

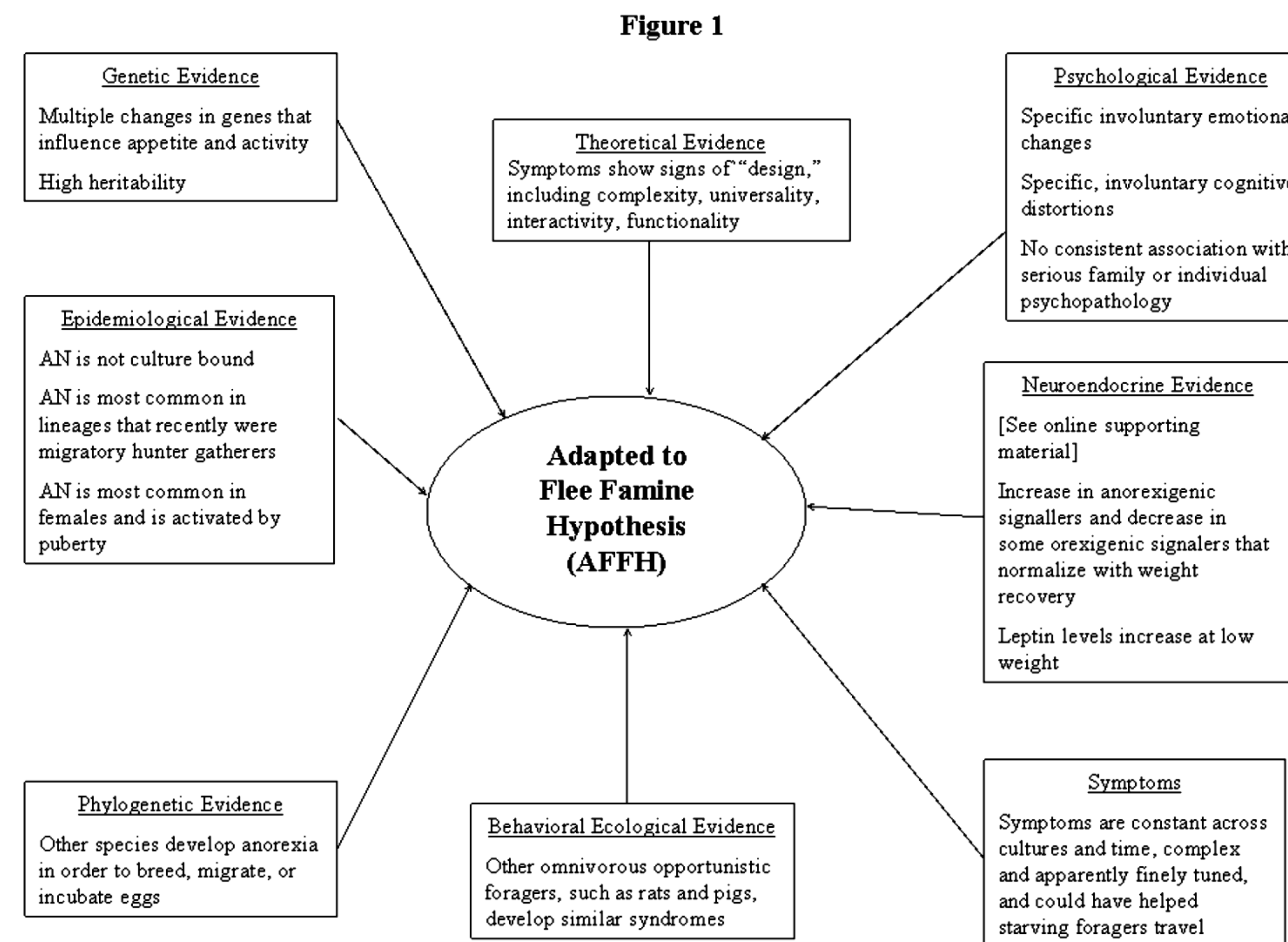
Anorexia nervosa Biopsychosocial Treatment (A-Bpst)

Shan Guisinger, PhD¹, David Schuldberg, PhD²

The Adapted-to-Flee-Famine Hypothesis (AFFH)

The symptoms of anorexia nervosa once helped starving nomadic foragers mobilize their last reserves to migrate from depleted homelands. In contemporary times low BMI may trigger these symptoms in their descendents.

