INTRODUCTION

To be successful at self-regulation, individuals need to bring their behaviors in line with their long-term goals (Heatherton, 2011). For dieters, their long-term goal is to control their weight. However, only few dieters can successfully achieve their goals over the long term (Mann et al., 2007). For successful dieters, their weight loss goals are activated when they are exposed to food cues (Stroebe et al., 2013).

Aim of this study: test whether being aware of weight control goals could modulate brain reactivity to food cues in the frontoparietal (FP) and reward systems as well as enhance the balance between these two systems.

METHODS

Participants: Thirty female chronic dieters were recruited from a large sample of undergraduate students at Dartmouth College who completed the Restraint Scale.

RESULTS

Food-cue reactivity across both groups:

The FP and reward systems were activated across both groups.

Aware > Nonaware group:

The Aware group showed greater food-cue reactivity in the FP system than the Nonaware group.

The Aware group did not show greater reactivity in the reward system than the Nonaware group.

ROCIs analysis:

The Aware group showed a higher balance score than the Nonaware group.

CONCLUSIONS

- Keeping the balance between the control and reward systems is crucial for dieters in achieving self-regulation of their eating (Chen et al., 2016; Lopez et al., 2017).
- Being awareness of weight loss goals may help dieters maintain the balance between the control and reward systems, allowing dieters to stay in control.

References