

EPISODE 362

# Embracing Your Body And Owning Your Power – With Guest Steph Gaudreau

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**Shawn Stevenson:** Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert Shawn Stevenson and I'm so grateful to be tuning in with me today.

We're are fully in the midst of summer right now.

Here in St. Louis we've got, they call it baseball heaven, so we've got baseball going on, we've got the swimming pool, the water slides.

Listen, when I was a kid we had a pool and there was like a diving board, the local swimming pool, diving board, swimming pool, kiddie pool that's it. Today, it's elaborate, all right.

They got 17 different kinds of water slides, they got water slides that will jettison you to another planet. There's so much crazy, cool, elaborate stuff.

Also, we had, growing up where I did, the fire hydrant, somebody's going to break that open and the kids would be playing outside and not say to do that, it's probably super illegal, but that's what we were experiencing.

I just want to encourage you to make sure to get out and enjoy this time of year, if you're here in the U.S. shout out to everybody listening in other parts of the world as well, but here's a good opportunity to get outdoors because that's one of the things that really holds us back psychologically like we'll tell ourselves we're not going to get out and exercise because it's too cold, it's rainy, whatever the case might be.

There's always a way, always an opportunity but this is that open door, that open opportunity to get out and to enjoy yourself and have some fun.

It's also a great opportunity to connect with amazing people, and that's what I have for you today.

I have somebody here in the studio who flew in to hang out with us and to share her incredible story, her incredible insights and this is just a really, really powerful episode. I can't wait to bring her on and introduce her.

Yet again, this is actually our second time on The Model Health Show, it's been a couple of years but man, she is new and improved, and hit that Beyonce upgrade button because like she is just something special and really bring it in and drop us some serious knowledge bombs today.

So I am really excited about that.

But another part of summer growing up is we would go to the pool and then we would bring some juice along, like go to the little bar and my grandma would have a cooler and I had these little barrel juices, shout out to anybody that remembers barrel juices, they were like little plastic shaped like a little barrel, actually looks like an alcohol barrel and then it would be filled with this 0 percent juice juice.

And my favorite was the blue, "What kind do you want?" It's not like, "Do you want apple juice orange juice, pineapple juice?" "Give me blue juice". Right, "I'll have the blue."

And that should tell you right there in and of itself that it is probably not that good for you, right. But it is just the way that I grew up.

And this is one of those things that if you don't know, you don't know, we come to accept as normal, all of these highly processed sugar and artificial sweeteners and artificial colors that now we know, we have hard science affirming the fact that some of the stuff that can be disruptive to our hormones, it can be disruptive to our neurotransmitters.

And so the bottom line is like we're looking today like we're upgrading those things, we're upgrading those behaviors that we've come to accept and to enjoy of having that juice, but we're doing it with higher quality ingredients.

Now, of course, you can break out the juicer and make yourself some fresh pressed juice, by let's be honest, the number one drawback for me making juice is the fact that I have to clean a juicer.

Now somebody might be like, "Oh that's just a weak excuse, just clean the juicer, not a big deal".

If I had a preference, I would have a friend who would love to clean the juicer always around when I make juice.

But I don't know who that friend would be. Do you know if any person, like that's one of their favorite things in life is to clean the juicer? Probably not.

That's one option that we can do, we can make incredible stuff and juicing is one of the things that really helped to reset my palate and transform my health because I wasn't eating vegetables at the time because of the way that I grew up.

Again, I grew up drinking the blue drink, right, I didn't grow up eating asparagus or kale. I didn't even know what those were, I literally did not know what those were until my twenty's, no joke.

But having the paradigm of, yes, so now we can make these juices but we've got a lot of stuff going on and we're on the go and if we're traveling, trying to find a place or time to get a fresh juice, it's more accessible today than it ever has been, but it's not always easy.

And so this is why I Organifi so much because they've got the Green Juice formula and it's a low-temperature process to retain the nutrients that we're getting from all these super dense green foods, these green superfoods really, like Chlorella, Spirulina.

Ashwagandha is in there as well, which is a really powerful adaptogen, it's been in Ayurveda for thousands of years and they've got these rare nutrients in there.

When we're talking about something like Spirulina, Phycocyanin which has been clinically proven to stimulate stem cell genesis right, so the creation of new stem cells. Absolutely mind-blowing, absolutely powerful.

I love their Green Juice formula and they have go-packs, so that when I travel I bring my Organifi Green Juice go-packs with me and I can literally open it, you know a water bottle on the airplane just pour that in there shake it up and I've got something that really, and you can feel it, you can feel how it just makes you feel cleaner, it is just like a nutrient infusion, when you have that green juice.

Everybody who has green juice knows what I'm talking about. And also, of course, it tastes really, really good.

And they also have the Red Juice formula, so we're swapping out instead of me picking the blue juice, I have the red juice, red drink we've got the real red juice which is from real Earth-grown nutrients and superfoods, red superfoods. We've

got pomegranate in there, super hot out there on the streets, and just an array of red superfoods.

And their Gold formula, I don't know if you know about the gold yet, or if you've tried the gold, so the basis of the gold and what makes this gold product that you can add to your almond milk or you can add to hot water, things like that, but it's gold because of the turmeric, and turmeric is well-noted now, we've got clinical data affirming that it has anti-angiogenesis properties.

So what does that mean? Angiogenesis is the ability for cells to get a blood supply to feed them to grow, specifically when we're talking about angiogenesis the big conversation around it today is regarding cancer cells, that's how they're able to grow.

They start to find their own and snatch up their own blood supply within you to feed them, and so turmeric is noted to have anti-angiogenesis properties specifically for cancer cells, super powerful, super remarkable, also very, very powerful anti-inflammatory compound as well.

And it just tastes awesome in this gold formula, it's got like coconut milk and like some spices, it's just really, really tasty.

So many people that message me about the gold, they like to have it in the evening, it has become their part of the evening ritual to help you to wind down or relax, because it also has some Reishi in there too, which is noted to improve sleep latency which means you fall asleep faster, improve overall sleep time and improve deep sleep and REM sleep as well, with Reishi.

So really, really great stuff upgrading this whole paradigm of juice, shout out to Organifi. And you get 20 percent off everything they carry, exclusive right here with the Model Health Show, go to [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model), that's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model, you get 20 percent off the Red Juice, Green Juice, the Gold and everything else that they carry, Head over there check them out [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model).

And now let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

**iTunes review:** Another 5-star review titled, "How to make disease disappear?" by Simon1HJ "As a practitioner in general practice, this episode truly spoke to me as a reminder to listen to our patients and not just treat symptoms with more medications. There are many aspects of their lives we need to delve into to help them live healthier and happier. I shared this episode with every provider in my office. Thank you for all the valuable information you seek out and share with us all."

**Shawn Stevenson:** Awesome, thank you so much for leaving me that review over at Apple podcasts, I appreciate it more than you know.

And listen everybody, if you've yet to do so, pop over to Apple podcasts, leave a review, let everybody know what you think about The Model Health Show, whatever app that you're listening to the show on, if you can leave a review please do, it really does mean the world to me.

And if you're watching this show on YouTube, hanging out in the studio with us today, leave a comment and let everybody know what you think of the episode. I appreciate that so very much.

And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day.

Our guest today is best selling author Steph Gaudreau.

And Steph holds a Bachelors of Science degree in biology and human physiology and a Master's degree in education.

She's also a nutrition therapy consultant and she is the founder of what is now StephGaudreau.com and that's Steph S-T-E-P-H G-A-U-D-R-E-A-U.com StephGaudreau.com, which was formally the award-winning, Stupid Easy Paleo which just shot her into this huge arena and impact and just reaching millions of people through her website and her recipes.

And that's what she was really known for even when I first met her, it was just like she is the person who is creating all these yummy recipes for everybody, but she's also over time, more and more getting busy in the fitness arena as well.

And over the last couple of years and having the opportunity to know her and to just admire her and just to see the progression and the insights and the ideas and all the powerful things that she's really put together, it's all become this compilation of ideas in her brand new book, "The Core 4" and it is a powerhouse book and she is a powerhouse human being.

And right now we're going to dive into a conversation with the incredible Steph Gaudreau.

**Steph Gaudreau:** My grandmother loved her Folgers.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, and now people are like so snooty with the coffee, it's a whole different game.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Do you like mushroom coffee? You've been drinking that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That's all I've ever had. I've had bulletproof coffee like the cold brew stuff, I just found out about that too, cold brew, man. Wow.

**Steph Gaudreau:** I've been drinking cold coffee, I mean I grew up in Massachusetts, right so I remember I would go through the drive-through at Dunkin, be snowing and ask for an iced coffee and a lady was like, "What?" Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Wow.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, I almost always drink cold coffee. I almost never drink hot coffee.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That is the best story ever, are we rolling?

