



EPISODE 407

How To Reduce Anxiety And Maintain Your Health During A Lockdown

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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. This is a very, very special episode. We are on location at my house. Right now, our society is experiencing lockdown, quarantine. Many people that might be feeling like Akon right now.

Oh. So we're just itching to get out and get back to a place of normalcy but really, what our life experience was prior to this is going to be no more. Life is not going to be the same after this. But my question and my premise and my mission for you is to come out of this better than you went into it. Is to come out of this situation, this quarantine, this lockdown, this huge societal concern better than when you came into it. And that's what we're going to be talking about today because messages have been flooding in asking me, "What can I do about the anxiety I'm experiencing, the added stress, the uncertainty, the fears that I'm carrying? What can I do to just maintain my health when I'm not able to do the things that I once did?" And the truth is, we're being honest, we're locked up with all the snacks. This isn't like Akon's song about the prison. This is like we got snacks on snacks on snacks available at all times. And the quarantine 15 is a real phenomenon. Some of us are going to get hit by it. Watch this. Just like the Freshman 15 was a thing, quarantine 15, you heard it here first, it's going to be coming on hot and heavy for a lot of folks, but it doesn't have to.

Now, today we're going to dive in and really look at what are some practical, clinically proven solutions to dealing with the current state that we're in right now, as far as our mental health and our health overall. And so I'm really excited about diving into this. And this is again, this is a guerilla style, we're at my house, don't know what's going to happen. A chopper might fly by. The Governor might be in it, the chopper. This is California, so that might happen. The dog might bark, I don't know. But you're on this ride with me and I'm grateful for that.

So we're going to go ahead and jump right in here. And again, the messages

that have been coming in have been overwhelmingly looking at, "What do I do about this stress and about this loneliness that I'm experiencing? How do I modulate and manage my health practices now that the gyms are closed and I'm having issues with getting the food that I want?" So we're going to talk about all that stuff today. But we going to look at... And this is really what I do in my approach and what The Model Health Show has been all about since the very beginning is, let's not talk about the surface stuff until we talk about the root. Let's talk about the root issue because what we tend to do with our conventional approach to health and so many other things is we try to treat the symptom. We try to treat the manifestation of deeper underlying things instead of removing the root cause, so the outermost symptoms don't even exist anymore. Because if we don't take care of the root, we're going to continue to try to trim and pick off the exposures, because these fruits that is bearing from our worry tree, those fruits have roots, and once we get rid of the roots, we won't have to experience and try to treat the symptoms.

So I hope that makes sense, and that's what I would really want to look at first and foremost. So, right now, the root cause of our heightened stress, right now, what is it? What is creating this pervasive fear, because it's not the virus that's creating all of this fear. It's our perception about the virus and about how society is working in response to the virus. The virus definitely can have a component of fear attached to it, but it's how we're reacting to it. Let me help to kind of clear up what I mean by that. I think that this is really summarized in a quote from Chris Hadfield, and he's an astronaut and former commander of the International Space Station. My man's dealing with outer space level uncertainty and fear. Now what he said was this powerful quote that really stuck with me is that "the best antidote to fear is competence". The best antidote to fear is competence. Truly understanding a circumstance, not because of what you're told to understand, but because you're looking at multiple perspectives. And right now we're being inundated by sensationalized media. Of course, we do have some challenges right now that we're experiencing, but for the most part, people are okay. But we're not going to report on that.

We do want to help the people that are not okay. And the best way to do that is to come from a place of well thought out reasoning and a place of service, which is very difficult to perspective-take and to serve. That's why so many other people are like every man for themselves right now when you are not in a place of true understanding of what we're dealing with and you're just reacting to what the media is saying versus having a true intelligent competency and



understanding about your actual risk and what we're dealing with. So with that said... Let's just give an example, by the way. So, when I'm talking about it's not easy to help other people or it's every man for themselves right now, for a huge amount of people this is true and it's normal because when fear and worry and uncertainty creates this chemical soup in our brain and it literally changes how our brain is operating, it can lead to instantaneous, irrational behaviors. Like for instance, okay, there's this virus going around. What am I going to wipe my butt with? That's the thing coming up for people. Virus going around, I need some stuff to wipe my butt with. Tissue, toilet paper, apocalypse takes place. Everybody starts going out and buying up toilet paper. Irrational. How important is toilet paper on the hierarchy of needs?

It doesn't make sense, does it? Fighting, biting, fistcuffs over TP is the strangest thing. This has never existed in human history for sure. Fighting over food, I can even get that, I can rationalize that. But toilet paper, very irrational. But this is that fear response that happens. And in truth, if it really came down to it, toilet paper is such a lower rung of priorities, there's so many other things you can use. Have you ever used a baby wipe? It's probably nice. Paper towels, tissue, facial tissue, your significant other's shirt that you absolutely hate, that blouse that you would rather... From Hawaii. If it came down to it, you can use it. Washcloth. Right now when people are going ransacking... Again, the store shelves, the same thing, with food... But tissue was first, but food... But the people are going for the non-perishable canned goods, ramen noodles, that kind of thing.

The produce section of the store was largely still intact and plenty of stuff to choose from, especially the greens. There were collards galore, Swiss chard in abundance, kale in droves. If it came down to it, you can use kale as an apparatus for cleaning your behind. I know it's gross, I'm sorry, but if it came down to it. Again, it's the way that we're seeing things. A bidet, you can make a homegrown bidet. You got a hose, you can get your butt clean. Irrational, "I going to get tissue, I'm going to die. I'm willing to fight and stand in line for two hours to get tissue." It's irrational, irrational behavior. My wife is from Kenya. She told me a story long ago because they didn't have a bathroom, they had a outhouse basically, kind of thing, which was basically a hole in the ground. I'm like, "What do you use for tissue?" She was like, "Newspaper." I was like, "No," I was just shocked. But this was just the nature of reality there. She'd never thought anything of it being in that situation. And how poetic would it be to take an article from the newspaper about people fighting over toilet paper and

wipe your butt with that article? There's poetry available everywhere.

