

**THE MODEL  
HEALTH  
SHOW**

**EPISODE 388**

**Positive Psychology:  
How To Wire Your Brain  
For More Happiness**

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

Listen, have you ever thought about what happiness actually means? Have you ever thought about how it actually works? Have you ever contemplated on how you can experience more of it? We know that all of our emotions are valuable, and we've talked about that on many episodes, even leaning back to Dr. Susan David and her book "Emotional Agility."

She was an incredible guest on the show a couple of years ago, talking about how valuable our emotions are. The reason we have them is to experience an array of human emotions and to give us valuable feedback about our experiences, our exposures, contrasts, so we know things that we want and to move towards things that we really want to have in our lives and experience.

And for many of us today we're experiencing a happiness deficit, however. We have this spectrum of emotions but happiness is an experience as often. And not to say that we don't have pleasurable moments, but happiness can sometimes be replaced with pleasure and there is a distinction, there is a subtle but powerful distinction, and so we will be talking about that today. But ultimately, what we're going to be diving into is some powerful content that I think is going to transform your life from this day forward.

And really moving into this next year I want you to experience more health and more happiness than you ever have before. And so today we're going to give you the happiness code, so that you have that in your superhero utility belt to use from this day forward.

Now the question that's really posed in modern psychology and medicine is the question of, "What's wrong with you?" That's where our science has been dedicated is looking at the problems that people carry, what's wrong with people in general and also it's been the basis of the entire field of psychology in

modern history. Yes, it's absolutely invaluable to be able to investigate and study the underlying causes of traumas and psychosis and mental illness, but it's also valuable to look at what actually makes people happy, what actually makes people successful.

And often, despite negative experiences and exposures, all of us have incredible things about us, good things about us that are often overlooked and they kind of fade into the background. And so instead of asking the question, "What's wrong with you" today I want to pose a question that I want you to ask yourself is, "What's right with you," so that we can focus more of our energy into that.

So again, I'm really pumped about this episode and we're going to dive into a masterclass on the subject of happiness and positive psychology. And before we do that, I want to share with you something that really does bring me happiness to actually be able to sit down with my wife in the mornings, whenever we have the opportunity and just sit and sip on a cup of tea or a cup of coffee, but not just any kind of tea or coffee. We don't play that.

For me, we're utilizing organic sources and mushroom infuse, so medicinal mushrooms infuse into our coffees, teas, elixirs, things like that. And for me, that formula at Four Sigmatic that I actually had today, also it's organic coffee but it also has Lion's Mane medicinal mushroom and Chaga in there as well. And Chaga is well noted in clinical research to be an immunomodulator. If your immune system is running too low, it helps to lift up and revive your immune system.

However, some folks are experiencing autoimmunity or their immune system is running too hot, so it has the ability to bring the immune system down, whereas kind of conventional medications push your body in one different direction or the other, it doesn't have the intelligence to kind of modulate and support your immune system. And so it's really like immune system training. And there is no other category of nutrients or medicine or foods that have that capacity like the kingdom of medicinal mushrooms.

Also in that formula, as I mentioned, is Lion's Mane. Lion's Mane is clinically proven to be neuroprotective. The University of Malaya found that Lion's Mane is actually being utilized now and has an effective capability to help to improve the function of brains that have actually experienced traumatic brain injuries. So that's what it's being utilized for today. But listen to this, this was a new



study that was published in Pharmacology, Biochemistry and Behavior uncovered that Lion's Mane appears to have significant effects in reducing symptoms of depression as well.

So it's neuroprotective, it helps to support overall cognition and brain function and much more is being studied on Lion's Mane right now. But I get this in my morning coffee. All right, people are not getting that with the Folgers in your cup, the best part of waking up. It's not that, the Four Sigmatic it's a whole different level, whole different experience.

I love my Four Sigmatic with a little bit of healthy fat so for you that could be a little bit of coconut milk or almond milk, or little MCT Oil, grass-fed butter, ghee, coconut oil, whatever you're into. Maybe a little bit of a sweetener if you like. Of course, a low glycemic sweetener like Stevia, maybe some flavored Stevia drops, monk fruit, that kind of stuff. But for me it's an experience.

And today I had a little bit of cinnamon that I threw in there as well and it's just such a great, pleasurable thing plus you get all of those cognitive and immune system benefits and overall health benefits. So I highly recommend you check them out, it's [FourSigmatic.com/model](http://FourSigmatic.com/model), you get 15 percent off everything they carry, whether it's the mushroom coffee.

They also have mushroom elixirs, so it's more of a tea that has just Chaga, or if you want the Lion's Mane by itself or Cordyceps, or Reishi, they have those for you as well. So if you want to do it in a hot chocolate, you're into the chocolate, you can get yourself some mushroom-infused hot chocolates as well. So pop over there, check them out, Four Sigmatic, that's [F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model](http://F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model), 15 percent off everything they carry. And now let's get to Apple Podcast review of the week.

**iTunes Review:** Another 5-star review titled "Quality content every episode." by TmorgN1300. "This is the first podcast that I've wanted to tune into every episode. I get so much value from listening to Shawn and every guest he brings on. I learn something new every episode. He sheds light and brings a fresh perspective to a vast variety of health and wellness topics."

**Shawn Stevenson:** Awesome, thank you so much for sharing that review over an Apple Podcasts, it really is highlighting what I'm devoted to here with the show. Again, thank you so much for sharing your heart and leaving that review. And if you've yet to do

so, please pop over to Apple podcasts and leave a review for the show. I appreciate it so very much.

And listen, if you're watching this on YouTube, if you're here in the studio with me, make sure to leave a comment below the video, let me know what you thought about this episode. All right, I appreciate it so much.

And on that note, let's get to our topic of the day. So today we're talking about the science of happiness and really diving in and looking at this new field. Well, it's been around for a while but now it's becoming more well known of positive psychology.

What positive psychology is, just to start off with the definition, it's a scientific study of human flourishing and an applied approach to optimal functioning. It's also been defined as a study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities, and organizations to thrive. Now, there is, in fact, a science to happiness, but science has also demonstrated that happiness is genetic as well, and to an interesting extent, this is true.

Listen to this— there's a study published in The Journal of Neuroscience that uncovered that test subjects with a higher presence of longer alleles of the 5 HTTLPR gene, which is a serotonin transporter gene, self-reported higher levels of life satisfaction, and this is what the researchers summarize as happiness was life satisfaction.

The study authors didn't note, this is not in the happiness gene however, there are other genes at play like the MAOA gene, and sometimes scientists will kind of put the letters in these genes together even though they kind of signify something else but it's the MAOA gene not to be mistaken with Moana, who is a Polynesian Princess superhero, but the MAOA gene. And so they also noted that the environment, and this is what's important, so we do have genes associated with happiness but listen to this— they also noted that the environment and personal choices can have major influences on the expression of your genes related to happiness.

All right, so just because we have these genes, which we all have them, they can be expressed in a myriad of ways depending on our lifestyle choices and our experiences. So that's really something to keep in your back pocket. And so what they concluded was that about 50 percent of our life satisfaction is due to



our genetics, right, or again, what they define as happiness. That's a big chunk! Wow, they found that 40 percent of happiness is attributed to intentional activities that we partake in our own lives.

And again just those things influence that other 50 percent, so I want that to be clear, I want that to be clear. And they found that the other 10 percent is attributed to external events, so that's kind of the formula, it's this 50/ 40/ 10 ratio that we have for our own happiness and it leads back to our genes.

