

EPISODE 363

How To Improve Your Strength & Performance – With Guest Mark Bell

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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 for you tuning in with me today.

I am super excited, I'm here at our LA studio hanging out and we've got some incredible stuff coming your way in the next few weeks with The Model Health Show, but today we're going to kick it off with one of the strongest humans to ever walk the face of the Earth.

This guy has literally set records, he squatted over a 1000 pounds. What? That's like squatting a baby elephant or something, that's just crazy, crazy, crazy strong.

And he was inspired as I was from childhood and just seeing our superheroes on the big screen and this is also getting into important conversation about like to what extremes do we go in order to kind of live up to those standards and to be those superheroes we see on the screen, and what are they actually doing in order to achieve those goals.

We don't want to overlook the fact of obviously hard work, dedication and training, and eating, and sleeping and all those things come into play, but there's also this realm where we get into supplements and drugs and those kinds of things.

And it's really surprising to me when folks don't realize just how many people in our culture today are on pharmaceutical medications.

I remember when I was running my practice, my nutrition practice and I had patients coming in.

And one of my patients, he was just in his 30's and I think I might have been about 30 at the time, and he was shocked when he heard that I wasn't on any pharmaceutical medications.

He just couldn't believe it, he was like, "You're not on one? No, what?"

Because in his world, in his domain and his family it's just something that you naturally transition into.

And also, on The Model Health Show I want to bring in different perspectives.

I don't want to just bring on everybody that 100 percent fits in my lane or my approach, or the things that I believe to be most effective, but to bring in some different voices as well.

But I also want you to be able to make intelligent decisions and become equipped with those things that really sing to your own heart and your spirit and your own goals.

And so if we're talking about getting stronger, there's nobody better to learn from today. And so we've got him coming up in just a couple of minutes.

But listen, I've been on the road for a while, I've got some adventures to share with you guys, you're not going to believe.

A lot has been coming at me the last few days and just taking the opportunity when I travel, I have my little Dora the Explorer backpack that I travel with, and I've got a few of my favorite things in there.

I've got a couple of books in there, I've got my headphones, over the ear headphones in there as well, but I've also got my Onnit supplements as well, specifically the Shroom Tech Sport, because whenever I travel, I was so crazy, I've worked out at gyms all over the world.

All right, I worked out in a gym, it's just crazy to even say this, in the Philippines, but when I'm on the road I know that I'm going to exercise.

And recently when I spoke at an event in Jamaica, when I was checking in and I asked the front desk attendant where the gym is at, he was like, "What? You're going to work out on vacation?" I was like, "Why wouldn't I?" It's just a part of what I do, and it's something that I enjoy doing.

But of course, when you're out on the road and you've got a lot of stuff going on, having that little bit of a boost or a little bit of support, is always of an advantage in my opinion.

But for me, I'm looking for things that are from Earth grown nutrients, that are not synthetic and that also have time tested value and safety and efficacy as well, so that's my approach.

And so for me, that's why I love Onnit so much, because they're utilizing supplements from Earth grown nutrients.

And their Shroom Tech Sport export is derived from Cordyceps, which Cordyceps has been, we have literally over 2000 years of documented use of Cordyceps and being supportive of everything from managing blood sugar to even libido, I can just say it regulates a libido, so that's another aspect as well, but here's what it has as far as training, this is a double-blind placebo-controlled trial, this is the gold standard of clinical studies to see does this actually work.

And so this study found that when folks were taking the Shroom Tech Sport, specifically Shroom Tech Sport, this isn't just any random Cordyceps product, but Shroom Tech Sport, here's what happened— in taking, this was a 12-week clinical trial, Shroom Tech Sport pre-workout, their bench press reps increased by 12 percent versus a control group who didn't have Shroom Tech Sport.

It increased their bench press and back squat reps by 7 percent, so if you're doing the super sets and also shown to increase their cardiovascular performance and their endurance by 8.8 percent. So it works.

And here's the best part about it, no crazy side effects, no weird stimulant kind of jitters or anything like that that you might get from typical pre-workout supplements, and again, this is from Earth grown nutrients, so I highly recommend it, it is one of my favorite things.

It's Onnit.com/model and you get 10 percent off the Shroom Tech Sport and everything else that they carry, whether you want to get yourself some fitness equipment, they've got the battle ropes, they are the ones who really put steel clubs and maces into popular culture.

And so they've got all this stuff, you get a 10 percent off that as well.

So pop over there, check them out, Onnit, that's O-N-N-I-T.com/model, 10 percent off everything they carry, including Shroom Tech Sport, so definitely, definitely pop over there check it out.

And on that note, let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

iTunes Podcast Review: Another 5-star review titled True Inspiration for Optimal Health, 27tkj27. "I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the

knowledge and passion you have given me this year. I started listening to The Model Health Show at the beginning of this year and have been grateful ever since.

In fact, it was my surprise when I looked over the keynote presenters at the Sixth Annual Biohacking Conference this year and noticed you were speaking.

I made sure to tell our friends the conference that you were a person to learn from. My only regret was actually not meeting you at the conference.

It was nice to know that you and your family was a true inspiration for anyone who didn't meet you there at the conference.

I know I will meet you someday when I become a game changer, so don't be surprised when a 6 foot tall blind man gives you a big hug of thanks for new knowledge that you've given to me.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. Thank you so much. I will look out for that hug, I appreciate it so very much and what a cool event, what a cool experience, and thank you for spreading the word and let other folks know about me as well.

I appreciate you immensely and everybody thank you for popping over to Apple podcasts and leaving a review for the show and letting everybody know what you think about the show. And if you've yet to do so, guys, it's right on your phone, you could pause this, pop over and leave a review and I'll appreciate it so very much.

And it might just get featured as a review of the week here on this show, so pop over there and leave a review. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day.

Today's guest is the incredible Mark Smelly Bell.

The Smelly is in there, even when I first met him, that was thrown into the introduction and you'll hear why, where he got the name Mark Smelly Bell from, but he's just a powerhouse in the field of powerlifting and also in inspiration and a real leader and a pioneer in just lifting techniques and utilizing specific pieces of equipment.

And he's one of the foremost experts on the planet in just finding ways to get stronger.

And so I am really excited to have him on this show, he's got a top rated podcast and he's also been creating incredible videos and content on YouTube since way

back in the day when YouTube first started so he's just been in the field a long time making a big impact on a lot of people.

And I'd like to introduce you to the one and only Mark Smelly Bell. So grateful to have you here, man.

Mark Bell: Thank you, I appreciate it.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome, awesome. So you've got this gym, it's in the Bay Area, right?

Mark Bell: We're in Northern California, West Sacramento.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. So when did you have the— well, first of all, let's just start at the beginning.

What was the kind of initial driving trigger for you to want to get into training and lifting heavy stuff, like where did that all come about?

Mark Bell: To begin, man, we got to go way back. We've got to go back 30 years.

I am 42, I started lifting around the age of 12 and luckily for me, there were some people around that were into heavy training.

I got into training because of my brothers, but ultimately what really sparked it, what really got me in was a guy named Joe Garlap who was a bully in school.

He was friends with my brother but we weren't really cool with him and he wasn't really, like our families weren't cool with each other.

I was not really subject to bullying, I was a big kid, but he was like 4 or 5 years older than me.

And so I was sitting there playing with my football, throwing it up in the air and catching it and my older brothers they were you 4, 5 years older than me so they wanted nothing to do with me most of the time.

I was usually just hawking the ball to myself. And this guy's like, "Hey Bell, throw me the ball."

And I looked and it's Joe Garlap and I'm like, I shouldn't throw him the ball because I know he's kind of a jerk.

So I throw him the ball and he just turns around and punts the damn thing in the woods. And I just, I couldn't find it, I went to look for it, I couldn't find it.

I just remember I was already like lifting at the time, but you can kind of fast forward to a little rocky montage of me, me getting in the gym and thinking about him the whole time.

Shawn Stevenson: "I am going to punt him into the forest."

Mark Bell: Yeah. It wasn't like this huge traumatic thing for me, but at the same time I was like, "I don't really want to ever feel that way again."

Like, "I want to be able to if I needed to do something, than I want to be able to do something."

And so I started taking the training a little bit more seriously and both of my older brothers played football and my brother Chris was born with bad knees and arthritis and all kinds of pain and stuff.

Shawn Stevenson: That is the oldest or the middle brother?

Mark Bell: That's my middle brother, yeah. And so with him, the first guy that he went to to try to rehab some of these injuries and some of these things that he had, this pain, was a powerlifter, the power lifting chiropractor who was like,

"Hey, if you want to be healthy, if you want to not be in pain, then you're going to have to lift and you're going to have to make your body really strong."

And as kids we thought that was really cool, I was kind of following in his footsteps and I didn't know what was going on, I didn't know like bench squat, I didn't know that we were powerlifting but that's what was coming across our desk at a really young age.

My dad ended up buying equipment for my brother, he ended up buying him like Olympic plates and all these different things, we had them in our basement.

And this is sort of where some of my I think early ideas of like business and lifting kind of the association came together really quick because my dad worked for IBM, he lost his job with IBM and he started his own tax practice, and the tax practice was downstairs in our basement that was half of the gym was a tax practice the other half was where the weights were.

And so I go downstairs, my dad would tell me about how much money he made I was really fascinated as a kid by that, and he would tell me how he did for the day and I would go and I would work out.

So when I look back at it now I'm like, "Oh maybe that's where I got the idea to kind of like mix these things together."

Shawn Stevenson: That literally was there, that's powerful man. And we were talking earlier about exposure, that's really, really cool.

And so I got to get it straight from you, even when you text me the first time you're like, "Hey, it's Mark Smelly Bell." Not Mark Bell, the Smelly, where does the Smelly come from?

Mark Bell: Smelly comes from me smelling as a kid. I didn't take showers. I've got two older brothers and they were picking on me all the time.

I was always, I always wanted to play football or basketball or I ran track, I did a bunch of different sports and just there wasn't a lot of times where I wasn't sweaty and at that age too between the ages of 12 and 15 I just didn't want to take a shower.

They were like, "You stink, you're smelly." And then they realized it bothered me or hurt my feelings so then every time their friends came over like, "Oh it's smelly, it's smelly." The name just, Smelly stuck to me.