Now, I know this is getting a little weird, a little gross, but what I'm saying is, our irrational behaviors take over when there's so many other options for things like that. But it's like, we start to get into this place of fear, and hoarding, and protection of self and not forgetting that we are all literally a human family. We come from the same DNA, the same human genome. And even if you would trace... Well, there's all these ethnicities and there's all this other stuff, if we trace it back even further, we come from... And I'm talking about billions of years further, billions of years further. If we take a meta-perspective of this thing, we come from stars. This supernova exploding and creating all of this stuff. You were made of the same stuff that you look up in the sky and see. We're so much bigger than this, and we get to a level of absurdity and stupidity when we forget how remarkable we truly are and we're fighting over toilet paper.

As I digress. So with that said, we understand some of the rational behavior... Or, I'm sorry, irrational behavior that could take over, but best antidote for fear is competency, becoming competent in the subject. That's what I strive to do. If you happen to miss the episode from a couple of weeks ago that I did on the pandemic situation, the human virome, talking about the truth about viruses and how... Right now, your body, that amazing body of yours, you have over 300 trillion virus cells in your body right now. If you saw me on YouTube, you see I did the Denzel Washington fingers. You, viruses don't have nothing on you. You are really made viruses... 8% of the human genome is viruses. You are largely made of viruses. We have to have a better understanding of the landscape here.

Of course, there are pathogenic viruses that we interact with, but our immune system evolved by basically viruses facing off against other viruses to develop and have the immune system that you now have today. And even when you get a vaccination, which is what everybody's looking for, the vaccine doesn't make you immune, your immune system makes you immune. It's your immune system reacting to the vaccine, which is usually a dead virus strain, a weakened virus strain, or some other version of the virus. And then your immune system adapts to it, your immune system makes you immune. We need to learn how our immune system works. Listen to that episode, share it with the people you care about. I've received so many incredible messages and I'm so grateful. When people saying, "This is exactly what I needed. I was worried, I was concerned, I had a lot of fear, this made me feel better." I've never seen a response like that,



and I'm so grateful that I can be here right now in this time, and to be a voice of science and sound reasoning for you.

And also again, but I can't do this by myself. The bigger conversation is still very challenged because it's hyperfocused on the problem and not on rational, real-world solutions. And so, I need you to make sure that you check the episode out and share it with people you care about.

And so, let's talk about how to address the anxiety that we would naturally... Any of us is going to experience. And even because of social contagion, this is a real phenomenon backed by science, you will feel anxiety simply by being human right now in this situation. But we have to have practices because again, you do not rise to the level of your expectations, you fall to the level of your training. You do not rise to the level of your expectations, this is what my potential is, you fall to the level of your training. How have you trained yourself to deal when stress manifests itself because it will. And so, what I want to encourage us to do is... Let's start with some very practical things. We have to have... Right now, it's easy to... We're closed in, we're Akon locked up, we're not able to go out, to go to the movies, to go out to eat, to go see friends and family. For the large part for many of us, what do we do to keep ourselves sane? Literally, we could start to go a little stir-crazy. Even if you can go outside, you're still not able to live your life like you once did.

So what do we do to address that anxiety? So a very practical thing is, we have to have, what I like to refer to as a mental treat. We need to give ourselves mental treats, and we have to practice peace. It's so easy to be consumed by messages of fear, we're just watching news. Some people are habitually addicted to watching the news right now, to stay up-to-date with all the problems, which is highly sensationalized, emotionally-driven to keep you hooked. It's how the news works. It's not just because of this, it always works like that. And so, having that as a thing or just... Not a mental treat, but more like, I guess, mind candy. Treat doesn't have to be unhealthy, but candy? Not so healthy. But mind candy or mental candy is like going and bingeing on the Netflix, which I want you to. I have. Okay? Go and knock out. Go and binge-watch a season. Go do that.

But we cannot allow that to consume our life either and create this huge distraction and not have the time to really have introspection, and self-assessment, and healing through this process. Because in one way or another,



you're not going to come out of this the same no matter who you are, no matter if you're locked in or if you have an essential job, or what we're referring to as an essential job, and you're trying to modulate in the world where everybody's walking around you in fear and wearing a mask, and your sense of certainty and peace in the world is skewed. So we all need these practices. So we need a practice of presence of peace. So what do I mean by that? You need a mental treat that's good for your spirit, something that brings you back to you gets you out of the external, which is so addictive and gets you that relationship developed with your internal.

You live with yourself all the time. This is the most important relationship in your life, in your reality, always has been, always will be, but it's easier than ever to ignore it. It makes everything else harder in our lives if we don't address how we're interacting with our self. The thoughts that we have, how do we interact with those thoughts, the thoughts that we're producing. How do we produce better thoughts? So what are some things that we can do? This is, again, addressing the root of diminishing the anxiety. And I'll start with some simple things. Shinrin-yoku. Simple? He's going to drop some Japanese on me? Yeah. Forest bathing, clinically proven to help to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, turn off the fight or flight. Go walk in nature, it's called forest bathing. Really strange name. If I saw someone forest bathing like from what my perspective would be, I'd have to make the call, you know 911. Somebody's bathing. But forest bathing is like taking in the natural environment. But I'm not snitching, I'm not, I'm sorry.

But real talk. How often are you getting out and getting exposure to fresh air in nature? You need it. It's instant reduction in anxiety and depression, and the stress-related hormones when you can get some fresh air, some sun exposure if at all possible, listen to the birds. You can still social distance if you're afraid. You can go to the nature walk, keep some distance from your friend. Keep your distance from the squirrels, whatever makes you feel good, but you need some nature. Okay? Number one. Another way to help to address and abate some of this anxiety is to have some quiet time. We can implement many different things within this quiet time, within this space. Obviously meditation is something we've focus on here because of all the tremendous science supporting: Clinical trials, peer-reviewed evidence of the benefits of meditation. I did a meditation today.