And these genes, again, are involved with some biochemistry that we'll come back to and talk about in a moment, but to just summarize things, I think it's important to understand that our genes do have an influence here, but our genes do not control our happiness nor do they control our destiny, our lifestyle choices, our exposures, our environment, our experiences all help to color and help to determine whether or not genes get expressed and how they get expressed. Because genes can have hundreds of thousands of different potential expressions.

And when we're talking about that, we're talking about how they're printing out copies, new cells, our DNA, the roles that our DNA is playing and how all of that affects this cascade of hormone production, neurotransmitters that create the experience for us of having happiness or something else. And just a little side note, the researchers define happiness as life satisfaction, essentially, but I think we can all agree that those are not exactly the same thing. And so I just wanted to note that as well.

Now, intentional happiness has grown with the evolution of the human brain. And we've talked about this many times in the show, we have essentially 3 brains that have kind of evolved on top of one another. And we began with a very primitive, reflexive brain that's housed in our brain stem, and when I say reflexive, that means it's reactionary, that means it's not about plotting things out and planning, it's very, it's just built on survival and it's built on managing threats, when the earth itself was a very volatile, extraordinarily dangerous place.

And from there, we've developed the limbic brain, the limbic system and this is bringing in the play different parts of the brain that are more connected to—still very reflexive, but emotion, connection, feeling, but it's still really driven by pleasure and by danger. But now it's more evolved.



And then from there we developed the neocortex, the new, neo meaning new cortex, specifically the prefrontal cortex which for humans, this is taking up about one-third of that new growth and it's by far the largest portion if we're looking at from mammal to mammal, species to species, humans this is what really makes us different is this really dynamic and complex prefrontal cortex. And so thank you, prefrontal cortex.

What's so interesting about the prefrontal cortex is that now it's brought into play the ability to have what we call these executive decisions, executive functions, where we can distinguish between right and wrong, social control so we're not so reactive and we're not just governed by our primal drives and we can even kind of stop and tell ourselves, it's kind of like being able to have a governorship over our impulses. Because as we know, sometimes our impulses can drive us to do not the best thing.

So this executive function, the prefrontal cortex allows us to map out and monitor and preview what will happen if we do or don't do certain things. So this prefrontal cortex is incredible, it's kind of like a flight simulator, right, it's an incredible experience simulator. And it enables us to— and what I want to mention is that when we simulate an experience in our minds, our brain largely doesn't know the difference between us imagining the thing and it actually happening.

We can release the same chemistry, the same neurotransmitters, the same hormones based on our imagination and our preview of a thing as doing the real thing. That's incredibly powerful, really, really powerful to understand because, for many of us what we're really looking for when we talk about happiness, we're looking for a feeling, it's not the thing, it's the feeling we get from maybe accomplishing or seeing or experiencing the thing, which we can do in our own minds. Put that into the superhero utility belt for later as well.

Now, if we are aware of this ability that we have, that we can intentionally decide, this is what the executive brain allows us to do, it enables us to intentionally decide whether or not we choose thoughts that increase our happiness or they lead us to other emotions. We get to decide what we think consciously. Other animals are not doing that, they're not deciding like, "You know what, I want to think about this thing, and then go down that path," like we have the ability to do that. But oftentimes that is on autopilot and we're kind



of at the mercy of the randomness in our lives, of our history and potential futures and it creates a lot of potential anxiety and depression because we're so scattered.

We don't have reins on our own minds. And today it's more difficult than ever because the evolution of the brain was not hard-wired to deal with all of the stuff coming at us today, like 24/7 access to everything. So this can be a little bit of an obstacle for us to deal with that I want you to keep in mind.

Now, leaning back on the history of happiness, why this is important is that our brains are actually hardwired to be a little bit negative, especially the early brain because evolution favored those with a keen awareness of possible problems— threats by animals, threats by other tribes, threats by not having access to food and shelter and things that many of us, billions of people have covered today, our basic human needs.

And so our brain is hardwired still to look for the potential holes in those things and problems, that's losing our shelter, losing our safety, our access to food and water and those kinds of things, all right. So our brain is like looking for problems. And so if we want to think back, and for many of us we imagine or conjure up the idea of like early caveman or some kind of more primitive version of humans, again, being very hard-wired to look for problems but then we evolved and we began to find the capacity to experience joy and pleasure and happiness more.

This was usually found in community, it was found in community, it was found in responsibility, responsibility within the community or within the tribe, within that nuclear component of connection of people meant a lot and it provided a stream of happiness to be able to have a role.

Also guardianship, this is one of the things really hard-wired into us in being parents and to take care of the young, and like having this— this is why babies for us are just so cute, we're just hard-wired to love them which is the weirdest thing because they come out looking kind of like “Mac and Me”, I don't know if you saw the movie “Mac and Me” but they come out looking kind of alien, right? But we're just like, “Oh, this is the most beautiful thing—”

We're hardwired to love and to have guardianship and to take care of these little just super malleable, like little gumby humans that we come out to be. But





with guardianship and also management, this was another place that we found happiness was being able to manage our household and our roles within the tribe. And so all these things help to kind of contribute through the evolution of happiness.

And this is where the story takes an interesting turn. The agricultural revolution appears to be a major obstacle in the evolution of happiness due to the creation of a new social hierarchy. With advances in agriculture, it created a decreased need for reliance on social groups for our survival. And so our responsibilities are feeling of management and our kind of community structures we're transforming. And so this is where we see a change in our happiness structure and how the brain is wired as well.

And so from there, after the kind of agricultural revolution, we moved into another phase in humanity which again, like in my history classes we talked about this stuff, it's like, "Oh, this is awesome, we got factories and whatever," but this was the industrial revolution and happiness took another shift because it began to be more equated with material wealth, accumulation and good fortune. In fact, the root of the word happiness is derived from the words meaning good fortune and luck.

This is where the word is actually derived from, so already happiness is believed in our society at this point to be out of your hands, in essence. And you need external circumstances of good fortune in order for you to have it. So I hope that makes sense. This was a huge shift in our psychological make of. Now, more recently and obviously, there's a lot that happens in these millennia, but most recently we have the digital revolution which has brought forth an entirely new set of obstacles for happiness.

In mini perspective, happiness is defined as getting what you want, it's getting what we want. And to our ancestors the vast majority of the US population has gotten far beyond anything they could have ever imagined, we're living like kings and queens, we're like royalty even if we have, even if we're living in poverty here in this country, having access to food and shelter and television and entertainment and our iPhones and all these different things, it would be like a dream.

Though many of our wants and needs are actually met today, our greater connection that we have, thanks to the digital revolution, enables us to see



what hundreds, thousands or even millions of other people are doing, what they have, what they're experiencing and to see their apparent happiness. And so it creates a lot of borrowed desires, it creates a lot of not-enoughness, and experiencing on a daily basis for many of us, feelings of envy and discontent, and not enough, and a lack of gratitude for what we do have, because we see what others have and kind of natural the hardwiring of the brain is to see that and to compare ourselves.

And so I just want to give us this little brief history, there's so much more to it, but I really want to get into some of these actionable items today. I want to also lay an important foundation to understand that the way that we're living today and how our brain has evolved, it's complicated when we're talking about happiness. This isn't a small thing, it isn't something that's just given to us freely today, but it is something that we all have access to. And there is a science behind it. And so with that said, let's move into a little bit of the biochemistry of happiness.

Now happiness is largely related to the production and activity of hormones and neurotransmitters that include dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin and endorphins. Now, this is the question— What is happiness? What is it? Can you touch it? No, this is something that is intangible, it's a feeling, happiness is a feeling. Now, what does happiness feel like?

