

# THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

## The Model Health Show with Shawn Stevenson Session #88

Show notes at: <http://www.theshawnstevensonmodel.com/88>

**Announcer:** This podcast of The Model Health Show is presented to you by Shawn Stevenson with Rare Gem Productions. For more information visit <http://www.theshawnstevensonmodel.com>.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Welcome to The Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, here with my cohost and producer, Jade Harrell. What's up Jade?

**Jade:** What's up Shawn?

**Shawn:** How are you doing today with your beautiful self?

**Jade:** Oh, thank you so much, Shawn. I feel like a euphoraniac!

**Shawn:** Euphoraniac. What?

**Jade:** Yes, I'm a euphoric maniac right about now.

**Shawn:** Well, I will justify that. Definitely I can see that.

**Jade:** I see a combination of both. There is euphoria but I am acting like a maniac!

**Shawn:** But you do it so gracefully.

**Jade:** Well thanks.

**Shawn:** That's what I like about you.

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**Jade:** That's what makes it work.

**Shawn:** Today we've got an amazing show.

**Jade:** Yeah, we do.

**Shawn:** Absolutely amazing show. We've got a great guest on and this is somebody who I've got a lot of respect for. We hit it off immediately. You get connected with some people and you just click. He's actually becoming a good friend of mine and is somebody that I met when I was at Onnit HQ, Onnit Headquarters, a couple of months back.

**Jade:** That awesome trip.

**Shawn:** He was right there to kind of take me around, show me the place, and we played a game of pool which I won, by the way. He did knock the eight ball in. But a victory is a victory!

**Jade:** You'll take the W.

**Shawn:** We were just geeking out on some information about nutrition and things of that nature. He is really, really well researched and is just a smart, smart guy. So we're going to bring him on in just a moment. But first, speaking of Onnit, we want to give a shout out to our show sponsor, onnit.com. Head over to <http://www.onnit.com/model> for 10% off your health and human performance supplements.

We're huge fans of the Hemp FORCE protein.

**Jade:** Oh that's my love!

**Shawn:** I know, right. The number one most bioavailable protein for the human body is going to be found in hemp. It is the highest source of edestin and albumin, very soft, globular water-soluble proteins. And what is the human body mostly made of?

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**Jade:** Water-soluble material.

**Shawn:** Water, my friend.

**Jade:** Exactly.

**Shawn:** So it's very digestible and it just feels good. It feels good in your system, very contrary to whey, AKA gas and blast.

**Jade:** No whey!

**Shawn:** No whey. Some people can digest that stuff just fine. But for a lot of us we take it because we feel that we have to because it has become the industry standard and has been tested. There are a lot of tests backing the efficacy of whey protein. However, if it doesn't feel good it's an indication that there is something off about that.

If anybody knows about this, if they have ever tried hemp protein of any type, they know it is so much more digestible. It just feels good. However, the catch could be that it tastes like a dirt smoothie. You've got some dirt, a little bit of painter's glue mixed in there. You shake that up and that's what you get with a lot of hemp proteins.

**Jade:** It's not going down smooth.

**Shawn:** But not with Hemp FORCE. It tastes incredible. It is likely going to be the most incredible protein you've ever tasted. So this is why we're fans of it. Not only is it incredible for your health and wellbeing but it also tastes good.

**Jade:** It tastes good.

**Shawn:** We're also huge fans of the SHROOM Tech. SHROOM Tech Sport is my number one pre-workout supplement to give me that extra energy in my exercise and training without spiking me out.

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There was a great little picture going around on Instagram, I've mentioned this before, of this guy with paper clips all over his body. He says, "This is how I feel when I take my pre workout." I know a lot of people have experienced this, like the beta alanine kind of buzz. You feel your skin is tingling. We're not talking about that, we're talking about something that is subtle and natural.

Actually, the cordyceps mushroom, which it's based on, has 5,000 years of documented history for improving your stamina, boosting your cell oxygenation, and is really incredible.

Something else interesting in there is ashwagandha.

**Jade:** Ashwagandha.

**Shawn:** It's often referred to as the Indian ginseng.

**Jade:** I would like a t-shirt that says ashwagandha.

**Shawn:** That's a good idea. That's a good idea!

**Jade:** It would start some real great conversation.

**Shawn:** What is that?

**Jade:** Ashwagandha.

**Shawn:** It's one of the top things in ayurvedic medicine. Like I said, it's the Indian ginseng. It is clinically proven to actually help to boost your reaction time, which is really interesting. That could be very helpful for training and when it's game time as well. It is really great stuff and is a really great formula.

**Jade:** Or for drive time for some of us.

**Shawn:** If you're into NASCAR, whatever, or just on the streets, because some people are a little cray cray.

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**Jade:** Going to work. Navigating the cubicles.

**Shawn:** Those are two of our favorite things. They've got a lot of other incredible things over there so head on over and check them out at <http://www.onnit.com/model> for 10% off.