**Steph Gaudreau:** We are rolling.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Oh good, good, that is a good start to the show right there.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, I know. It's hard for me to find cold coffee here though, I don't know if it's a thing, it's kind of a regional thing, in some places don't have cold coffee.

**Shawn Stevenson:** First of all, they had a drive through as well that early in Dunkin donuts?

**Steph Gaudreau:** In Massachusetts? Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I think it's just because of my awareness, I didn't see it. You know how it becomes just background if you're not eating there at the McDonald's or whatever, but now I'm noticing like when I go to the gym in the morning that the Dunkin line is just around the building every morning.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, we finally have Dunkin now in California, it's starting to come in. I saw, I was at the airport yesterday and it said, "San Diego runs on Duncan," and I was like, "What has just happened?"

Because being from Massachusetts, it's like Massachusetts runs on Dunkin, it's like Dunkin Donuts, no one goes to Starbucks or anything like that, yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Dunkin is like the strong arm in the game there.

**Steph Gaudreau:** It is, so I saw in the airport in San Diego yesterday and I thought, "Oh, that's it. The simulation is complete".

**Shawn Stevenson:** The mob is spreading. Wow, you come to Massachusetts to get your donut. So is that where you were teaching?

**Steph Gaudreau:** For the first 3 years.

**Shawn Stevenson:** First 3 years, because your entry into the world of health and fitness and all this stuff is pretty unique because you were like in the "trenches" teaching high school students. So was it biology?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Biology and chemistry.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So how did you even get attracted to biology and chemistry?

**Steph Gaudreau:** I've always been a nerd, always. I learned how to garden with my grandparents.

My grandfather always used to take, my grandpa was very influential in my life.

My dad bounced when I was maybe 4 or 5, and my mom's father, we lived with them, him and my grandmother for a while, while my mom got back on her feet.

And when you're so at that age between like 5 and he died when I was 8, but between 5 and 8, I mean he just really shared his love of nature, he used to point out the constellations, he bought me a telescope, he would take us in the garden.

I mean all this stuff, so that's really where my fascination with living things began, that young.

And then when I was in high school I took a bunch of science classes and I thought I was going to go to school to be a physical therapist, got into school at Springfield College.

They had a really competitive program and I got in, and it was like a mile from where I went to high school, so I didn't leave—

**Shawn Stevenson:** Stay local.

**Steph Gaudreau:** I did a year of P.T. and I had to do an internship and I did it at just like an outpatient P.T. place, and I just went in and I thought, "I cannot do this."

Because I don't think back then you had people who were doing their own progressive P.T. stuff.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, it was very like a franchise.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah and I just thought if I'm going to help someone with a stretchy band and that's going to be my job, I just don't think I can do that.

So I left Springfield College, transferred to UMass and just continued on with biology. That's really how it started, but it goes back to being a kid.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, that's so powerful. This is one of the things we've been talking about recently, is like exposure.

Because there's the statement, of course, you were a product of your environment, we really are.

But we're also creators of our environment too, which is kind of what makes us unique.

But that exposure had such an imprint with your grandfather, even though it's just those 3 years like it could be one time, this is why I'm so passionate about giving kids exposure, which is what you did.

And so while you were teaching, you were kind of battling some stuff yourself, different stuff with your health, your fitness, your opinion of yourself.

So let's talk a little about that, like what kind of drove you, well literally, because you were on a bike for a while into the health and fitness space?

**Steph Gaudreau:** When you look back you can sort of see how everything came together, but at the time, I was teaching high school which I did for 12 years, the first 3 of those I did in Massachusetts and I moved out west.

And I remember getting on a mountain bike and thinking it was really fun, and then I started racing bikes.

But if you go back to from that time again, from being a kid, I have a sister who's a year and a half younger than me and we look completely different, we don't even look related.

She looks like my dad I look like my mom, she's tall and thin and blond and blue-eyed and I've always compared myself to her.

And again, when you have those things that people say to you especially adults and our new memories are notoriously a little fuzzy, but I remember my stepdad saying something to me like, "You're the fat one". And Carrey, that's my sister, she's "the dumb one".

And that just stuck with me, I'll tell you, and I was the first girl in fifth grade to like go through puberty, I got braces, I started my period I mean, I just changed physically, and I was like 10 and a half.

So you have all those things happen, your body changes and I was just from that moment so hyper-conscious of my body, I didn't look like my sister, I didn't look like other girls.

And of course, we're fed all the messaging from the media and at that time it was magazines, we didn't have social media, but magazines and TV and you internalize what you're supposed, what you should look like.

And when you don't look like that, you become very aware of it.

So all throughout school, I played sports, and then I got into Mountain biking when I was in college.

And as soon as I started racing mountain bikes, again, I became very hyper-aware that I was not your typical mountain biker body type, and in cycling, there's a huge power to weight ratio.

That's like prized, can you propel yourself up the hill the fastest and one of the easiest ways to do that is to weigh very little. If you look at the Tour de France riders, they are the epitome of that, they're like the jockeys of the bike world, they're tiny.

And so again, I was always aware, aware, aware of not looking like everybody else, and just thinking, "If I could just get smaller, I'd be so much happier. I hate my legs, why are they so big?"

And just painfully aware of that stuff and it became such an obsession, always thinking about it, always analyzing, self-analyzing, always getting on the scale, every day pinching the fat on my legs, "Is it more, is it less, did the scale go up or down", and that would dictate how I felt.

If the scale goes down, okay, you feel happy for maybe a few minutes.

My story is not unique in a lot of ways, I did so many diets, I used to exercise try to control my way instead of finding the joy in movement, and it was always a

chore or it was something to try to make up for what I ate or earn what I wanted to eat later on.

And so you take things that could be very healthy and at least exercise in our society, so it's very praised to see somebody training or exercising and you think, "Okay, that's awesome, good for you."

What you don't always know is the motivation behind it, the mindset that's going into it, what it means to that person.

Could they be even overdoing it? Are they abusing exercise?

And I think I got to the point for myself where when I was on a bike, I could run away from my problems and not have to deal with what was going on in my life, I could kind of escape, I could numb myself out to that as long as I was in pain on the bike, I was suffering, then I didn't have to address the things in my life like, like my self-limiting beliefs, like the fact that my marriage was falling apart.

I could just get on the bike and ride. And it progressively switched from a shorter distance to longer and longer and longer races and I was racing 6 hours solo, 12-hour solo, 24 hours on a team, I would go out and do these 55-mile races in Southern California up in the mountains, and it just became like then triathlons.

So now I'm adding on swimming and biking and running and it just became so consuming, but it was a way for me to not have to deal with my life and the things that were painful for me, and a way for me to try to control the way I looked.

My relationship with food and fitness was very different to how it is now.

And I think a lot of the people that I work with, a lot of the women that I work with especially are realizing that their relationships with food and with fitness are not necessarily healthy when they really look at it.

But they don't know any other way so that's really how, I mean, this is such a long, convoluted story, but when I was thinking about leaving the classroom, I had started, I really changed what I ate.

I was the type of person you'd go to subway and get a sandwich, you get a grinder, we call them grinders in the northeast, you get a grinder—

**Shawn Stevenson:** Oh this is new.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Not an app by the way.

**Shawn Stevenson:** This is new. thank you for clarifying.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, you'd get a grinder and it would have one or 2 slices of avocado on it, really thin and I would take them off, it's just very, again that diet mentality.

And so I started really eating real whole foods, I wasn't counting my calories, for the first time I used to weight watchers, I wasn't counting points, and I started weaning myself off of weighing my own self, started lifting weights.

And so all of these things kind of came together and when I really decided that I wasn't happy in the classroom, and I had already started my blog and I was sharing some things online I just thought, "Well what else am I going to do with my life? I know nothing else."

Teaching was my first career. I was 21 when I left college to teach and I was teaching 18 year-olds, I don't think they knew at the time. I didn't let them know how young I was because I was only a few years older than them.

But that's really what spurred me initially to take my background in biology and human physiology, my understanding of how to explain complex scientific topics to 15 and 16-year-olds, and my love of fitness and how my life really started to transform in terms of my relationship to these things.

And food and fitness didn't become, it wasn't like the end goal, it became part of my life. And then allowed me to think, "Okay, well now that I'm not obsessing about these things, what else is there to life?"

And for me it was teaching other people how to get away from the things that I had, because I was like, "If I can get over this, if I can come out the other side," when I was so, I was using all of my energy focusing on myself it's, "How can I help others?"