This can bring up a whole discussion and a whole array of different feelings, but we do know one thing— happiness feels good, it feels good. Now, dopamine pathway, serotonin pathway, we know that serotonin is largely related, even we're talking about on the genetic level to our experience of happiness. And we talked about this on an episode of The Model Health Show, this was episode 240 with Dr. Robert Lustig. And we talked about happiness versus pleasure. So happiness is more attributed towards serotonin and pleasure is more attributed towards dopamine, we need both, both are important, and they intermingle but there are pathways in our brain and in our physiology that lead to one or the other.

And so dopamine really, it's not necessarily specifically pleasure, it's seeking, it's a drive towards wanting, towards seeking and finding pleasure, that's really what dopamine does in our bodies. And dopamine is more temporary, it's more reactionary, right. When we think about dopamine, we're talking about potential issues with addiction, with wanting these quick fixes to lift us up.

And many of the most powerful narcotics in the world like cocaine and heroin are operating influencing this dopamine pathway, right. And so I want us to be aware of that, again it's not that it's bad, I'm not talking about the drugs, but dopamine is not bad, we need dopamine, it enables us to seek and to progress and to try to take ourselves to another level. But serotonin is about more tied to contentment, peace, more long-lasting feelings of joy.

This can be attributed to an incredible amount of things, it can help us to boost our production and utilization of serotonin. And so it is going to be many episodes that we're going to refer back to and those are masterclasses on those particular subjects, but we're bringing them all together here in this episode for you today. So that's episode 240, we'll have that for you in the show notes, "Happiness Versus Pleasure" with Dr. Robert Lustig.

And so with that said, now we're going to transition to the things that create the activity of more of that feel-good chemistry in your body, the health affirming type of those feelings and not the kind of health detracting or the addictive types, right. So these are things that create more of what we refer to as true happiness, stable happiness and not addiction per se.

And so next we're going to look at the core components of happiness. Now, without these 4 components I'm going to share with you, it's going to be incredibly difficult to achieve happiness, if not next to impossible to achieve happiness. So here are the 4 core components of happiness and keep in mind, these are in addition to having our survival needs being met, even if we're looking at Maslow's hierarchy of needs all the way back with that, there are levels of things that we need to have addressed before we get into community and connection and self-actualization.

We have to have those things met, so I'm just giving that as a given. And again, we've been building on these 4 elements in recent episodes, masterclass episode of The Model Health Show so we're not going to go too in-depth on them, so we can get to the practical application of them all here.

Number 1 here on these core components of happiness, number one is significance. Significance. You have to feel, in order for us to feel long-lasting happiness, we have to feel like we matter, we have to feel like we are enough. We have to feel like we hold significance in the world. And this was highlighted

in the episode we just did recently with Marisa Peer, largely considered the top psychotherapist in the world, so that's episode 387. So we have to have this component met in some form or fashion in our lives, and we're going to talk about how do we do that today, as well. So number one in the core components of happiness we have to feel significance.

Number 2, we have to feel like we're part of a community, we have to have community, we have to have access and communication and connection within a community. And this was highlighted in the recent episode we did, this was episode 384 with Drew Purohit, talking about the science of connection and friendship and community. So definitely listen to that episode, it is a core ingredient in happiness, we have to have this base covered. Basically, 4 bases that we're trying to round here, we're trying to hit the grand salami, all right. So significance, community.

Number 3— purpose. We have to have a purpose, we have to have meaning in our lives and a feeling that we are here for a reason and we're moving toward something. And episode 380 took a deep dive looking at the connection between your purpose in life, your health and your overall success. And so again, you can refer back to that, but we have to have this component, significance, community, purpose.

And finally the other 4 corners or 4 bases there we're trying to round here in order to hit that happiness homerun is number 4 we have to have structure. We absolutely have to have structure and this leans back to episode 385 with Steve Weatherford. We've got so much going on in our world today, people are telling us we need to do all these different things and there's so much drawing our attention, we have to have structure and strategy to maneuver our way through and to define and create and write our own lives in the way that we want.

The environment has a huge influence on our structure and our experience of happiness and connection. For example, this time of year when this is being recorded and released, it's the holiday season. Alright, during the holiday season people just seem to be a little nicer, I think you've probably noticed this. But my thing is like, why can't we just do this every day, right? Why is it this time of year that elicits more kindness and thoughtfulness and, people are waving people on in traffic, just being nicer. Even on my flight, I went and visited some friends and family in St.Louis and then flying back to LA, it was a little bit of a problem.



I got a notice on my phone that the plane was changed and our seats weren't, we didn't have seats anymore, basically. But they're saying, I got on the customer service line and they're just saying, "No, you definitely have seats they'll just give it to you when you get there, everything's going to be fine, trust me." When they say, "Trust me," I don't know, I didn't feel trust, but I got there, I talked to the manager of the airline that was at the desk, she was like, "Well, I can't actually put you in seats here, they'll do this at the gate, everything is fine though, trust me."

Now, I've got tickets for my 2 sons and my wife but I don't have a seat. So I'm still concerned, I'm nervous, I go down there, they're working at the gate and she's working for probably 20, 30 minutes trying to figure out, I still don't have a seat. And ultimately what happened was they offered me just a seat change away from my family a little bit, or of course, one of us can just go and sit a little bit away, but they were like, "You know what, we're going to give you \$1500 for this inconvenience."

Huh? Happy holidays! All right, they were just so wanting to go the extra mile to make me feel— and of course, airlines do this stuff kind of all the time but they just want to over-deliver. We got on the flight, all good, sitting there, I'm just like, "Okay, I've been working, I've been reading, researching, really working my butt off even those past days," and I was just like, "You know what, I am just going to watch a movie." So we get up in the air, I log onto the wi-fi, nothing.

And I mean, I felt like relaxed before I went to log on for the movie, I was like, "Alright, now I'm just going to unplug, I'm going to chill," no wi-fi. And you know how they do in the airline, they requote, reset the wi-fi, and so they did that, still it didn't work and they reset it again. But anyway, it maybe took 45 minutes, the flight attendant came by and gave my wife and me several hundred dollars of credit for the airline, for future tickets. I'm like, "What?"

Everybody's been so nice and then it got me like, "Wow, they're in their holiday spirit," right? So it's the structure and the environment that creates new behaviors of happiness and empathy and giving and over-delivering, but we can have this all year long. And for many of us, what I want to point to is that it really refers back to our routine, it's our structure and our strategy and our routine that largely creates our outcomes of happiness or success or whatever the case might be, because for me, one of my unsaid mantras that I want to



share with you is that, yes we all will have bad moments, I have bad moments but I have no bad days; I can have some bad moments but I don't have any bad days, because I'm leaning on my routine to keep my mind right and to keep me in the state that I want to be in. Things are going to come up but that routine weighs heavy in my perspective and my results.

And so one of those things for me that I lean on is working out, for example. That is a cornerstone in my structure, in my strategy that keeps me in a state that I want to be in, physically and mentally, that is always there for me, I have access to. It might not be the routine that I want, things can even come up and interrupt my objective of working out a certain way, but just doing something physical for me every single day has a multitude of long-lasting positive effects.

And it just, it's a part of my mental makeup that enables me to interrupt patterns of problems, right. Stuff might be going a certain way and I don't know if you've ever experienced this but maybe you're dealing with something and you go and you work that stuff out, you work it out at the gym, you work it out in a hot yoga, whatever, you just process, you just feel better. You feel better when you're able to move your body because it's hacking in a health-giving way that happiness system of releasing endorphins that we talked about.

You're getting a boost of serotonin that we talked about, from that movement and that workout. So again, this goes back to our structure and strategy, so that's episode 385 with Steve Weatherford. Now as you recall from past episodes, your brain actually becomes adapted to the environment and the habits that it's exposed to, this is why structure and strategy are so important.