Now let's get into the iTunes review of the week.

**Jade:** Can you believe it Shawn, another five-star rating! This one is from bbone1978. It says:

"Imparting wisdom in simplistic terms. Shawn, I was introduced to your podcast by a friend in my men's group. At first I was hesitant and decided to put it off until I had more time. One week later the 'I had more time' moment came and I couldn't be happier that I settled in. Now I'm hooked and am have thoroughly enjoyed what I've heard and how it's delivered. The episode detailing how we should take back our sleep sanctuary spoke volumes. I immediately took measures upon arriving home. You have earned a devoted listener as long as you stay true to your formula and always keep it real." – J. Kelly

**Shawn:** Wow! Oh my goodness. My formula, that's my secret sauce. I'm staying true to that. Thank you so much for that review. That's so powerful.

**Jade:** To the Bone. And again, we get a glimpse of how this is working in people's lives. I love that they include that.

**Shawn:** Wow, so much gratitude. Thank you everybody for leaving those reviews on iTunes. It truly does mean a lot of me. We promise to keep the good stuff coming, for sure. We've got amazing, absolutely amazing shows coming up for you in 2015.

Now let's go ahead and get into our topic of the day and our special guest. Our guest today is Evan Brand. He is the host of an incredible podcast, [Not Just Paleo](#). So the podcast looks behind the incredible framework of paleo nutrition but goes beyond that, which is really, really wonderful. Talking about a lot of the

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other things that matter in our health and wellbeing, which we are going to talk about today and I am so excited about it.

He is also an author and a very, very dedicated researcher. Like I said, he is becoming a good friend and is a really smart guy. He is a great guy to hang around and I would like to welcome Mr. Evan Brand to The Model Health Show.

How are you doing today, man?

**Evan:** I am doing great. It was so fun just listening to you guys talk so hopefully I can make it just as fun.

**Jade:** Just come on in. This is how the environment is around here.

**Shawn:** It's how we roly-poly man.

**Jade:** Roly-poly.

**Shawn:** I know you can, man. You've got that rare quality. It's kind of like a child-like nature you have about you and a curiosity. I could see that very blatantly when I met you and I really appreciate that.

I am curious, how did you get to this place where you have that nature? I know that life can try to beat you down sometimes and beat the curiosity out of you, beat the child-like adventurous spirit out of you. So I am really curious, what is your superhero origin story? How did you get started in this health and wellness field? What was your triggering event for you to get interested in this stuff?

**Evan:** Honestly, as far as the curiosity goes, that probably goes back to being a kid. I always remember asking, "why." I feel like that's an important question to ask as we move forward into the future. So I did that all of the time and it took until college before my health started to get messed up, especially my gut getting the diagnosis of IBS, which is sort of a pseudo diagnosis anyway. I asked, "Why? Why am I dealing with this?"

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Just digging into the stress response, I was working out with body building, I was stressed out with school, and it was a combination of things going on so I just kept asking, "Why, why, why?"

Eventually I discovered that breads and pastas and this whole category of foods wasn't really necessary and was actually destroying my gut, which was then destroying my bowel function, which was then destroying my confidence, which then destroyed my self esteem.

It was like a huge snowball that piled up and I basically got swept away in an avalanche of depression and negative emotions while working third shift and going to college. So that was sort of my point to realize something was messed up and that I needed to make some changes.

**Shawn:** Wow. IBS man. I think it's an acronym for I Barely See. I barely see what the issue is. Like you said, it's a pseudo diagnosis. When somebody is diagnosed with something like that it really doesn't answer the questions. I think that's where your curiosity and your naturally curious spirit kind of kicked in.

I'm interested to see what you found. How did you get from there to experiencing the health and amazing energy that you have today?

**Evan:** Thanks. First, I would like to mention that I had to turn down the conventional treatments because they were failing. I had the opportunity, I never actually filled the prescriptions, but I got thrown three different prescriptions.

One was an acid blocker, one was some anti-spasmodic drug that was going to reduce the colonic motility and different things like that. I don't even remember what the third prescription was. But I just looked at the research and that stuff is not good for you so I turned that down, first off.

Then, essentially, it was just baby steps. I think that's what anybody does. They take baby steps. The first step was just cutting out pasta. I had a weird idea that if you were going to be a body builder, if you wanted to bulk up, you just needed to be pounding the pasta. It was a food group. I had my chicken breast and my pasta and my green beans.

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I thought I was just killing it. Yet I was still having to run to the bathroom It's like this didn't even make sense. My acne was bad. I was depressed. I wondered why all of the body-building magazines were saying this. It just didn't make sense. Then it took a year of suffering to realize that was just propaganda that had somehow survived this long.

**Shawn:** Man I can definitely identify with that too. Just having this kind of conventional understanding about what we should be eating and not really paying attention to the results we are personally getting. Pre any football game we would have a big pasta meal. I remember being so tired. I would be pumped up at the same time because I was ready to get in there and go to battle.