And you can't always if you're not feeling good in your body and you don't have energy, you can't pour from that empty cup, that's that cliché but it's so true.

So how do you— but then once you have the energy, once you have that baseline of skill, you know how to feed yourself, you know how you, you're getting sleep, you're able to feel good for the most part every day, is that where it ends?

Do you just hoard all that knowledge to yourself? Or what do you do with that? How do you help other people? And so that really became the mission.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah and you put it together in such a straightforward and accessible way in this book, and as I mentioned in your intro, you had an award-winning recipe site, paleo recipes, and just delicious stuff– I've made your stuff before.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Thank you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** But you also mention in the book that if you were just sharing recipes, you felt like you were doing your audience a massive disservice, and it's because of what specifically– what else was missing for you that you needed to share?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, it's such a great question. I think for me, if I look at the progression of things, eating better, eating differently, letting go of some of the obsession with food, that helped me to feel physically better.

I had way more energy, I mean every day I would leave school, a bell would ring at 3 o'clock, very Pavlovian, I would think, "Okay., it's time to go get a Coke 0 and M&M from the 7-Eleven," we had down the block from the school.

Because I would need energy, I would need the sugar and the caffeine to get through the afternoon without falling asleep while I was driving home.

So I had no energy, I wasn't sleeping very much, 5 or 6 hours a night if that. My life was pretty stressful as a teacher.

And again, I wasn't really using, I was using exercise to escape my life and to try to control my body.

So for me, food was the initial way that I started feeling better. I would always get super bloated, my gut was always hurting, I had no energy, I wasn't sleeping well, I had weird skin problems.

I have endometriosis which was my symptoms were kind of masked by birth control at the time, but all of those things said and done, eating better allowed me to start physically feeling like I had the energy to tackle my day and I wasn't relying on sugar to get me through the afternoon and all these things.

And then when I added the fitness piece, lifting weights for me was, I mean anybody who's lifted weights knows that there's something primal in your brain that just gets triggered on, and endurance or your cardio is fine, HIIT is fine, I really think that all those things have their place and you have to think about, "In what doses am I going to do them," and it's not for everybody.

But when I started to lift weights, there was this part of my brain that thought, "Can I do that?" I would look at a barbell and think, "Am I going to be able to lift that?"

And then you go up to the bar and you lift it and you think, "Okay, what else can I do?"

For a lot of women, a pull-up is like the thing, because typically the narrative that we have absorbed is that we're not strong enough.

We're strong enough to do a pull-up, we're not strong enough to climb a rope, I remember the first time I climbed a rope I was like, "Whoa."

And I had the opportunity to go to the BUD/S obstacle course, I live in San Diego, with a couple of friends of mine who were in the Navy.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So that's like Navy Seal training?

**Steph Gaudreau:** It is, it is the Navy Seal BUD/S O Course, and everything it's like an O-course on steroids.

Everything's bigger, taller, longer and I was probably a couple of years into CrossFit at the time and I did every single obstacle except for one, it took me a long time, I wasn't raising the clock but I just thought, "I couldn't have done this a couple of years ago."

And that feeling of being able to move my body and having that autonomy, having that agency of being able to move through space and be able to lift myself onto a platform or climb a rope or lift something heavy and move it, that independence, that feeling that comes with that was such a sense of freedom and also a catalyst for again, thinking, "What else can I do?"

I just proved myself wrong, that's pretty cool. I just shattered all these preconceived notions that I had about myself and we are so much more than just a body, but yet our body is precious to us, it carries us around, it helps us do all these different things.

So when I started to be able to move and I felt more confident, then it was time to, and all this stuff happened over the course of a couple of years, but I started to really challenge my own negative self-talk, my own negative thinking.

And so through this whole process, and it's very messy, and it's not linear and it goes in a million directions, but through this process of starting with food and sleep and self care and taking care of myself and then going outside myself and

then starting to challenge these beliefs and perspectives and this mindset, I really thought if I am not sharing this with people— and my community would say, "Okay, so I did the food part but why don't I feel any better?" Or, "My body feels better, but I'm still dealing with XYZ, what's what else is there?"

And I really am such a holistic person, I can't look at somebody and just see their physical being, we are all so multi-dimensional, we're all so complex, we have these different pieces of who we are.

And so I oftentimes look at people that are like, "Well I am eating the perfect diet but I'm still super unhealthy, or maybe the perfect diet has triggered me into unhealthy behaviors in other areas."

So for me to hoard that experience and not share it, and I don't think that the way I did things is necessarily how it plays out for everybody, different people have different entry points, different on ramps to this experience.

But for me, to only do recipes I thought I was doing people a disservice because there's so much more to the conversation.

Sometimes you feel like, "But that's not what I do." I don't do that and I just felt like, "I can't help it, I can't not share," even though it's not, was this paleo, is this in the conversation, is this relevant?

And so over time, it's grown and grown and grown and now it's almost like we talk about food and fitness and mindset, but as a means to an end, not the end themselves.

And what is that end, is it achieving our full potential, is it having a higher purpose, is it creating community and connection?

Is it exploring our gifts and talents, like what is the thing that we're trying to do? And how can we support that? By taking care of ourselves with these different pillars.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah and it makes the process so much more accessible and graceful, once you attach it to that rather than as you talk about in the book, a lot of us hate ourselves into being healthy, we try to hate ourselves then and the way that we berate ourselves, and that negative voice that we have about how we're not the person or how we're not good enough or how we don't have the body that we're supposed to have.

And you also talk about, for many people, they believe that "Once I have this perfect body, that I'm working for, then my life is going to be sunshine and rainbows and bubble gum and iced Dunkin Donuts coffee," right.

But you say that there's a different reality that we're not really looking at. You're still taking you with you, and so we need to talk about those other things behind the scenes.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Absolutely. And I remember very clearly when I was in my triathlon days and I wasn't eating nearly enough food, so doing lots of cardio, not enough food, I mean I started to just shrink. That's not what I thought I looked like though.

And I got on the scale one morning and I had a number in mind and I don't want to say what the number is, I don't want to trigger anybody, I don't think that's helpful for comparison sake, but I had a number and I was like, "When I get to this number, I have made it. It's going to be great."

And I got on the scale and I saw the number, and I just thought, probably for about a minute or 2 or 3 or 5, like I just thought, "Okay, I did it."

**Shawn Stevenson:** I have arrived.

**Steph Gaudreau:** I have arrived.

And I got off the scale, went about my day and lo and behold, all of the things that I hadn't dealt with, all of my self-narratives, all of the stuff that was weighing me down was still there.

And I just thought, "Oh no, what now?" And I'm not, I don't want to take this away from people who are trying to improve their health, and weight loss is perhaps one thing that comes out of it.

Because oftentimes, you have to put in, hopefully, that's going to be sustainable, you have to put in the work with the sustainable changes and the habits that are really going to improve your health.

But I think too many people are chasing that number hoping it's going to provide validation, it's going to provide happiness, it's going to provide a sense of arrival.

And I think we have this false promise of arrival, because when we are pursuing whatever goal it is, whether it's the scale, even getting us lifting, getting your 300-pound deadlift or whatever it is, you get to that moment and then you think, "What's next?"

So getting that payoff can be nice, you get your little dopamine shot, you're happy for a few minutes, and then you're left with yourself in this same— you're still you.

So can we stay committed to the process?

Can we look at the things that got us there?

Can we stay focused on that and enjoy that? And so for a lot of people, I work with and for myself, the scale is not the thing that provides happiness.

We think happiness is an outcome of having achieved certain things and there's really interesting research that shows that happiness is an ingredient, it's like happiness begets more happiness, but the people who are the most content are the ones that are able to create that for themselves that they're not sitting around waiting for it.

I talk about that with motivation or confidence I will wear the bathing suit and I'll feel more confident and I will wear the bathing suit, there's a hack around that too, which is, I wear the bathing suit I realize nothing bad happened to me I'm still alive, I survived, therefore I feel more confident than I did before and then that creates the cycle.

And I think happiness is very similar to that. And I realize that not everybody has the same circumstances and we're all dealing with different things and life is not equal, it is not fair.

But if we're waiting for this external validation, then we've missed the whole point which is if we can create that in ourselves and even things like gratitude, which is there is so much research around gratitude and how powerful it is, we can foster that sense without needing to look towards things like everybody always complimenting us and giving us that validation or getting on the scale.

And it's nice to say nice things and be kind, but I think that's why so many people are let down when they get that scale weight loss perhaps and they're still left with the same, maybe their physical, their [ **Indiscernible 36:38** ] has changed, but who they are maybe fundamentally hasn't changed, the things that they carry with them.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right, especially if you're not doing it in a healthful manner in the first place which oftentimes today, that's not the case. There are two things there I have to talk about with you. The happiness and the bathing suit part.