And neurologist Dr. David Perlmutter states that through neuroplasticity your brain literally changes, the more we dwell on negativity the more our brains become primed for negativity and the more we're inclined to view the world around us in a negative light. On the other hand, the more we dwell on happiness and positive, affirmative thoughts the more our brains become primed for positivity and the more we're inclined to view the world around us in a positive light.

So our brains become trained to look for the things that we create as habitual exposures. And so with that said, now we're going to dive into **7 things that actually encourage happiness**. These are specific tools and strategies to help you to cultivate that happiness and positive thinking that will actually change



the way your brain is structured. And so we're going to dive into these.

**Number 1**, and I want you to take some good notes, so number one of the 7 things that encourage happiness, number one is to **cultivate humor**. Lighten up. I first heard my mother in law say this many years ago, she said that seriousness is a sickness, seriousness is a sickness, and that just kind of floored me like, "Wow, that's deep."

Little did she realize, speaking to my very analytical brain I was just thinking about how our thoughts create the chemistry in our bodies and what we experience, and I was just like, "You are so right," when there's so much opportunity to see the good in life and the funny things and the happiness around me, but there's equal amount of opportunity to look at all the negative and the things that I lack in, and so on and so forth. So cultivating humor is a huge leverage point in actually changing the structure of your brain.

So how do we do this? All right, I'm going to give you something super simple to do and you might be doing it now which is to smile more, smile more. Now I know that a smile and a laugh are not the same thing, but they do live in the same neighborhood. The smile is like knocking on, "Can happiness and laughter come out in play?" They're like next-door neighbors. Do you remember we used to do that? Like you go and actually knock on the door and like you know, "Can Avery come out to play?" That was my friend's name, or Rico, "Hey, can Rico come out to play?" That was my other friend when I was a kid.

And now today, it's just the whole different ball game for many of us, but smile and laugh are not the same thing but they do live in the same neighborhood. And so when you smile, you are literally, there are nerve endings that are connected to your brain that light up certain areas of your brain related to positive attitude and happiness, simply by smiling.

In cultivating humor and lighting up, this is something we all have access to that we can train ourselves to do more frequently, which I'm doing right now, you can probably hear it in my voice, which is to smile. Smile more often, consciously do this. Now, something else that we can do to kind of cultivate more humor and to lighten up is that when something annoying or frustrating occurs, practice flipping it on its head, as soon as you can and find the humor in it.

Now, this is something that I've learned to do and practice in my life on a



regular basis, just because it's just not worth being annoyed at certain things, it's not doing anything but pulling energy from myself and putting me into a negative state, and 99.999 percent of the time nobody else around me in the circumstances even cares or is thinking about how I'm feeling.

And so the story that I shared on a past episode a couple of weeks ago is something that really annoyed me at first and it's from moving to Los Angeles and the gyms that I would go to, just people having this, it seems like a deficiency or some kind of just like mental barrier and putting the weights away, like re-rack your weights. You got the 35, you've got 135 over here, there's another one down where the fives are at, you come to a bar, do some squats and there's already like, 190 on one side and there's like 45 on the other side, just dangerous, right just like re-rack your stuff.

And I literally shared it in a way that it just made it, it was like, it took the sting out of it. And it's actually kind of funny, I even saw it yesterday, you know I'm just like, I go to the gym, but now for me, I've made it like it's just a part of the workout now, you know, like part of the workout is doing a scavenger hunt for my weights. Welcome to LA.

Another thing, by the way, that could bother me but when I was at the gym yesterday there was a dude there and I get it's LA, he had on some Aviator sunglasses and Crocs. He's like lifting weights, like what are you here to do? He had the gold chain, everything, it was like, "You think you're incognito, you think you're hiding?" But for me, it's like, I immediately flip it, and it's just like that's funny but also man, he's getting it in, he's got his Crocs on but he's here, you know, he's here.

By the way, after I walked away from that spot where my man was at, there was another guy there, clearly in a tribute band or maybe he's in a band from the seventy's, I don't know, but he, my man had jeans on, tight jeans, he was older. Bandana tied around the jeans, he's lifting weights, first of all, he is lifting weights in jeans, all right. I'm just like, again, my brain could be like, "What are you doing?" But instead, I'm like, "He's getting it in, he's ready for that reunion tour, boy he is getting it in, he is training in his jeans because he'll be playing in his jeans."

I just create these funny scenarios off of things that might be annoying to other people. But it's funny like if we just lighten up we see the humor and the beauty





in the world around us, so I hope that that makes some sense and just kind of helps to color those lenses to look for the humor in things, things that might annoy you. And there's more, I mean, I've got so many examples of things that might be even more bothersome. But I just wanted to share a couple of examples for you.

So another tip here in cultivating humor and lightning up is to regularly watch, listen to, or read things that make you laugh. So funny shows, my family, we love for whatever reason, we are weird, I don't know why, but we will sit around watching news bloopers for like an hour. I do not know why and there are certain ones that are just iconic for us like this news reporter was, he had his very prestigious voice on, and then like a bug flew in his mouth and he just started cussing and he got super hood so quickly when a bug flew in his mouth and it's just like, I could watch that 1000 times and just die laughing. It's just something that we do.

So whether it's little videos like that, even books that are written by funny people. One of my favorite books in that kind of space, a comedian wrote it is Jim Gaffigan's book "Food, a love story." Now he and I definitely don't have the same approach to food, but just seeing the comedic writing and just having the laughter throughout the book and the jokes, it was really funny and it was enjoyable for me. So regularly watch, listen to or read things that make you laugh, daily.

Do this daily, give yourself this gift daily, it rewires your brain to look for things to laugh and to have joy and to experience more happiness for, it literally rewires your brain to scan the environment and to look for more happiness. All right. Also, another thing that we can do to cultivate humor is to share funny or even embarrassing stories with family and friends. One of the greatest gifts we can do is to lighten up with ourselves and our ego and talk about the funny, embarrassing stuff that might happen to us.

When I was in eighth grade, for example, we went on a field trip to Babler State Park which is this huge, massive, state park in Missouri. So it's a field trip, I got the bag lunch, man, come on, I had the sandwich, I had the chips, everything, the juice box, I'm straight, I'm ready, right. Now, even at eighth grade or seventh grade, juice box is still like a thing, so I have my, I know it's a Capri Sun, so I have my lunch waiting for me, I couldn't wait to get to lunch.

And so our last activity for the day was to use a compass and to find certain points in the forest, this little perimeter that they had put together for us and there were like clues at each one and we used the compass to kind of navigate our way to each point and we're dividing the teams to see who could do it fastest. So my group is about 6 of us, it was like 5 or 6 of us, and I'm killing it like we're way ahead of the group, I got the compass in my hand.

Now I'm not saying I'm Jacques Cousteau, I'm not saying that, but I was managing that compass. But in my group, it's Adam, Adam was the smart kid in school like he just knew he was the smartest kid, all right. And he was kind of, I'm not saying he was whining, but he was whining, just a little bit. And so he was like, "Let me lead, let me find some of these points," I think we had like 3 points to go, we had already found 4. And so I was like, "Here, fine, do your thing man."

And so Adam gets the compass, we find one point then we go on for the next point and we don't find it, and we don't find it for 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes, we're lost in this huge forest, already at least like 30 minutes walk from where our camp is, we're lost. And we're all freaking out. Well, let me not say we're all freaking out. My friend John was super freaking out, he's in the group too. Now John was like, first of all, this is way out of our element, we're from the hood. What are we doing here? All right, so he's like, he's crying about an hour into, he's crying, he's like, "We're going to die," we're like, "John just relax, we're going to be okay."