It's kind of hard to explain but I was yawning, especially if I was standing still. I started to come down very quickly. I thought if I ate more pasta it would give me more energy.

**Jade:** More energy, right.

**Shawn:** But I never paid attention to how I was feeling. When I upgraded things. By the way, I went from the standard pasta to the whole wheat pasta and thought I was doing better. I was still puffy, had low energy, and it wasn't until I pulled that kind of conventional food out of my diet that I started to experience much better health. I am assuming you feel the same way?

**Evan:** Oh yeah, puffy is a great word. I was looking at some pictures of myself the other day from even 2009 and 2010 where my muscles were big but my face was big. I look back and I feel like I have actually gone back in time or something. I feel like I look younger now in 2015 than I did in 2009. In 2009 I was still young. It's crazy.

**Shawn:** I would have called you Puff Daddy if I had met you.

**Jade:** Puff Baby because he was young. But they did that for track.

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**Evan:** There are pictures out there where my cheeks...I thought I was just born with chipmunk cheeks. That's inflammation.

**Jade:** We were convinced of that as well with track and the bulk. I remember yawning and feeling so sluggish but I never got the realization that there was a connection there. I think one of the things we do is suffer through if we feel like we are doing the right thing. We think we have to pay the price of pain in order to break through to this other place. But with the carbs and the pasta and the grains we never get to that promised land, so to speak.

**Shawn:** Absolutely. I think that's a great segue into something that you really discovered for yourself and have been teaching a lot of people, which is a connection between food and your mood. Can you tell us a little bit about that and how you kind of found that inner guidance system.

**Evan:** Definitely. When my diet was messed up, like I mentioned, my gut was messed up and I am sure your listeners are familiar with the idea that, depending on who you ask, 80% or so of your serotonin is produced in the gut. What people don't often know is where the serotonin came from.

Well, you have to have the precursor, L-tryptophan, the essential amino acid. Everybody talks about turkey. As soon as I say tryptophan you are all picturing turkey and gravy. That's a good place to start. Dietary tryptophan and dietary amino acids are a good place to start for people. But often times if your gut is so messed up you are not going to have all of the different cofactors necessary to convert the tryptophan from your food over to serotonin which then converts over to melatonin.

Essentially, if one thing is off at the top of the food chain you will have messed sleep, a messed up mood, and a messed up gut. I am sure a lot of your listeners are already doing these things. But the pasture-raised eggs, grass-fed beef, nuts and seeds, raw dairy (if you have quality access to raw dairy) could be good for some people. I do a little bit of raw cheese and I happen to love the taste of it. Sometimes my gut can't handle it so I have to pull it back out. But these are great ways to get dietary tryptophan in there.

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For a lot of my clients that are severely depressed and have sleep issues, supplementing just a little bit, maybe 150 mg of L-tryptophan, can be enough to really put them into a restful sleep which then reduces their stress and they then sort of have a calming down of the gut. I think that's a good starting point though.

**Shawn:** Absolutely. You know how we roll. We actually did do a show topic talking about reversing some of the symptoms of depression and how it's interconnected with what's going on with tryptophan and serotonin in the gut. One of the big players here is your liver function.

This is really codependent on your liver being able to process this and help that conversion. Liver health is of paramount importance, for sure. So I am so glad you brought that up because what we tend to do, when we find out our serotonin is low, we think we should take serotonin or try to take a precursor. But, will your body be able to convert it is the question. That's where overall abundant health comes from.

When it comes to this food and mood connection I really feel it is like a bisexual relationship, it goes both ways.

**Jade:** What an analogy.

**Evan:** Yeah.

**Shawn:** The food you eat impacts your mood. And your mood also impacts the food choices you make. So it goes both ways and you can quote me on that. We need to put that on a t-shirt.

**Jade:** I'm going to stick with the...what was the name of the thingy?

**Shawn:** Ashwagandha.

**Jade:** Ashwagandha.

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**Shawn:** So, your mood dictates your food choices and your food choices also dictate your mood. When you are in a positive mood you are much more likely to make positive choices.

**Jade:** There you go. Say it again, sir.

**Shawn:** Also, with feelings of a stress-free attitude you will more capable of exacting your willpower, when you're not dealing with a lot of stress. However, when stress is on top of you it's the reverse.

**Jade:** It is.

**Shawn:** It becomes very difficult when you feel stressed and worn out to go chop up some vegetables and make a nice salad or whole foods meal for yourself. This is likely a time you will pick up the phone and dial Dominoes.

**Jade:** Yeah.

**Shawn:** The Noid. Remember the Noid?

**Jade:** I do.

**Shawn:** It was very annoying.

**Jade:** That sounds like it was before your time. I am surprised you know that.

**Shawn:** I had a Noid video game.

**Jade:** Did you really?

**Shawn:** Real talk, on Nintendo.

**Jade:** Oh man, what a confession of confessions.

**Shawn:** I got a lot of free stuff, I'm not kidding. So, let's talk a little bit more about the food-mood connection. Have you got anything else to share with that?

