

Mindfulness-Based Eating Interventions for children and adolescents

Caroline Baerten

Dietitian - Psychotherapist
ME-CL/MB-EAT / MBSR trainer

The Center for Mindful eating and Nutrition (MeNu), Brussels

Member of Eu. Association of Integrative Psychotherapy (EAIP)
Vice-president The Center of Mindful Eating (TCME), USA

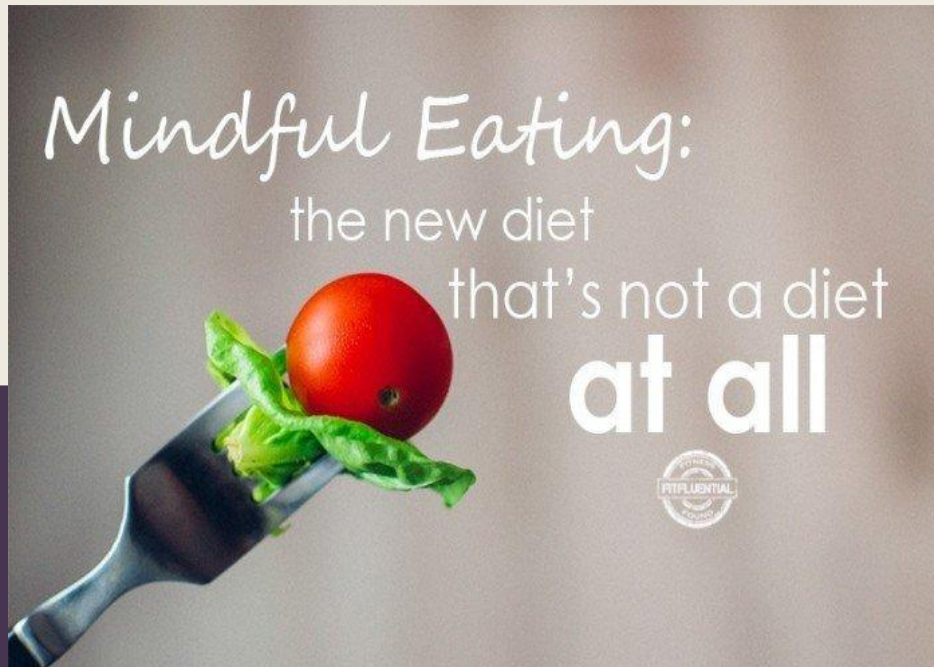
MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org



Objectives

- Different focal points between traditional and mindfulness-based eating interventions
- What is mindfulness/mindful eating?
- Rationale for mindfulness-based eating interventions
- Working mechanisms of mindfulness (tools)
- Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Different focal points between traditional and mindfulness-based eating interventions



Question 1: Focal points of health care providers?

Causes: Qualities and faculties of the mind

Cognitions, emotions, body awareness

Eating behavior

Physical expenditure

Foods/nutriments -high/low caloric

Symptoms : weight, fat%, BMI



Inner
wisdom

Outer
wisdom

Question 1: Focal points of health care providers?

• **Dietary interventions, physical activity**

• **Cognitive behavioral approaches**

• **Mindfulness based interventions**

• (Mindful Eating, Conscious Living program, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Mindful Self-Compassion)

External
motivation

Intrinsic
motivation

2e question: Why shifting the focus? Traditional weight loss interventions show gaps

Healthcare providers practice evidence-based medicine
=> decrease the incidence of obesity and its co-morbidities

*-> BUT benefits have been extremely limited in youth (12-18y);
Modest effect sizes (long-term), high attrition rates, low levels of
compliance, regaining weight quickly*

- Jeffrey RW, Drownowski A, Epstein LH, et al. Long-term maintenance of weight loss: Current status. Health Psychol 2000;19:5–16.
- Bacon L, Stern JS, Van Loan MD, et al. Size acceptance and intuitive eating improve health for obese, female chronic dieters. J Am Diet Assoc 2005;105:929–936

2e question: Why shifting the focus?

Three primary psychosocial factors highly correlated with disordered eating behaviors and overweight in youth (12-18y):

Psychological distress - Body dissatisfaction - Physiological distress

Traditional weight loss interventions may not adequately address these important risk factors.

- Neumark-Sztainer D, Wall M, Larson NI, et al. Dieting and disordered eating behaviors from adolescence to young adulthood: Findings from a 10-year longitudinal study. J Am Diet Assoc 2011;111:1004–1011.
- Neumark-Sztainer D. Integrating messages from the eating disorders field into obesity prevention. Adolesc Med State Art Rev 2012;23:529–543.

Mindfulness?



MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org



Mindfulness

*“...a way of paying attention that is taught through the practice of meditation or other exercises, in which participants learn to regulate their attention by focusing non-judgmentally on stimuli such as **thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations.**”*

Jon Kabat-Zinn (MBSR)