And so we're lost for an hour, 2 hours go by, and we're just trying to find our way back. And this is trouble, like this could be a big problem. And eventually, I'm just like, "We just got to keep moving in one direction," and eventually we found a road, we found the actual road in between the 2 parts of the park and so we found the road and I'm just like, "We'll just walk along this road until we find something or somebody drives down the road."

And so we're walking down the road and a car drives by and these fools literally jump on the car like zombies. They are banging on the window like, "Help, help," like we've been lost for days. And I'm not saying I was like the more civilized point out, me, I don't think Adam jumped on the car either, we were just like, "Hey guys, just relax, you can just wave them down, we don't have to jump on the car." And it was a couple, they were grandparents and they had their grandbaby with them.

And so we told them the situation and they were like, "Okay, we know where the whatever headquarters is, we will drop you off there." So 5 people piled into his car with this couple and they were so nice and they dropped us off at this center. And so, but the embarrassing part hasn't come yet, all right.

So we get there, get notice to the camp counselors and the school that they found us, so they send somebody to come pick us up, we're all waiting, we're exhausted, I wanted my lunch, I just want to get to my lunch, it's all I'm thinking about, it's like, "I got my sandwich, I did the special, my mom put you know, she put the mustard in a little baggie, so I could like squeeze it like cake frosting, right so it's not going to make my bread mushy right, so I'm just like, "Man I can't wait to have my sandwich."

So we're all sitting on a park bench, a picnic table and little do we know we're under a tree and ticks are just jumping all up into our clothes, they're just jumping all up into us, all up into our crevices. I had no idea, none of us, until we got home and I'm just like, I think I was you know, maybe going pee, but I was like, "What the...!" And I'm freaking out, right, there's a tick on my "junk".

And so I'm yelling to my mom, whatever, and now I'm an eighth grade, I'm in an awkward stage and now my mom is like pulling ticks off of my "junk." And she's just like, "Oh calm down," I'm like, "Mom!" I'm trying like hold it, move it away from her certain way just like, just to get the part. It was so mortifying for me. And we all got back to school, we all kind of had this experience of having these ticks and needing to get assistance for somebody to help get them off of us.

And even though it was a crazy experience, traumatic experience, there's much more to the story than that, but it's also super hilarious looking back on it, and it's a moment I will never forget. I was so embarrassed, this is one of the most embarrassing moments of my life. My mom seeing my development, it was so, such a terrible experience for me but it's also kind of funny.

And so sharing funny stories, embarrassing stories with your friends and family also cultivates your humor as well. And so just one other way that I want to share in this number one on this list is to hang out with people who make you laugh, proactively hang out with your friends who make you laugh that you have a good time with, that you enjoy and you have more happiness and more laughter with.

Give yourself that gift and, of course, you could bring that humor to the table as well. So these are very practical, tangible things that we can do to encourage happiness in our lives. I hope that you got some value from that. And so that was number one on 7 things that encourage happiness. We're going to move on to number 2.

**Number 2** is going to sound like Captain Obvious, but we're going to do something very practical in this and it might sound obvious, but are you doing it? Number 2 is to do things that bring you happiness, do more things that bring you happiness. Happiness isn't a spectator sport, you don't sit on the sidelines and just cheer happiness on. This is something you get in the game.

So what I want you to do is to stop what you're doing, you could stop right after this episode or you can pause this right here, but what I want you to do is to literally make a list, create a list of 10 to 20 things, 10 to 20 things that make you happy. Make a list of 10 to 20 things that make you happy and then once you have that list, this is the most important part, you can really see how your list really matches up with your actual life.

When you list out the things that make you happy and then you analyze your life for many of us we'll see that, "Wow, my life, I'm not including so many of these things." You've got to get it out of your head first and then open your heart, what are the things that actually make you happy? List 10 things. And just to kind of get you started, I'll share a little bit of my list here.

And so I made a list and I think I've got about 15 things on my list, and I'll just, and this could just literally be a few words or half a sentence, so that's what I did here for my list. So this is my list of things that make me happy. Number one, playing trivia games. I love it, I love playing trivia games, I've got so much seemingly useless knowledge in my brain, I know the most obscure, crazy facts, I know actors in movies that I've never seen, like that kind of stuff right. So trivia night, if I'm on your team it's a W. All right, we're going to get that victory.

And there are even fun games even on your phone like apps, like Heads Up that are like a catchphrase, type games where you work with your team or with everybody and they're trying to give descriptions or you're trying to give them descriptions without saying the word, you know, fun games like that. There are so many different things that we can all do, and it is super fun. I even posted like



the app Heads Up, it records a video as well as you are playing the game because it's on you, you place it on your head so you see your family or your friends trying to give you these clues and it records the video.

And so I posted some of that video on my Instagram story. And so if you follow me on Instagram you got to see a little bit of that, it was hilarious. So I am @Shawnmodel on Instagram. You're not following me? @Shawnmodel on Instagram, make sure you follow me, I've got so much cool stuff that I share over there. So that's number one for me, playing trivia games.

Number 2 eating delicious food. It brings me a lot of happiness. Also, delicious food that just happens to be healthy, that just happens to be health-giving. It's not a dopamine-driven type of thing, I really appreciate, I think it's because just all the work I've done over the years and the experimentation and the fasting and all the stuff, I just appreciate food, I appreciate it and I enjoy the subtleties of it. So that's number 2 for me.

Number 3 is lifting weights, maybe it's fortunate, but this is something that brings me happiness, I love doing it, I love working out, I love lifting heavy things, I love going to the gym or training at home. And number 4 for me is working out with my family, it's another thing that brings me a lot of happiness, I love working out my family.

Number 5 for me on my list of things that make me happy, number 5 is watching superhero-themed movies or TV shows, so much, so much good stuff out there. Number 6 is writing. I love, I absolutely love writing. I love the experience of bringing thoughts into physicality, making unique connections in the way that things are stated. Bringing things to life on a page for people, I really love it.

Number 7 is knocking the boots. Number 8— no, we can't pass number 7 like that. Number 7, that really makes me happy, there's some dopamine involved there as well, but yeah, alright, so that's number 7. Number 8 is, for me something that really makes me happy is inspiring other people, that brings me so much happiness in my life.

Number 9 is brightening people's day, there's this little subtle difference here because I'm not like, the inspiration factor might be something like creating a podcast, or doing an enriching social media post but brightening people's day



it's just the simple things, just smiling at somebody, which again, goes back to number one on our list, but smiling really elicit something positive for myself but it's something that I can give away for free and it just, it creates a chain reaction, or complimenting people. I really look for, everybody's beautiful like everybody has some unique feature or style or thing or something, and I love it when I see it, I compliment people all the time.

Some stuff is super weird, for real, but my mind, the way that it works even when I shared the story about the guy working out in the aviators and the Crocs— I just thought he was a different level kind of cool, he's like over there, doing his tricep extensions, I'm just imagining how it feels in those Crocs in the gym. He got his air Crocs on, forget Jordans, you know what I mean? But I just find ways that I can compliment people, if somebody has a new bag that just looks beautiful or cute or nice, and it lights people up so much.

You know how it feels when somebody compliments you when you put thought into the outfit you're wearing or the purse that you've got, maybe you're working for a long time to get that Louis V. You know what I'm saying? So when somebody acknowledges you for that or maybe it's your haircut or whatever the case might be of quality, or just being kind, that really makes me happy.

Or going through the line at the grocery store and I don't just not act like I don't see the person I see them, the person at the register, I see them, I speak to them and that kind of stuff makes me happy. So that's number 9 on my list.