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**Evan:** Even before we stray away from tryptophan, a lot of people that are striving to go for weight loss, carbohydrate cravings have a lot to do with low levels of tryptophan in the blood. So there are a few studies where obese patients will be given 1000 mg or 2000 mg of tryptophan before the meal and they have a significant decrease in their overall calorie consumption; not that I count calories, but a lot of the food-mood connection is that people are stressed out or are using food as a coping response.

I have seen so many people, even if it is a healthy thing like dark chocolate, they just have an emotion need to eat to satiate themselves. Often times there may just be an underlying deficiency that can be fixed and all of the sudden they are not having these weird cravings at 9 p.m.

**Jade:** That's so powerful for people. I can attest to this personally, you feel out of control out of body at some point. It's like a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde thing going on. In turn, you beat yourself up and have an overriding guilt that then pushes you even further into a place that if you don't know and if you're not clear and understand what's happening it can just be a vicious cycle.

**Shawn:** What a great analogy with Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Mr. Hyde was bigger. He was angry. He was hangry.

**Jade:** Yes, hangry.

**Shawn:** He was looking for a Snickers to get him back to being Dr. Jekyll again. That's a great analogy. Also, on the stress note, Evan, thank you so much for bringing this up because this is a huge issue. When we are battling stress it inherently makes our food choices more difficult biochemically. Biologically a stress response in the body will inherently increase your blood sugar. There are many ways your body goes about doing that.

One of those ways is breaking down your muscle through a process called gluconeogenesis and turning your muscle into sugar, basically, to fuel that stress response. It doesn't matter if you are stressed out because you need to take care of a bill that came out of nowhere and you have to get something done

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today or you are getting chased by a predator, the response of your body is not that different.

This is going to be going on no matter what. You will get an increase in blood sugar. What that will inherently do is also lead to a crash. You will go hypoglycemic. Your blood sugar will drop through the floor. And what are you going to do then? If you've ever had a cookie, if you've ever had cake, if you've ever had ice cream, if you ever had a Subway sandwich, your brain remembers that you can get a quick source of glucose from those foods to stabilize you.

Your whole biology is going to compel you to go eat those foods and not eat the foods that you know are the right ones for your body long term. This gets into that conversation of your willpower versus your biology.

**Jade:** Your subconscious and your conscious mind. At that point your mind is not involved. You're mindless about it. You're going based on something underlying.

**Shawn:** Evan, have you seen any of this in your practice as well?

**Evan:** Oh definitely. Something else I was going to mention is that food cravings for people, food is such a weird thing for people, especially guys. Now there is intermittent fasting and there's always a new diet trend. Even if we've taken it so far, everybody is onboard with organic and grass-fed and this whole thing, now we have to take it to another level.

A couple of my clients have recently come to me that are completely exhausted and burnt out. I look into their food journal. If I were to count, I really don't keep track of calories too often, but these guys are probably eating 1,000 calories a day and they tell me they are intermittent fasting. They don't realize that is a stressor.

If your stress barrel is already full with kids, traffic jams you are a part of every morning, all of those things are basically filling up the stress barrel and you add something like intermittent fasting, which has plenty of great benefits if you are in the right state of the nervous system, but they add that in at the wrong time and now they are having to drink two or three glasses of wine, they are eating

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half of a dark chocolate bar at night, and all of this is basically an imbalance or what I would look at as a GABA deficiency, which is sort of the neurotransmitter that I call the brakes of the brain.

Essentially, a lot of people that are having the bad food-mood relationship are a semi truck with bicycle brakes. We have so much go, go, go, yet we have no ability to slow down until we hit a wall. I don't want people to live an unsustainable life like that. It is just really not a way to be. You can still do that and eat healthy food and then run into the wall.

**Shawn:** Wow. Yes.

**Jade:** Unsustainable life.

**Shawn:** Often times, and I just had this happen with a client a couple of weeks ago, he was telling me he didn't really feel that much stress (with his job). That parenthesis is what a lot of people inherently connect to stress, stress with work. He doesn't really feel like that. He kind of has his work stuff on automatic. But he didn't take into account his overall stress load. This could be mental stress, relationship stress, lack of relationship stress, emotional stress.

**Jade:** Lack of relations stress.

**Shawn:** Right. It could be work stress, it could be dietary stress like you are talking about Evan, where we are not getting the nutrients we need. Or we could be brining in too much of the wrong stuff. Exercise stress is even a stress. It can be a hormetic good stressor but if you're not having stuff in balance it can tip you over. I am so glad you brought that up. Spiritual stress, and this is where this individual really wanted to focus.

Again, even that word has a lot of different connotations for different people. But what it really meant for me and for him in that context is, do you feel like you are on your mission?" When you wake up in the morning do you feel like you are doing the thing you are here to do.

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He laughed a little bit. It was one of those brush it off laughs. Then he said, "No, I don't feel like that at all Shawn, actually."