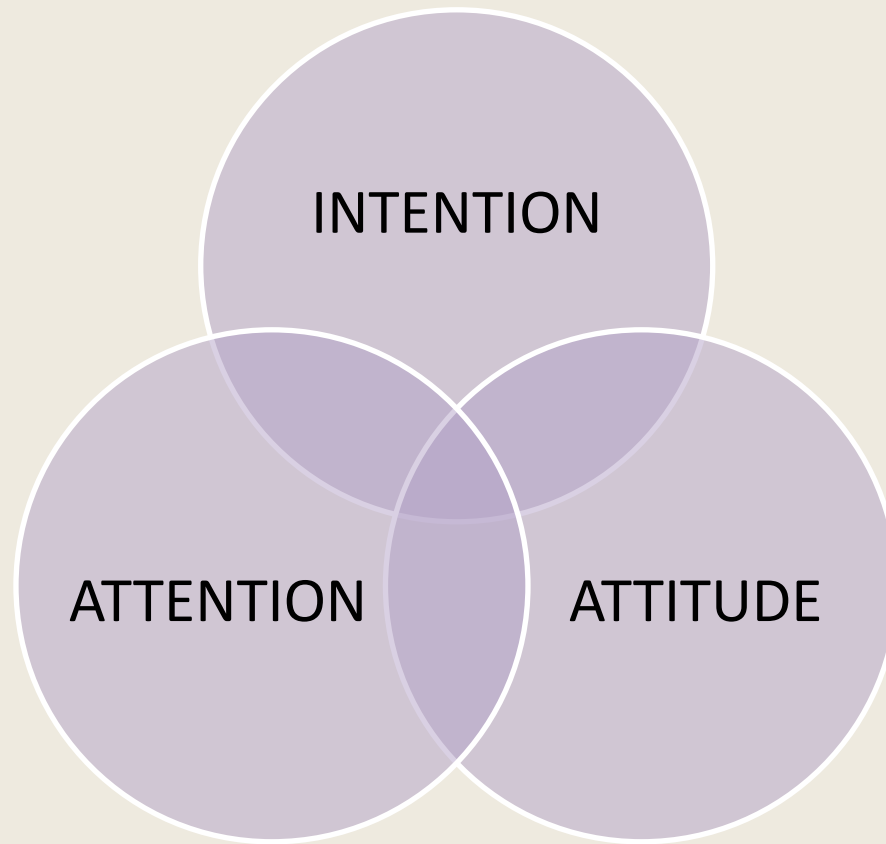
Mindful eating is...

Intentional, non-judgmental and caring awareness of our moment to moment experience before, during and after eating.



Jan Chozen Bays, M.D. (ME-CL)





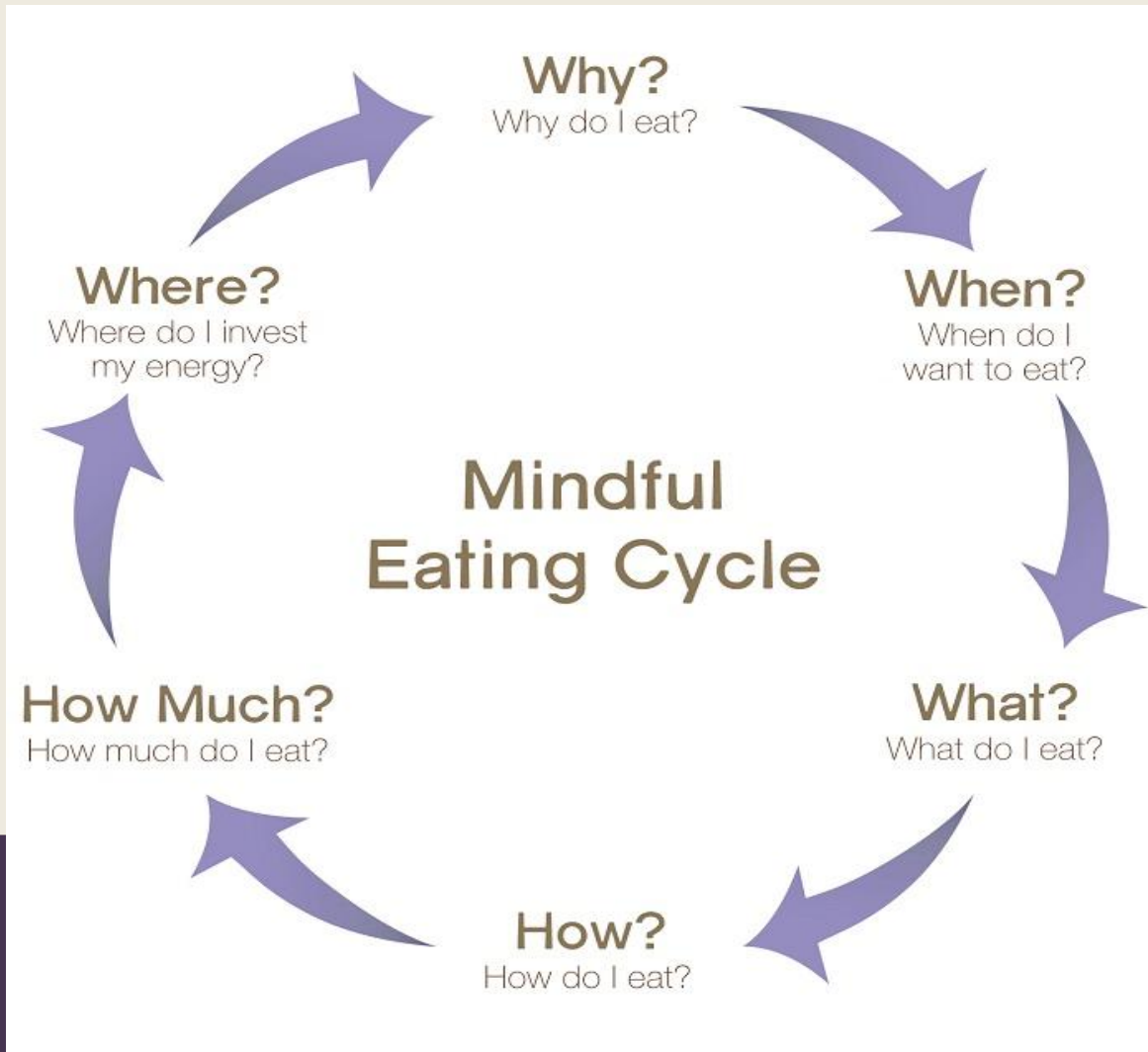
MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org



Cradled at the Table



Mindful Eating is... bringing attention & awareness to all aspects of eating



Mindful Eating Paradigm Shift

<u>Traditional weight interventions</u>	<u>Mindfulness-based</u>
Food, nutritional facts	All aspects of eating
Individual	Relational
Weight focus	Mind focus
Outcome focused	Process
Quick fix	Slowing down
Emotions less included	Connect with mind-body /feelings
Numbers	Seeing the reality as it is, holistic
Anxiety/stress/guilt	Acceptance + compassionate
Focus on what is <i>wrong</i>	Focus on what is <i>working</i>