And again, we're all experiencing this. I definitely see myself as somebody who's



really done a lot of inner work to be able to be prepared for the stress that is around me right now and to be a source of stability and strength. I feel it and I feel that pulling on me, and I'm here for it. I know that this is why I'm here today. This is why I'm alive right now. But I realize that that anxiety that I'm feeling, all the... So many questions and just concerns. I sat to do my meditation and I felt some discomfort in breathing deeper because I didn't realize I was breathing more shallow, the last... I don't know how long. And so, as I'm really focusing on my breath, and expanding my lungs and breathing, breathing out, getting all the air out of my body, I can feel this. And for me, as even as I'm saying this, it's a very slight thing. But that inner work you notice are slight changes. But I could feel myself trying to clinch, trying to hold on, trying to not let go, and to be present and to understand that things are okay.

It's just a slight thing where I'm holding on. And so doing some breath work, some meditation, prayer would be great for many people right now. Some time, and just go within and commune. We need that. But also this quiet time could be a good book. Some time with a good book. Kick your feet up, listen to an audiobook, would be great. There's one Sleep Smarter was really good. Or listen to a podcast. Even if you're doing essential work and you're in your car or whatever transportation, putting those headphones on and listening to something or listening on your radio, your car radio to something that feeds your spirit, that brings you back to your center, that reminds you of how powerful you are. What can be more important right now? Another thing is right now, this is a great opportunity. Again, I want you to be better coming out of this thing than you were coming into it. This is a great opportunity to learn something new. But something that feeds your spirit, something that makes you feel good, something that excites you that you're fascinated by. For myself, nerd alert, oh man.

Right now, my son and I, my eight-year-old son, Braden, we're watching this show on Amazon called, How the Universe Works. And I love it, I love it. It's such a... Just powerful reminder of the grandness of things and also how minor our afflictions can be and to being able to take multiple perspectives and just to better understand how all of this stuff works. Of course, I've studied a lot of this for many years, but it's great to have that rather than reading a book. I've got books I've read from Einstein, things like that, but you get this visual feedback as well. So again, you could binge on something that also feeds your spirit, not just Joe Exotic, but also things that feed your spirit. Shout out to the Tiger King. And so, these are all things that are allowing me to learn something new. So



maybe for you, it's a new skill that you want to develop, maybe it's a course you want to take, maybe it's something for your coaching practice, maybe you're realizing that "Hey, this time, nothing is guaranteed with my nine to five, I need to get a new skill. I need to start that business that I've been thinking about.

The sidepreneur thing that I've been working on, I need to go full-time into it, right? We've got great resources from guests we've had on The Model Health Show we'll put in the show notes for you. Jamal King, Pat Flynn, Chalene Johnson, Andy Frisella, so many great episodes talking about the financial career side of things. So, learn something new. If you come out of this quarantine being the same person that went into it, first, it's next to impossible. But still just trying to hold on to the old you, you're missing on a huge opportunity, huge advantage because again, even when this is being recorded, we don't know when "This is going to be over." I've done a lot of quotes, this episode, but we won't know when this is going to be over the timeline, but also life as we know it will change, but will it change for the better? That's up to us. That's up to us as a society to truly understand what's at the heart of this thing and how we relate to health issues in our culture.

So another thing we can do that has some clinical evidence, we've talked about on The Model Health Show, some of the evidence backing this up, but journaling, journaling can be very cathartic to get the things rattling out around in your mind out on paper, can be a healing tool. So you could journal, you can dictate and do a diary. The 2020 Quarantine diary. That might be a popping book, later on. That's another thing that we can do is just start writing. Do a writing project. Maybe you got a book in you, you've been wanting to write for many years. Maybe you've got a memoir or maybe a fictional story.

There's non-fictional information that you want to put together for folks, and share from your experience, this is a great time to do it. That's another thing that I'm doing with my son, Braden, is he's working on writing his first book right now. I went from being the host of the number one health podcast in the country, speaker, author, creator of different programs, products, nutritionist, to being a second-grade teacher, like that. All of a sudden... I didn't sign up for that. School's closed though. So now I'm second-grade teacher as well. My wife and I tandem. I like to see myself as, I don't know, maybe principal? I don't know. No, she's the principal. Who am I kidding? But what we did was we saw... He's just tearing through the work and getting done in two hours, which is a whole day of school. He'd be gone for seven hours. What are you doing? I want to



know what the school is doing with my son for seven hours when he's done in two? Never mind. So what we've been doing is taking some extra time and working on different projects. Right now, he's working on a book. It's a Ninjago story, based on one of the characters Kai from Lego Ninjago. He loves the Lego Ninjago. So he's creating a story of Kai, and in his story, there are pieces of relationship, development of friendship, perseverance, distinguishing between right and wrong, hidden agendas and ninjas. Sprinkle in some ninjas makes it all fun.

So that's another thing that we can do. Art projects. You might be like, "I don't have a artistic bone in my body." I promise you do. I promise you do. This is great for your brain. It brings us to the present. Some of us, it can be stressful, okay, to try to create art. But let's find some art that you don't feel stressed by. Maybe it's taking pictures. We all have cameras now, but maybe you can get a fancy camera and do it. Maybe it's creating videos, you know what I mean. TikTok is popping right now. Maybe it's painting, maybe it's drawing, many different things that we can do to engage in some art creation. Maybe it's sculpting. Maybe you watched Ghost back in the day, you're like, "I've been dying to do that whole sculpt thing. It was super sensual by the way if you haven't seen Ghost, like what? So anyways, but I don't know what it might be for you. There are many different things that you can do to employ some art and help that part of the brain. It helps to kind of turn off that analytical worry thinking brain when you create. It works. Now, the next thing... Let me get a sip from the... If you can only see the words that are written on my glass right now. I'm just going to say it, "Let that shit go." That's what it says right on my glass. Thank you, this was a gift from my good friend Cynthia Garcia, love her.