Number 10 is playing competitive sports, I love it, I love it, I love whether it's like basketball, ultimate frisbee, ping pong, whatever, pool, I don't know if pool is exactly competitive— it is, it is, but I just, I love it, I love it so much.

Number 11 watching goofy movies, this is something that you'd be surprised to know, and my wife doesn't really mess with me with this one, we have our 2 different things that are kind of unique to us, we blend on so many things but she doesn't really vibe with me with the goofy movies, she's not going to sit with me and watch The Love Guru, she's not going to sit with me and watch Old School, Old School I mean that's in the middle, right, so that's with Will Ferrell, Vince Vaughn, classic, Luke Wilson.

I still, I say stuff from that movie probably every day even when I have my water a few minutes ago I was like, we were on a break and I was just sipping, I was



like, "When it hits your lips", Will Ferrell was talking about when he's drinking beer, he's like, "It's so good when it hits your lips," and I just did that when I have my water. But a lot of people don't even know that I'm doing it but it's from these goofy movies. So that's another thing that really makes me happy.

Number 12 for me is hearing my wife and kids laugh, that really makes me happy. 13 is reading thought-provoking books, I love that, makes me super happy. Number 14 is listening to my wife talk, that really makes me happy. Now, let me be clear, it's when there's nothing going on and she's not talking about an agenda, things we've got to do, whatever, but just when we're free of that stuff and she's just talking, it's like music, it's like I just love it when I can just sit there and just listen to her talk or even lay on her lap and listen to her talk, I love it.

15 is driving and listening to good music, like I love doing that as well, like for me it's like who doesn't love that? Was that Jerry Maguire Free Fallin'? Come on, man. For me, I'll just tell you what I'm listening to, it's a true story, I was just listening to Michael McDonald. I don't know why. Because I saw somebody who reminded me of him and I let my family listen to it. He's got some classic hitters, boy, Michael McDonald. But real talk, you don't know exactly what he's saying it's like [singing] You don't know what he's saying but it sounds good, bro, you know so Michael McDonald. LL Cool J Going back to Cali.

There's so much built, there are layers there. Rick Rubin, huh? And just for obvious reasons, of course, like with the of course, but just like the layers of the— Masterpiece. I want to talk about Free Fallin', by the way, I love the John Mayer cover of that, man, come on man. Come on now, if you're driving and you don't catch a vibe listening to that when you're driving, where's your soul? Real talk, check it out if you haven't.

Who else am I into? You know Drake is just- I saw this little graphic and showing over the past like 60 or 70 years like the highest selling artist and Drake has been killing it for a long time now, so you got to give him respect. He's got a new one with, Ricky Rosé, Rick Ross, whenever I think of Rick Ross again, I'll tie in something funny, he is just like, [weird sound] you know, I just do that in my mind every time. So I think it's called Money in a Grave, that's a jam. Sabrina Claudio is popping for me right now, but anyway, so just driving and listening to good music.



So do the things that make you happy, if you're feeling a vibe with that nobody else feels it, do that for yourself, do it for yourself. My son, my son's very diverse in the music, obviously, I've got this diversity of music with me, like people never expected, I was talking about my love of country music, several times on the show, ranging from that to hip hop, to like some classical stuff. My kids have this diverse thing, but there's going to be stuff I don't like, like my son Jordan, he might be getting ready for college in the morning, he's listening to 2Pac, but then he's playing like some other artist I'm just like, "What is that?"

Whatever that song is like how is that good, you know? But this is a thing, it doesn't matter if I'm into it as long as he's catching a vibe from it, that's what it's all about. So hope that you take this advice, make a list, it feels good even to just write it down, like write down 10 to 20 things that make you happy and do more of those things on the list.

When I looked at that list I immediately saw the thing that I'm not doing, that I probably said that I really love when I did that 1 through 15 I probably said I love it and I really enjoy it more than any of those 15 and this the thing I'm doing the least of. Which is playing competitive sports, just with the move, all the different stuff going on and whatever reason, I haven't plugged myself in to do that right. So it just gave me fuel to do more of the thing that I really enjoy doing. So that's number 2 on our list of these 7 things that encourage happiness, so we're going to move on to number 3.

**Number 3**, this is what we've really brought forth here on The Model Health Show since the very beginning. Number 3 is invest in your health. It is very difficult to be happy when you don't feel good physically, it's not impossible, it is definitely not impossible, but it's more difficult. It's more difficult to experience empathy, it's more difficult to experience compassion, it's more difficult to experience drive and motivation when you don't feel good.

I've been there, I've had to do things when I don't feel at my best. And we can rise, that's a beautiful thing about humans, we can rise to the occasion. We can. But stack conditions in our favor so that we make it more graceful. And so invest in your health, take care of your sleep hygiene, your nutrition, your exercise and movement practices, the core things that we talk about here on the show.

And part of me, as I mentioned earlier, is the training, physical activity. It's a part





of my routine that gives me a very dynamic cornerstone that I can always rely on to help to get my mind right. The crazy thing I know, many of you have experienced is that some people might be like, "I want to get there but I definitely don't have the experience."

But once you start employing a regular exercise routine in your life and you don't do it, like you stop doing it for a while, maybe it's 5 days a week, whatever you start not feeling like yourself, like you really, you just kind of have a healthier withdrawal, it's not something as debilitating like it would be with like narcotics, but it's just like, "I don't feel right, I'm missing my movement, my exercise." Your body, your brain starts to literally transform to expect and to crave that movement.

And so just even with all the stuff going on and the travel, when I hit the gym yesterday, and I actually worked for a little bit first, but it's still the early part of the morning and something that I utilize whenever I know like just to give me that little bit extra, if I don't have it from training and I've been fasting, maybe I might have a little bit of coffee or whatever early in the day, but it's been a little while, what I utilize is the Total Strength and Performance formula from Onnit, and the reason I do is that it's actually been clinically proven to work a double-blind placebo-controlled study and this was conducted at Florida State University.

And so the study participants utilizing Total Strength and Performance pre-workout, now, number one this is not synthetic, so this is based on Earth-grown nutrients in this formula, but here's what happened when they utilized this in a 4-week study. The test participants utilizing total strength plus performance significantly increased improvement in their one rep max for squat, bench press, and deadlift combined total weight compared to those taking a placebo.

It actually works, now also again, 4 weeks of training with total strength plus performance added an average of 6 kilograms or that's 13.7 pounds to one rep bench press max. Huh? That's 14 pounds. What? Like that is so remarkable and again, this isn't anything synthetic or habit-forming, it doesn't negatively affect hormone function and they actually tested for that to see how it affects hormone profiles and it doesn't, alright. This is just unassisted, really helps with the way that your mitochondria and that your muscle fibers are utilizing and distributing energy.



So I love it, I don't use it all the time but I probably use it maybe at least once a week, sometimes twice a week, sometimes 3 times just depending on how much I got going on and timing of things, but if you're looking for a good pre-workout that is clearly proven to be effective and without all these crazy, synthetic, ingredients definitely check out Total Strength Plus Performance from Onnit, you get 10 percent off anything that Onnit carries, I am a huge fan of Onnit, they've been my family and a part of The Model Health Show mission for, it's got to be maybe 5 years now, you know, I love those guys so much. So you get 10 percent off everything they carry, go to [onnit.com/model](http://onnit.com/model), that's O-N-N-I-T.com/model, for 10 percent off of everything they carry. And so again, referring back to number 3 here invest in your health, this is a cornerstone of happiness. And so we're going to move on to number 4 on our list of 7 things that encourage happiness.