Rationale for mindfulness-based interventions

The mind-body gap

- ✓ **Many factors out of our control** (Genetical, hormonal, neurological, obesogene environment)
- ✓ However, we can **change the relationship** children have with foods, body and weight

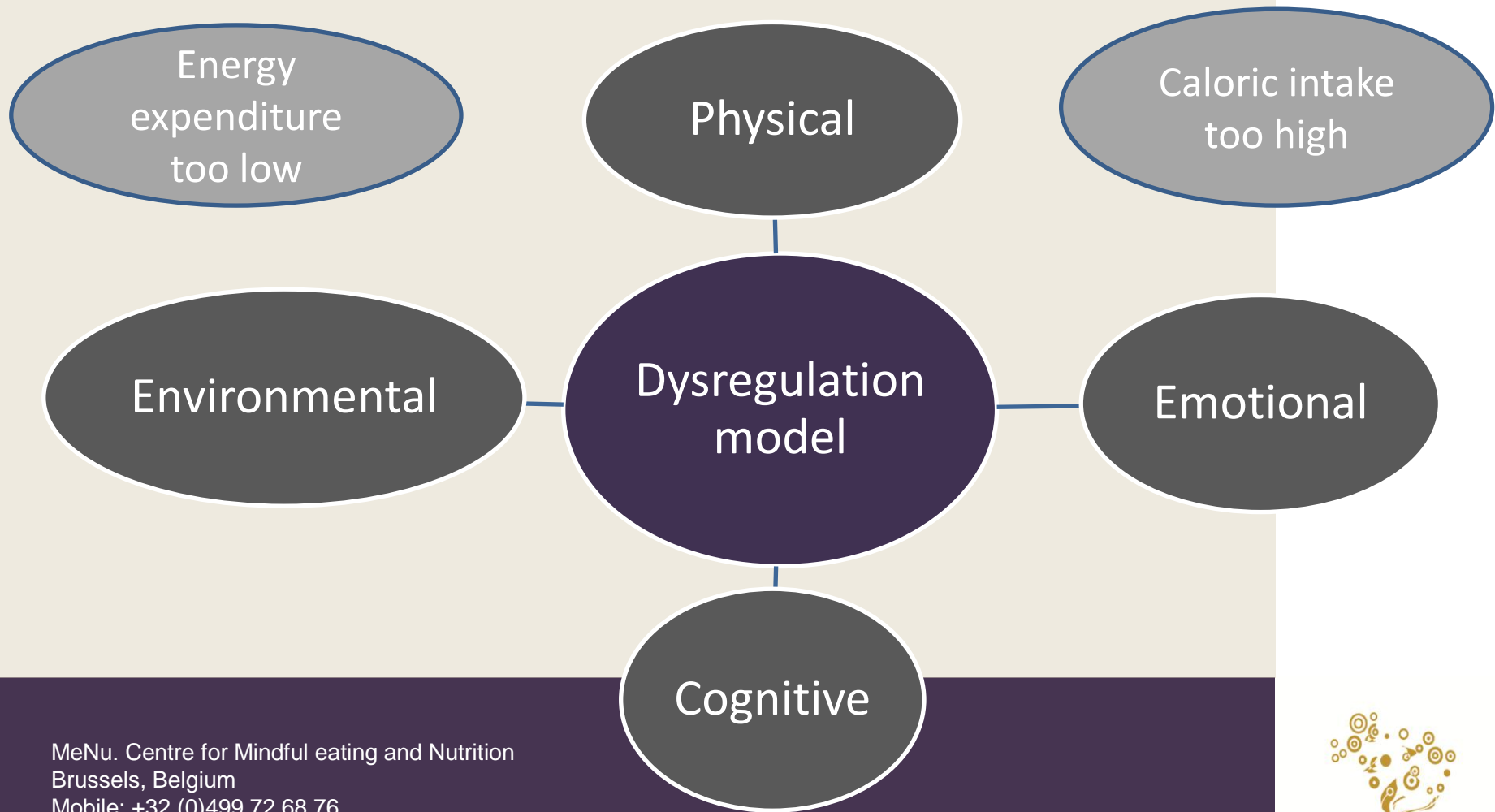


'Release' by Julie Bayer Salzman & Josh Salzman

<https://vimeo.com/170687659>

*“Mindfulness helps us to choose how to respond
instead of to react”*

Dysregulation model = basis for mindful eating interventions



Expand the focus on WHAT (food intake) to HOW (eating behavior)

Children: 1.6 – 6.5 years

Baby-led approach = effective to regulate food intake

⇒ Lower BMI – more satiety responsiveness

⇒ Preference for foods like carbohydrates (potatoes, bread)

Versus spoon-fed infants

⇒ Higher BMI

⇒ Preference for sweet foods

- Brown A, Lee M. Early influences on child satiety responsiveness: the role of weaning style. *Pediatr Obes.* 2015;10:57-66.
- Townsend E et al., Baby knows best? The impact of weaning style on food preferences and body mass index in early, *BMJ Open Nutr & metabolism*, 2012

Sensory exploration with foods

Challenges

- Developing a “relationship” with new foods (10-15 times)
- Exploring tastes & textures
- Tastes can change over time and then change back again..



Young children are natural mindful beings...

Supportive conditions

- ✓ **Trust in their self-regulation (and cellular hunger):**
 - Eating when hungry, stopping when full and food choices
- ✓ **Division of Responsibility (Ellyn Satter)**
 - The parent is responsible for *what, when, where*.
 - The child is responsible for *how much* and *whether*.
- ✓ **Setting a good example**
 - Parental modeling more powerful than parental control
- Dickens, E and Ogden, J. (2014). The role of parental control and modelling in predicting a child's relationship with food after they leave home: a prospective study. *Appetite*, 76; 23-29.