So the next thing we got here is exercise. This is huge. This is a huge player in anxiety if we look at the clinical evidence. And stress modulation, we cannot allow ourselves to look past how important this is. Researchers at the University of Bristol found that exercise actually changes the expression of genes in the brain. Wait, what? Exercise changes the expression of genes in the brain. Specifically, they noted, genes that are related to a heavy influence on how we cope with stress. Genes that have a heavy influence on coping with stress are modulated in the brain when we exercise. Come on now, our whole perception of the situation of the reality right now is based on what's happening with our brains, we can literally exercise and change the expression of the genes in our brain related to stress, to reduce the impact that the world is having on us, the fear, the worry, the uncertainty that leads to irrational behaviors. So that's one

thing.

Another one, this is a study published in the Journal: Frontiers in Psychology revealed that lifting weights help to reduce symptoms of anxiety for study participants. This is specifically noted to reduce anxiety better or at least equal to some of the most popular anti-anxiety medications. Exercise, your body, your genes expect you to exercise, we need it. Now the question is, what do we do? What if your lifeline was the gym, that was your Mecca, that was your therapy session, going to the gym. The gyms are like, "No, no, no. You can't come here now." What do you do? Well, this is again providing a great opening and opportunity because the reality is, for many of us we depend on gym equipment at the gym. Some people, they haven't seen a barbell in weeks and they're already they can taste their gains leaving, they can taste it in their mouth, the gains just dissipating, you don't need the barbell in order to maintain and create gains.

But this is creating an opening for us to realize that if you have a body, you have a gym, if you have a body, you have a gym, your body is a great tool for resistance training, but our mission is to become more physically literate during this situation, learning how to use our body in creative ways and create resistance to get those benefits like noted in this study from Frontiers in Psychology. So obviously hallmark exercise, push-ups, for some people, kneeling push-ups crushes 'em, for some people, regular push-ups is just not enough like, "I could do these all day Shawn."

What about if you do eccentric? Super slow coming down, explode coming up. What if you elevate? Utilize gravity to make it harder, put your feet up on a stability ball, or a chair or you can go so far as putting your feet up on the wall to get completely vertical, and you're doing a handstand push-ups, mister, this is too easy. There's so many different things that we could do creatively with our bodies to add that resistance to it. That being said, there are wonderful implements that we can have and you might be in a situation where all you've got is the two little princess dumbbells, two little five-pounders, little pink, maybe little blue, little five-pounders, little Grammy weights. No, disrespect to Grammy, okay? Meemaw, momo, popo, papa. We have lots of different names for our grandmas and granddads, there are some grandparents killing it right now, as far as the physical fitness, they can outlive many of us, let's be honest.

Now, with that said, we might find ourselves all we have is little baby weights.

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We'll call them baby weights, that's all we got. This is an opportunity again to see like, "Oh, wait a minute. I need to have some form of a weight implement for myself so that no matter what happens, I have something I could do resistant training with." Again, you don't need it to survive, but once you have a physical like a weighted implement, it provides us hundreds of different exercises we can do. If you've got one kettlebell, this opens a door for dozens if not hundreds of different exercises we can now do or add to exercises that make them more challenging or creative. And so even a bodyweight squat, we can take that template like you're just like bodyweight squats are too easy, I'm not getting that muscles stimulation, what if you use one leg? One leg? You're like, "Well, maybe I can't do one leg, I can't do the pistol squat." I promise you can. Different levels to it, you can use a chair and just do a one-leg squat.

Just come up using one leg, sit down. You can use something that's kind of like a support, find a pole, maybe it's on your front porch or the staircase has a railing you can hold on that and do pistol squats, just hold on to something to lower yourself and come up. It's becoming more physically literate. If we have the kettlebell, we can do sumo squats, or we can do Turkish get-ups, we could do snatches and swings and so many other things. But these are pieces I've been accumulating over years now. I'm not the guy to go ball-out on gym equipment. I've just been picking up a piece here, piece there, piece there. But a lot of my equipment I've been so ahead of the curve because of the people that I'm connected to, and this is the thing, this is the new thing. And I've got steel clubs and maces, kettlebells, primal bells. The primal bells are like kettlebells with these cool the orangutan face and the chimpanzee, the howler monkey, there's the little one that my youngest son uses. And also I can use for different things as well. But I get these from Onnit. Now, truth be told, people are getting the memo and they're buying up these kettlebells like crazy.

They're out of stock right now, but they still have available steel clubs, steel maces. Get yourself one of those. I recommend to get the light one. Do not be like, "No, I need the big one." No, you don't. The way that these things are designed are incredibly challenging to use. And so Onnit also has their programs to take you through and show you how to use these different things. They got free stuff online. But I highly recommend get yourself a steel club, steel mace. I'm telling you right now, you're going to thank me later. Go to onnit.com/model that's O-N-N-I-T.com/model. You get 10% off all their fitness equipment. But also they have some incredible supplements and foods and things of that nature as well. But... Let's move on. So another study conducted at Appalachian State

University found that walking, simply walking caused short-term boosts in immune parameters most notably for neutrophil and natural killer cell blood counts. In the episode we did talking about the immune system, talking about the virus and how the virus works, how our bodies work in reaction to viruses. I talk, and I highlight how natural killer cells work. Simply going for a short walk boost.

These immune parameters including natural killer cells. When you see the post out there from these government bodies saying, "You can't boost your immune system." Do they read? Do they actually read clinical evidence 'cause it's right there. There are so many things you could do to support your immune system and there are so many things you could do to absolutely crush your immune system, in a bad way. So walking is one of those fundamental things. We're designed to walk. Get outside and walk. Nobody is putting cuffs on you, Akon's song's still in my head, keeping you from outside. If you're worried about the social distancing thing, obviously, you can work around that. But we need to be outside. We need to walk. If you've got a treadmill. If you've got whatever, just find a way to walk. Your body really does need that. Your immune system needs it. So many great resources out there. We've got folks like Shaun T who does a lot of bodyweight exercise programs. But here's the bottom line. Right now, we need this more than ever but we have these limits in our minds. I'll tell you right now, this is the best form of exercise. Are you ready?