And those don't typically go in the same sentence sometimes, but you know just the statement from Dr. Wayne Dyer that, "There is no way to happiness, happiness is the way." And it's like one of those secret life hacks because we're always postponing happiness, like, "I'll be happy someday," or, "When this thing happens."

But life is so fluid because people don't just apply that to their health, but also their relationship status, kids, income, whatever the case might be, we keep pushing happiness away, and we find out every time we arrive, it's really, you might have within a day or something maybe a couple of weeks, you hit a goal, but then it's really going to come back to those fundamentals of like my significance, how am I contributing, how do I feel about myself.

I just had my mother in law on the show recently who's like my greatest teacher and she said a statement that I hope people don't miss like she just said, "I love myself so much."

And to hear a grown ass woman say that was so— it did something for me, just hearing that I was so proud and so happy and it made me want to love myself more so that I can be better for her.

So that's one aspect— there is no way to happiness happiness is the way.

The other thing is that the bathing suit part, bringing yourself to it. And so having the confidence first and then wear the bathing suit, versus I wear the bathing suit because I changed my body then I have confidence.

And so you talk about this concept in the book that is so powerful and specifically how more often it's women who shrink themselves, because we believe that in order for you to be socially compliable and this ideal woman, you need to literally shrink yourself, physically shrink yourself.

But you're telling women, "No, you need to expand yourself."

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah it's one of the hardest things for people to wrap their brains around sometimes because we have been so socially conditioned in that way, as women or individuals who identify as a woman.

We have been so socially conditioned from day one. It's the Goldilocks thing, you better be kind of right in the middle and just pleasing enough, so if you're too opinionated, you're a bossy bee, if you're not opinionated enough and you're not standing up for yourself then you're a doormat.

If you try too hard with your appearance then you're conceded and full of yourself, if you don't try hard enough then you've let yourself go.

Don't have too much muscle and look manly, but don't be too skinny either, because then that's not attractive.

So you can see why women are constantly walking this tightrope of being too much or being not enough and one of the easiest things to then try because of what we see and things are changing, and things are becoming more inclusive, but the dominant idea and image of what it looks like to be a woman in America is a thin, young, able-bodied, white chick. If you google healthy woman, what are you going to find?

And a lot of women frankly don't see themselves represented there in that conversation.

So it's not surprising and I want women to know that this is not a blame game on ourselves because one of the first things that women feel is bad, they're like, "I feel bad, I didn't realize this," and I really love—

I don't know if he's the first person to talk about this, but Mark Manson in his book talks about the difference between blame and responsibility, and we might not be to blame for what we were experiencing, but once we are aware what is our responsibility then to ourselves and to each other, is to do different, to change, if we don't like that.

And so I think this idea of taking up space is very significant because yes, we are talking about physically that there is not one correct way to look, that everybody has their own genetics, everybody has their own environment, everybody has different esthetics that they may prefer.

So that's part of it, but also taking up space is with your voice, is with your opinions, is with how you carry yourself. I know a lot of women in my community talk about when they walk in a public space, they have people that just walk right into them and I've had a few people who say, "Okay, I tried this experiment where I went walking maybe in an airport and I didn't move.

Somebody just was walking and they weren't, they didn't step out of the way and I didn't move", and how many people walk into them?

So we're used to just you know diving out of the way and we're used to having our space taken up, we're used to being talked over, we're used to being drowned out in meetings, we're not having our voices amplified.

There certainly are not very many seats at the table sometimes, I recently got an e-mail from a health company and they're having a conference and there were something like 13 speakers and 2 of them were women and the other 11 were guys and that's something that I noticed, are we giving spaces at the table to people who don't look like that, that don't look like us.

Are we giving spaces to people at the table for women, are we including different voices, are including different points of view?

And I think that's all taking up space, but it's hard and it's scary. We talk a lot about in my community what happens if you get catcalled when you're walking down the street, and a lot of people say, "Just say something back."

And the first thing that goes through my mind is, "Is it safe to do that?"

These are the things that we think about, so it's not always safe to take up space in whatever way you need to or you may want to consider your own safety.

But in the environments where you can speak up, you can use your voice, you can amplify other voices, are we doing that?

And I will be the first one to admit that I haven't always done that, I'm trying to do better for sure, but taking up space with your body, taking up space with your opinions, your voice, sharing what it is that is your mission without apology, all of those things are to me included in that conversation.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, man, that's so powerful. Man, just this idea that you also pointed out about a lot of women thinking— a lot of times it's very subconscious but just wanting other people to feel comfortable with their bodies. Right? Can you talk a little bit about that?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, yeah. So in my community, we have this unofficial kind of hashtag and movement called #where are the shorts.

And it's kind of our version of wearing a bathing suit, and I don't think that there's a gold standard that says, "Until or unless you can wear shorts, you have not arrived." Or, "Until and unless you wear a bikini, you have not arrived."

It's more about challenging the notion that we are not allowed to be in our bodies as they are now because it could be offensive to someone else, it could make someone else uncomfortable to look at us.

And this is anybody from new moms to people that are in larger bodies, to people who have just always had that self-conscious, "Everybody is looking at

me," or they had a bad experience and that they've carried that with them, they've had some kind of trauma, whatever it might be.

So we have this thing called #where are the shorts, and it's become its own thing, I did a podcast episode on it, we talk a lot about it in our community with women of like how something as small as you know what, it's 92 degrees in St Louis, it is very humid.

I'm going to go do this workout but I normally will wear long pants and it's not out of comfort, because I get it, if you're going to go out and run 10 miles, chafing is a real thing, but it's always I'm going to cover up because I don't want anyone to see me.

I'm going to wear a tank top or a long sleeve or a real baggy T-Shirt over my sports bra, because if I take that shirt off, I don't want anyone, I don't have to inconvenience anyone, I don't want them to look at me and then they're going to think something about my body.

And the number of women who are now posting that they for the first time in years, I'm talking 20 years since high school, these are women typically between the ages of 35 and 45, two decades or more have not worn shorts or have not taken off their shirt in public or were wearing a sports bra or a bathing suit top or something.

It's mind-blowing, but it's also very cool because it's that one, that next step, it's that next thing. And more often than not, nothing bad happens.

Nobody looks, nobody cares, nobody says anything. And again, it's like, "Okay, what else am I playing small for, and what can I do, like what else can I do? How else can I grow? How else can I expand? How else can I challenge my own way of doing things that I did for so long, that does not serve me anymore? Okay, I get to actually sweat, yeey!"

That's physiological, that's my body trying to cool me down and I can actually evaporate my own sweat now. Amazing, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Got this whole air condition unit, didn't even know.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yes, so we have that or I was able to go to the water park and play with my kids and I was in there, in that pool and we had so much fun, but previously I would have been worried about covering up or staying out of the pool or whatever.

I mean, those are moments of life that people are missing because they're afraid.

And I completely get it, because I was there, and when you again, look at the messaging that's really dominant in our culture, people in larger bodies are often made fun of, they're in movies, they're the butt of jokes, they're treated disrespectfully so you can imagine this is very complex and why people feel this way.

But yeah, it's a really cool time of the year and I know a lot of people talk about in their own ways, having that sense of freedom and what that means and how symbolic it is, but for us it's about taking that next step to reclaiming our own power, the power that we've always had but we've just put this really protective shell around ourselves.

And usually, for valid reasons, but maybe those reasons aren't there anymore, and so getting to chip that away.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I think it's not just for us doing that as individuals, but also be supportive of that, even like you creating this movement really #where are the shorts, but for us to be supportive of each other and I know as a man, and I'm not saying that everybody is like me, but I'm very aware of it, like I know if a woman might have put something on, she might be a little self-conscious.

Because it just, statistics-wise and so, me making an effort to just be friendly, like to let her know like, "I see you," just to encourage people, give a little gratitude and be sociable like if you're at a gym and other people, you can see that they're on uncomfortable, try to help them out and encourage, be kind, be kind and supportive and help people to really come out of that shell, because each one of those steps it's a courageous step because of the way the culture structure.

So that's just what I think because when I hear that a woman is uncomfortable about what other people think, because of what she's wearing, that really like bothers me a lot.

And I'm just like, "You better wear that," you know.

And like, because either, "I'm too thin for this," or, "I'm too thick for this," or whatever the case might be, you've got to do what, we're the beautiful thing you know and love who you are right now, because that attitude is going to move you closer to that next evolution of who you are.