Shawn Stevenson: It stuck, but you grabbed it. I met you and I was like, "Oh he doesn't smell at all." Why did you keep that persona, keep that with you all these years?

Mark Bell: I like to have fun. I like for things to be fun, it keeps things exciting even in our gym we get a little serious here and there with some squats and different heavy lifts that we do and stuff like that, but I still like to keep it fun, even even from our team that does our media and they film stuff for YouTube and stuff.

They'll film the lift and then they'll just turn the camera off, I'm like, "No, get the guys," the other guy was pulling the guy's finger or the other guy was doing this and the other guy was making a funny face while the other guy was lifting like, "Let's capture that, let's capture the guys laughing in between the sets and stuff."

Because all this stuff hurts, my gym is free and it's been free for many, many years. I had the gym for 12 years, it's been free for probably about 8 or 9 years now, ever since I invented the sling shot product and even with the gym being

free, you would think, "Oh man, that's got to be, the gym probably gets super overcrowded."

But it doesn't, because powerlifting is a really painful and a really thankless sport, it takes a long time to get good at, it takes an even longer time to be great at it and because it's just kind of a painful sport it's not super attractive.

And so I try to bring some fun to it.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. So it's super training.

Mark Bell: Super training.

Shawn Stevenson: That's the name and again, free gym, like I got to know what would inspire you to make your gym free?

Because you would immediately, especially with the level of quality of equipment that you have there, the quality of experience and insight that's within those walls, what on earth would make the gym free?

Mark Bell: There's a lot of things that go into that.

One thing I'm really obsessed with is to try to lower the barrier of entry into fitness into strength training.

One thing I've always found fascinating and I don't even know if people even realize this, but me and you and everybody in this room can go workout and we can all do the exact same workout.

It's pretty darn cool when you think about it, especially if we were to do a powerlifting workout and we were to do some deadlifts and then we were to do some like lat pulldowns and a couple other exercises that would help maybe increase the deadlift a couple back exercises, a couple grip exercises, everybody in this room would be capable of doing it, it would just look different, look a little different from person to person.

The amount of weight that you move, the way that your body moves, the way that you handle it.

One person might have a preexisting injury or something, so you might to modify something but we can all go do it together.

And what I love about fitness in general and especially when it comes to lifting weights is I have never met one person that does not possess the ability to get

stronger and it's my belief that I've also have not seen anybody that doesn't possess the ability just to get better on a daily basis.

And so rather than having the sport be so hard and be so niche, and have all this information I am going to hide it, I was just like, "You know what, screw it, I am just going to make the gym free and let people, it's free, I'm going to tell people it's free, they are going to always think I am kidding", it's actually because of my personality.

It's free. It's actually free, a 55 Riverside Parkway, West Sacramento California, Tuesday, Thursday from 3 until 6 and Saturday, Sunday from 10 to 1. It's free, it's wide open, so anybody listening right now can come in.

Come check it out.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. You're going to have some people dropping in, man.

But also people should not expect that you're just going to scoop them under your wing like a mama bird and feed them.

Mark Bell: I'm not always there all the time, but I will, like it just depends.

I had somebody come in the other day and they were from Canada and we have a store when you first walk into the gym you walk through a store.

And we have all of our products there, we sell apparel and all kinds of stuff, and the guy, one of my guys came in and said, "Hey these guys are from Canada, they came and they stopped here special just to see you."

I said, "Alright," and grabbed them, brought them in the gym with me barely even said one word to them, said, "You guys are hopping in on this workout," they were like, "Huh?"

And I had them exercise with us and they went through a couple of sets and then took some pictures with them and they kind of went on their way, but it just depends, sometimes I do get to put somebody under my wing.

I used to be a strength coach for a high school football team for a while and my one rule was I wasn't going to talk to you unless you were sweating.

So there might be somebody coming into my gym for a while, like they might, some of these guys and girls they come up to me like, "I've been training in here

for like 3 or 4 weeks," and I'm thinking, "Oh man, that's bad I haven't even noticed them yet," but I don't notice you until I see you working really hard.

And once you're working really hard, that's probably when I'll come over and be like, "Hey man, you gotta try to keep your back a little flatter on those deadlifts, this is how you're going to do this exercise."

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah that's what I was thinking you were going to say is make sure somebody is invested before you invest, just kind of as Captain Obvious.

But man, that's so awesome.

But the part of the reason that you're able to sustain such an incredible gym and atmosphere where you're not getting money coming in like other gyms might is because you're an inventor as well.

And you just gave my oldest son Jorden the sling shot.

Mark Bell: That kid is jacked, man. Can he beat you up yet?

Shawn Stevenson: Definitely not. He is laughing—

Mark Bell: He doesn't know you know the sneaky stuff.

Shawn Stevenson: He knows, he knows the old man straight man. But yeah, you know what's so crazy is when he said that, "Oh yeah," he knew what it was, the sling shot because they use it at his high school.

That's so powerful that you made something that is so integrated into the culture of lifting right now. So what was the inspiration for creating this sling shot? And first of all what is it, for people who don't know?

Mark Bell: It does feel good to hear stories like that, to hear that it's been used at high schools.

There is a poster of the Rock decked out in Under Armor gear and he's wearing our hip circle, that's a piece that we have to kind of like warm up your hips and stuff like that and it's in every Dick's Sporting Goods around the country.

It's pretty wild to see stuff like that happen. But it all started, part of the reason again why the gym is free too is because I feel like I need to pay it back, I need to pay this forward like people taught me a lot of great things, I have great parents, I'm very fortunate so if I'm able to pass something along to somebody and they are able to get something out of it then that's awesome, then I'm all for it.

But all this started just by working hard and by training hard and by maybe overdoing it here and there, admittedly.

I heard you mention before about how you were kind of neurotic about what you're drinking and what you're eating and trying to get your sleep in, and I got super neurotic with my strength and I was in this, I tell people all the time like, "You don't want to kind of fall into the trap that I was in," it wasn't the nicest place to be.

I definitely took it too far and compromised my own health.

I ended up with a lot of fortune that kind of came out of that, I did break myself down, I tore my pack multiple times, torn tricep, torn biceps, torn hamstring, tore up you most of the stuff on my body that you can tear up.

But the last time that I tore my– the second to the last time I tore my pack, I tore my pack 3 times even though you only have 2 packs but anyway–

Shawn Stevenson: That inner pack.

Mark Bell: Yeah, yeah I tore an extra one. When I tore my pack the second time I was super frustrated, I was training for a competition.

I was doing really well, the power lifting is comprised of a bench, squat and a deadlift.

My squats and my deadlift were just on fire, they were going so well and I was in training and I was bench pressing and just something went in my chest and I was like, "Man, what the hell was that?"

I racked the weight and I wait a few minutes and I'm like, "Oh man, okay, this is bad, I'm done, something tore in here."

And so I had to stop, shut it down for that day. A couple days went by, it started to bruise and then it started to bruise all the way down my arm, my whole arm was black and blue, all the way to my chest and then even down into my leg.

I was like, "How the heck did this get down on my leg?" But the gist of it is that's kind of the healing process, the body is going to start to heal and the blood is going to kind of leak out from there and just it's kind of crazy looking.

But that's what happened and I was super frustrated and I was like, "I don't want this to happen again," and I've run into so many people over the years that were

telling me that they used to lift this amount of weight, they used to lift that amount of weight and now I'm starting to understand why they say 'used to'.

I am like, "How do I get people to not say used to anymore?"

Maybe I can create something that will allow people to still handle some weight a bench press even after they have been hurt or just after they have gotten a little older."

And so I started playing around with a bunch of different ideas and they were all really bad. They were poor ideas. I bought a really tight Under Armor shirt and tried to kind of put it up over my head and, I'm sorry put up over my arms and like bench press with it around my arms.

That didn't work, I just hurt, it didn't allow to bench press any more weight, it didn't take stress off the shoulders or anything like that.

But I knew the concept was there because I knew that when you spot somebody on like an incline dumbbell bench press, you usually spot them by their elbows and if you think in terms of what moves the most on a bench press really the only thing that kind of moves is your elbows, your elbows move around, your elbows move back and they move forward.

And so I thought something needed to be connected to the elbows but I didn't know what it was going to be or how it was going to look.

And so moving forward, I played around with some different ideas and I one day took a pair of wrist wraps and kind of wrapped them around one elbow, wrapped them around the other elbow and started kind of moving around with it.

My dad was holding in the middle, this was just some old ratty wraps that I had, and I went to pull my arms back and when I pulled my arms back that thing exploded and hit my dad in the face, he's like, "I don't think you want it to work like that."

And I was like, "No, I think that's actually the feel though", that was kind of the feel I was looking for.

And then from that point, it was a matter of trying to figure out how to make this thing and I did a lot of soul searching and I've tried to share with people the ideal I tried to share and I just kept get hammered, people were like, "That's not a a good idea, I don't think that's, that doesn't sound like it's going to do anything."

I'm like, "No, I think this is like, I think this is a pretty big deal I think this is huge, I think it could really help a lot of people. I know a lot of people that lift."

And they are like, "Yeah, but that's your world, that's your lifting world, there's not that many people that bench press."

I'm like, "No, there's a lot of people that bench press, people care about it."

And so as I started to examine it more and take it a little further, I went to some different companies, they both shut me down and said they didn't see it, they didn't see the vision.

And so from there I was like, "I need to make a prototype to show people what the heck I'm talking about."

And once I made the prototype and I did that through meeting with my wife friend, my wife was a Division One swimmer for the University of Kansas, and she still swims to this day in a master swim program.

She said, "Hey, at swim practice one of my friends saws up swimsuits," I was like, "Okay, that's what I need, I need someone that can sew."

I brought her a bunch of just knee wraps, things you wrap around your knees to squat more weight and I said, "Hey, saw these together like this and this will make this thing I'm trying to create."

She did that, I met her at a Starbucks. And then I tried the product on and I walked, right next to Starbucks was a Fitness 19, I walked in there and benched one 35 and two 25 and it helped alleviate pressure off my shoulders and elbows and it would sling shot the weight out of the bottom of the lift, the way that I was hoping for.