The absolute best form of exercise is the exercise you'll actually do. I know it sounds crazy. I'm going to say it again. The best form of exercise is the exercise you'll actually do. What will you actually do? That's the best form of exercise. It doesn't matter how good HIIT training is, if you don't do it. It doesn't matter how good swimming is if you don't do it. It doesn't matter how... Fill in the blank. The best form of exercise is the exercise that you'll actually do. That's the best thing for you. But we put exercise into these boxes, like, that's not exercise, but exercise is movement. Anything where you are moving the human body can be considered exercise.

So dancing, roller skating... I saw Mike Epps on Instagram. He's roller skating in his house, hardwood floors. I'm not saying to do that, but if that floats your boat, and you have skills with the roller skates, I'd be concerned. I don't like having wheels on my feet. I'm just going to be honest about it. I missed that boat. But roller skating... This can be playing games, physical games. You can go to a basketball court and just shoot around. Not... Obviously, the indoor courts



are closed, but maybe there's outdoor playground around your neighborhood. Go out and just work on your dribbles. How's that left hand? If you're left-handed, how's that right hand? Go, just work on that. Physical games like Twister, right? There's so many different things we could do, but we put it in this umbrella, like "This is exercise, going to the gym," and that's just not true.

So this is another big piece of this equation with addressing the anxiety that we're experiencing. We have to move our bodies, we have to exercise, but there's one other piece I want to mention really quickly. When we're talking about anxiety, when we're talking about stress, stress eating is a real phenomenon. We're cooped up, caged up in the house with all the snacks. If it's in the house, it's going to be in your belly, you know what I mean? But again, we can still allow ourselves to have some treats, to have some good stuff. We want the basis of our diet obviously, to be real food, health-affirming foods, but we going to have our snacks as well.

And so, I just ordered literally... Hopefully, it's coming in today, but I just ordered a new shipment of some of my favorite snacks. And one of the things that I'm really in love with right now... I don't really talk about that often, but I'm going to talk about it now, because I just ordered a lot more, is the fat butters. Fat butters. Now, you're probably like "Shawn, what is a fat butter? What is that?" Well, these are traditional "nut butters", but then we add in some incredible superfoods along with it. And so, one of the ones that I got is a snickerdoodle. And by the way, these are organic nut butters. So this is snickerdoodle: It's cashew, macadamia nut, coconut butter, hemp seeds, organic lucuma, so there's a delicious sweetener that goes in there. We got some cinnamon in there, salt, you got to have the salt in there. If you don't have the salt in nut butter, what are you doing? It brings out all the flavors, and Stevia is in there as well. These are the nut butters which are taken to a different level if we're talking about adding some macadamia nut in there. This is the fat butters from Onnit.

So they got the Snickerdoodle. They've got the traditional creamy peanut butter as well. Let me tell you about their peanut butter. What's in the peanut butter? So we've got organic peanut. What's peanut butter without peanuts? Macadamia nut, organic chia seeds in there, organic coconut oil, Pink Himalayan salt, delicious. You've got the almond butter as well, you've got the chocolate hazelnut, fat butters are special, they're on point. Great for like having with... Depending on you, maybe you're into the crudités, maybe a little slice of veggies on there. Maybe you do the Celery Boy or the carrot stick, I'm not a big



fan of those. I like apple slices. I like that with my nut butters or maybe you're just using it for your smoothies and things like that. It's just delicious. It's just delicious. So many things you could do with it.

I've even been known to use some almond butter to make some great dressings, salad dressings with. I know it sounds crazy, but it's hella good. The snickerdoodle, you just got to be careful just to not just eat it straight and just kill it. But actually, the crazy thing is like these are so satiating, it's very challenging to eat a lot of it. It tastes amazing, so you'll definitely want to dig in, but it's really tasty, really special. So I get that from Onnit as well as my MCT oil that I use every single day in a coffee or a tea.

I love the MCT oil so much. I'll use it in smoothies as well. And we've got evidence now. So the MCTs are one of the things that we can utilize because they're able to cross the blood-brain barrier and actually feed the neurons in your brain which a lot of things are not able to cross the blood-brain barrier and actually get into the brain itself. And so that's one of the benefits of the MCT oil. Also, we found benefits to the microbiome, we found benefits towards... Since it's such a high converting energy, it doesn't have to go through the process of getting broken down into these amino acids or whatever the case might be, it goes directly to your cells and it's a great form of energy to provide to ourselves. It triggers the body to produce ketones which is an alternative fuel, even if you're not fasting or on a keto diet, things like that. MCT oil is fantastic. The reason I love it from Onnit, and I keep it stocked. I keep it stocked is the fact that it's emulsified MCT oil. So that means it's kinda like a coffee creamer and it has these delicious flavors. My favorite is the almond latte.

My wife loves the vanilla. They also have a strawberry. They have some savory ones for salads, things like that. So anyways, I can go on and on. I love the snacks and products over at Onnit. It's onnit.com/model. It's an O-N-N-I-T.com/model. Get you some. So let's move on and talk about another huge overlooked modulator of stress and anxiety, and it's also one of the most important drivers of your immune system, and this is your sleep. Guaranteed, anxiety level, stress levels are going to be elevated exponentially if our sleep quality is deranged. Now, right now, during this time period in human history, you're either most likely in one of two camps. During this lockdown, you're either sleeping a lot more or you're sleeping a lot less. Which camp are you in? This is a safe space, you could share with me. A lot of people are sleeping a lot more, a lot of people are sleeping a lot less. The normal routine is gone. I get it. Right now, it's kind of



like we're all living in a virtual Groundhog's Day.

I'm feeling super Bill Murray-ish myself, right now. I'm just being honest, it's kind of like a perpetual Tuesday. And Tuesday's the most disrespected day of the week. Let's just be honest about that as well. Monday is the beginning of the week. We got TGIM, right? Monday. Wednesday's hump day, it just sounds good. Anything with hump in it. Thursday, it's almost Friday. That's Thursday's claim to fame. And Martin used to come on Thursdays. Friday is freaking Friday. There's songs about Friday. So many. Just got paid, Friday night. Saturday, full-on weekend. Immersion. Immersion. Weekend. Glory. And Sunday, you've got... It's the day of rest. Or there's another day kind of quote free day, get prepared day, activity day, spiritual practice day, whatever it might be, Sunday's got that juice. Tuesday. What? What are you doing Tuesday? What are you doing? What are your goals Tuesday? Where do you want your life to go?