I could point him to ten supplements to take but is that really going to solve the issue? Then I'm doing allopathic medicine again where we are treating symptoms instead of looking at the underlying cause. If you are waking up everyday feeling excited about life and the opportunity you have to do something great and be of service, to give your gift, that's what's going to connect you with something that's going to not only create vibrant health but suppress the symptoms you are dealing with naturally.

We've got to understand it's the whole thing. Your overall stress load is something to take into consideration. That brings up another point, Evan, that I want to talk with you about, which is looking at diet and fitness and how a lot of people feel that once they have fitness dialed in and diet then it will equal happiness. Is that a little bit of a mistake to think that?

**Evan:** I would say so. You could look back at some of the early pictures on my website where I was completely ripped, probably 8% body fat, six pack, shoulders popping out. If you look, I have a punk face on. There is no better way to say it, I look like a punk. I wasn't happy.

I thought that was all it took. Once you get the six pack or once you get the weird aesthetic goal everything kind of falls into place and people automatically respect you. I was completely wrong. I probably got less respect the more fit I got. The bigger my shoulders got, the bigger my arms got, the less respect I got because I was a tough guy now. I was immediately judged for trying to fit that look and people never took the time to feel out my heart.

That is something I love about you Shawn, and you expressed this on my show as well, we are so much deeper than what we are on the surface. In the age of the internet and social media we just see the outward appearance, someone eating this food and all of the pictures on Instagram of meals. This is a new obsession. We have to take a picture of everything before we even touch it with a fork. Whatever, that's cool.

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But what's beneath all of that? For me there wasn't much beneath all of that. I was unhappy. That was a big deal for me. I could sit here and eat the healthiest organic food ever but if I'm so depressed and I am thinking depressed thoughts, I'm lacking the spirituality, that I'm a huge proponent of too, what is that going to be doing to my digestive enzyme function? What is that going to be doing to my assimilation of nutrients? Am I actually going to be taking any of this in if I'm not grateful for the food?

For me, I just try to encourage people that life is so much deeper than what it is on the outside. Your relationships are so important. Hugging your kids, hugging your spouse, I try to do at least three, four, five, eight to ten second hugs with my wife every day. That is such a good feeling. Of course, we could geek out on the science of oxytocin and all of that but just expressing love like that and having physical touch after a long day of sitting behind a computer screen is enough to pull somebody out of a depression in my experience.

**Jade:** Mine too.

**Shawn:** That's so powerful, man. We have talked about this several times as well, it's called the cuddle hormone, oxytocin. And just having a long embrace with somebody you care about is powerful. It's medicine. This isn't airy-fairy talk, it's real science.

**Jade:** I've got some evidence. I tell you what, my father-in-law, when I first started coming around several-teen years ago. He felt like a stone. His body literally felt like a stone when I hugged him. He would bristle up when I would hug him because he was at that point he wasn't really getting any physical contact with people for long periods of time.

Now he opens his arms and feels like flesh again. I totally feel a physical difference in him at his shoulders and how I hold him.

**Shawn:** I know how you hug. She makes sure you feel that hug when you leave her.

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**Jade:** Because I'm pushing my heart in there too. But I know it probably felt really awkward to him. And it is for people who aren't used to it at first. They want to "let go now." I'll just smile through it until they get used to that and it has tremendously made an impact with the people I encounter.

**Shawn:** Definitely.

**Evan:** Let me add this real quick too. This sort of weird energetic thing happened. I was at a health conference and I'm a big hugger. It's more awkward for me to shake someone's hand than it is to hug them. That's just the way I am. I remember hugging one of these other health practitioners I met and she said, "No, no, no, you're doing it wrong."

You know how we just go up and hug each other. Most of the time you are chest to chest. She said you have to be heart to heart so she kind of scooted me over to where when you are looking down on yourself, on your left side, my left side was on her left side and we were kind of pressing heart to heart.

We just kind of sat there and hugged each other for 15 seconds. Then she teared up and said, "Oh my god, you are a good hugger."

I was just like, "holy crap." She was crying. This was an emotional deal and apparently this isn't the first time since that that has happened. When you kind of scoot yourself over and hug heart to heart instead there is a weird sort of energetic transfer.

**Shawn:** I encourage people to check out [Heart Math Institute](#). They actually have a device called the magnetoencephalogram where you can actually measure the energetic field that radiates from the human heart. It has a distance of about eight feet from our bodies.

Again, this isn't just hugging somebody and they are tearing up for no reason. There is actually an interaction of your energetic field and it is very, very powerful. There is a saying we have, "seeing is believing." But, sometimes it's the other way, believing is seeing. Understand that we can only see a certain

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spectrum of energy/light. Dogs see a different spectrum. Bats see a different spectrum.

Some entities can see more infrared or ultraviolet. We have a certain spectrum of reality that we see and we limit it there often times. This is why this technology is so great because we are affirming what our ancestors were telling us with technology, which is great. But the thing is, you don't need to wait around for the next study to tell you that you are a bio-energetic being as are other people as well.