And I got up off the bench and I was just like covered head to toe in goosebumps because I was so excited, I was like, "Oh my God, this is what I wanted to do."

And then from there it was kind of a matter of figuring out how to kind of mass produce it and things like that.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow, man, this is an awesome story. You're Edison of fitness, like just kind of trying to experimenting, finding things that don't work. But you knew the final destination.

Wow, that's awesome, man. And so one of the reasons I wanted to have you on, of course, is to talk about getting stronger.

But I think one of the biggest misconceptions or maybe it's not, but just from my perspective, is that like you even broke the world record in the squat I believe, and there was a time we didn't think humans could squat over a 1000 pounds, but you're one of the people that actually did that.

But if people want to get stronger in those general powerlifts, the bench, the deadlift and the squat, should that be all they focus on? Or should there be some variety of all then in their training?

Mark Bell: There are so many different attributes of strength. I mean, you'll even hear somebody say, "Hey, stay strong" when somebody is fighting an illness or somebody who has something happen in their life, they go through a divorce, some will say, "Stay strong."

There's so many different variations of strength and willpower and even just in terms of like gymnastics, there's a smaller gymnastics guy or a girl who's holding themselves up on those rings– are they not as strong as I am?

I can't hold myself up like that so they're demonstrating just a different level of strength.

And then someone like Usain Bolt, you might not think like that he's powerful but that's one of the most powerful people ever walked the face of the Earth.

Nobody has ever demonstrated to be able to produce more force than somebody like that.

He's on the ground less time than anybody in history because he's able to produce so much force, he is able to basically projectile himself through the air faster than anybody can fathom, right?

And so there's many different forms of strength and I think for that reason, you do want to be able to demonstrate your strength in some different ways.

I mean it would be nice to be able to bench, squat and deadlift something because they have great value in terms of getting your money's worth type of thing.

Those are kind of the exercises you're going to get the most bang for your buck out of.

Not a lot has changed in fitness when it comes to that kind of thing, so you've got a bench, you have a squat, you have a deadlift, you have an overhead press,

you have a bent over row, you've got pull ups, you've got pushups, and then you kind of start running out of exercises that are super effective.

Then from there, it's not that a clean and jerk is not effective, all those are super effective, but those are variations of squats, a clean and jerk and a snatch, and the Olympic lifts and stuff, those are all still, it just becomes a giant variation.

And there are machines and they all have their place.

But to answer the question very directly, yes, you should be strong in a bunch of different ways and I think you should be able to demonstrate some strength through your upper body.

You should be able to demonstrate some strength through your lower body.

You might hear somebody say you should be able to like hip hinge or you should be able to do a knee bend – knee bend is a squat, hip hinge is a deadlift, upper body strength demonstration could be pull ups, it could be a bench press, it could be push ups.

But yeah, it is great to be able to demonstrate some sort of strength in all these different avenues.

If you try to pursue towards one thing too heavily, whether it's to be leaner or whether it's to be stronger, than other things will fall apart.

So if you're trying to be really, really strong you're not going to be great at tying your shoes.

If you're trying to get really, really super lean you most likely will not be very strong.

And then you try to find a happy medium between the two and that's I think what most people are struggling with is, most of the people in my world are struggling with, they like being strong but they don't want to be fat or they don't even want to be like puffy, they want to be leaner out, they want to have the abs and so they're like, "Man, how do I have abs and lift heavy?"

If it's kind of unnatural for you to have abs, if you have to really, really, really work at it, then for you to have abs you are going to lose strength because you'll have to lose a significant amount of weight. And so it's hard to find that balance.

Shawn Stevenson: And I know that a lot of people think about that, a lot of the listeners too. So just to give a specific example, what if we want to get stronger in our deadlift, for whatever?

Obviously, if people are just getting started, just get started with the basic stuff, just get started with the barbell and some light plates.

But what are some exercises, just say somebody's got a little bit of experience in deadlifting, what are some complimentary things that we can be doing along with the deadlift, and maybe just even a couple of insights about deadlifting itself?

Mark Bell: Again, the kind of bench, squat, deadlift are going to be great because they're going to work so many different muscles at one time.

Barbell exercises are amazing because they're barbell exercises and barbell exercises are detrimental because they're barbell exercises.

So bench, squat and deadlift are amazing because you can use so much weight in them. And normally when I do like a strength training seminar I'll say, "Who in the room has lifted 400 pounds?"

A couple of hands will go up. I'll say 500 pounds and eventually usually it stops at like 600 pounds. And I'll say, "Okay, what lift was that done in?"

And they'll say, "A deadlift." I'll say, "Okay, does everybody kind of understand this is going to be one of the better ways that we can overload the body."

Everybody kind of agrees and we can kind of move forward. Because overloading the body is going to give us a great stimulus, it is going to help with bone density, it can help with increased muscle mass. It is going to give us the most bang for our buck.

It's going to be really hard to get big and strong if all we're doing is like overhead squats; overhead squats are a great exercise.

How much weight can you use in an overhead squat? Probably not that much.

So if you're trying to actually add muscle mass, which by the way should be everyone's goal, I'll repeat that again— which by the way should be everyone's goal, because the muscle pays for the party, you don't have to look like me and be stuck together and have trouble scratching your own knee or something like that, you can have more mobility than that, you don't have to get that muscle bound.

But it is important to have muscle because the muscle is going to help shift your metabolism, it is going to help you to be able to eat more for those of you who love to eat.

And I see a lot of people spending countless hours on a row or countless hours on a treadmill or something like that, those can be effective ways to burn some calories, but it's nice when your body is actually working for you and you're not a slave to your own body.

When it comes to deadlifting, or when it comes to any of these lifts, but when it comes to a deadlift like let's just try to break it down a little bit what do we need— well we need a strong grip.

And in order to have a strong grip, you're going to need strong biceps and a strong forearm because the body is so intelligent, so smart that if there's a weak link, your hands will no longer be able to hold on to it anymore.

Your biceps are like, even though you're not trying to curl the weight, you're trying to let your arms be extended as much as you can, your body is going to say, "This is not a good idea, you need to drop this."

And same thing happens when your back round's over, a lot of times your back will round over and then the weights kind of go into your fingertips and your body is sending this message like, "Dude you need to let go of that, like you're too rounded over, you are going to get hurt."

And so you usually kind of drop the bar. The best way to get strong and the best way to improve on something like a deadlift is to only go to a technical limit.

So you want to lift and you want to push and you want to work hard, but you don't want to go so hard that you're failing all the time.

You'll hear bodybuilders say you want to go to failure and sometimes train through failure— we don't really do that in powerlifting.

In fact, a lot of great power lifters, the best powers I've ever seen, they'll go to do a lift and they'll pull on the weight, and then they will just kind of shake their head and they'll stop.

And they might restart and they might lift it again or they might even decrease the weight, and that is really hard to do because our ego gets in the way and we want to always lift more.

But it's not necessarily about lifting more, it's about lifting better.

And the definition of like what powerlifting truly is, it's you're trying to move throughout an entire range of motion while maintaining position.

And when you start to see people do that in person when you go to a powerlifting meet and you see a female do it with 400 pounds or 500 pounds or you see a guy deadlift 7, 8, 900 pounds and their back is still flat– to me, it's like magical, you're like, "This guy and this girl, these are geniuses."

Because who else can figure out a way to organize their body in that fashion and be able to demonstrate that amount of strength and their ability to recruit that many muscle fibers at one time, it's just insane and it doesn't always get enough credit.

But the only way that those people are able to actually get anywhere is if they always are training through that the absolute limit, they're not going to recover from their workouts.

And this is where you and I line up really well with the sleep, I feel like I have powerlifted everything in my entire life.

Powerlifting is you do a lift, you go out really hard and then you recover. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 sometimes 10 minutes in between sets, the harder the lift the longer the rest is.

When we're in competition it starts out with the squat, you have 3 attempts on the squat, 3 attempts on a bench and 3 attempts on a deadlift.

And depending on how big the competition is, it's how long it will be until your next turn. It's almost always like 12 minutes in between each set that you do. Think about that.

For some of your listeners, some of the people listening right now to have 12 minutes in between the set that's excessive, but that's what happens a lot of times in the powerlifting meets because they want to see those athletes have the absolute best opportunity to make that weighting, and so you're not going to be able to make the weight unless you recovered.

The recovery aspect of it though all starts with, because people ask me all the time, "What do you do for recovery? What do you do for a treatment? What do you do for this?"

I don't do much, because I try to train the best that I possibly can. I try to train optimally, I find weights that are optimal and not maximal.

That's the biggest issue, people are lifting too heavy. So they think, "I'm going to go to the gym, all right Mark Bell said that I need to deadlift."

And so they're going to go to the gym and they're going to try 3 plates and they're going to barely make 3 plates and it's going to be really crappy form.

The next week they're going to try it again, next week they're going to try it again— they're not allowing themselves any room to really make any progress because the body is only learning how to do the lift improperly, not really ever learning how to do it the right way.

And so a great way to know what amount of weight you need on the bar you should be able to talk to yourself why you're doing it.

So if you're somebody that lives around 300 pounds, try talking yourself through 225 and try 5 reps and say, "Okay, I'm going to try to keep my chest up, I am going to try to keep my back flat, I am going to try to keep my stomach tight, and I'm going to try to continue this form all the way up until I lock the weight out and all the way back down to the ground.

And I'm going to do all 5 reps that way, and I'm going to have perfect reps on every single thing that I do for the day." That's how you want to strength train.

Shawn Stevenson: I love that, man.

Mark Bell: Precise.

Shawn Stevenson: Yes, that's so good, just staying on the lane and again, we're just using a deadlift as an example.

So we've got the deadlift itself, so you mentioned building up the biceps and forearms would be incredibly helpful obviously with the grip.

So what about things like bands, like bands are super popular now, so what are your thoughts on bands and things like chains? How do those work into it?

Mark Bell: Yes the bands and chains are sometimes put on the bar that's called accommodating resistance, and what that is supposed to do is it is supposed to allow you to apply more force and it's supposed to give you a more optimal weight, which it usually it does, it kind of depends on the lift.