But thanks to Drake... Okay? You got a song at the club going up on a Tuesday.

He gave Tuesday a little bit of shine. And so since then, Tuesday's been kind of acted different. But anyways, it just seems like a perpetual Tuesday. And so, with that said, our sleep patterns can get skewed. To say the least. Now, here's why we want to address this. Research published by the Mayo Clinic shows that people who don't get quality sleep or enough sleep are far more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus. This isn't just hearsay. This isn't just guessing. It isn't just... It sounds nice. These are fundamental basic things, basic principles of reality of the human body. If we're not addressing this, why are we talking about all this other stuff? Basic things. So with that said, on the stress front, let's talk a little bit about that.

Poor sleep quality and sleep deprivation create dramatic detrimental changes in our brain automatically. UC Berkeley did some brain imaging and they found that just a short amount of sleep debt, just a short amount of sleep debt, even one day of short sleep leads to heightened activity, in the amygdala, what I talked about earlier, this is kind of the more primitive part of the brain that's really focused on survival of self, primarily. The amygdala is highly emotional, highly sensitive, and it starts driving the responses of the brain, and also of course, of your actions and how you respond to the world. So this is super important to understand this. And they also found that the executive part of your brain, the more evolved pre-frontal cortex, that part of the brain responsible for decision making, for social control, for distinguishing between



right and wrong, for rational thinking, for perspective-taking, putting yourself in someone else's shoes, all this stuff we can use more than ever right now, that part of the brain, they found after short sleep debt, one-day sleep deprivation, that part of the brain starts to go cold.

The brain activity gets dramatically reduced. Wonder why we're acting this way with each other and not thinking rationally about what we're dealing with here. We're going to this far end of the spectrum of fear, doubt, worry and not enough, and every man for themselves. Now, that's not everybody. And so many people, because they're not rising to the level of their expectations, they're falling to the level of their training. They've trained to be compassionate in times of crisis. Right? So we have that camp as well, but that doesn't mean that they're being their best self, and their rational perspective-taking self as well. They're there to serve, they're there to put themselves on the line, but they might not have to put themselves on the line if they're able to see the bigger picture. It's just harder. So that's what we see here. We also see elevated stress hormones when you're sleep deprived as well, and just all manner of not-goodness. So if we're trying to get better, come out of this better, I'm just going to leave this as two simple things. Number one, we want to keep a semi-consistent sleep routine. I know that I've been sleeping more. My son, Braden, sleeping more. Sleeping more. It's just like his little body wanted more sleep, but we had the routine. We had to get to school. We got to get up, get to school. Now, it's a little more relaxed, and we kind of create our own schedule. So, yeah, we can...

Maybe you don't want to go to bed at 9 o'clock, like you were going to bed 9 o'clock. You want to go to bed at 11:00. Cool. Let's get up and go to bed. Let's have a reasonable consistency to it because your brain and your physiology are always looking for patterns. It's one of the most important things with regulating your sleep quality, not just the time. So create a semi-consistent sleep routine. That is your mission. That's your homework for today. And on top of that, another thing is practice the principles of great sleep hygiene that are in Sleep Smarter. If you haven't read Sleep Smarter, where? Where are you from? What? Oh, you're from... Alien, huh? So, if you can't see me on YouTube, I just hit the nanu... That's not the nanu nanu. What is that?

Live long and prosper.

Live long and prosper. Shoutout to Spock. Sleep Smarter. Make sure that you



read Sleep Smarter. Check it out on audiobook. So much great stuff there that will inspire you to get great sleep and just make every other aspect of your life better. So I just want to talk about that a little bit. Sleep is a huge component here in addressing our anxiety and our stress. And from there, again, I'm getting a lot of feedback and questions, concerns of people's experiences of loneliness. One person who's in my, this inner circle, this incredible private group that we have. Are you in Model Nation, by the way? You need to get in there because I actually just did a live and talked about a lot of this stuff yesterday and answered some questions. I'll jump in there occasionally, but just the incredible community of folks who listen to The Model Health Show and just have incredible breadth of knowledge and insight and sharing with each other. It's just really special. But go to themodelhealthshow.com/modelnation and get access to our private Facebook group. It's a really, really special group of people there. And the only prerequisite is that you are a listener of The Model Health Show, but we're going to check. We're going to ask you questions to make sure.

So, pop over there. But somebody shared they even just experienced a break up just prior to this quarantine happening and they're just having a tough time. So what do we do to deal with loneliness and how do we modulate? Because here's another thing is that just because you're with people does not mean that you are not lonely. This is really important to talk about and understand as well. It's really about connection. It's about connection to other people. Your connection might have been the people at work, it might have been your workout group, it might have been the people you go biking with, it might have been special groups, it might have been your parents that you can't even go and hang out with. So what I really want to bring to the forefront is that it doesn't mean that you're not lonely just because you're with people. So we need to address connectivity, that connective tissue, and use this as an opportunity to deepen our relationships that we do have access to whether people are there in their physical presence or not.

Now, for introverts, this is like, you waited your whole life for this to happen, for society to shut down and say it's okay, just stay inside. Introverts are kind of like Bane. If you've seen The Dark Knight Rises, you know that Bane... Batman tries to use the dark. He's the Dark Knight, he tries use the dark against Bane, but Bane is like, "I was born in the darkness. You only borrow it." Introverts are like, "I was born to stay home. You only borrow it. Do you know?" So, I don't know why I just covered my mouth. But introverts feel like, "I don't need people. This is great." But even for the most introverted among us, we still do crave and need human



connection. It's just different levels of it. With introverts and extroverts, we're creating a huge broad statement is really about how you refuel. Introverts can hang out with people, all that stuff, even enjoy it, but there's that social tank is drained and they refuel by themselves. Whereas extroverts are charged up, their emotional tank is kind of drained being by themselves and it's filled when being with other people.