And that's what I love about your book is like you're not telling people, as a matter of fact, you are pointing people to love themselves to but not with that necessarily that language, but to appreciate who they are right now.

But also you can change too like you can have both, it doesn't have to be like I killed this person that I am now in order to be reborn as this other person.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah I think there's— so we very purposely were naming this book and as an author, you may feel this way too, but naming a book is very hard.

And we went back and forth on the title for a while and then we just could not figure out the subtitle because as you know, you're always like, "How can I convey what the promise of this book is? What is this book about?" and you have such limited space to do that.

And so we wanted to do something, we don't have, in this book we don't talk about weight loss, this is not a weight loss book, this is a health gain book, so gaining health how can we control those inputs that are going to make us feel good because we respect ourselves, not because we're dieting.

And so when we were trying to figure out what do we call this, and what is the subtitle, at first it was, "Love your body, own your power," and I just thought, "No," for a couple of reasons.

The first is when I was in the absolute depths of hating my body, this wasn't just a blip or like a season, this was like many, many years.

And when I did one of the last triathlons that I did, we were in Lake Tahoe by this beautiful waterfall and I did kind of this light bodybuilder, like double biceps pose and I looked at the photo and I just thought, "You are disgusting." Looking back, that was the thinnest I had ever been.

So I think if you had told Steph then, "Just love your body," I would have some choice words for you, it would have seemed impossible.

And so I just thought about those things and I said, "You know what, love is—" I appreciate that sentiment and I think love is when we're talking about physical body and we're talking about health changes, I think what we really mean is respect your body, treat it well, it is the vessel that carries around your amazing spirit, it is the vessel that allows you to do amazing things.

But love is, I mean self-love can very easily fall into the realms of narcissism, especially when we're talking about a positive obsession with self.

I had a negative obsession with self, I think if we're only ever obsessing about eating the perfect food or getting the perfect workouts, or, "Am I doing enough? Do I look really good?"

I think that can easily go into kind of negative space. So I don't think everybody who uses the term self-love or loving themselves means that I think it's more of like a deep appreciation and unconditional self-respect.

So when we were trying to figure out the subtitle, I settled on "Embrace" because to me embracing is like coming home. It's acceptance, it's like this is who I am, here I am now.

And I can respect myself enough and have compassion enough for myself to take care of my physical self, and my emotional self, and my mental self, right here, right now.

I don't need to earn that right to then get to this magical land where I'm in this really negative place and I need to get to this place where I really love myself, that there is this kind of neutral middle ground, where I just am, I am here, I'm doing those things because they feel good, not because I'm trying to always reach a particular ideal.

And that's why it ended up being "Embrace your body."

So I think introducing this concept, and I didn't create the idea of like neutrality, but it really resonated with me because when I sat back and I looked at where do I spend most of my time, it is in this neutral place where I'm not thinking about every single thing I'm putting in to my body in terms of food, I eat pretty intuitively, I move pretty intuitively and that allows me to then have more time to enjoy my life and do things I want to do with my life.

So it's again, it's not the destination, health is not the destination, it's a vehicle for us to enjoy other things, but it's not the Holy Grail and so can we come to that place of deep appreciation for ourselves, even if there are parts of ourselves that we don't necessarily love.

That we want to perhaps change. And that's a very acceptance, be here now, be in the present kind of mentality.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. Wow, oh my gosh. And the thing about you is that you actually demonstrate this, like when you talk about embracing yourself, you are part of what I mentally call, which I have never said this out loud but like real social media like you are so more of the real stuff.

And one of those things like there was a video, you were like dancing, it was slow motion, and you had what is considered thick thighs, in slow motion, and this is something that might be just like terrorize somebody mentally or make

somebody else uncomfortable, but I thought it was like so beautiful. I was like, "This is amazing," I showed my wife.

But these are the things that that you're embracing yourself and you said in the captions like, "Muscle moves. This is normal."

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, flesh jiggles. It does.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. And also, the tooth is wow, like, just one day you know you had the teeth, the pearly white smile, then one day is a pose and there's like no tooth there right in the front.

And then you were like, "Hey, this is me," and now like it's common that you're doing your insta stories things like that, tooth free.

**Steph Gaudreau:** I can take it out and do the rest of the interview without it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's up to you. But you know, even you came here I know the guy who was like, "Is she a fighter? What happened to her?"

**Steph Gaudreau:** I fought with the concrete when I was about 8, I fell off my bike and broke my tooth.

And yeah, that's another one where people, male, female whatever have messaged me and have said, "Thank you for making me feel less broken," or, "Thank you for making me feel normal."

And I just think the number of people that have dental work or missing teeth is actually pretty high at any one given time and the number of people who are like, "I would never have even thought, I would never put that on" I just felt like, "I can't let anyone see me this way," that's the feeling, I can't let anyone see me without being perfect. And what a heartbreaker.

But people were saying, "Okay now I feel like—" they'll send me their pictures, 57:51 their retainers in and stuff like that or they would take their whatever their temporary out, they are like, "Look, I've got one too," and I don't know if it's turning 40, I turned 40 this year, I just really don't know— I don't know, I just am— I don't care anymore.

If you want to have your opinion, here's the thing, Shawn— someone is always going to have an opinion, whether you wear the shorts or don't wear the shorts, whether you take the job and move or you don't take the job and move, whether you leave your tooth in or take your tooth out, whatever it is, someone's going to have an opinion, either way.

You might as well just do what makes you happy.

As long as you are being a good person and not hurting other people, I think that's really important, but yeah the tooth, doing that video dancing around, the number of women that have told me they cannot see themselves in a video because their bodies are, their flesh is moving.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah.

**Steph Gaudreau:** We had a lovely lady who did a 5 or a 10K, it was her first race and she was so proud of herself because she finished this race and she said, "I saw pictures, still photos of myself and my legs were, my flesh was rippling," and she was like, "I just couldn't post it."

Like what are we doing to people? What have we created in this world where people are doing something really positive for themselves, it's they're really proud of it and then they explain it away.

The same thing happens with health, I feel better in this way, this way, this way, this way, but the scale didn't move or the scale went up.

The scale went up with me! If I used that scale as a measure of my success and happiness, I should be really unhappy right now.

Because I'm bigger than I was before. But that's not how it works. Right? So I think the other reason why I do those things, and I sometimes I'm not immune to this, I think, "Am I about the post," like standing from the back doing a slow-motion video like of myself, I'm going to post this, yes, and here's why is because that is very liberating for other people, just like the tooth, it is very liberating for people to think, "Okay, I can do this too."

And if I can help somebody find that freedom, peace of mind, confidence, whatever it is by sharing my stuff and who I am, the things I'm going through, why I wouldn't I?

Normalizing things, right, normalizing the human experience in these ways where we oftentimes don't see that on social or in the media or whatever it is, we don't usually see those sorts of things.

I remember was it the actor who was in The Hangover and he's missing a tooth, that is actually, he was missing the tooth in real life. So I just always think of him.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Jim Carrey, it's another person too.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Jim Carrey, yeah. That's why I share those things.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Made for one of the most epic movies ever. Wow, that's so powerful. So again, and there are guys out there that are just like, "I admire that so much", and it's just so encouraging. We can start a hashtag of like post your picture when your front-facing camera is accidentally on, that is like the worst you would ever look.

**Steph Gaudreau:** You would look like a potato.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I was like the babies see me like this? Is this how I looked to my son? But you know, like everything is not always going to be you know, but we can create that illusion today with social media.

I remember when we actually took pictures with like disposable cameras, there were so many random, awkward like and those were pictures that you keep, your one eye is closed or whatever, and just you can't, there's no reposting to a degree.

And so just keeping all the stuff in context and like it came in handy, real talk hashtags support the real real social media.

But I want to shift gears and talk a little bit about, which we touched on already, but instead of this approach of like trying to exercise our way into this perfect body, basically beating ourselves into submission through exercise, you encourage people to move with intention, move with intention. So what does that mean exactly?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, I think it's different for everybody but moving with intention is what am I trying to achieve here through a movement?

It's, first of all, being aware of your own motivations and we know very well whether it's through an **[Indiscernible 1:03:10]** equal's one experience or a clinical observation or research we know that exercise is really not a great weight control practice, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Some people like, "What, wait a minute."

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, because we're always told, "Eat less move more." And it's not great, it's not great at controlling weight and I guess the opposite phrase would be, "Abs are made in the kitchen," which I kind of shudder when I hear that phrase but it captures that nutrition is important as is sleep.

And I'm you know, preaching to the choir on that one.

But when it comes to body recomposition, if we're just talking straight up weight loss, exercise isn't the best at doing that because I think people overestimate how many calories they're actually expending when they're doing certain things.