It kind of depends on what the lifter needs. But from what I've seen is it will help you to be faster and so if you can get through the lift faster just as an example, again if your max deadlift is around 300 pounds and you're trying to pick that up, if I ask you to pick it up and take 5 seconds to stand up with it and then take 5 seconds to bring it back down, you are going to lose a lot of energy and you are going to be super gassed by the time you get done with that set.

Now if you can take that same set and I say, "Just go at it, go as hard as you can," you might be able to bust out 5 or 6 reps in the amount of time it took you do that one rep.

That same example of lifting the weight 5 seconds under super control happens automatically when the weights get too heavy, you go to lift the weight and it takes like 3 seconds or so for you to break inertia, for you to get momentum, for you to break the weight off the ground and then it may take a few more seconds for you to lock the weight out.

But the question you always have to go back and ask yourself is not, "Can I lift more," but, "Can I lift it better?" It's a same message you have with your sleep, it's not about more, this is about better— can we make this more optimal?

And what would it look like if you just did every rep perfectly? What would it look like if we went in the gym and yeah, let's say I can bench to 225 but what would it look like if I went in the gym and I bench 185 for 5 sets of 3 reps really super clean and crisp.

Am I going to walk away on that day with any injuries? Probably not, I am probably going to feel pretty good.

Am I going to walk away with maybe a little better understanding of how I should bench press, where I should bring the bar, where my grip should be?

Are you kind of like learning along the way, because that's what this process really is, you're trying to like bake all this stuff into your head and bake it into your body, into your cells, into your DNA and into every aspect of everything that you're doing, so you know that it's ingrained but you have to have the rest, you have to have the recovery.

It is a boring message and it's boring to lift a certain weight like this, but those are the key ingredients, the bands and the chains they accommodate resistance, they allow you to apply more force so it can give you an opportunity to say force times masses acceleration or however I'm messing that up, I'm sure I'm messing up.

But it's you're trying to apply as much force as possible to the amount of weight that you have on the bar and you're trying to move it as quickly as you can. And the bands can help you demonstrate that better.

So like if I gave you a wiffle ball, if I gave you a tennis ball, a baseball in a shot-put and I said to throw all of these things, one at a time.

The baseball would travel the furthest because it's most optimal weight for what I asked you to do. So that's what we're trying to find in the gym, what's the most optimal weight.

And if you're going to hurt yourself with anything, trying to throw the shot-put really fast, shot-put will probably hurt pretty bad, but actually throwing the wiffle ball really fast would probably hurt too.

And so in training, you can't use really, really light weights and try to move them super fast because your body is, especially like in the case of a bench press, your body is going to tell you, "Hey man, if you lock your elbows out that fast, you are going to blow them apart.

So you can't like go crazy and drive your elbows into weight that's not there. And then same thing with like a deadlift, you might kind of hyperextend your back or something like that, your body is going to automatically want to decelerate a little bit and slow down, and that's what the bands and chains help you do, they help you to accelerate, they help you speed up.

Kind of like jumping and if you jump up on this table you can't jump up on a table slow, you can't lift with bandage and chains slow so it's supposed to be training for speed and they can be really effective.

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect.

So just for example, if you have the deadlift bar, the barbell and then you have bands attached to maybe something on the floor that's a round barbell itself, the outside of the barbell, so it's going to have effectively no added resistance on the floor but as it goes up, it increases the resistance?

Is that how it works?

Mark Bell: That's 100 percent how it works.

And with chains the same way like more and more chain weight will collect on the ground, the chains that we use in my gym are about 20 pounds a piece so

each link as it's hitting the ground there's less and less of that chain on the bar and there's more and more as you come back up.

The huge advantage in terms of like muscle building is that there's constant tension on there.

So if you wanted to— now I'm saying you're trying to move through these weights as fast as possible, but if you want to slow it down and build muscle it's amazing for that as well because now you can slow down, you have constant tension on it.

And you kind of think about what's the hardest part of the deadlift, what's the hardest part of a squat, was the hardest part of a bench— under normal circumstances it's the bottom of the bench press, it's the hardest, it's the bottom of squat that's the hardest and it's the bottom of the deadlift that's the hardest.

So in these cases when you're using accommodating resistance when you have a band, chain on there or even the case of my product the sling shot the weight is actually lightest at the bottom of the lift.

In the case of the bench press, that's where you're in the least advantageous position that's where your shoulders are at most risk.

So some coaches and stuff will say, "Hey, if we're going to bench press at all don't even go full range of motion."

Because they don't want their athletes to injure their shoulders because when both your arms are pinned back behind your body, with 200 or 300 pounds it's a very unnatural movement and even as we start to squat and deadlift more it becomes an unnatural movement as well.

But the bands and chains are going to allow you to train through those areas that might otherwise be harmful with a lesser amount of weight as you get into a more advantageous position, as you go to lock out a deadlift or a squat or bench press, more and more weight is coming onto the bar as you're getting into a better position.

Shawn Stevenson: I always try to find creative ways to, because I would, my shoulders get a little chunky doing a flat bench and so I would start to like put like a pad or something, block, I'll roll a mat or something, like I would just do a rudimentary thing at the gym and also I've seen people, a friend who's been on the show Don Saladino do presses in the squat rack where he's got the arms of the squat rack there to get prevent it from—

Mark Bell: Pinned press, yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: So that's called a pin press?

Mark Bell: Yeah. There's so many different ways to train that's kind of like almost like an isometric form or training, so you have to overcome—

Shawn Stevenson: It's like a box squat?

Mark Bell: Yeah, you have to overcome the weight just sitting there and that is an amazing exercise but that one hurts a lot, so for anybody that hasn't done it, it just takes a lot to get something from like a static position, you're going to definitely feel that one like in your elbows, in your shoulders and stuff.

The nice thing is though you can limit the range of motion, so if you do have a shoulder injury or something like that you can have a shorter range of motion.

Normally you can lift more weight on those things too.

There's a time and place for all that sometimes when something just automatically allows you to lift more weight if it's not like going to support you, then there's a more risk of injury.

So if you can normally bench press 200 pounds and now you can all a sudden on this partial range of motion movement use 300 pounds most of your body is like, "Hey we've never done this amount of weight before, this isn't a great idea."

And then sometimes you pay the price. But there are good movements.

Shawn Stevenson: This is just mind blowing stuff.

We've got so much more to come, everybody. Sit tight, we've got to take a quick break, we'll be right back.

One of the biggest barriers of entry to eating healthy is the expense involved. This is one of the biggest reasons that people use for not buying better products, is that it just costs too much.

And there are incredible grocery stores, mom and pop spots out there, chain stores like Whole Foods that are great at providing a lot of value and curating a lot of great products, not always great, but a lot of great products, but the nickname is often whole paycheck, because there's a pretty big markup for the whole process of getting the best products there on a store shelf.

And so I really wanted to do something to help eliminate that barrier of entry to help people to get more access to healthy food and to get products that are curated and getting the very best brands that are doing good for people and for the planet.

And this is why I utilize Thrive Market.

Thrive Market provides many of the same products that you would find in stores like Whole Foods but at 25 to 50 percent off most of the retail costs, which is absolutely mind blowing.

You can save 25 to 50 percent off many of your favorite products, your coconut oil, your nut butters, your snack bars for the kids, kale chips, whatever it is you're into.

Also, personal care products is another big thing that's taking place right now, it is a shift in public consciousness and understanding that it's not just what you put in your body, it's what you put on your body as well.

And getting rid of all these toxic chemicals but still getting the very best products.

Also, household products as well, cleaning products so you're not putting all these chemicals and things like that that are going to impact your health and the health of the people that you love.

And so they have all the best products, 25 to 50 percent off and curated and whatever food approach that you subscribe to, whether it's gluten free, paleo, vegetarian, all of these things are categorized for easy shopping.

It is absolutely amazing, I love Thrive Market so much, it saves so much money, you literally save hundreds of dollars every year by buying many of our staples from Thrive Market.

So head over there right now, check them out, it's ThriveMarket.com/modelhealth together as one word so that modelhealth together is one word and guess what— not only are you going to save 25 to 50 percent off of products anyways, your first purchase you're going to save an additional 25 percent off your entire card. It's amazing.

Plus also free shipping, plus also free 30 day membership.

You're going to want to keep this membership because it's just going to keep giving back over and over and over again and giving back is another big thing

that Thrive Market is doing because every paid membership they provide a free membership to a family in need, this could be a teacher, this could be a veteran, this could be a low income household to keep paying it forward to reduce that barrier of entry so that more people can get access to the very best healthy food.

So definitely head over there and check them out, ThriveMarket.com/modelhealth and now back to the show.

Shawn Stevenson: You know when you were talking about the chains and you said they are like 20, 25 pounds at your gym, it made me think of the Junkyard Dog, WWF.

Mark Bell: Old school of wrestling.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah man, I was like super into it, I would literally ride my bike to a place called Star Video and rent like the Royal Rumbles and all that stuff like when they would come back out.

So like Hacksaw Jim Duggan and Macho Man, Ultimate Warrior, all this stuff, but that was like a big inspiration for you too when you were younger, right?

Mark Bell: Yeah, me and my brothers we all love wrestling.

My oldest brother Mike he was a professional wrestler he was also really big into football and stuff and I just, I kind of followed whatever he was doing.

And my brother Chris was a bigger influence when it came to the actual powerlifting stuff.

But yeah, pro wrestling we were enamoured– my uncle would show us The Road Warriors, Animal and Hawk, these guys were huge, they were jacks.

I remember seeing the Ultimate Warrior and Hulk Hogan again, all these guys were larger than life.

Then my dad would take us to some of the wrestling and stuff and we were like, "Okay, well what's the deal with these guys, how did they get big and strong?"

And so we're like, "Well whatever the heck they're doing we need to figure that out too."

And then that's when we started to get more into weights and stuff like that, other sports.

But yeah, I've always loved professional wrestling and my oldest brother was so into it that he actually got into professional wrestling.

Shawn Stevenson: Was it the WWF then?

Mark Bell: Yeah, he was in the WWF and he wrestled like the Undertaker and Bret Hart and he wrestled all those different kinds of people.

And then I followed his footsteps as well and ended up wrestling in Ohio Valley Wrestling which is like kind of like a minor league for WWE type stuff and ended up doing some stuff with WWE a couple of times here and there.