What are you bringing? Instead of worrying about other people that come around you, what are you bringing to the conversation? What are you bringing when you step into the room? That energy can affect other people so powerfully.

Of course, we can get to a place where we start to have the standards of the people we allow around us with their particular energy. It can be difficult to put on that cape everyday and you be the light. It can be difficult. But, with this audience of people who are super heroes, who are the ones that step out and say they are going to be the leader and the light when they step into the place.

**Jade:** They add to the light with over a million downloads. They are adding to the light. We are illuminating this planet now.

**Shawn:** That's so powerful.

**Evan:** Yeah, it's exponential. I didn't mean to interrupt there but I just wanted to add to that, you mentioned in the very beginning, you get beat down if you are a questioning person, if you challenge authority, if you challenge the status quo.

I have had plenty of opportunities to get beat down and stay down. But anybody that is faced with that situation, if it's somebody making fun of you at work because you are the health nut or you are the healthy guy or the guy listening to Shawn's podcasts all the time, the super fan, and people pick you on, or whatever, those people are deficient in their own happiness.

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Negativity is like a virus. When you hear about energy vampires, that is a real thing. Eventually, positivity can overcome that. Whether it's you listening to Shawn's podcast or listening to your favorite song and singing at the top of your lungs, that can stimulate your vagus nerve which can stimulate neurotransmitter production.

Just doing all of those little baby steps each day is how happiness comes. It's not some secret. There are no secrets to it, it's just a little nurturing of yourself and taking care of yourself like you would take care of a baby, doing all of the right things to really make the environment for yourself and optimal experience.

I really think that's where happiness comes from so I wanted to make sure that we really crushed that question of where happiness comes from.

**Shawn:** I love how you put a nice bow on that. That's incredible. For everybody, understand that diet and fitness does not equal happiness. I have seen this across the board. He has seen it experientially, as I have seen in countless clients as well, it has to have depth. You have to have depth.

We've got kind of a circle of life, like a little pie chart. Our life is a pie. Have you seen the movie Life of Pi? It's kind of weird.

**Jade:** I loved it.

**Shawn:** His tiger blew up. Anyway, check it out if you haven't. There are different pieces of our lives and we have different sectors: health, relationships, finances, career, and I like to have a category of growth, and spiritual health.

If we look at it like a wheel and one of those areas, like health, is at a 10 but your relationships are 4 and finances are an 8, your wheel is a little bit jagged so your ride is bumpy.

**Jade:** It's lopsided.

**Shawn:** Your ride in life is bumpy. But let's celebrate the things you are rocking out but we have to give adequate attention to help to bring everything up to

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level. That's something Evan just brought up. To have the audacity to care enough about yourself to invest in those things and listen to these podcasts, to read the books, to go to the events, to sing (if you feel so inclined) because it is going to do nothing but bring good feelings to your body temple.

**Jade:** Which adds to the goodness around you. You know, that eight feet from your heart, if you are doing this investment it gives that much more radiance from it.

**Shawn:** It's powerful stuff. So there is another thing I definitely want to talk with you about, Evan, because you know quite a bit about this. It is how to manage stress daily instead of trying to manage it when it blows up. Let's talk about that.

**Evan:** Sure. I actually just finished, it's not out yet, but I'm going to send you a copy as soon as I'm done editing my second book, Stress Solutions. It is almost done. This was created because I was a stressed out dude. I went from 170 pounds to 140 pounds over a year and a half time span. That was not intentional. It was the result of multiple things.

But stress, you know how it eats your muscle away. I experienced it first hand. I am still building my weight back up to where I want to be as I am reducing stress. I did completely the opposite of what I should have done. I just ignored stress. I felt it was there. I could feel some muscle tension in my back or maybe I had trouble going to sleep at night because my mind was racing about my new business idea or whatever it was.

I sort of ignored it. I thought it was the life of what an entrepreneurial-spirited person is. They are just always hustling. It wasn't until I woke up in the middle of the night with my heart pounding and I had all of these racing thoughts and guilt and all of this stuff that literally overwhelmed me. I knew it was too much. I messed up.

I should have been managing this stuff before and I didn't. Now here I was completely stressed out in the middle of the night almost in a sweat. I called my

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friend, Kevin, who owns a float tank center. I told him I needed to come in and float.

He suggested I come the next morning and I said that was perfect. I kind of chilled out that day and reflected on my thoughts and realized that stress is always going to be there. It can be that you ran a red light and you got pulled over. You can't change the fact that happened but you can change how you respond to it.

I was responding the wrong way. I was sort of trying to beat stress up. I said I was going to beat stress. I was in charge. I was Evan. I was going to dominate. Stress was nothing. I was just going to take an herb or supplement and hit the gym. I was going to work off my stress.