**Number 4** is, this one is really, really powerful. Number 4 is to dwell on past happiness, dwell on past happiness, or a.k.a I call this giving yourself a happy history lesson. So what do I mean by this? We tend to spend a lot of time talking about seemingly negative past events and experiences that help to shape who we are. One of the most negative things in my life was losing my health and being diagnosed with this so-called incurable spinal condition when I was 20 years old, it's devastating, it was a terrible experience.

But it brought forth so much opportunity and positive change in my life, those are the things we tend to focus on. Some people don't get out of those negative circumstances, some people do, but what we don't talk enough about are the positive, happy experiences that help to shape who we are. We don't tend to give a lot of credence to these positive events that really helped in our history, that helped make us who we are as human beings. And so what I want you to do, what I want to encourage you to do is to literally take the positive memories and stories from your past and write them down.

You can write them down, record them on video, you can do a live stream and share the story or the experience, a positive, happy, joyful thing in your life. Do a positive history analysis in your life and use these so that you can be able to refer back to the good things about you that helped to shape who you are. So I'll share a couple of examples just to color this for you a little bit and these were things that I was able to pull things from, these weren't just happy moments, these were things I was able to pull things from and hopefully these can encourage you and bring you more happiness today as well.



So one of those situations was, I lived with my grandmother from kindergarten to second grade and it was an incredible experience, you know very safe, consistent environment, but some weekends I would go and stay with my mother. And we lived, at the time, she lived at the time in not the best neighborhood, what would be considered a bad neighborhood, a dangerous neighborhood.

There wasn't really even a bedroom per se, there was like space where the bed can be and that's where my mother and my stepfather slept and my little brother, he was really a baby at the time, he was maybe like 2 years old, one or 2. We would sleep on the floor, we would sleep on a pallet and there are mice running by, there are bugs, roaches. And so it's very different, I have my own bed in my grandma's house, a very comfortable environment, she tucked me in at night, I now just like to lay on the floor.

And so this might look from the outside like man, that's like some really trying conditions. But during that time, when I would stay over there, my mom worked at Magic Market which is sort of like 7Eleven, and she worked overnight shift. And so when I would get up in the morning, when I was there, she would always bring me a pack of baseball cards home from work that had the bubble gum in it right.

And I was just so happy, I was excited to get up and I would wait for her to get there so I can get that pack of baseball cards. And it was such a light in my life, and I literally kept a lot of those baseball cards until maybe like a year ago, when the wrath of my wife with her like declutter, you know what I am saying, she just is like, "These got to go". It might have been thousands of dollars, I mean I still have some of them though, I kind of hid like I knew it had some value.

But anyway, so I just kept these forever, like those baseball cards and it was like a bright spot, it was a happy thing and that even despite the negative circumstances, negative experiences that I've had with my mother, I've shared stories about her when I'm just in preschool, making me go fight and having the back of my head cracked open, but I do know that she still, she did love me. And that's such a bright spot, it makes me feel good thinking about it that I was special enough for her to remember to bring me a pack of baseball cards every time when she came home from work when I stayed over there.



So that's one story in my history. And so again, looking at your history of happiness, things that shape you, so guess what I do today, I do things to make my kids feel special and that they matter and that they're significant and that they're important I got that from there.

Another story. In eighth grade, but really it was beginning in fifth grade so I went from a city school right, the inner city to in fifth grade I was placed into the desegregation program, the deseg program and we're now being bussed out to the "good schools" and it's a different culture, it's basically a predominantly black neighborhood to a predominantly white neighborhood, and there's going to be obstacles there just in and of itself and maybe there's going to be people who don't necessarily like the way the things are going or the people there, whatever the case might be.

But something really profound happened to me that changed my life and is affecting me to this day. And 8th grade, so this is middle school and we had a writing assignment to basically create a book of poetry in different types of poetry like Haiku, Tankas, and like free form poetry or whatever. But I did my free form poem that I wrote, my teacher Miss Blackmore published it in the school paper.

It was only one person's poems there was a free poem, there were like 3 people got to be in the newspaper but the free form poem she chose me and she published in the school newspaper. And it was read over the intercom that I was, my name, man, that just like changed my life. I felt so, I felt like I was seen, I felt like my voice matters in a world that oftentimes it seemed like I didn't fit in or I didn't have a voice. And it was so powerful for me. And just affirming that I had something to say.

And I know that that moment, I don't know if this would have happened without it, but I know that that was a seed for me writing an international bestselling book, that's now been read by hundreds of thousands of people, translated into 20 different countries and it's just really changed my life, and I'm so grateful, Miss Blackmore, if you're listening, thank you so much for that acknowledgment. And so these stories are just taking a look at your happy history, right taking time and writing down these stories or sharing the stories, maybe you could post them on social media, share them with your friends and family, these happy moments in your history rekindle those flames of joy.

Because even within poverty, like I shared, there is happiness there, even within inequality like I shared, there is happiness there. And within so many other circumstances, you can find happiness and meaning that help you to elevate from your circumstances. And so now we're getting close to the end, and next, we've got number 5 here on these 7 essential ingredients or strategies, or core component to encourage happiness.

**Number 5** is to highlight your strengths rather than your weaknesses, right. Highlight your strengths rather than your weaknesses. We're taught in our culture so often that we have to work on our weaknesses and absolutely true, oftentimes we need to bring those up, but we're missing the point here of we all are unique and we have different unique gifts, talents, capacities, skill sets, experience that really helped to set us apart and make us truly special and unique.

And so if we can focus more on those things, but the problem is we tend to brush those things off, especially if we're good at something or if something that makes us happy that we just happen to maybe we get paid to do, we'll brush it off as something that is just like, "Oh, whatever, it's not a big deal." But it is a big deal, it's just because it's second nature to you oftentimes that you don't acknowledge how beautiful and amazing and powerful that is and you are.

And so, what I want you to do is to make a list of 5 to 10 positive qualities or character traits that you have. Make a list of 5 to 10 positive qualities or character traits that you have and this can include physical features as well. Again, we tend to, this is what we tend to do— "I know I have a great smile but my eyes are too big," or whatever it is or like, "Yeah, I have nice legs but I also have bootydo," and somebody might be like, "What's bootydo?" Bootydo is when your stomach sticks out further than your booty do, alright.

That's what bootydo is, and you are just like, "I've got bootydo so my legs," whatever. Instead of being like you've got some amazing legs, right you have beautiful eyes, you have you know great skin, whatever it might be, whatever might be, you have nice feet, all right. So for a lot of guys that might be a huge plus because if we're looking at the ratio, a lot of guys, I mean if you've seen the movie Lord of The Rings and you've seen the Hobbit that's based on a true story bro, okay. Like a lot of guys got the Hobbit feet man.

So whatever it might be for you like acknowledging those good qualities about



you that are physical, but more importantly the character traits, the qualities of your character. And so what I want you to do is stop picking yourself apart for a moment and to acknowledge the good things about you.

And also, by the way, stop blowing off things and I'm saying this because I've done it and did it for so long, like if somebody gives you a compliment, I was just like, "Whatever." For years you know even on the trip back you know somebody might say like, "You have beautiful eyes," and I would just like, I just see through these like, "What's the big deal," and also the conditions that I was in I never really fit in and so I felt like I'm not quite right, right? And so when I get a compliment I'd be like, I wouldn't even know what to do with it.

And then I was actually doing research for The Model Health Show and it hit me, this was like 2 years ago, which I'm still going to do this show because this is something that we also do. This is, again, what makes this show different is I might be in preparation pulling in stuff for years before I create a master class episode, but it's on improving vision and you know your sight.