But having that experience, people ask me about my business failures and in terms of business, everything I've done business wise has always been with my wife and so because it's a family oriented thing we take baby steps.

And so we really, not that we've been perfect but we really haven't really messed up when it comes to what we're doing business wise.

We are always going to spend a little and see how it works and then if working good, we'll spend more.

And so therefore most the stuff that we've tried has worked pretty good. But wrestling was one place where I did fall on my face, it was a place where I failed and it was hard. It was extremely challenging, I mean just like many other kids too, I wanted to be a pro football player but you kind of realize your hopes and dreams for that can run out as well.

You realize maybe you're not as fast as the next guy, you're not as this or that, and that gets to be really difficult as well.

But as I was transitioning from football into pro wrestling, I thought the pro wrestling would be easier in some way than football and I thought it would be a little easier to navigate and the men and women that are in professional wrestling they are so athletic, it's unbelievable.

But that's not the only thing that held me back either.

You know, you hear so many people talking about, "You got to find your passion," and then you're just kind of like, "I keep hearing the same darn message from everybody."

You better love whatever it is that you get into because you need to have the energy to do it all the time.

Shawn Stevenson: If you're going to be great.

Mark Bell: Yeah, if you're going to be great.

And what I always loved was lifting, but lifting was like this like annoying girlfriend or something that you can never get rid of.

I just didn't realize like that was the one for me from the beginning, from the time I was 12, but I always [53:08 indiscernible] powerlifting and I would be like, "No I am going to be a football player, no I am going to be a pro wrestler."

I was always kind of chasing after these other things and that's why sometimes I'll tell people like powerlifting I feel like it almost chose me, because it just keeps showing back up at my front door, I'm like, "Go away," slamming the door in its face.

Maybe about 3 months ago I went and competed again, I benched over 500 pounds again, so it's like I just can't get away from it, it just keeps ending up there.

But the experiences in pro wrestling when I saw people like Shelton Benjamin, all-American the University of Minnesota in collegiate wrestling Brock Lesnar, John Cena.

When I've seen how athletic and how built these guys were, especially for me, at the time I was like— I can't figure out whatever it is these guys are doing, I don't have some of that.

And a really valuable message that came from pro wrestling and something that sticks in my head forever that came from my dad, my dad's a huge influence on my life, but my dad has taught me he said, "Part of knowing who you are is knowing who you're not."

And I feel like that's such an easier thing to land on, just knowing like, "I'm not like him, I'm not like her and I'm not like this person."

And it is easier to not be like disappointed in yourself because it's okay to not be like that person, because you don't really need to try to be like that person anyway.

But, maybe they could not be like you in some other way, you know maybe you can figure out a way to get ahead, maybe you can figure out a way to kind of find your own niche.

So when I saw I remember Shelton Benjamin he hopped up on the top turnbuckle from inside the ring and then he ran around the entire ring like on the top rope without holding anybody's hand or anything, he just like ran around the ring.

And then he did a backflip into the ring. And I was like whatever that is, I don't have that, I can't do that.

Shawn Stevenson: That's the Nacho Libre, man, that's crazy, wow.

Mark Bell: And there are some people that are, yeah, some people with these positive affirmations and things like that, I can get behind some of these things, and I believe in some of the stuff, but I also believe that it's nonsense in some way that if you haven't proved yourself to yourself then you've got nothing.

You have to figure out a way to at least prove yourself to yourself a little bit so every time that you set a goal you can say, "You know what, I've set other goals before, you know what I bet if I went after that with everything I had I bet you I can do that."

And I think that's really important for people to understand, it's like if you haven't really proved yourself yet on anything, you're going to have to find something you kept mentioning kind of like the low hanging fruit, I agree 100 percent, find something small, find something easy.

I had a friend the other day he's been lifting with me. I lift at 4 AM. He's been lifting with me for the last few months and I started talking about weight loss.

He's been already training with me, he knows my diet, he sees it all and we haven't really talked a lot about nutrition I let him do his own thing.

He's coming and he's training and we're good you know, I've talked to him a little bit about nutrition but haven't really hammered it.

He started asking some more questions I said, "You know what dude, it's time that we kind of put a time domain on this and let's start working on trying to drop some weight, let's make you a little bit more accountable for this."

But he said, "You know what, when I first started all I wanted to do is be consistent." And I was like, "That is so good."

Because you wanted something that you felt was simple enough for you to do and I was like, "How hard has it been for you to show up on a scale from one to ten?"

He is like, "A 3." In comparison to other things you've done in your life, it's a 3, right.

So that's the kind of stuff that you want to look for in your life, what is that thing that you can do that would be pretty simple for you to get started, maybe not easy but simple.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah I love that, man. I love that you said it was like that annoying girlfriend, powerlifting was just like sending that text you up.

Also you getting involved in two areas that are like from the public perception it's just like we don't really know what's going on behind the scenes with wrestling and also with powerlifting as well, and you're one of the people that's been really honest about performance enhancing drugs.

And unlike people like Barry Bonds and all these folks they are like, "No, no," it's like a big part of the culture.

And so I'm wondering for you personally when you were just say getting into the space a little bit more with powerlifting or wrestling or whatever and just seeing like this is the culture, this is what people are doing, what were your initial thoughts on it and what got you to the place where you were like, "You know what, I'm going to start to experiment with some of this stuff and try to figure out how it works in my particular goals, because if I am wanting to be the best in this space, this is what people are doing."

Mark Bell: As a kid, I looked at performance enhancing drugs and I was like, "That's very clear, that's cheating when you take that."

And I still view it that way, just to be totally clear. And what I mean by that is it's cheating in the U.F.C. where they're very clear about what performance enhancing drugs that they test for and if you and I are to fight we're both agreeing, we signed a contract, we're not supposed to be taking the stuff right.

And N.F.L. football is like that or baseball's like that, a lot of sports are like that. The power lifting and body building they have other things that you can go into if you want to be drug tested.

And so therefore I've been a huge powerlifting proponent and a huge powerlifting fan since I was a kid.

Once I started kind of learned that as a kid I was always in the drug tested federations and I always admired the guys that were drug free.

But as I moved forward I just kind of recognized, it seemed very similar, the guys that were taking steroids and the guys that weren't taking steroids, both guys were stuck, it's just that each guy made a decision to take it a certain distance or had a certain you want to call them like values or moral values or whatever it was, one guy decided, "Hey, those aren't for me, I'm not sticking myself with that needle."

Another guy decided, "You know what, I am going to make that jump."

For me personally, what I kind of think it's cheating is when somebody is doing it and they're not talking about it and they're not telling you about it.

If I'm going to share with you some progress I made for a bodybuilding show, or I'm going to tell you how I lost a bunch of weight, even if it's in a book it's like I have to mention it every time.

I have to say, "I take performance enhancing drugs," because as you know it changes our hormonal profile of everything so much. I mean, if we slapped another 10 pounds of muscle on you it would be so much easier for you to regulate how much body fat your body has.

It does make it easier, it is a cheat code.

But it's also a cheat code that you can only play one time.

Maybe you made it to a certain level without taking them and then it's going to jump you up a little bit, but it is not going to make you go from barely making a division one track team to all of a sudden being Olympic gold medalist.

If you are already really talented in track and you already are finishing top 5 in the world and then you take them, it might.

Track is not a great example, so many of the track athletes are on performance enhancing drugs, but you get the idea, it's like once you kind of play that card, the card is played and it's kind of hard to negotiate whether you take them or whether you don't take them.

For me, it was actually a really hard decision, and this is something I share with people too, like just be open with people.

Like if you have somebody else living in your house, if you're with somebody else, you are married or whatever, don't tell your girlfriend you are taking creatine or something, just you wouldn't want to find out that your girlfriend smokes pot or even if it doesn't matter what thing it is, I mean if they had like a little flask and they hit some alcohol here and there you'd be like, "Hey, how come we can't talk about it. I'd like to know more about like what's going on, why are you doing that?"

And so I always share with people, like don't hide it from people.

And certainly if you're a kid, you've got to wait until you're older, you've got to wait until you're out of your parents' house, you also got to wait until you're mature enough, until you have done something with your lifting and you have done something with your body before you ever even really mess with taking that at a super young age is not not a great idea.

But I remember having a conversation with my wife and I was crying and I was like, "Babe, I don't want to do this, I don't want to like make this jump, this is weird, like I don't want to inject this like oil into my body."

She was like, "Well, why are you doing it?" I was like, "I don't know, I am obsessed with this stuff, I want to."

I've been working at this for a really long time, I think I about 25 which is still pretty damn young, looking back probably I should have started a little bit later, but I've already been lifting since I was 12.

I was like, "I want to see, I want to see if I can break these all time records, I want to see if I can go after some of this stuff."

And probably my mistake in all that was maybe, like maybe worrying about the way that other people got to those goals and maybe I should not have focused on that, but that's to me, that's what was in my head.

It wasn't really an excuse on why I couldn't be stronger, why I couldn't be bigger. But at the same time it was there, I was like, "Oh well, I'm going to lift these kind of weights probably forever-ish, give or take some weight.

But if I do this and I'm all in and it changes everything." And so it was a tough decision to make, but I made it and I tried to be as open as I could be, I still get a lot of comments on Instagram if I post up a transformation picture or something, I don't mention it every single time.

There's always that guy who is like, "Hey man, he's on steroids." And people just have a certain perception about it and I'll just write back and I'll say, "Yeah, I am, I talked about it in a movie, if you have any questions about it, let me know, let me know what you need to know."

And so that's my kind of vantage point on it.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, the reason I wanted to talk about it with you specifically is first of all, obviously, the honesty which is difficult because of the stigma.

And also it's one of those things that is so crazy because things that are statistically much more dangerous like alcohol consumption and various drugs are socially acceptable.

Where this is not socially acceptable.

Now I'm not saying I agree with any of it, but people are going to do things that they believe are good for them or fun for them in a sense or moving them towards a goal that they want whether it's drinking some alcohol or whether it's the performance enhancing drugs.

And so I think that the big thing that I want you to kind of get across is where this is appropriate and where it's in that level of dangerous?

Just like for example with alcohol, we can get to a place of addiction and with steroids or with performance enhancing drugs it's that addiction to that goal, to being that person, right.

And so once you start is very difficult to not be that strong, big guy, right?