Working mechanisms of mindfulness for children and adolescents (tools)

'Release' by Julie Bayer Salzman & Josh Salzman

<https://vimeo.com/170687659>

“Mindfulness helps us to choose how to respond instead of to react”

3 key therapeutic factors with mindfulness

- Experiential **acceptance** as a positive coping skill for controlling responses to psychological distress;
- **self-regulation** through developed awareness of the emotional and physical cues to eat;
- **compassion** as a way to cultivate self-acceptance and body satisfaction.

- ***Catherine Gueguen***, Pediatrician
(La neuroscience affective)

*« Être bienveillant, c'est porter sur autrui un regard aimant,
compréhensif, sans jugement,
en souhaitant qu'il se sente bien et en y veillant. »*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo8nakP6p7c>



- **Richard Davidson**, Kabat-Zinn, J.

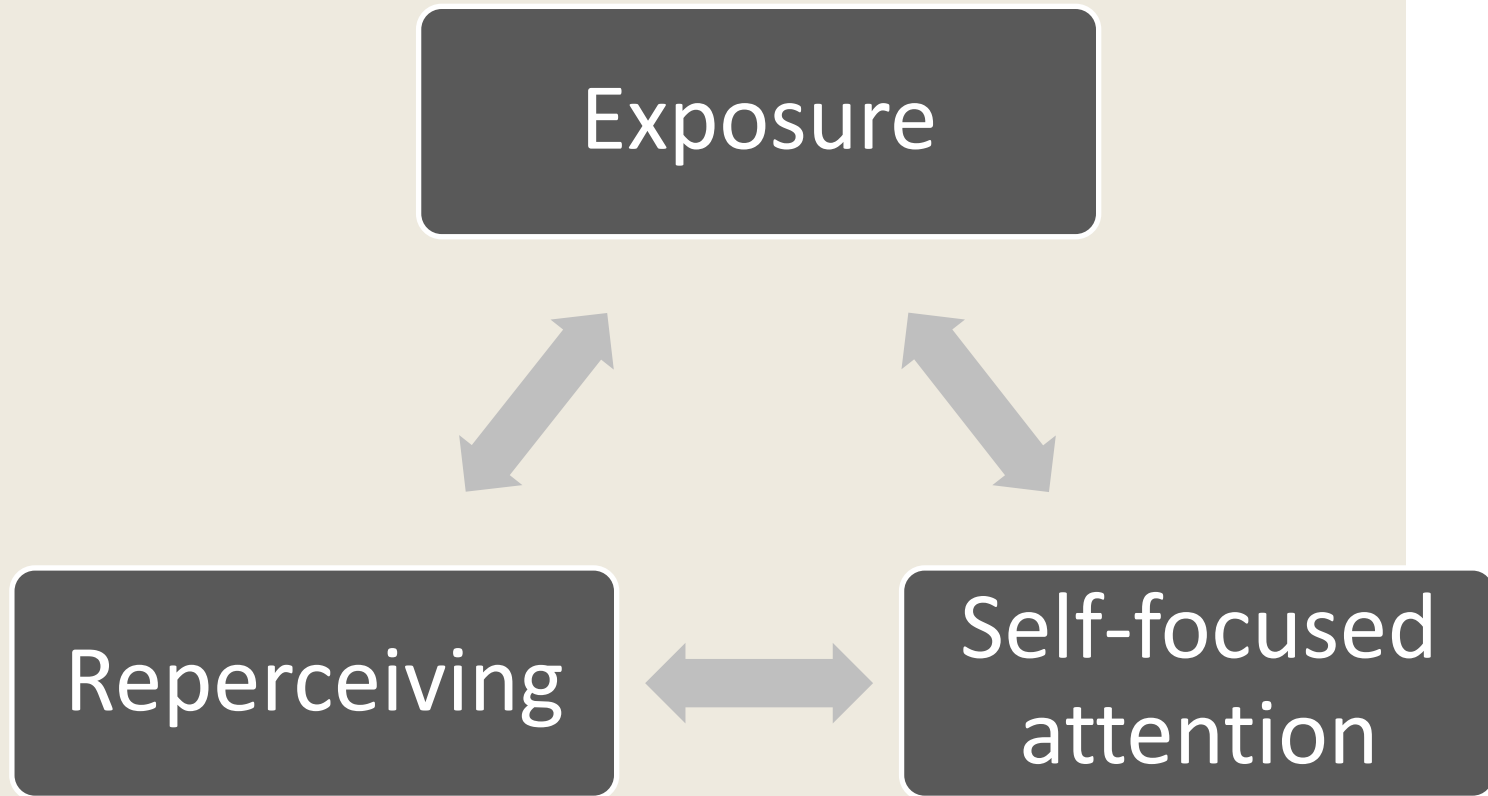
"Alterations in Brain and Immune Function Produced by Mindfulness meditation".
Psychosomatic Medicine. 2003, **65** (4): 564–570.

Prefrontal Cortex: executive functioning such as **planning, problem solving, and emotion regulation.**

Hippocampus: learning and memory, susceptible to stress and stress-related disorders like depression or PTSD.

Decreased Amygdala Size:

“fight or flight” center and the seat of our fearful and anxious emotions, decreases in brain cell volume after mindfulness practice.



9 kinds of hungers by Jan Chozen Bays (Touch: Baerten)

Mind

EAR

MOUTH

EYE

TOUCH

STOMACH

NOSE

CELLULAR

HEART

Urge surfing

- *Alan Marlatt*, PhD. Mindfulness-Based Relaps Prevention, Founder Addictive Behaviors Research Center, USA
- *Judson Brewer*, PhD., Director of Research Center for Mindfulness, Umass, USA:



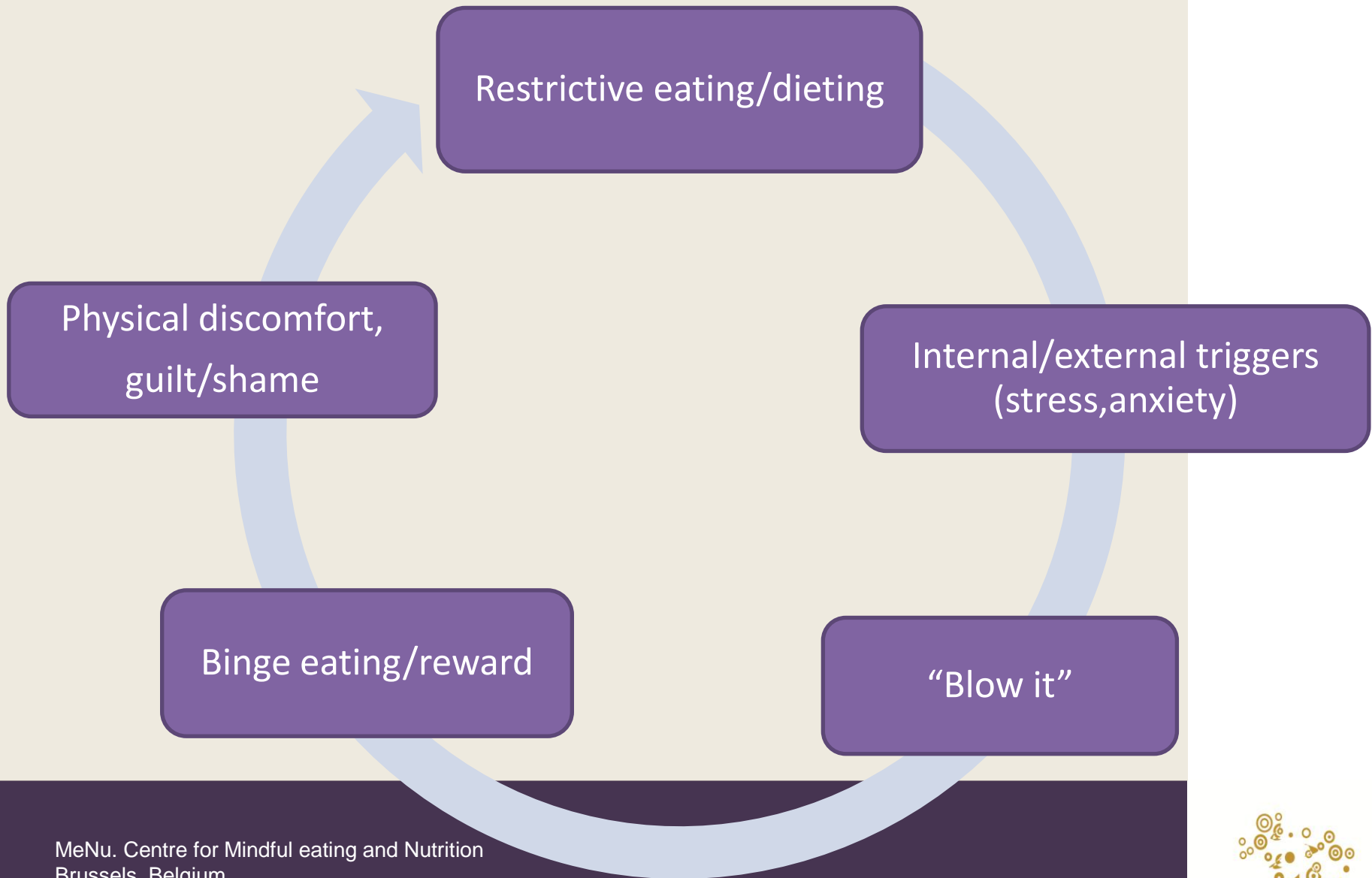
Clinical case

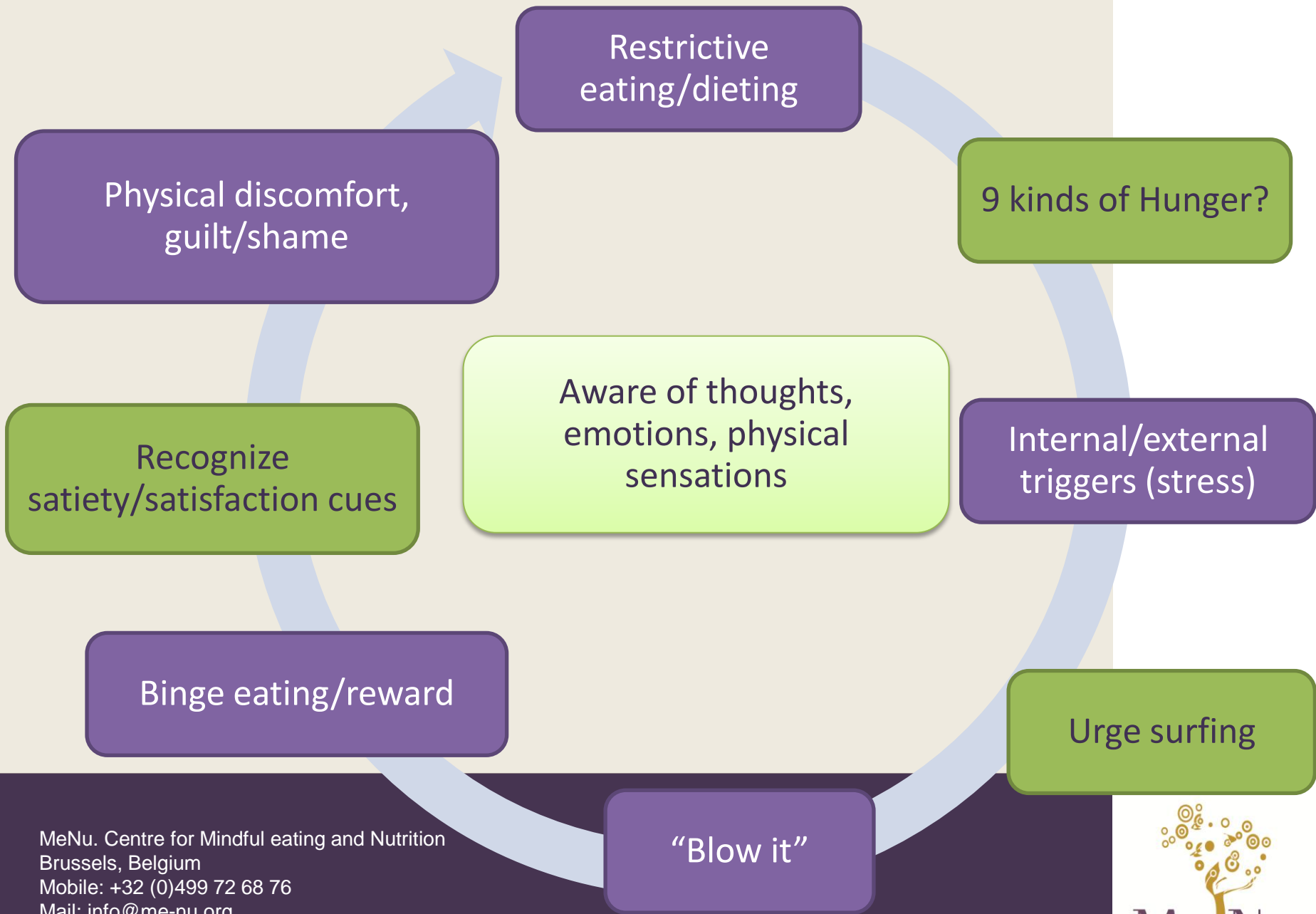
Young girl, 16 years, overweight

Eating behaviour : overeating alternated with restrictive eating

Mindfulness-based approach =

- Breaking the chain of binge/diet cycle
- Awareness of underlying triggers (hunger) and emotion (stress/anxiety) regulation
- Awareness of physical satiety and satisfaction cues (mouth-stomach-cellular)
- Compassionate attitude towards the body and during meals





A Family-Based Mindful Eating Approach