And I was researching and I came across I'm just interested in eye color, and I came across these different types of eye color and then I found out that there's this condition and maybe many of you have heard of this before, but it's called heterochromia, right and this is like something like David Bowie, because I got 2 different eye colors but then there's a type of heterochromia called Central heterochromia which is apparently the most unique, rare eye color and basically you have 2 different color eyes within the same eye.

Now I know many of you are listening or maybe you can't even see on the video, but that's, I have that, there's a very distinct color around the pupil and then there's a color outside of that and it's even as we're recording this episode, I stopped because I wasn't even going to talk about this because I was just like, "Whatever, it's not a big deal," and so my team in here knows this, that I still do it, it's like whatever, but if I just be like, "Oh this is pretty cool, that's pretty cool," because what it is actually and what I found in the research is that it's a mutation. I'm an X-Man.

So for me, that could give me a little bit of feeling of like, "Oh man, that is pretty cool, that's dope." And so really, stop brushing off the things that people acknowledge about you that they appreciate about you or that they hold as like something special, which I'm saying this because I'm guilty of it, even still to this



day, because I almost did it, recording this episode. So absorb it. I'm not terrible at it and I've been very great at teaching other people to do it, but when you receive a compliment just saying, "Thank you, thank you so much," like really receiving it and embrace it and stop brushing it off.

And so again, on that list of 5 to 10 positive qualities or character traits about you so and then moving again to the character side, writing down, I'm kind, what are those good qualities about you, about your character: I'm giving, I'm thoughtful, I'm passionate, I'm a passionate person, I'm physically strong, I'm a hard worker, right acknowledging those things. I'm giving, I'm supportive, I'm intelligent.

How often do we acknowledge if we're intelligent right, if we're smart? And what we tend to do is we just brush those things under the table because it's like, it's "who we are," and we take them for granted. And we want to be humble. I'm doing air quotes on humble, we want to be humble so we don't acknowledge the great things about us. First of all, if you have to say that you're humble, you're probably not being humble. Now being humble does not mean not acknowledging your good qualities, that's not what being humble is.

We can acknowledge our uniqueness and the good qualities that we have and be a humble human being, it just means you're not propping them up as a belief that it makes you better than other people. That's what it is. So embrace your uniqueness, embrace the cool things about you, your character, your physical body, it's you, you are a gift, you are unique, there's never been before and never will be after you somebody like you, right? Dr. Seuss, "Nobody can be youer than you."

So it's embracing that, right, that's what all of life that has evolved to this point would expect you to do, because you have the opportunity and the gift of being here right now, why would you belittle yourself and not acknowledge your greatness? So that one, that's number 5 on our list here. We're about to close this thing out, so I hope you guys are getting a lot of joy and inspiration and value out of this. We are going to move on to number 6 on our list here, and this is a list of 7 things that encourage happiness.

**Number 6** is practice gratitude. We talked about gratitude on the show, we've done a masterclass episode on the science of gratitude, but just a couple of key points here. The practice of gratitude has been clinically proven to reduce stress



hormones in our bodies and increase happiness-related hormones, we literally are changing the chemical cascade in our body, shifting towards happiness when we have a gratitude practice.

Maybe it's journaling each day, writing down 3 things you are grateful for to start the day or maybe to end the day but having a gratitude practice. Professor of psychology at UC Davis Robert A. Emmons believes gratitude works because it allows individuals to celebrate the present and be an active participant in their own lives by valuing and appreciating friends and family, oneself, situations and circumstances, it focuses the mind on what an individual already has rather than something that's absent and is needed. So it reminds you of how fortunate we are.

Again if our ancestors could see us now, they would be like, "Oh man, you made it, you made it." So it's refocusing on the things that we do have. And what's so funny is that what you appreciate appreciates, and we tend to get more of that, because your brain is rewiring itself to find more things to be grateful for. So that's episode 320 The Science of Gratitude, check that out if you happened to miss it.

**Number 7**, our final one here on 7 specific strategies that encourage happiness, number 7 is to change your language. Change your language, change the way that you speak to yourself and out to other people. We talked about this in a dynamic way with Marisa Peer on that recent episode, but just in the context of happiness, just think about your response, for example, in day to day interactions when people ask something like, "How are you doing?" If you see somebody say, "Hey, how are you doing?"

And they say something like, "Just taking it one day at a time, just taking it one day at a time." Or they might say, or you might say, "I'm maintaining, I'm maintaining." Or, "I'm getting by." Watch the language that you're using, your conditions might not be perfect but you are alive, you are alive, and you have ample opportunity to change your circumstances but it comes from initiating the language that we use outward and the language that we use within ourselves.

So people I know that personally who proactively changed their language, somebody I know they're just like, the struggle is real, like you ask them how they are doing, or you know, "I'm getting by, I'm making it," and literally like he



started his own, opened his own gym, started really working on himself and his personal development and now most recently when I asked him how he's doing he said, "I'm living the dream." Huh? You're living the dream?

First of all what is the dream, let me live that? And I know it might even be something that maybe he's not living the dream, maybe he is not living his perfect life, but for him to say that, it just evokes something in me, he's like, I like that, I like that, I don't know exactly what it means, but I like it, right. So living the dream or just, "I'm doing fantastic, I'm blessed, I'm blessed."

Or just, of course, the standard, "I'm doing good," or, "I'm great" but really paying attention to the words that you're using and in the moment you can conjure up some gratitude of the thing that you're actually doing great about. Again, it's not always going to be the case and I'm not telling you to falsify the data if you're not doing great, but watching the language so you don't get into a habitual pattern of ignoring your greatness.

And so with that said, monitoring your mind in and of itself and easing up on the complaining, right, that language of complaining, again you're programming your brain to look for more things to complain about. So consciously, if you see yourself complaining or gossiping or talking negatively about yourself or other people, catch yourself, awareness starts the process and ease up on that a bit.

And compliment more often. So critiquing and complaining, the cure for that is complimenting, it's the actual cure for that. So complimenting, whether it's to the person, like I said outwardly doing or even just within your own mind and complimenting people, "Oh, they have such beautiful hair," or, "Oh my goodness, I love their sunglasses." Or, "I love how they are with their kids, that's beautiful." Or that person, the couple, just complimenting more in your mind if not outwardly to other people, it's a cure for complaining. And you can be that for other people, you can be the light when you step into the room.

I hope that this brought a little bit more light and joy to your day and you can actually come to a place where others can help to light of your world as well and you can bring your light to our incredible community that we have, it's Model Nation and it's a free place but it's only if you love The Model Health Show, not like it's cool, but if you love The Model Health Show, come on over to Model Nation, we've got, I mean, I'm talking about just serotonin out the wazoo, I don't



think that's ever been said before, might not be said again, but serotonin out the wazoo, just because of the good energy and the love and the sharing and the support.

You can get access, go to [themodelhealthshow.com/modelnation](http://themodelhealthshow.com/modelnation), modelnation together is one word, one entity, and get connected to our community, it's popping over there. So pop over there, check it out, it's [themodelhealthshow.com/modelnation](http://themodelhealthshow.com/modelnation). And again, I hope that you got some value out of this episode, if you did please share it out with the people that you care about, leave a comment below the video, let me know what you thought of the episode and what one of your big takeaways was from this episode.

And we got some incredible stuff, we've been building on different pieces over the years that we're going to start putting together more powerful masterclasses to really help you to move forward as we go into this New Year and far beyond and creating the life and the happiness that you truly deserve to have. But it starts with us laying the foundation and taking advantage of these simple tools and putting them in play in our own lives. I appreciate you so much for tuning into the show today, take care have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

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

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