The body really doesn't work that way. The body laughs at you and lets you know it is in charge. The nervous system will eventually fight back and give you red flags that you may or may not listen to such as anxiety or weird heart palpitations or sweaty palms and things like that. To try to answer the question, essentially taking little baby steps like you do toward health is the same way you decompress from stress.

Think of it as a rain barrel. It is good to have a little bit of water in your rain barrel. That means you won't die of dehydration. If you have a little bit of stress in the barrel. That is good. It means you are alive, you aren't bed ridden. You are making it through life.

But, when you have traffic, and meetings, and your boss yells at you for something, and your wife is sick, and the kids had to come home early from school, all of those things happen. But now it's up to you whether you are going to let that penetrate your stress response or whether you are going to say, "It is what it is, I'm free."

That doesn't mean that you are denying that things are happening. This isn't about denial or about avoiding stress or shoving it under the carpet. It's just a simple mind set shift, a perspective change. It sounds simple but the effects are amazing. I don't know if you have all experienced that but it is amazing.

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**Jade:** I love the statement, “It is what it is,” but then add it becomes what you make of it. It is what it is, it will be, but it becomes whatever we make of it. It could be horrible or we can make it something that we can take on in an entirely different way.

**Shawn:** It’s all based on our perception. It’s so interesting that, of the billions of people on the planet, no two people see things the same way. We’re all seeing through our own unique perspective. It’s like we’re looking through a kaleidoscope of our own. We color things with our own experiences and our own beliefs.

There is a lot of research showing that it’s not that stress is bad for you, it’s your perception of the stress being bad for you that is the problem. So, even if you can start to make stress your friend (there is a wonderful [Ted Talk](#) that I will put in the show notes about this) when you start to make stress your body is going to respond to that stress and actually make you stronger. It’s how you respond, it’s your perception, and we actually get to choose that. That’s what’s so powerful.

I’m not saying it’s easy. This is not for the faint of heart. This is something that you practice and it’s why it is called a practice. What I am hearing you say, Evan, is even just cultivating some daily practices can help to make the shift. Can you share something with us? What is one thing people can do today to help to shift that perception of stress?

**Evan:** Go for a walk outside. You read my mind. I was going to get to the action part. It is sunny and blue skies here in Austin. I don’t know where people are. Hopefully they are not in that crazy blizzard that happens to be going on at the time we are speaking in New York. But, maybe you can reframe that. Instead of stressing out about that you can go out and just jump off shed into two feet of snow.

Just going outside and getting into nature, there are a lot of natural components outside that we are picking up on. Forest therapy, they call it shinrin-yoku. If you

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start looking into forest baiting, taking in the atmosphere of the forest, your salivary cortisol levels are dropping 50%.

I know you are all about NK cells, Shawn. In one particular study, your immune-boosting NK cells are boosted even after a month of time spent in the forest. That is incredible medicine for people. If you can get out of the office and even just go walk around the corner real quick or hide under a tree for your lunch break that is enough to really take off the stress that has built up through the day instead of waiting until 9 o'clock or whenever you get to the gym to de-stress. Just kind of de-stress throughout the day.

Another thing I would like to mention is the use of essential oils. For me, especially with IBS, but definitely for focus when I am writing or podcasting or things like that, you can take just one drop of peppermint essential oil and you can rub it onto your stomach if you are somebody having some IBS issues or maybe a meal didn't sit with you right. Or, you can take a drop of it and just rub it between your hands and breathe that in. Inhale and the focus and mental clarity that you get from that peppermint is up there with nootropics and brain vitamins and things like that. Yet it's just a little essential oil that you can pick up at Whole Foods.

**Jade:** I put some in our hand soap dispenser in our bathroom so every time my family and I wash our hands they get a burst of that.

**Shawn:** These are the little things about Jade that I don't know. I always find something new. I love it. Wow, that's so powerful. You've inspired me to actually look into this research regarding time in the forest and time in nature.

This is something that has been years since I looked into that stuff. I'm excited. I am literally excited...

**Jade:** Can we do a podcast from the forest?

**Shawn:** It's mandatory now!

**Jade:** We've got to do it.

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**Shawn:** Mandatory. I definitely want to check that out and look into it. I understand, experientially again, we know this. Your inner guidance system knows already how you feel when you are in nature. There are amazing studies to back this up, according to Evan as well. So that is awesome.

That's one side of the coin. I definitely take this approach myself, these daily stress integration/management processes to help buffer the stress we already have. But something else I like to do and encourage people to do is to lean into the stress. You are strengthening your nervous system to be able to handle the stress in the first place.

You are taking a multi-faceted approach so that you never break down. A couple of things you can do to put yourself into the stress on purpose, such as hormetic stress, a tease or something to turn your nervous system on to make you more capable is to work out. That is one of the benefits that you get from doing an intense workout. By intense I don't mean a two-hour workout or running a marathon. It can be just four or five minutes of intense exercise or doing sprints or HIT training (high-intensity intervals), or lifting heavy stuff by doing dead lifts and things of that nature. Or, you can use some of the great equipment that Onnit has like the steel clubs. Man I absolutely love my steel clubs.