Jeanne Dalen, PhD, **L. Brody**, PhD, **K. Staples**, and **D Sedillo**,
CHILDHOOD OBESITY, 2015, Volume 11, Number 5



Rationale for *Family-Based* Mindful Eating approach

Improving obesity treatment outcomes

⇒ moving beyond individual intrapersonal factors

⇒ to incorporate the **social, contextual, and environmental influences**

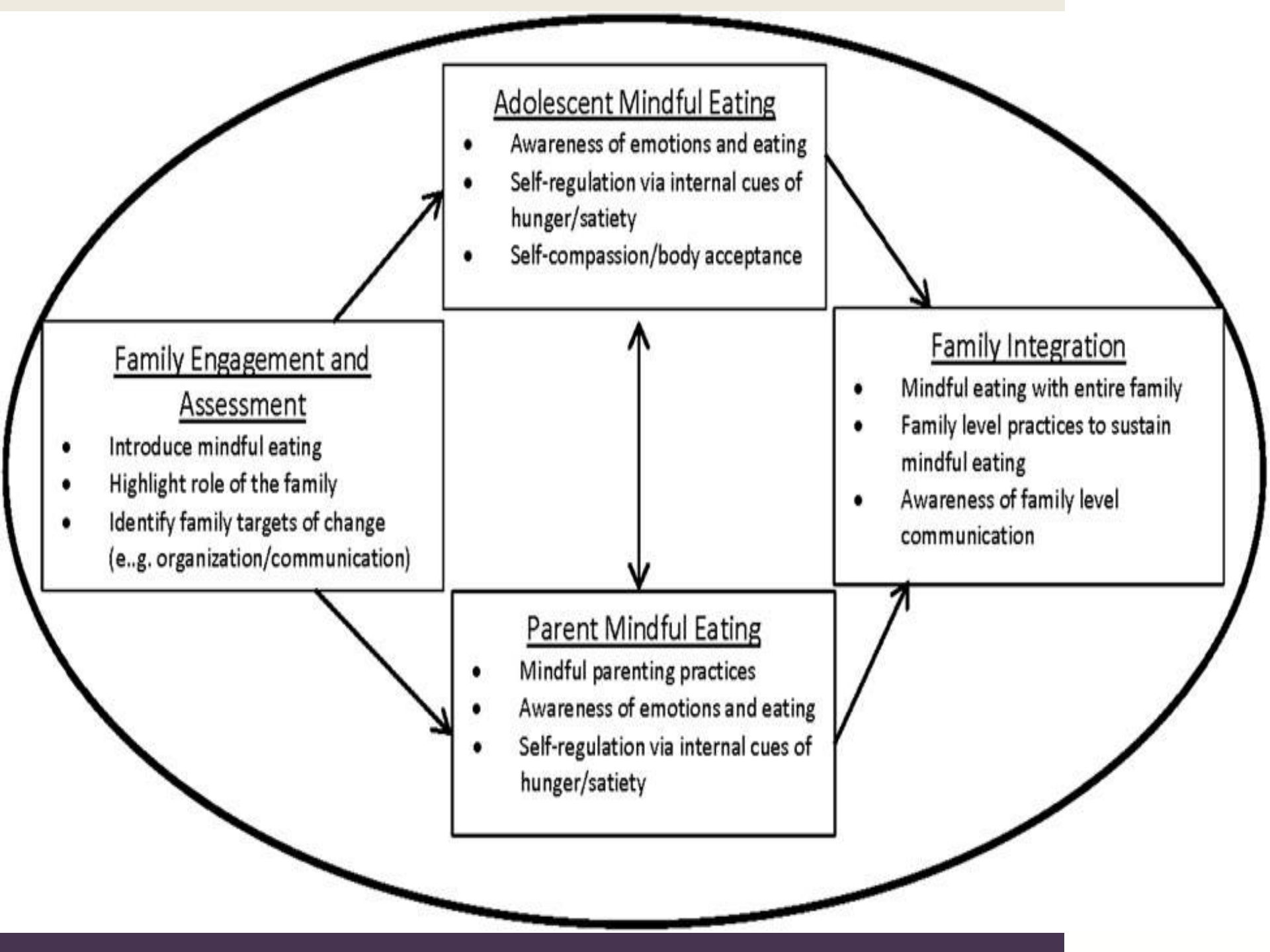
- Lawman HG, Wilson DK. A review of family and environmental correlates of health behaviors in high-risk youth. *Obesity* 2012;20:1142–1157.