Considerable evidence supports the AFFH



The A-Bpst uses the evolutionary narrative to decrease blame and shame
Anorexic perceptions and cognitions such as body fat overestimation and fear of eating are triggered by low body weight

Understanding why their bodies' resist them helps helps people recover their weight

It helps the therapist empathize

It engages and involves loved ones in the recovery process

Preliminary data from A-Bpst treatment $n = 4$

Why is anorexia nervosa difficult to treat?

Self-deception is a core feature

Powerful biological and psychological mechanisms oppose eating

Patients identify with the symptoms

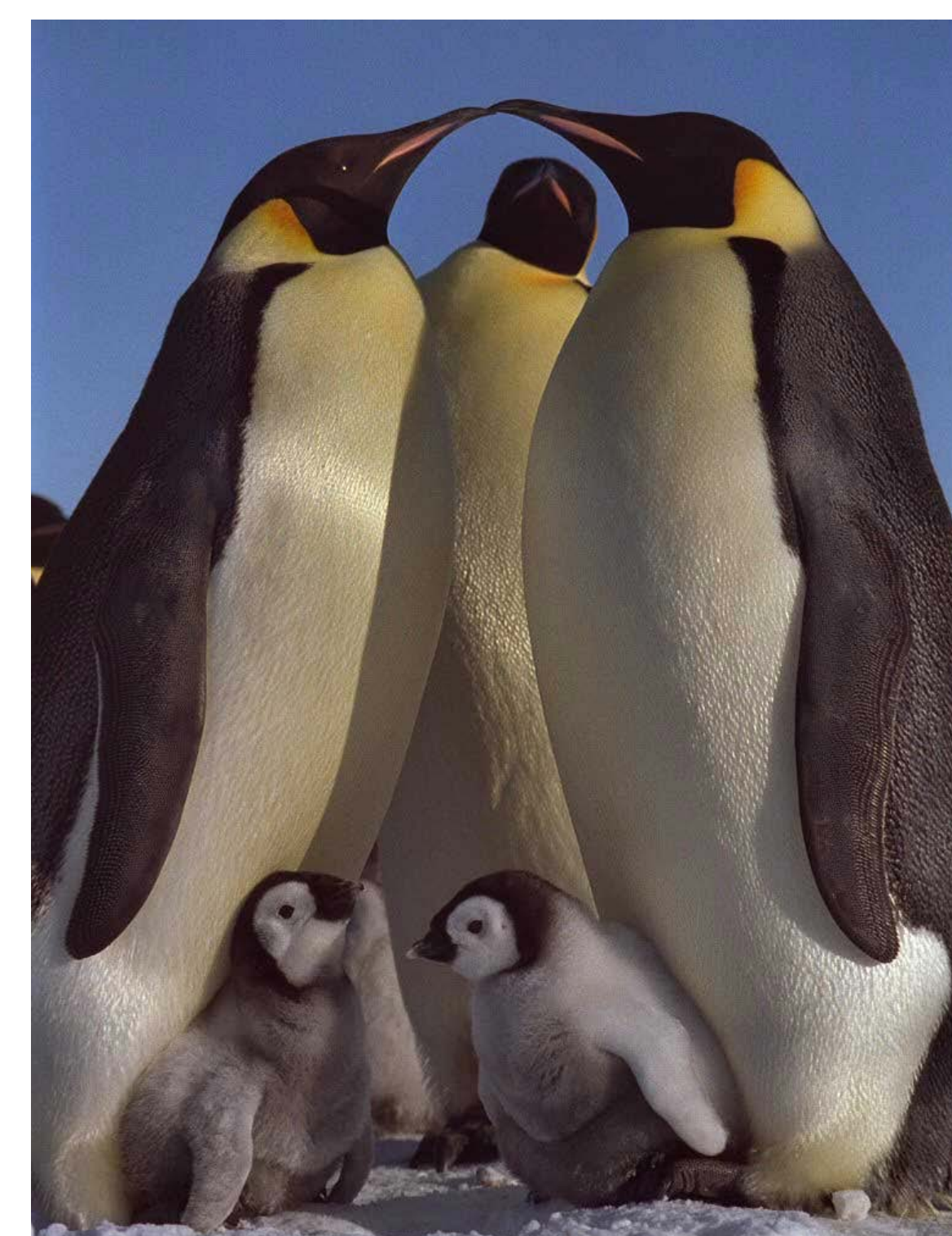
Therapists have difficulty empathizing with the patient's struggle