Just doing exercise is a way to lean into the stress. It is another benefit you get there. Another thing to try that I do as a daily practice is a contrast shower.

**Jade:** Oh gosh!

**Shawn:** Have you heard of this before?

**Jade:** From your wife! And I told her she was crazy!

**Shawn:** Right. If this woman does it, it's something. I'm telling you she doesn't really play around. She especially doesn't play around with the cold. She is from Kenya so she doesn't really play around with the cold.

**Jade:** The word "cold" bothers her.

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**Shawn:** She knows how it makes her feel. What this is, basically you take a hot shower and then at the end of the shower you take 10 to 15 seconds and turn it on total cold. Hit yourself up with that and then you can go back to hot for another ten seconds but then you go back to cold. You finish with the cold.

This is incredible and so powerful for really helping stimulate your nervous system. This is a practice that, funny enough, we found out that Tony Robbins does. He has impacted millions and millions of lives. He regularly does this every single day.

**Jade:** Every day. Do you end in cold or can you end in warm.

**Shawn:** Cold. I'm telling you it's so invigorating. This is just one of those ways to kind of lean into the stress.

**Jade:** I'm going to give it a try.

**Shawn:** One more thing people can do is just try something new. Anything new.

**Jade:** I've been doing that since you said to try.

**Shawn:** You can try some crossword puzzles, if you never do that, or you can read something outside of your field, or you can go to a different exercise training class. There are so many different ways to try something new. So those are some other ideas. I've just got to say, Evan, thank you so much for being who you are and thank you for providing so much value and thank you for coming on.

I truly do appreciate you and often times I like to end the show asking my guests, what is the model that you are here to set with your life? What is the example that you are here to set with your life?

**Evan:** Sure thing. I quickly wanted to add to use a shower filter that filters out chlorine when you do all of the hot stuff because there is a category called

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trihalomethanes that are little airborne chemicals that increase when you use hot water.

I do hot/cold water thing too. But even on Amazon you can get a simple shower filter that filters out 99% of your chlorine. You'll feel the difference on your skin too. I know women love their hair and their skin and all of that. You will feel the difference once you filter it out.

My message is just that I don't ever want to have an ego of somebody that has it all figured out. In the world of health sometimes there are certain people that have a business model where they have to put themselves as the one dude. I don't ever need to be the one dude. I just want to be a dude, just like you Shawn, who is out there trying to change people's lives.

People are tuning in to this vibe that your show has, which I particularly happen to love, and people are tuning in. I just want to have people out there that are seeking help. They might not even know they need help yet. They may have just found a podcast for entertainment and then they start hearing stuff that is resonating with them. And then they realize they do need some help or a little boost.

I just want to be that little daily boost and that person to where if someone is in traffic and somebody cuts them off and they want to punch the steering wheel they can remember back to a show where we talked about reducing stress little by little and they just say, "Go ahead, maybe that person is in a rush, let's just let them go."

I want to be the guy to where somebody remembers and has that one little experience. Then, if I can get a million people or 10 million people to have that little experience or that little friendly reminder to chill out and enjoy yourself, then I really think we can change the entire planet.

**Shawn:** Awesome.

**Jade:** And you are right. You are so right about it.

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**Shawn:** Thank you so much for that. Let everybody know where they can get connected with you.

**Evan:** Sure thing, <http://www.notjustpaleo.com> is my website. You could just search Evan Brand and you will find my radio show. Shawn was a guest on there and we got deep. If you want to hear even more than you hear about Shawn, that episode is a great place to start.

I've been on the air for a few years now. It's a weekly show covering anything from stress and sleep to some fringe topics like cell phone radiation and things like that. If people want to geek out they are welcome to joint me there on iTunes and Stitcher.

**Shawn:** Awesome. Thank you so much for sharing that. By the way guys, I'm going to put everything to connect with Evan in the show notes. But I will also put the shower filter that I use. He is right on the money. This one is only about \$30. It is phenomenal and you will notice a difference when you use a shower filter. Chlorine is bad business. You are going to be absorbing more of that through a shower than through drinking water.

It is just something to be aware of but its another thing to add to your super hero tool kit. Evan, thank you so much again for being who you are and being a real pioneer with the podcast movement and helping to create a platform to really help to change people's lives. I just want to thank you so much for that.

**Evan:** Well, thanks again. You all are really inspiring and this has been a great way to start my day. Hopefully other people feel the same.

**Shawn:** Awesome. Well everybody, thank you so much for tuning in to The Model Health Show. I appreciate you so much. Now take this and go and apply something to your life to make your day even just a little bit better yourself.

So, everybody take care, and we'll talk with you soon. And, make sure for more after the show you head over to <http://www.theshawnstevensonmodel.com>. That's where you can find the show notes and if you've got any questions or comments make sure to let me know. And, please head over to iTunes and give

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