So where do we get into a place of like, you even mentioned like 25 might be too young, but how is there an age that is old enough to make a decision like that?

Mark Bell: I think if you've been training for a long time and you've been honest about how you've been training, you've been diligent with your nutrition and with your sleep and you have things pretty cleaned up and you feel comfortable because steroids are not going to make you, they are not going to also make you lean either.

I think that's a perception that's out there too, I think some people just think it's all of the sudden going to add 10 pounds of body weight and make it very, very simple to lose weight.

And they can help you increase size, they can help you add more muscle mass, but it will not clean your diet up for you, you'll have to figure that, you'll have to get that stuff taken care of and situated on your own.

And so if those things are all situated and you've been training for several years, usually most people get to like where they're going to end up forever at about 10 years and I think that steroids prolong that for maybe an additional 5.

So as sad as that is to say, you can, it's probably even a shorter window than this, probably only like 8 years or so that you got before you reach your peak at just about anything, whether you're doing jujitsu, boxing, track, you name it.

I mean look at these young girls that win Olympic gold medals in like figure skating and stuff, they can do it for about a decade, they started at like 3 and then they're in the Olympics at like 13, 14, gymnastics and different sports are a little different but you get the idea like that's kind of your window, that's your timeframe.

And the steroids can help extend that time out a little bit more.

But one thing I would say about steroids and performance enhancing drugs is I think that it is a life altering decision, so you have to really think about it.

If you really, really love lifting, then the odds of you being addicted to it are going to be huge.

Because you're just all of the sudden go back like, "What am I going to do, am I going to just disappear and all of sudden not be able to lift those same amount of weights?"

Those weights are so attached to who I am in my own head, whether it's true or not, they are so attached to who I am that it would be really, really hard to just all of sudden be like, "Yeah, I'm shifting", it would take a lot of courage and a lot of strength, and I'm not saying I don't have the courage or strength to do that, but what is it's people that are just starting, you need to really think about what is your exit strategy going to look like or they are just never going to exit out of it.

For me, I'm now in my forty's so I'm like, "Well, I am probably just ride them out until I am not around anymore."

I'll also point out too that they are dangerous.

Any drug that you take is dangerous, so you have to kind of weigh the pros and cons of it, what's it going to look like for you, what's this going to do for you? Is it

going to give you bigger arms and give you a bigger chest and make you feel better about yourself?

If it is, than that seems pretty good to me, that seems like pretty positive to me. Is it going to negatively impact your life? Is it going to hurt your job?

Is it going to hurt someone close to you? What are the consequences of it all? What's it all going to look like?

And being the person that takes them, it's hard to know what everybody truly feels about them.

And it's different for people that I don't know to talk about it or whatever, it doesn't matter as much, but like I don't know how it impacts my kids, I don't know how much they know or don't know. I don't know how much they've seen a bigger, stronger, faster.

I don't know like what my son knows and doesn't know.

But yeah, of course it would kill me if it was something that hurt him, he's like, "Oh man, I looked up to my dad, I thought he was strong on his own or something."

Shawn Stevenson: That's what we do societally period is those wrestlers were our idols, or Arnold Schwarzenegger, or whatever and to believe that we can work hard— because what did Hulk Hogan say, something about like eat your vitamins—

Mark Bell: Yeah, "Train, say your prayers and eat your vitamins."

Shawn Stevenson: That's how you get to be Hulkamaniac, you know what I'm saying, but it was actually—

Mark Bell: He's talking about different vitamins.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, yeah, right. And it's just like so where do we draw the line, is kind of what I'm trying to get to, just to give people another perspective, because I know this is like— this is what I really respect about you, is the ability to talk about this stuff from your perspective.

Because there is a lot of stigma, but there's also, it is very pervasive in our culture, like you mentioned like in track athletes.

Obviously it's not a 100 percent of the people running track, shout out to, there are some incredible people who are Olympic level athletes who are listening to the show right now, but a lot of people are, they're taking something in our own lives.

I wanted to start to look at this stuff a little differently, or in a bigger perspective of you leaning on that caffeine a little bit too hard, are you leaning on the alcohol a little bit too hard, or whatever it might be to get you to where you want to be.

And are you at a place where like you said, you don't know if you're strong enough to stop, and so are you going to ride that out forever? So yeah, man.

Mark Bell: It's an interesting thing to start to really think about because great music, so much great music and we're in a music recording studio, so much great music has come off of people being high, people being under the influence of something, LSD, marijuana, alcohol. I'm not even saying that's bad necessarily, but it's just a thing, it's part of it.

A lot of great art, a lot of great things we have in our society come from things like marijuana.

Would Joe Rogan, Joe Rogan is the leader, Joe Rogan is the king in the podcast domain, he's a friend of mine.

Would Joe Rogan be Joe Rogan without the Psilocybin mushrooms and weed—no, he wouldn't be.

Because his podcast, if you remember, if you go back to the very beginning, it started out this is going to be me and my buddy smoking some weed, talking shop.

And that's how the whole show started and exploded.

Arnold Schwarzenegger is Arnold Schwarzenegger the governor of California? No, is he Mr. Olympia? No, probably not.

I mean, if everybody else doesn't take them, maybe he reaches some of the same spots. But you see like what a rabbit hole we start going down and who's completely clean who's not using something to get an edge.

I'm not even really saying there's anything wrong with it, I just think it's something to— and I'm not trying to be defensive of my stance at all either, but it is something that people should think about because every person that you put

up on a pedestal has probably gotten there by doing something that's maybe a little different than the way that we currently understand it.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow. Men, again thank you for sharing that perspective.

And just to kind of take a step back, you mentioned your son, and my son is over there, and my youngest son is in the other room.

And you mentioned on your show because, I've just been diving into your world and like I think it was your son when he was a baby he would get up and do the perimeter, he would go and like every day he had to go—

Mark Bell: He ruined my videogame life. I used to play video games all the time, he ruined it.

Shawn Stevenson: So every day my son Braden would get up in the morning and the first thing you would do, he'd go into the kitchen, open the cabinet take everything out from under the sink and put it all over the floor and then you could start your day, like that's literally how it had to happen.

And so when I heard that I was like— so what did your son used to do?

Mark Bell: Yeah, he would do this I call it 'the perimeter walk' he would like shuffle along the wall every single day and then he would make his way over to where our TV was and then he would reach down and grab all my DVDs out of there and like chuck them behind them and a lot of them were video games.

And so when I would go to play the video game it wouldn't work anymore so he ended my video game career which I'm sure my wife is pretty excited about.

Shawn Stevenson: Man, this is another thing that can really just got to pull you into that world.

Because that was my thing too, man I was literally, I don't know if I have shared this on the show, but when I was dealing with my spine issues, like I was even paying my rent like hustling, playing Madden.

Mark Bell: Now you can do it online.

Shawn Stevenson: Right, oh!

Mark Bell: You can get paid—

Shawn Stevenson: I did it a couple of years ago, I started to play Madden and we got this really incredible TV and all the stuff.

Mark Bell: It's tough when you play people online, they are really good.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, man. But I got, I started to get like, "I've gotta beat them," and I just, I had to shut it down man because it pulls you right back in there.

But, just that experience of like you know raising kids in a family and all that stuff.

And for yourself, and I think that you get— why did you choose to like forgo the wrestling and not that you forwent the powerlifting, but when did you decide, "I'm going to open my own space." Like what was the inspiration for you to open your own gym?

Mark Bell: Inspiration behind it was just pretty selfish.

I knew that like I couldn't be the best that I wanted to be without support, like without help, without people around me.

And I knew that it wasn't really going to happen in like a 24 hour fitness type of space. I needed other people that were like minded that really like, that really love to lift, they are very serious about it.

And so I would just dream about it every day. I would think about it all the time, I was like, "Look at that storage unit over there. I bet if I got just a couple of pieces of equipment I can get a couple people to train with me."

Because at that point, I felt like I had a pretty good knowledge base and I could get some people to work out with me.

And I just kept thinking about it, thinking about it, thinking about it, thinking about it and finally I got to a spot that was like 900 square feet and I was like, "Oh well if I get a couple lifters in here," the gym wasn't free in the beginning, "If I get a couple lifters in here we can break even and pay the rent and we can kind of start we can start going from there."

And so that's what happened. It's something that I was so obsessed about though, I thought about it all the time and even in terms of like squatting and deadlifting and not so much bench pressing but more so squat and deadlift, I would just like randomly like air squat and randomly like deadlift because I'd be thinking about, "Oh man, I wonder if my shin angle was like more like this if I could deadlift more."

Or, "Maybe I should try to open up my stance more on a sumo deadlift tomorrow." I was just thinking about it all the time.

Coming up off my couch I was like squatting or coming up off my toilet I was squatting, it didn't matter, whatever I was doing I was so obsessed with it and I was like, "I got it, this is bugging me so much, I've got to figure this out."

And so eventually my wife and I kind of came together, I'm like, "I want to try to do this thing," she's like, and nobody knew what the heck I was doing.

Powerlifting was not anywhere at the time, it wasn't popular. And we just dove into it and just decided to get moving on it.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow, man. And that was how many years ago?

Mark Bell: That was 12 years ago.

Shawn Stevenson: 12 years. So how long have you been in this location right now?

Mark Bell: The spot that is, so this is like the 5th iteration of Super Training Gym, it's changed many times over. Now where in like, the place is like 30,000 square feet where we have our sling shot products, all the products that we sell, everything's under one roof which has been kind of the dream and the goal from day one was to kind of get to the point.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. And so obviously the vast majority of the results that we get into the fitness domain comes down to training, nutrition.

Sleep and supplementation, performance enhancing drugs, like that's a smaller percentage for sure.

We can get some benefits there but you can't get anywhere without these foundational things.

And so I want to ask you about some more of these foundational things because you know your stuff man, like it's really remarkable to see what you've been able to achieve like physically.

And there there are a lot of people, I think we get stuck in, because of course, we do want the basics right, there are like those 5 basic movements kind of like the hip hinge and all that stuff. But what about like single leg stuff?

Is there any, should we be giving any credence to doing that like single leg deadlifts, and step, like what do you think?