The A-Bpst uses the evolutionary narrative to increase empathy

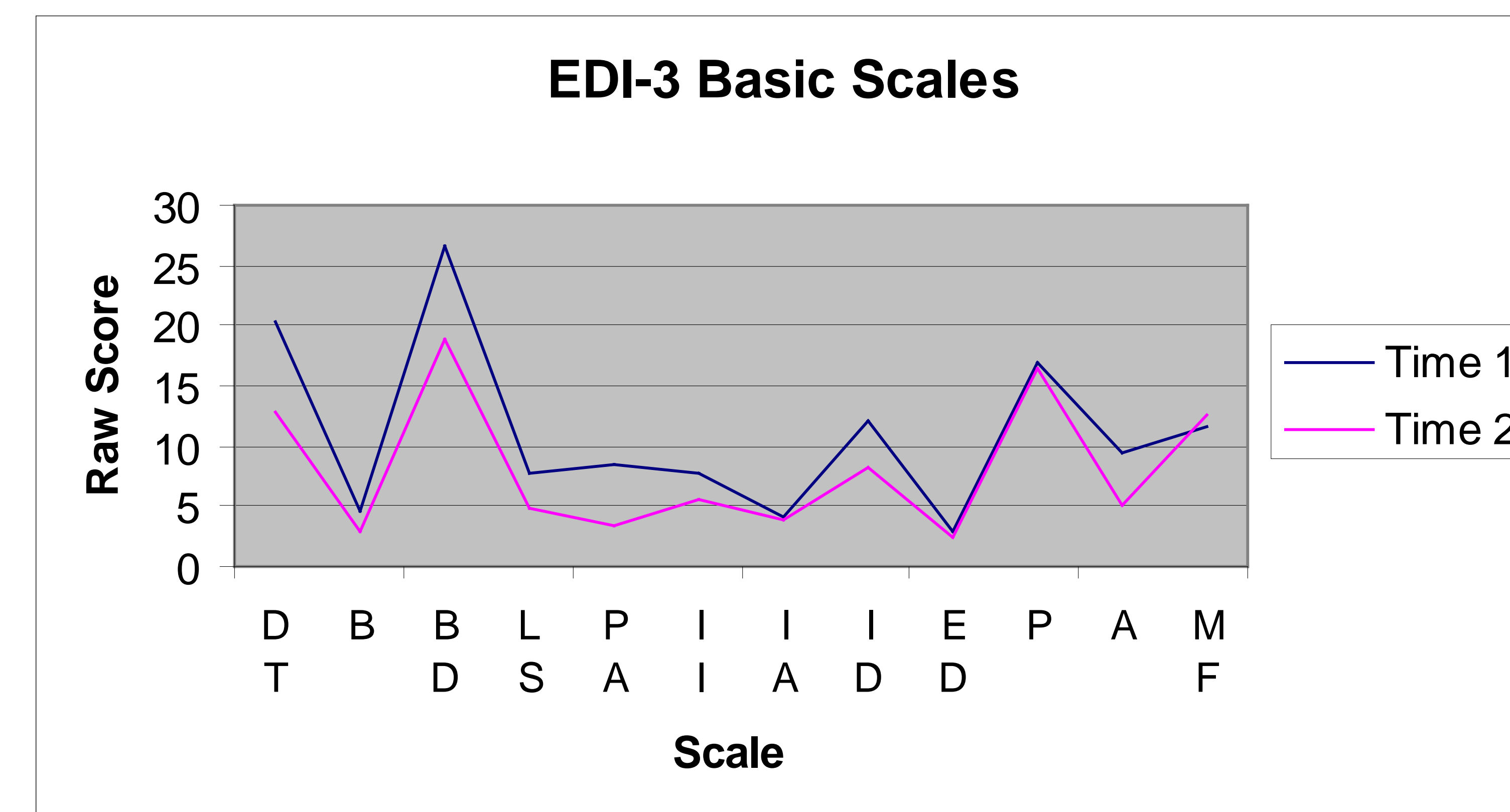
AN patients cling to their symptoms because they are descendents of foragers who survived by stubbornly ignoring hunger and moving



Like the anorexic Joan of Arc who convinced French soldiers to march with her by her confidence and zeal



Many bird and mammal species stop eating when feeding interferes with another life task such as incubating eggs, migrating, nursing or defending a breeding territory.



¹210 N Higgins Av, Missoula, MT.
shan.guisinger@mso.umt.edu;406-543-8138
²Department of Psychology
The University of Montana, Missoula, MT