And just to highlight some of the ways that we can address the loneliness epidemic that we're experiencing right now as well is here are a couple of some simple strategies and things that we can implement. So, number one is to take time, if you do have your family near you, take time to connect with the people that are actually in the house with you. What a concept. Don't run from each other. You can. Again, you could spend time alone, but use this as an opportunity to grow your connections and relationships, to talk out problems and to play and to have fun and to ask questions and to inquire and to share. There's probably some stories about your partner or significant other, your kids, your parents, that you've never heard before. This is the time to ask those questions because I promise you, there's going to be a day that you would wish that you asked those questions. For whatever reason, during this time, I had a dream about my grandmother and my grandfather. You know how dreams can be. For whatever reason, like cognitively and just in a real... Like I know that they have passed away, but it was so... They were here. They were here and I hugged them and I asked some questions and I let them know, "You were the best grandparents that have ever walked the earth."

And then I went outside their house, and because it's a dream, it's like a Walmart parking lot. Super weird. Super weird. I know it's super weird. But ask the questions, spend time, pay attention. These are the moments that you're going to look back on and really wish that you had. So, that's number one. If you have people that are near you in the house, connect. Find a way to connect. If you are not able to do that, our technology has allowed us... It creates a lot of problems, of course, because there's rapid spreading of fear and poor information, poorly executed information, but it also presents an opportunity to connect. Like to see somebody's face that you love, adds a whole different dimension to your well-being. So, FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, whatever the case might be, face-to-face, or face-to-many, or even a phone call. I know people still do that. I know it's kind of a dying thing, but just jumping on a phone call.

This might be for some folks the prime time, if you don't have that physical



contact, to get a pet. Now, I know that this comes with some different caveats here. First of all, are you a cat person? Are you a dog person? A dog will probably... This is not my opinion, but the dog will probably be a lot happier by hanging out with you. Cats can be... They could be difficult, they could be a little different. And matter of fact, there are no holds barred to the pet sphere if you've seen the Tiger King on Netflix. If you got 2 G's you can get yourself a tiger. I do not recommend that do not put words in my mouth, say, "Shawn said, get Tiger. Shawn's out to the exotic animals." No, I'm just saying, "What a surprise." It's only \$2,000 to get a freaking tiger. Absolutely crazy. So this is that physical contact. We've got clear data showing that having pets actually... It influences your life span. Crazy enough. Crazy as it sounds. So maybe this is the time to get yourself a pet, you know, go to the shelter or whatever. The word is, "No coronavirus coming from pets." So just throwing that out there if that's a concern of yours. So this might be something to consider.

Now, I'm not... This is not coming from a person who has a pet. I'm not going to say I'm scarred. I'm not saying I need therapy buddy, but maybe. But I grew up in a household, there was always a pet. But pets just tended to not last long in the Stevenson household for a variety of reasons. My very first memory is was at my grandma's house that I was just telling me about earlier, that I was at in my dream with my dog Lucky who was really my grandparent's dog, but it was my dog, Lucky. And from there, my grandmother had a dog named Kitten. She had a cat named Ras Keegan, a cat named Ji and a dog named Country. And the list goes on and on.

Same thing with when I was living with my parents. We had a plethora of different animals. I had a cat named Smokey. I had a dog named Beamer. Just the list goes on and on. We had a dog named Rosco, but he always run away, pass away. But the final straw for me... I'm from the hood, I grew up in the hood. We don't get little, tiny little doggies. We want the big... We want a pit bull, Rottweiler, that was my dream. I was like, "When I get out of my parents, I'm getting myself a Rottweiler, a pit bull." I came home one day, it was high school. So I think I was a sophomore, yes, sophomore, maybe freshman. I came home from school, there was a Rottweiler puppy. He was a couple months old, so he was still kinda getting kind of big. Rottweiler puppy. I was elated, I was so overjoyed, so happy, I could not believe. I was like, "Mom, thank you. Oh my God, thank you, I love you." This is my puppy.

Now for the next week, maybe week and a half, I couldn't wait to get home to



see my dog and appropriately, with the mindset that I had at the time, the environment I grew up in, guess who my dog's name was? You can't guess, I'll tell you. My dog's name was Felony. I named my dog Felony. "Why Shawn? What are you looking to." I was acting like I'm Tuesday. What is in front of me? What value do I have? What am I putting out there? Anyway, so couldn't wait to get home to Felony. Week went by, week and a half went by, in love, come home, about, before two weeks was over, Felony gone. I'm looking all over like, "Mom, where's the dog, where's Felony, where is my dog? My uncle who partake in narcotics, namely crack... We have this terminology, we might say someone is a crackhead. But he'd stolen the dog and the dog had a chip and the owners found the dog and this kind of thing and so I was devastated. And ever since... I was like, "I'm done, I'm not going to attach myself to a pet."

Fortunately, I didn't do that with people and I'm married now. But I'm not coming from a perspective of somebody who is like a pet owner, but just from the perspective of this could be really helpful to help to have that connection, to have a sense of purpose, you know, caring for... As many people know, your pet becomes part of the family, right. Many people, their pet has their last name. This is Twinkles McGee, the McGee family. This is Dash, the dog next door, Dash Johnson. The dog has a last name, the family name. This might be a great opportunity to do that. So get a pet, consider it.

Tiger King, here we are. By the way, I've been having a couple of Tiger King references here. It's number one show in the country as of now, many, many weeks on Netflix. Joe Exotic. This is a real-life story. It sounds like a movie. There's explosions, there's murder, there is polygamy, there's money and you throw tigers in on top of it. Oh my God, it's the craziest thing. And again, I don't usually partake, but if you haven't seen it don't see it. Don't watch it. Your eyes don't deserve it. It's just super crazy.

