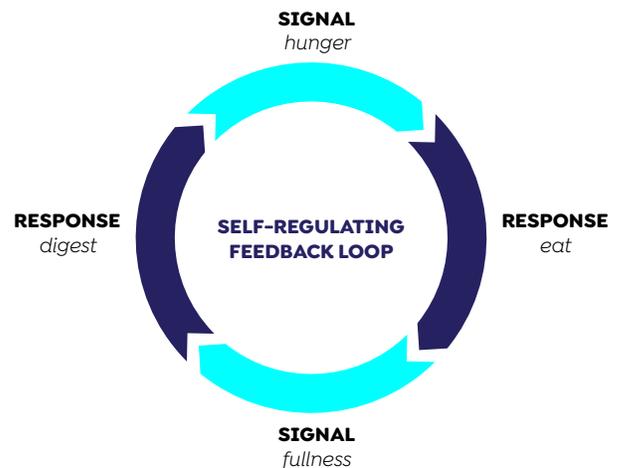
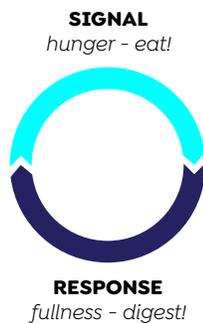


Feedback Loops: Dieting & Dysregulation

Our body is a self-regulating system, which maintains its stability by way of **feedback loops**. A feedback loop is like an input for energy and information, but the origin is from *within the system itself*, rather than from an external source..

Our bodily signals of hunger and fullness are an example of these feedback loops. When the body signals “hunger,” we eat. Once we eat, our body signals “fullness,” which is when we stop and digest. Once the food is digested and the fuel is used, eventually the loop will begin again and signal “hunger” to remind us to consume food.

To help break down the loop further, hunger and fullness can be represented as separate signals with responses that create an entire loop.

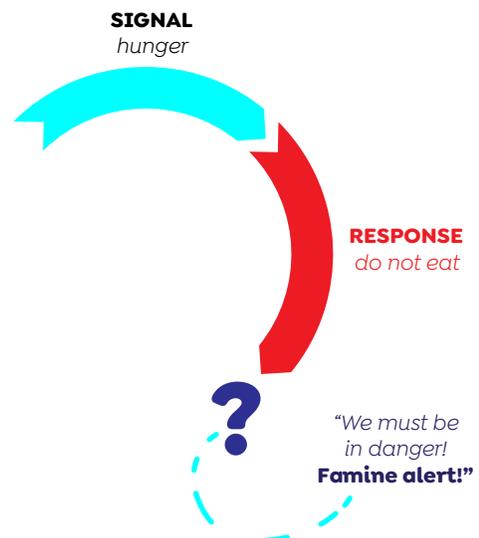


When feedback loops are interrupted or ignored, our bodies cannot regulate, so we become **dysregulated**.

Remember—dysregulation leads to DIS-ease!

If our bodies send a signal (hunger) and we respond by ignoring it (do not eat), our bodies become confused and do not continue the cycle; they stop maintaining the healthy feedback loop.

Instead, our systems think “*something must be wrong.*” When our bodies require nutrients (which is what hunger is signaling) and are not provided with the nutrients soon or regularly enough, our bodies go into “starvation mode,” assuming food is not available. Our bodies don’t understand that a fridge is a few feet away, the grocery store is down the street, or that food is almost always available. When we don’t offer it the fuel it needs, it goes on high alert.



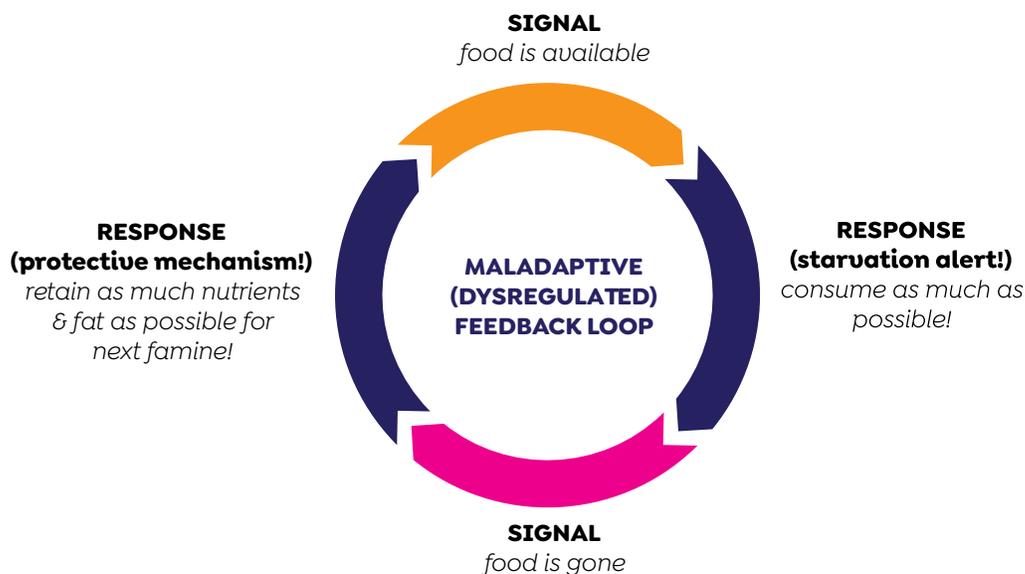
continue on next page →



Feedback Loops: Dieting & Dysregulation

After repeated disruption of these feedback loops, **new and maladaptive feedback loops are developed to protect the system (our body)**. We have trained our body not to eat when it's hungry (**internal cue**), so the hunger signal is no longer reliable or effective. Instead, we eat because of **external cues**, like "it's lunchtime" or "this is the amount of calories/points I'm allowed right now."

At this point, when we start to eat, and our body recognizes that food is available, it's on high alert from fear of starvation and physiologically overrides any mental control or willpower—directing you to consume as much food as possible (binge). This is NOT because you do not have the willpower or because you're weak. ***This is because your body is trying to protect you!***



When we binge, we eat as much as possible, usually until an external cue sets in (the food is gone). If we consume enough (too much) food, an internal cue may force us to stop (we eat until we're physically ill).

Our body's protective response is then to retain as much of the food as possible in preparation for the next famine. Our bodies get very efficient at holding onto fat for protection—which makes it harder to lose.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS LESSON:

- Your body is an integrated, **self-regulating system**.
- Your body's job is to **protect** you.
- **There's nothing wrong with you** if you feel like you can't stop eating—your body is doing exactly what it's supposed to, given the circumstances.
- **There is a way out** of this: we must reconnect to our internal cues and **inner wisdom**, re-regulate our feedback loops, and stop depending exclusively on external cues for guidance.