You walk for, or you run for 30 minutes on the treadmill and you take the towel off the display and you're like, "Oh my gosh, I'm only, this is terrible."

So I don't think approaching exercise from that point of view is a recipe for again long term sustainability.

Also, are you enjoying what you're doing?

That's intentional, right, what are your intentions, are you enjoying?

Are you finding the joy in movement through what you're doing?

When you try new things, they always feel uncomfortable. I remember the first 20 times I went to Jiu Jitsu, I thought, "This is not, I don't know, is this for me, this feels really awkward. Is this going to work?"

The first time I ever went to lift weights and everything is so new, you don't know what you're doing, but you get past that, but are you enjoying how you're moving?

Does it fit into your life? We should not be fitting our lives into exercise, we should be fitting exercise into our lives in a way that makes sense for us.

Is it financially making sense for us, time-wise making sense for us, for always trading time from family and to be in the gym for 3 hours, I don't know, is that worth, is that worth the trade off for you?

When I was asked that to people is it worth what it costs? And I don't have any answer, that's only something about an individual can answer.

Moving with intention also means, for me, anyway, how can I get the most bang for my buck? How can I get the most out of this with the least amount of effort? I kind of want to be lazy, like how efficient can my work out be?

And that's why strength training is a huge component of the book, is because it's really efficient.

We can do 5 sets of 5 squats and start out with a really low weight, and then as we get stronger, we can still do 5 sets of 5 squats and we're not really spending that much more time as opposed to some longer endurance sports where you have to run longer and longer and longer or bike further and further and further.

So how can I be really efficient with what I do? Again, I don't want to spend all my time in a gym. It's not my goal.

And I know a lot of people say that they really love, it's an exercise fitness movement is so amazing for stress relief, it's amazing for anxiety, for moving emotions through your body, really, really important.

Having less pain, feeling less stiff, very important. However, what else outside of the gym do you have as your stress reliever?

And that was really important so moving with intention is realizing that you also need to have some other, you need a plan B.

Because from being in the fitness world, what inevitably happens is you see people who fitness is their only thing, it is their only outlet, they get injured, life changes, they get a new job, they have a baby and all of a sudden the one thing that they had they don't have any more.

And it's like a crisis of identity at that point. So yes how can we move a lot throughout our day, how can we just move more, how can we stay active, really important.

How can we do some really targeted workouts that we get really great results from but we're not in the gym all the time?

Can we weave in things like HIIT when appropriate, knowing it's not appropriate for everyone, and then how do we take care of our bodies? Like maintenance on a car, what do we do to take care of our physical selves?

So those kinds of all go into moving with intention. It's not one specific recipe, but I really do encourage people to find something that they like doing, that can tick those boxes because if you don't like it, you're not going to do it and it's always going to feel like a battle.

And then also, really low key things like if the only thing you can do today is a walk, that's fine. We don't always need to crush ourselves with workout and I think that's where a lot of people get a bit in trouble as they think, "Okay, more is more, I've got to be in here more, I've got to do more," and that's a stressor.

And your body doesn't necessarily know that this 3 hour workout, this stress that you just gave yourself is too much different from other stress that you can experience and so we're not recovering, we're having trouble sleeping, body composition is getting worse, I mean outside of the obvious things that maybe need a little bit of tweaking but are we doing too much? But that's challenging, the "Eat less move more" paradigm.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right and all of that goes into this overall stress load that we have, that we're trying to manage.

But what is so fascinating is you mentioned, and this is the thing you're a big advocate of this because it's like what you put into the book is really 80/20 rule like you're giving people these exercises, specific weight training movements that get you 80 percent of the results, and this is just 20 percent of the work, like you just mentioned, more bang for your buck, and so you structure that into the book and of course, like you're demonstrating and showing people, walking people through the program, which is awesome.

But also that portion, and I'm so glad you highlighted this multiple times of like doing something you enjoy doing.

I think that's literally, that is the number one form of exercise, is an exercise that you'll do because you enjoy.

It just makes so much sense. True story, the other day, it was last week and I went into the gym because I was going to lift and I just, it was my day, it was my day to do whatever lift it might have been, presses or whatever.

And I usually warm up, I play basketball myself, usually 9 times out of 10, just shooting around, dribbling or whatever.

And then there was a game, it was like full court and I just felt like I just want to play, and also I want to embarrass some people.

So you know, I was just like, I felt, and so I did, I jumped in the game and the kid that was guarding me was like probably 19 or 20, and I like literally, I was like because everybody on their team I was like, "I don't want this guy to guard me," and I told them, "You look like you have way too much energy."

And he didn't score a point, first of all, I'm just saying, first of all, I got the most points in my team, but you know, but that's neither here nor there, I am not trying to brag.

But what happened was I did something I felt good about, I enjoyed myself and it was an effort that I hadn't had in a little while, my body was stimulated in different ways and of course, even like this stuff is good for your brain when you get out of the monotony even if you press and there's only so many ways you could press a dumbbell.

And so I gave myself permission and it was tough because I literally was like, "No, I'm supposed to do this thing."

And I enjoyed doing that but I listened to what my, the circumstance, my body, what I felt called to do at the moment. So shout out to doing something you enjoy.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, intuitive movement is a huge thing. We intuitively know how to move, it's the same thing with eating but we've absorbed all these rules about what we should and shouldn't do and it's like, "We shouldn't eat after 7 o'clock and we should only do now back and biceps or whatever, bodybuilding splits or weight lifting."

There are certain things we get into these habits or we get into these mindsets of, "We are supposed to do this stuff and if we don't, we are lazy, we are bad people, we're not doing the right thing, we're going to lose our gains."

Right now a perfect example for me, I haven't lifted a barbell in probably about 6 weeks, 2 months, I've been doing kettlebell workouts on my front porch.

I've got 4 kettlebells at home that's the only workout equipment I have.

**Shawn Stevenson:** My brows are raised. I am just very surprised to hear that because you like we attribute you to the bar.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yes. So for me, with the increased pace of work, the stress of the book going into busier season, I just was not feeling, I was not feeling it, I can't give you a particular reason why I was just thinking and feeling like I just would love to do some short 15 minute workouts on my porch, shout out to my friend Pat Flynn, I've been using his kettlebell workouts and there is this super, set the timer for 15 minutes, it's so easy, I don't have to think and I'm done.

Because I don't have right now, I usually would make my own workouts, right now I just don't have the energy to create my own workout or create my own program.

And so yeah, but if I was really tied to my identity like I am the person who lifts the barbell only, then that would be a conflict for me, and it's not like you know what, it's always there, I didn't forget.

And when I feel ready and like I can potentially handle the recovery from those increased loads like I think the heaviest kettlebell I have at home is a 44.

So not lifting super heavy right now, it just feels right. So when you were in the gym that day, I knew you listened to yourself, you listened to your body and I think that's really important.

I think sometimes we get too stuck on the rules and yes, lifting weights is incredibly beneficial for so many reasons, but if right now that doesn't make sense for your life, your body, your health status— I mean for some people, if their adrenals are completely toasted or they're not sleeping, I don't know, do we need to even be doing really heavy strength workouts right now? Maybe not.

Maybe it's not good for me right now and so I think the more we can tap into that stuff and have fun, how amazing that we can move? Some people can't.

You know, we get really stuck on the numbers and, "I should have hit this PR I should have hit this lift, or I should be doing this much." I just think can we just be grateful for what we can do.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, man, and there is so much. Everybody listening, there is so much you can do. And just really quickly if anybody ears perked up when she said Pat Flynn, there are 2 Pat Flynns out there, there is one who is a smart passive income, my guy. One of my good friends.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Not that one.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Shout out to Pat Fynn, he is probably listening. And then, there's a Pat Flynn who's in fitness. He's really with kettlebells, big time.

So another thing was, and going into this, because I usually feel myself for the purpose of like, "I'm not going to do super high intensity, I was going to lift heavy."

And so like I said, it is a lot less glycolytic kind of work and so I had only, it was like midday, and I'd only have my coffee.

I know we've been joking about The Duncans frosted ice coffee, yeah, whatever, that's all new territory. I had just had my Four Sigmatic coffee and some MCT oil

and I was like, "I don't know, I don't know if I am fueled for this," as well, and it's just like my body is like, I'm in that state of metabolic flexibility.

Shout out to Mark Sisson, but I did have the Cordyceps coffee. Which coffee do you have, the Cordyceps or the Lion's Mane?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Lion's Mane. I like that one.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. So what's so crazy, I shared this with you too, and I shared it on the show but I didn't have coffee my entire life until about 2 years ago, and I just remember my wife was like, because she was having the coffee for about a year and every morning she would like be pestering me, and I call it now, like I'm her garcon or her barista.