Mark Bell: I'll first say, which is something I haven't mentioned quite yet, is the fastest way to get strong and it beats steroids, it beats, it beats everything, I mean you're going to need to still be well rested, you can't really do much with that, you're going to still need some hydration.

But the fastest way to get really strong is just to weight a lot, just to get yourself bigger, figure out a way to get bigger.

And one way to do that is going to be through your sleep and through your food, through your nutrition.

So people that are listening are like, "I just want a tip on how to get—" not everybody wants to make that sacrifice though because as you get bigger, you are going to get fatter, so sometimes people don't want that.

But a larger muscle or even just having like a larger stomach, you're going to be able to squat more weight, you are going to have a bigger base underneath you.

And whether it be fat or whether it be muscle or a combination thereof, it helps with compression, like if I got to move my forearm back towards my bicep, my forearm and my bicep touch each other pretty early because my forearm is fairly big and my bicep is fairly big, so it's going to give you some compression, it's going to give you leverage advantages.

In terms of like single leg stuff and single arm stuff, and all these different things, they are all great to utilize and your training should, if you're not training for like a competition, then you should be doing all kinds of different stuff, like have a lot of fun with it, try to figure out, especially like if you're new into fitness and you're just getting into it, don't do all the stuff that you hate.

I mean you might hear somebody kind of give you a speech about, "You are only strong as your weakest link," and that's for competing. If you're not competing then don't worry about your weakest link, do the stuff that's fun.

I have always said that it's nice to throw yourself a curve ball here and there but really, the majority of what you're doing should be underhand pitches and you should be knocking those suckers out of the park every single day because you want to, that's the whole point of working out and exercising is to feel better.

And I think we somehow, we're just thinking annihilation, we need to go in there and annihilate and that's not what we're trying to do, we're just trying to stimulate, we're trying to feel better.

I've heard you mention before that if we checked your markers for health after a training session we could diagnose you with something horrible, right.

Well, I mean what if the training session didn't impede upon those markers of health so badly, that you looked like you had a blood glucose problem or something like that?

That might be a really nice way to train at least occasionally, it's like you and I go back and forth between you're doing 10 pushups and I'm doing 12 calories on the bike or something, we go back and forth, I think that would be a really fun, great workout, we'd both be sweating, we'd both be breathing hard, "Oh my god, I kicked my butt," but we wouldn't be dead from it, you know, if we did it for like 10 or 12 minutes.

Back to kind of the original question of the single leg and single arm stuff, you have to be doing that stuff and if you're not training for competition, why not start your workouts with stuff like that.

I start a lot of my workouts with what would be considered like accessory stuff.

So for a long time in fitness people would say, especially if you do like Olympic lifting or powerlifting that those are first, they have to be first. Well, why?

They don't have to be first.

I understand if they're first for football. I understand they're first for these things because that's when we're going to have the most strength, that's where we're going to have the best coordination, but it's actually kind of nice to be knocked down a few notches from doing a few sets of leg extensions and a few sets of lunges before you actually start your squat.

And then what is it doing for you mentally? Now you're like, "Oh my god, I still have to squat, holy crap, this is going to be a really really hard workout."

So you give yourself a lot of different stimulus.

One thing I like about doing these systems exercises first, it allows you to get more out of less weight.

So rather than you trying to have to bang around you know 2 plates in a squat and and trash up your knees and stuff, you might use one plate because you might have done leg extensions, and leg curls, and leg press, and lunges before you ever even squatted.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow, that just sounds like, it sounds like torture.

Mark Bell: It's brutal.

Shawn Stevenson: But it's also like you said, the stuff you've got to overcome mentally to be able to do that.

Because I think we can get stuck in cruise control with our lifting too. Like we can get ourselves up to a point where we know we've got to go in there and kill it with the squat or with the bench press and then everything else is just like leisure.

But what if we make that more challenging?

Mark Bell: Yeah, I love that. I love leaning into the resistance. Like think about in training specifically, as we get stronger we get the opportunity to use more and more weight and what if we just kind of leaned into the resistance of life and took things on and got excited when something was hard.

You said that you rather than thinking about how worried you were or how nervous you were, first speech you would just turn that to excitement.

So rather than being like, "Oh my god, it's one of those like a leg day," what about being like, "Yeah, tomorrow's leg day and you know what– I'm going to do it at 4 am just because I feel like being a psychopath today."

Do without coffee, do something just a little– just do a little different than what you used to. Try, you're so reliant on pre workout and you're so reliant on this or that. Try to just make it look a little different.

And I've learned that over the years from training with guys like Mike O'Hearn.

Mike O'Hearn is over here at Gold's Venice, you have to have him on your podcast at some point, people will really love him a lot. He is in his fifty's, guy is still strong as hell, he's–

Shawn Stevenson: He's in his fifty's?

Mark Bell: Yeah, you've seen him at work.

Shawn Stevenson: I just saw him at **[1:22:59 Indiscernible]** event.

Mark Bell: He looks absolutely ridiculous, but he's a guy that will really lean into the resistance of life and he'll say, "Okay, you know what, it's going to be the hardest training day that's when we're going to do the early training."

And sometimes on the other days were smaller muscle groups or easier workouts those are done a little bit later on the day.

But I really like that idea of like just trying to make stuff harder. And you think about the different exercises you have in the gym, it's nice to think, "Okay, how do I make this easier?" In the case of something like a sling shot or you might think, "How do I make this more difficult?"

And that would be like, what's harder than a lat pull-down, pull-ups you know, chin-ups. If you really just want to, if you really don't love to lift, again, you can kind of bounce around, you can pick some of the things that you like to do or you can kind of go the torturous route and pick a few of the things that are just really hard.

I think CrossFit plays into this really, really well because the CrossFit workouts, they're not really complicated, like no one's like, "Oh, what is that?"

They might have a question on what a particular workout means, because they got different names to them.

But when you look at it you're like, "Oh my god that's super simple, I'm going to do that, I'm going to do that and I'm going to rest a minute.

And I am going to do that every minute on the minute until the time's up, and I'm going to work out for 12 minutes."

And we're like, "Oh cool, this is going to be fun." Then we get halfway through and realize how hard it is, but it's great that it's simple.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, awesome, man. So recently because I saw you back in the day on something, that might have been a YouTube video, it was maybe 8 years ago and you were a lot bigger, there was more of you and you made a switch within the last few years of just like being the biggest, strongest person possible which somebody who can squat a 1,000 pounds to more aesthetics and just kind of leaning down.

What was the, what triggered you to want to do that?

Because I know it's like that balance in our minds of finding that, but like you made a pretty dramatic shift. So what inspired that?

Mark Bell: Yeah, I had to be you know put in my place I guess. So I squatted 1080, I bench pressed 854 pounds, I have deadlifted 766 pounds.

And the whole time I was chasing after these numbers, I just kept going deeper and deeper into this rabbit hole and I think you know, there's so much information being shared right now about you know want to be better version of yourself or the best version of yourself, or trying to be great, it's like be kind of careful like as you are on that mission to try to be great that you don't lose sight of just being happy and just being excited about what it is you're doing.

Because I got to a point where I was miserable, I didn't really like I was obsessed and I didn't even love it anymore, it's just like I was just forcing myself to do it.

And I was 330 pounds I was getting you know bigger all the time and having trouble sleeping, my legs were always like red I'd have what's called like pitted edema, so if it pushed on my like shin like that area would stay sunk in, like almost like a diabetic.

Shawn Stevenson: Or pregnant.

Mark Bell: Yeah, there you go, I was pregnant. I looked pregnant, my stomach was big enough for that. I mean, I was big and strong but you know just like little stuff just like you were saying you had so much trouble walking because of this bone degeneration you had.

Mine was self-induced just from food and I couldn't get around.

And I was just thinking, "Man this is actually kind of lame," because there's these people that I see being pushed around in a wheelchair and I'm always kind of critical of them.

Here I am judging them being pushed around in the wheelchair because they basically just ate too much.

But I'm turning into that myself, but I'm a lifter, I'm active, I shouldn't really be that way.

So I kept kind of sweeping all this under the rug, I was ignoring that I wasn't able to sleep and just trying to just forge forward but eventually, I was in a powerlifting meet and I went to squat 1085, it was my second squat attempt and the goal for that contest was to do 1100.

I should back it up a little bit and say my goal originally was to squat a 800, or squat a 1000 pounds and to bench a 800 pounds and I did both of those things.

But I got greedy, and I kept rolling the dice, rolling the dice. I already stopped powerlifting, I already retired a few times, like I said it keeps coming back, it keeps coming back, powerlifting just keeps showing up at my front door.

And so in this contest the goal is to go for 1100 I did a 1085 squat and as I'm coming down the squat my knee just shoots inward, my other knee kind of shoots outward and I just kind of get sent like towards the rack that we're in and I hit the ground.

And from that moment it was like they just changed everything forever, it was a big pivot point for me, and it might have been the video I sent you this morning of F your elbow.

Once I fell I was like, "Alright, well this might be the last time ever on a platform," so I'm getting up and I'm walking off under my own power so my teammate came over to me to try to help me and I kind of showed him away and I just walked off on my own.

And not smart enough to go to the doctor or the hospital or anything like that I just went on with everything but I was in a crazy amount of pain for about 3 months, it took me about 45 minutes just to go from my couch, or sorry from my recliner to our couch where we had like a roll out bed I couldn't go upstairs and sleep with my wife because my leg was too mangled and messed up and stuff.

I got really, really screwed up from that but it was a message of like, "Dude you need to slow down. You want to take this time, you can't be strong, you can't squat, you can barely lift," and even at the time I was like, "Oh I'll just work on my bench while my leg hurts," and I went in the gym and I actually hurt my shoulder too, because your body is just dealing with too many things at once.

Yeah, your body is dealing with too many things. And then so I was like, "Well if I can't be strong I might as well start to work on getting in better shape, and I might as well start to try to regain my health."

And then that sent me down a really, really good path of kind of forging forward and starting this as I call it a war on carbs, and I went on like a ketogenic style diet which I used when I was younger, I've been from the with ketogenic diet since I was about 18 years old or so.

And so I went on this ketogenic diet and started to lose weight, and I think this is really important for people to understand is there's not a real rush to lose a lot of weight.