Rationale for *Family-Based Mindful Eating* approach

Support the Feeding Relationship

- When a child feels secure, they have the ability to pay attention to their bodies—innate hunger & fullness.
- The relationship & environment while eating impacts the ability to tune into self.





Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Phase 1: Family Engagement and Assessment

Phase 2: Parent and Adolescent Mindful Eating Groups

MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org

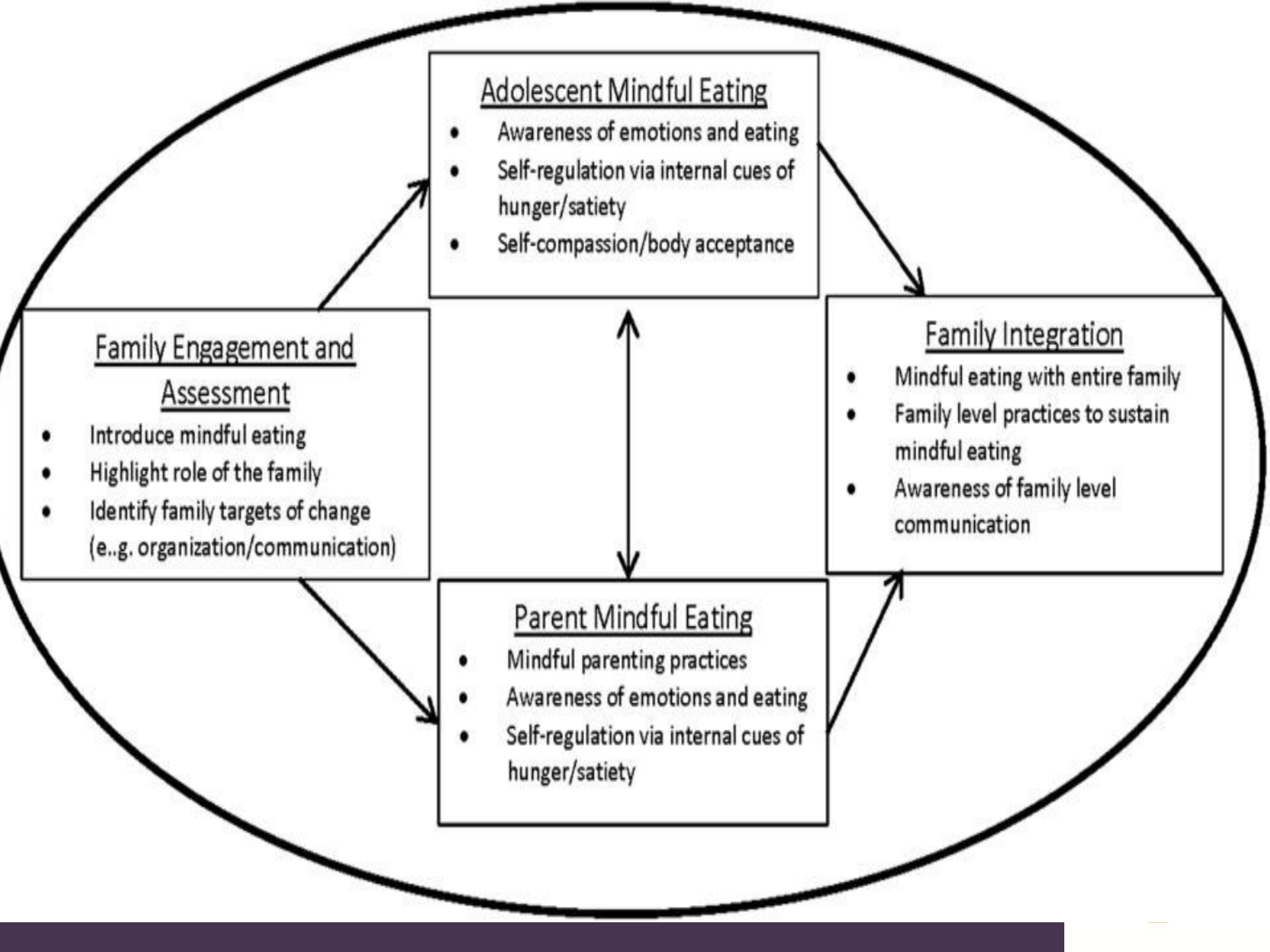


Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Phase 1: Purpose of the assessment

Parents do their best. They do what they know:

- “Know” dieting. Counting calories.
- Good and bad foods. Deprivation/restriction of food (types, amounts)
- Cycles of dieting and weight regain
- Over-focus on physical appearance



Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Phase 2: Parent and Adolescent Mindful Eating Groups

Mindful Eating Exercise for Parents: 4 steps

STEP 1: Step out of the “PAID” world

- Pressure *Destress*
- Always Available *Not at mealtimes!*
- Information super highway *Disconnect*
- Distracted *Uni- (not multi-) tasking*

STEP 2: De-stress with 3 deep breaths, hand over heart/grounding

Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Phase 2: Parent and Adolescent Mindful Eating Groups

STEP 3: What is present for me right now?