And I was just like, "What's the big deal with this coffee?" I just didn't get it.

And then I had it and I get it. And so the Cordyceps coffee, they did a double-blind placebo-controlled study and they found that cordyceps supplementation was able to improve cardiovascular performance or stamina about 9 percent which is remarkable, without taking whatever—

**Steph Gaudreau:** Pre-workout.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Black market something and there is no crash, right? This has been used for thousands of years plus it's that good organic coffee along with it.

And the reason I love it is that, the biggest reason is that they do a dual extraction of the mushrooms so it's like alcohol extract and hot water extract and I literally used to like buy capsules to get the hot water and I buy tinctures to get the alcohol extract and I'll be like putting this stuff in my smoothie, I used to do this for years.

And then I found out about Four Sigmatic and I've been using them ever since. So how long have you been doing the coffees?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Gosh, I think— I want to say a couple of years, I really like the hot chocolate though, the hot cocoa.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, the reishi one?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yes. The Reishi.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I give it to even my son, my youngest son Braden, he is 7, when I'm having my coffee in the morning, especially when he's home he is like you know, "Can I have hot chocolate?"

And he's getting that Reishi which Reishi is an immunomodulator it's an adaptogen.

And one of the studies I saw a while back, Reishi increases in case [ **Indiscernible 1:18:12**] cell mobilization activity upwards of like 300 percent for some people, like if their immune system isn't really working and training like it's supposed to be doing, so it's really fascinating the impact that it can have.

So shout out to Four Sigmatic, we love you so much, and guys, you get 15 percent off everything they carry, the mushroom coffees, the mushroom hot chocolates.

If you're just like, "I don't do either of those, I am trying to keep the caffeine free," you can do the Elixirs, you can just have the Chaga or Reishi or Cordyceps and they have those by themselves.

And so that's what I was doing when my wife was having a coffee, I was just having the Elixirs which I love those anyways, by the way.

So head over to [foursigmatic.com/model](http://foursigmatic.com/model) to get their 15 percent off, that's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model, 15 percent off everything they carry.

And let this carry you into your workout which I want to ask you about now.

Because I just want to put an end to this whole big and bulky lifting thing forever, and it's less and less happening now with people's awareness of it.

I want you to touch on that but specifically, I want you to talk about the 2 different kinds of muscle growth.

So with the hypertrophy— just talk about it a little bit, okay, because this is one of those things it's like it seems like a barrier of entry for a lot of women to really step into their strength.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah. We still are dealing with this, "I don't want to get bulky," which is kind of reinforced by things like you know, "I want to get long and lean muscles," and I ask, "Well can you, how are you lengthening your muscles, they are fixed attached to your bones, you can't actually lengthen a muscle."

And I think it's having a common language that we're talking about things, but I, having a science background, I also think it's really important that we talk about things accurately.

What do we mean when we say long and lean? Or what we mean when we say toning? Or what do we really mean by those things?

And the fact of the matter is if we want to build muscle, we're going to add, we're going to add shape right, we're going to add density, we're going to make them bigger in some way shape or form when we're strength training.

Now, where people get kind of mixed up because they don't understand is they're thinking, "Okay, I'm going to go in and do you know 5 sets of 5 squats" or whatever it is, 3 by 5 or whatever they're doing 5, 3, 1 even just some basic dumbbell work and they think, "I'm going to end up looking like Mr. Olympia".

And that just, first of all, takes a lot, it takes a lot more work to end up with a bodybuilder style body. It takes nutrition, the training maybe some other helpful things along the way in terms of other substances—

**Shawn Stevenson:** Black market, it's the black market again.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah, and so you're not going to look like a bodybuilder by doing a basic strength program 2 times a week.

I mean, 2 times a week is really kind of the basic. If you do 2 times a week strength training I mean and move on to your life and do other things, you're good.

**Shawn Stevenson:** 80/20.

**Steph Gaudreau:** You've got to mean it though, and so the thing that people always ask me is, "Well, how heavy should I lift? How much weight should I do?"

That's again, all relative, but if you're in there and you're just doing you know like sets of 10 triceps kickbacks with like 2 pounds and you're like, "But I don't feel anything," and I am just like, "I can check out when I am doing my workout, it's probably not heavy enough."

I would say like, "If the last few reps are a challenge, then you know you're kind of in the right zone."

But I think why women say they're going to get bulky, for me, when I talk to women they're like, "But I don't want to get bulky."

When I inquire further because I used to coach Olympic weightlifting, so I worked with some women that came in and I would inquire further like, "What do you mean by that," asking questions, "What do you mean by 'I don't want to get bulky'?"

And for a lot of the women in my community the real reason they say things like that is because they're actually curious but they don't feel like they have the right entry point; they don't feel confident in that environment.

They're curious but they don't feel like they have access, so that's always a really interesting thing.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So it's like a blanket statement, like a little bit of, this is my past to not participate.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Right, because if I say, "I don't want to get bulky," and you're some dude you're going to go, "Oh yeah," and it's going to end the conversation.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Well not me.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Not you. If you're you but you're not you. It's an easy way to end the conversation because everybody thinks, "Oh yeah, I don't want to get bulky."

So yeah, there are 2 types of essentially muscle changes and we can push our muscular changes in a couple of different directions depending upon what we're doing.

So the type of you know, the sarcoplasmic hypertrophy so hypertrophy means to grow.

So the sarcoplasmic which is where we're basically adding fluid to the cell or the myofibrillar which is where we're actually increasing the number of contractile units and essentially fibers, so if we want to increase strength but we don't want the accompanying like massive bulk that comes with things like bodybuilding, then we can do sets of 8 or sets of 10 or sets of 12.

And we're going to get that strength increase, we're probably going to increase the size and everybody's muscles are a little bit different, you might have really rounded muscle bellies depending on the way your tendons are arranged and how much is there.

I might have longer looking muscles with less bulk, I mean you see people who kind of are cut and they have abs, some people have very flat abs and some people have rounder abs.

And, of course, you can push that in certain directions depending upon what kind of movements you are doing, what kind of exercise you're doing as well.

But I think what most people assume is going to happen when they pick up weights is that they're going to end up with the sarcoplasmic hypertrophy, they're going to become giants and we say but we still deal with a lot of the women in my community who again, they're like, "I am feeling better in every way I'm stronger but yeah, my muscles did get bigger."

And then it's like, "But I can't wear the same clothes I used to," or, "My shirts are all too small," or, "My jeans are getting tighter."

And that is a mind thing too. I have personally, I kind of walk this line because I want people to be happy and comfortable in their body but I also have to push back a little bit against asking, "Well why do you feel that way? What is it?"

If you get to the root of why women oftentimes feel like they're fitter, they're stronger, they're feeling better in every way, maybe they've let go of the scale finally but they're like, "I'm still growing, my clothes are tighter, I'm taking up more space."

What is at the root of that? And it's usually fear, it's fear of not being attractive to your partner or fear of being alienated from people in your life or there's usually—

**Shawn Stevenson:** Maybe someone else is uncomfortable.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah there's some kind of underlying, like, "I don't match up to what society says a woman should look like."

And I think it should be up to every person to pursue what they want, but I also have, because of the community that I work in and because of what I do, I also try to act as a mirror or a sounding board when people give me the "but statement" like, "I am happy about all these things but—" "Why is that, that's curious, tell me more about that."

And asking them to dig deeper and sometimes what you get on the surface, what they're not happy about isn't really what's running real deep for them. So yeah, the bulky thing, I wish we could put that to rest.

**Shawn Stevenson:** For good, yeah. Yeah, thank you for sharing that.

And even still, when we talk about taking up less space, actually muscle takes up less space than fat does, like if somebody is trying to get a slimmer waist, that's the thing that would, of course, bother me early in my career, just like, "You lost 3 inches off your waist in a few weeks but you know, you worry about the scale," just because of our conditioning.

But my goodness, there are so many things that we just scratched the surface, it's the Core 4, there are 4 pillars to cover in the book. Obviously the movement, we've covered a little bit, just a little bit of it and you go like, "Man, it's just so good with the structure and giving people like those really the 80/20 movements.

And the nutrition, and this is what you're really initially known for was the food and making delicious food as well.

But also you talk about the necessity of recharging your energy and there's a great section on that, and you talk about what does that mean, what are the different components of that.

But before I let you go, the last thing I just want to touch on really quickly, and if there's anything specific that you want to share in regards to folks when they pick up the Core 4, but one of them is empowering your mind.