And I think that from what I've seen, it makes the most sense to lose weight in stages. So let's just say I lose like 20 pounds, let's say, "Mark, you need sleep more, you need to hydrate more and you need to just cut out junk and then I lose 20 pounds."

Well, now the next thing that you're going to ask me to do is probably going to be kind of hard so it might take me a little while to really put that into practice and really get that going.

And so I might be stuck at that weight loss for a few weeks, but who cares if I'm stuck, it's still 20 pounds less than I was before. So then you proceed forward and you keep going and going, and I ended up losing about 100 pounds.

People are like, "How long a 100 pounds take?" And I always tell them it took 10 years and they're like disappointed, but it didn't really take me 10 years, it took me like 5 or 6 years probably, but it took me like 2 or 3 years afterwards to understand and to know how to keep it off.

That's the key is to keep it off, I mean you can give people all kinds of ridiculous adjustments to their diet and you could have just because you want to post it on YouTube, you could have you know 10 people lose 100 pounds in 10 days.

I mean it would actually be very simple, you just have them water manipulator or do something slightly different than what they're doing right. But that's not the goal, that's not the game.

The game and the goal is to not just lose weight because every American, not every American, but most Americans have lost weight and most Americans are successful at losing weight, but what most Americans are not successful at is keeping the weight off.

And so when I fell with that 1085 I wanted that to be a strong pivot point away from that, it's where I'm like, "You know what, I might get kind of big again, and stuff like that but I'll never be you know 330 again, I'll never be 320 again," and I just kept knocking that bracket down about 10 pounds.

I gave myself a 10 pound swing because when you're that big, just eating different food or not taking a poop for the day, it makes you weigh 10 pounds more. So when I weighed 300 I said goodbye to 330 forever.

When I weighed 290 I said goodbye to 300 forever, or whatever it was. But I tried to make that agreement to myself, I was like, "Hey, I am not ever going to do that again, not ever going to go down that path again."

Shawn Stevenson: Hm, man. 100 pounds, that's crazy man, that's crazy.

And so I love that idea of going in stages. You basically changing that thermostat, that metabolic thermostat as you go along as well giving yourself that leeway because I think a lot of folks as they're losing weight get disappointed if they gain a pound or two, here or there and I understand even those things like they fluctuate so much man, but giving yourself like that 10 pound bracket of flexibility, that's such a good idea man.

So there's so many things I want to ask you about and so I'm just a big fan of your personality and I've been listening to your show and it's just so funny too, just some of these random things and also just a story, like all the things that you've been through, that you've accomplished and the willingness to share.

But also I love the fact of like at your gym if somebody is not sweating because a lot of people want your attention now, like you're in this position.

And so I want to ask you being in the position that you're in, with so many eyeballs on you like how does it feel, like coming from where you came from, where you were just trying to make it in the business of like getting into wrestling or whatever the case might be, was that not your personality?

And like is this really where you're at right now, is this really your true calling and like where you're finding that fulfillment and happiness?

Mark Bell: Wrestling helped so much because I was so shy, like I really didn't want to get up in front of people and talk.

I didn't want to, like now I do seminars and different things like that and that was just not part of my personality, I was always very, very like shy and just I didn't want to get up in front of people and talk, I didn't really want to be like a leader.

But one thing I realized as I was getting into the fitness space it's like, well if you want to be like recognized for this or do well at this then you're going to have to figure out a way to communicate.

And being an inventor also made me realize, "Oh my God, I created a product but it really doesn't matter how good the product is because I need to communicate to people and tell them how good it is and I need to tell them why they need it."

Like why would you need this thing that you've never even seen before, it's not like a phone, everybody needs a phone; it's not a consumable product, it's not like a protein bar, nothing like it has really ever existed before.

So now I got the daunting task of like trying to figure out how the heck do I get people to understand what this thing is, how do I get people not just laugh and think it's like a gimmick and things like that.

And so when I created the sling shot, I quickly recognized or not even recognized, I was almost just like burdened with the fact that yeah, you created a product so you're in the game of like making products and now you're automatically locked into the game of customer service, which I didn't know anything about.

Now you're automatically locked into the game of having an e-commerce business, which I knew nothing about.

Now you're on linked in to this being on a website and now you have to figure out like marketing, and now you have to have like a media team.

These are all things I'm like, "Oh my God, I knew nothing about them."

But what I did know about was kind of like talking trash from professional wrestling and so a lot of the early videos and stuff was just me kind of like bragging about the product and throwing the product up over my shoulder like it was a championship belt saying, "This is what you guys need to be able to bench press more weight," and stuff like that.

So it gave me a lot of courage to kind of throw my hat in and be a voice in the community.

And I also ended up being a voice in the community very early on because I started my YouTube channel like right around the time YouTube started.

I was Super Training 06, you know the gym started in 2006, the YouTube channel followed shortly after that, I think YouTube started in 2006 and there's thousands and thousands of videos.

One thing I find really interesting and this is really funny because you're asking about the eyes on me so it's interesting to me because like— and then you mentioned your brother early about having an advantage, you have an advantage over him or privilege over him right?

Everyone has an iPhone and everybody has YouTube, everybody has Facebook, everybody has Instagram and you've heard from so many people say, "Hey Oprah has the same amount of hours in the day."

Well relatively speaking in the United States here we'll have access to the same stuff and I understand you have people can have money and they can pay for people to do certain things, but you can go live on Instagram whatever the phone costs, I mean most people have a phone right.

And what I find super interesting is when I go somewhere some older friends or some people that I have, not old friends but friends I've had for a long time, when I get around them will say, "Oh my God you've blown up I can't believe it," and I'm thinking, "I didn't really blow up, I just drew attention to myself."

Which, you know, 20 years ago you would have been just an a-hole for that, right? You wouldn't have been like glorified for it so I always kind of find that kind of interesting, I'm like, "I didn't really do anything, I just was filming stuff and just talking about stuff."

The other things too that I love to share with people is that my story started with an injury but I was at a Starbucks and I was on my iPhone and I used google and I looked up knee wrap manufacturers in the Google search. I just like to point some of these things up because this is all stuff that other people could, anyone can do that.

So whatever this idea is that is sitting around in your head you know you have a good idea, you know you have a good invention, you know you have a good product for some reason you just haven't pulled the trigger, lower the barrier of entry that you have getting into whatever it is.

You might just look it up and research it a little bit and poke around and see what you can find, because all you need to do is find someone to make it for you.

Once you have a prototype then you can show people, you can say, "Hey, you see you dummies this is what I have this is the product that I want to make."

Once you have that prototype you can be off and running.

Shawn Stevenson: I love it, man. Dude, thank you so much for your dedication, thank you for sharing your story, thank you for your openness, thank you for being an inspiration for folks to get in the gym and to lift some heavy stuff.

There's a lot of men and women out there that are making not just better bodies, but like getting stronger like you even gave the analogy earlier about like that

mental strength as well that is required to just live today with so much coming at us, because a social media you just mentioned is a double edged sword.

We've got this access and availability to create and do just about anything.

You've got the same tools everybody else does and at the same time, you've got the tools everybody else does and we get to see what everybody else is doing, you know what I'm saying?

And you're putting out good vibes and like I love the fact that your personality is so infused into the stuff that you do and just having a good time.

Even when you text me with the Smelly Bell, I was like, "I like this dude, man." And so just thank you, man. Thank you for being yourself.

Mark Bell: I appreciate it.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Awesome. So can you let everybody know where, mention where your gym is again and where they can follow you and also mention your podcast.

Mark Bell: Super Training Gym, we're in West Sacramento and it's at thesupertraininggym on Instagram, if you want to hit us up and just find out when we're there because if you just show up it might be a little harder to figure out where it is and to get in and everything.

And then the website is MarkBellslingshot.com. If you want to buy knee wraps, knee sleeves, wrist wraps, elbow sleeves, sling shots, whatever it is that you need to get yourself through your training, I'm highly dedicated to just simply just trying to make this world a better place to live, just make it a little easier for people— that I used to be of the belief, few years back, of like, "Hey man, whatever form or exercise you want, that's cool."

But now I'm of the belief I think everybody needs some good resistance training so that's my goal is to try to make it easier for people to lift, make it easier for people to understand lifting and what it can do for you.

Get your butt in the gym, get some training done and then then I am at marksmellybell on Instagram as well.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. Thank you for coming in.

Mark Bell: Thank you, I appreciate it.

Shawn Stevenson: Everybody, thank you so much for tuning into the show today.

I hope you got a lot of value out of this and I love what he said, make this world a better place to lift. Man, that's so cool, so powerful.

And today it's really a great opportunity for us to really look at like what are our personal goals for fitness and designing a protocol or a life structure to help us to get there.

And doing that within the parameters of your own ethics and your own driving forces on what all of those pieces look like.

And thank you so much for having compassion and understanding of Mark's story and also understand like he is somebody who's world class at what he does when we're talking about powerlifting, getting stronger, so much great advice is there for you if you want to take advantage of it, make sure to follow him on social media and also check him out, check out his show, he shares a lot of nuggets there in his videos.

Man, he's been on the Internet dropping videos since they became a thing in the first place, since YouTube started, so he's got a lot of stuff back logged as well. And also his brother has two films, can you share what those are?

Mark Bell: Yeah, my brother did a Bigger, Stronger, Faster and it's sometimes on Netflix and sometimes not, but you could find it on like Amazon or something like that, and then he also did Prescription Thugs and another movie called Leaf of Faith. Check those movies out.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow, awesome, yeah. So, he is diving in more behind the scenes in these worlds of you know performance enhancing drugs and also into pharmaceutical drugs as well, especially with Prescription Thugs and just looking at what's going on behind the scenes.

Mark Bell: We have another movie working on too.

Shawn Stevenson: What's this?

Mark Bell: Nutrition.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh yeah, yeah.

Mark Bell: We might need to talk to somebody who knows something about sleep.

Shawn Stevenson: Okay! So you guys are seeing me in a new movie coming up as well.

And so again, thank you so much for tuning into a show today and I'm so grateful to have this opportunity to share all these different perspectives and different tools and insights for you to take advantage of.

And we've got some powerhouse episodes coming your way so make sure to stay tuned. Alright, take care, have an amazing day and I'll with you soon.

And for more after this show, make sure to head over to 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.