- Thoughts, mental states
- Feelings
- Emotions
- Physical sensations

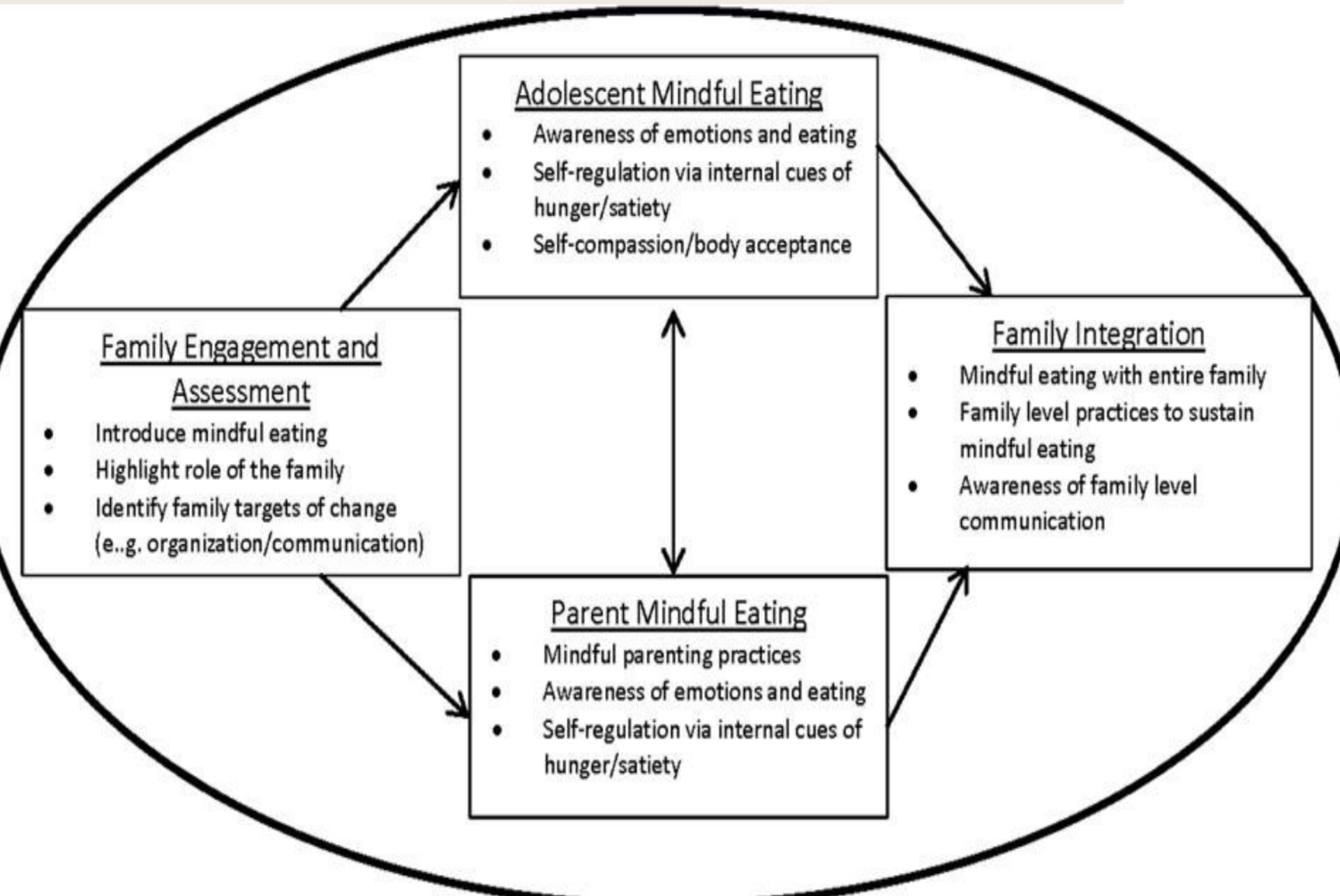
Family-Based Mindful Eating Program in obesity treatment

Phase 2: Parent and Adolescent Mindful Eating Groups

STEP 4: What do I need right now?

- Nourish yourself first
- Set intention for the meal
- Eat more slowly
- Be more present
- Nourish body, heart & mind
- Open your awareness to your child
- Can repeat these steps with your child

Phase 3: Family Integration



Conclusion

Psychosocial distress

⇒disordered eating behaviors in overweight youth

⇒Need to expand treatment beyond diet and exercise education

The successful integration of mindfulness and mindful eating skills with families represent a promising approach to children and youth obesity



Mindful Eating trainer

Skills

1. Clinical background

2. Embodied mindfulness

- 8 weeks MBSR / MBCT or MSC
- 5-day residential professional Mindful Eating, Conscious Living training (ME-CL) -> with teacher trainer Jan Chozen Bays, M.D Ped.



Mindful Eating, Conscious Living training (MECL)

Faculty: *Jan Chozen Bays, Char Wilkins (USA)*

5 – 10 april 2017
Belgium

Certified by UCSD Center for Mindfulness, USA

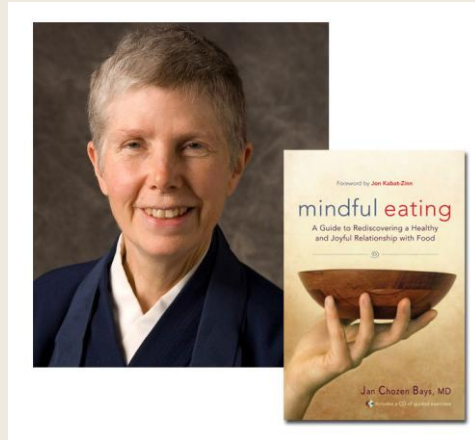
www.me-nu.org or info@me-nu.org

Resources: www.thecenterformindfuleating.org (TCME)

Mindful Eating Principles

- Awareness of the **positive & nurturing opportunities** available through food preparation and consumption by respecting your **inner wisdom**.
- Choosing to eat food that is both pleasing to you and nourishing to your body by using **all your sense to explore, savor and taste**.
- Acknowledging responses to food (likes, neutral or dislikes) **without judgment**.
- Learning to be **aware of physical hunger and satiety cues** to guide your decision to begin eating and to stop eating.

Thanks to my colleagues for sharing their knowledge and wisdom to enrich this presentation



***Jan Chozen Bays, M.D. Ped
and Zen Buddhist***



***Leena Liu, Professor of Pediatrics, Univ Washington
and long-term meditator/yogi***

MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org



Questions?

Caroline Baerten

info@me-nu.org

www.me-nu.org



MeNu. Centre for Mindful eating and Nutrition
Brussels, Belgium
Mobile: +32 (0)499 72 68 76
Mail: info@me-nu.org
Web: www.me-nu.org