And we've talked about some of the reframings that we will probably need to go through to have happiness be the way for us, but why was this like something important for you to talk about in the book?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Yeah well I think when I talk with— I think a mindset and just exploring our perspectives and our beliefs and how we operate in the world is absolutely critical to finding sustainability in these other areas, to find the things that are going to last, and I always say, "I don't care what you can do for a week, I'm not impressed. What can you do for a really long period of time?"

Health is not just this thing that we're going to do in the next 30 days and then we forget about it.

And when I talk to people about this stuff, they realize and even for myself, I realized that in order to find things that were sustainable things that I enjoy doing but also made a big impact on my health and my life— really the mindset piece is paramount. The habit.

And I know people define mindset in different ways, for me it's stuff like habits, it's how you again how you talk to yourself, what you do with your own thinking,

your perspectives and outlook, your values, your fears, and I'm not a psychologist but I'm a human who deals with these things.

And so even in my coaching practice, these are the things that people come up against. So the mindset is absolutely essential, it's also for some people one of the last things they feel equipped to deal with.

Because these are nebulous things, these things often bring up the past, they may require us to eventually seek out things like therapy or professional counseling, if we keep butting up against these things and we're really having a hard time or we have to deal with past trauma, like understanding that these topics oftentimes if you think of a Venn diagram can often overlap a little bit with these other mental health issues, certainly.

So I want to encourage people to get professional help, there is no shame in that. But when it comes to mindset, yeah, we need it to be able to have sustainability in these other areas because if I don't, if I continually come up against limiting beliefs and I think, "I can't do this, I can't do this, I need to reframe these thoughts and I'm not able to do that", I need that work. But for some people, tackling that is one of the hardest things.

For me, that kind of came last. And so when we're thinking about how do we structure this book, what do we put first and I told my editor I mean, "Really, I think mindset comes first," but I also know that for a lot of people it's the least practical, it's the least tangible thing.

You can't touch their values, you can't touch your purpose, it informs what you do, you can cook a meal and for some people that is like they're really concrete first step or you can stop right now and do, we're going to do some air squats and push-ups or whatever it is, it's very tangible.

So in the book I think that the couple of things I really want people to think about are the values peace, what's important to me right now, and if the last time you thought about what was important to you was 5 years ago or 10 years ago or when you were in high school or when you were in college and you're not at that age anymore, it's time to reassess.

Because when there's this disconnect, it's often because our actions and our values aren't meeting up, there's a gap.

What we're putting our time and energy into is actually not super important to us and that takes boundary setting, that takes an assessment, self-assessment?

Can we do that without intense self-judgment though too?

Can we do it from an observational point of view?

And I think that that stuff's tricky but if we're not reassessing every so often because life changes, we might be putting time and energy into things that really aren't that important to us and sometimes it's easier to define what's not important to you in order to really get to the heart of the issue.

So I think that's really important in this particular book and then the other thing is having something outside yourself, some kind of purpose.

And I know for some people they're really freaked out by that concept and it doesn't have to be something global, it doesn't have to be something huge but what is it outside of yourself that you can connect to, that you can feel aligned to.

Because again, we have to get, we have to break free from this intense focus on self all the time.

And it could be something as simple as random acts of kindness, I used to go around and I would take blank note cards and I would write things in them like, "You're an amazing human, I hope you have a wonderful day," I would just write really generic messages and would I put them in the envelop and put some stickers on it or whatever and leave them in random places.

I don't know, and I wouldn't hide out in the bushes or anything to find out if anybody ever found them but I would tuck them into places like I go in the grocery store and tuck it in between the cans of whatever, or leave it under somebodies windshield wiper in the parking lot, or whatever.

I mean it just, the things that are so small like that are giving someone an honest compliment.

When you really look at them and you see them that's a random act of kindness, that costs you absolutely nothing.

Can you take the focus off you for even just a little while because when things feel hard, it's so easy to get closed off and isolated?

So I think that finding something, some purpose some little thing, maybe it's a big thing, maybe you do want to have this, have a huge community and change the world or maybe you start with just your neighborhood or you start with your family and friends and you really want to connect with them or whatever it is.

But find something outside of yourself because the more we can stay connected to that, the less we worry about our own imperfections and the things that we don't have and we get to carry that gift on to other people, and it's infectious.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, it sure is. That's incredible just model that you're setting for everybody, right there in and of itself.

Because one of the things that I've seen and just being able to talk to you a couple of years ago and even when I first met to it was at that event Paleo f(x) Daren and—

**Steph Gaudreau:** Danielle.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Danielle introduced us, they were like, "Hey you guys should know each other," and you just, I don't think you were owning you as much as today, like it is infectious, like your ownership, your ownership of the room even when you came in here with these 3 sketchy looking fellows, you're just like, you just shine.

And I know, of course, you're still in process, there is always stuff that you're working on, but you really are a reflection of this work and what you put into the book is just super inspiring, and also it is very tangible as well, we can get access to this, so I want people to get the book like right now, I got an advanced copy thankfully but people can, when this comes out, the day that this interview comes out people can preorder it right now.

I'm pretty sure they're going to sell out so get your copy, preorder right now and if you listen to this a little bit later, make sure that you get a copy of the Core 4.

So can you let everybody know where they can pick up the book?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Thanks, yeah. You can find it anywhere online you can buy books, so it's pretty simple.

And then in retail places I guess if you like to go to bookstores, I love books, we have a book problem in our house because we've got random piles of books everywhere but to me, there's nothing better than holding a book in your hand.

So yeah if you want to go to a bookstore you can usually find it there and if this is before the 30th, people can preorder and then get the suite of bonuses that we have created that go along with the book, so that's at [core4thebook.com](http://core4thebook.com).

**Shawn Stevenson:** Just a little morsel of the bonuses, please.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Oh my gosh, so we've got the introduction in full and I've read the introduction and there's also a text version if people are like, "I cannot wait I want to dig in," and I've had people tell me that when they read the introduction, it either has one of 2 effects or both, it makes them cry in a good way and it gives them goosebumps.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I love it.

**Steph Gaudreau:** It's really powerful, we also have a 30 day companion journal, a digital journal that goes alongside the book, there are workouts, there are recipes, there are journaling activities and to me, writing in a book would feel, I mean, I want people to be able to go back and use this, so I don't want you to write in the book and then think, "Oh no, I've ruined my book," so we created the journal to go along with that so people can jot down what they're learning, things that they've experienced so that comes with it.

I've got some audio pep talks which are like many podcasts, if you're ever feeling a little bit down you can just put that in there and it's like a good friend giving a pep talk. Oh gosh, so many other things, so yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And where is that again?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Core4thebook.com.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Core4thebook, is that the number 4?

**Steph Gaudreau:** It's the number 4.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Core number 4 the book.com, get the bonuses because you got a few days before the book comes out, get the bonuses right now because you'll get access to that. Thank you so much for coming and hang out with me, this has been awesome.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Thank you, I really, really appreciate being here and talking to you again.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes, yes, and I get to see you more now, coming up here soon. Again, thank you so much, I appreciate it.

**Steph Gaudreau:** Thank you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Everybody, thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this, so many nuggets of wisdom. I took some

notes myself as well and right now, I'm challenging by having Steph on the show it's challenging our thinking.

It's challenging our ability to take ownership of our own bodies to not be concerned about the comfortability of other people based on the way that we look or how our bodies are showing up currently in reality.

And she mentioned something in the book in talking about the scale and it just hit me like how silly it is because just like it's a measurement of how gravity is hidden in this scale, like how much gravity we're kind of interacting with, and it doesn't take into account your heart, it doesn't take your heart, except the weight of your heart, but it doesn't take into account the size of your heart and your spirit and your desire and the goodness that you're carrying.

It doesn't take into account how you are as a friend or parent. It doesn't take into account how much you love yourself or as Steph was talking about it you accept and embrace and respect yourself.

All of these things really equate to something much bigger than a scale could ever tell us. And I'm challenging you to today begin to take up more space, to expand yourself instead of constantly trying to shrink yourself and to really embrace your greatness, because you are great. And again head out, pick up the Core 4 and what is that again?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Core4thebook.com.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Core4thebook.com, get the bonuses, bonus alert. And we've got some powerhouse episodes coming your way soon so make sure to stay tuned.

Share this episode out with your friends and family, you could tag me and tag Steph as well. What is your IG handle?

**Steph Gaudreau:** Steph\_gaudreau.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Boom, there it is. I love you guys, I appreciate you so much.

Thank you so much for hanging out with me today, take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after this show, make sure to head over to [themodelhealthshow.com](http://themodelhealthshow.com), that's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode and if you've got a comment you can leave me a comment there as well.

And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much.

And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life.

Thanks for tuning in.