So, with that human connection, find someone also to walk with. We've already talked about this, but a new study published in the Mental Health and Physical Activity Journal found that walking is proven to be an effective treatment for alleviating mild depression. Depression is another thing that's going to take hold more and more as we're dealing with this economy downturn. Find someone to walk with you. Again, you don't understand the landscape of things and you got to get masked up and you got to do, walk a little distance, so be it. At least go out, get somebody to go walk with, walk with and talk with. Another thing that we can do to help to alleviate some of that loneliness... Again, if there



are people in your space, but you're still feeling a lack of connection and loneliness, a good hug can do wonders. A good hug can do wonders. Go and hug on your... Your brother, your sister, your mother, father, your significant other, your kids, just love on them. Use this as an opportunity to get closer, connect. Let them know that love them. A hug can do actual wonders.

Now, listen to this. A study published in clinical psychology and psychotherapy affirm that the human touch can directly reduce the stress response in the body and down-regulate the production of stress hormones. Other studies affirm that human touch triggers our bodies to produce anti-anxiety and anti-depressant compounds like serotonin and oxytocin within our own bodies. Dr. Amy Banks, who is an expert on human touch and immune system development, says that, quote, once we became mammals, we kept the babies inside of us and so we had fewer of them. Their chances of survival were dependent on us. Being in social context a parent taking care of their offspring. Biologically, our whole nervous system and immune system functioning became dependent on being in a relationship and a society and having community around you.

This is so important right now when we're being told, now there are justifiable reasons and in being intelligent about it, not to touch each other, to stay away from people. And this can be a slippery slope. My job is to just bring a balanced perspective to it. We don't want to be... If somebody is sick or you're sick, don't. But in reality, we need human connection. This is what makes us human. Without it, we become something else. And I'm pointing to this fact because, again, in the media, we hear stories like this. Dr. Anthony Fauci, he's the big voice right now in talking about the coronavirus and the impact on society. He's out there making the rounds, doing the different media. And he's the director of the National Institute of Biology and Infectious Diseases, and a key member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force. Task force.

And he has suggested that Americans should never shake hands again. Never. He said, listen, listen, when the quarantine is over, what are the things... The reporter is asking this. What are the things that we can do and approach as normal? He said, quote, one of them is absolute compulsive hand washing. The other one is you don't ever shake anybody's hands. That's clear. Now, I read the report first and I was like, he couldn't have said that. So, I went and dug up the audio. Listen to it for yourself.

What are the things that you could still do and still approach normal? One of



them is absolute compulsive hand washing. The other one is you don't ever shake anybody's hands. That's clear. I don't think we ever should have to shake hands ever again, to be honest, with you.

Now, we have an authority figure, somebody who's in a position of power, which goes past our filters of reasoning of simple logic because it's coming from an authority figure and is an emotionally charged situation and social contagion, social pressure, gets right through all those filters and people start to believe they cannot shake another person's hand, hug a person they don't know. We become more distant and fearful of each other like never before in human history. We didn't evolve like this. We need each other. And is it just me or does his voice sound a little bit like Marge Simpson's sisters Patty and Selma? No disrespect. And I mean in the most respectful way possible but, just saying.

Now, I'm sure he's a highly intelligent human being with the best of intentions, obviously. But, for me, my brain is wired up in such a way that I'm always asking questions when I get any type of advice coming from any type of medium. I've trained myself to ask questions like if this, then what? If we do this, then what happens? If we do this, then what happens? What happens with this thing on this spectrum? What about that thing?

I'm constantly asking questions and my brain is just wired that way. Maybe that's why The Model Health Show is what it is. It's just the way that I think. But I don't think that this is innate to me. I think that this was just a training through my life experiences that has caused me to ask questions in this fashion. And so, for me, I'm asking questions like what are the potential downsides of the advice to not touch other people? What are the potential downsides? Can you consider that before you have the audacity to tell people not to touch people? What are the potential downsides? Let's talk about that.

Will this potentially cause psychological distress and phobias? We know well now about the placebo effect in medicine. He literally said compulsive hand washing. You can't throw words like that around. That's dangerous. We have to be more balanced in our perspective, simple logic rationality. But it's difficult when we're in a heightened state of emotion and fear. And in the same interview, he also said that he doesn't sleep nowadays. So, I'm just going to throw that out there, as if that matters.

Now, just to make my point here. Very smart people, very smart people like my



man Fauci can make costly mistakes in judgment and especially in the field of health and medicine. And this is actually quite common. This is highlighted. I want you to know this. You have to know this piece of data. A study from Johns Hopkins analyzing medical death rate data over an eight-year period found that more than 250,000 deaths per year are due to medical error in United States. This makes this the third leading cause of death after cancer and heart disease, is death by physician error.

So many people don't know this, and there's a way that the CDC reports is that's just kind of part of the problem, is that there are so many different factors that goes into medical error. So this includes things like misdiagnosis, errors in medication or surgery, negligence, what's known as cognitive pitfalls. Cognitive pitfalls, this is a situation in which biases happen that cloud our logic. For example, a practitioner may overvalue their own personal data and not take new data into account which could result in unnecessary treatments or mistakes in treatments. And besides the deaths, which that is, it should be jarring to you to even hear this, there are millions of iatrogenic injuries every single year in the United States. Iatrogenesis means physician created. The first rule, the Hippocratic Oath, do no harm. We have to know this stuff. Very smart people, this is what we look to. And highly intelligent people, we can make mistakes, we can be wrong, we can put the wrong information out. The way that we put the information out can cause conflicts and problems.

Can a doctor save your life? Yeah. Can that same doctor kill you? Absolutely. But we have to stop looking at a physician or any other figure that you hold in a place of authority, as the end all be all authority on the subject, we have to use our rational thinking and ask questions. That's what I want to implore you to do right now at this time in history more than any other time. Because if we take a very smart person, and we teach them the wrong thing, they become world-class at doing the wrong thing. They can become world-class at doing the wrong treatment, they can become world-class at giving the wrong advice. If you take a highly intelligent person and they're giving the wrong piece of data. So I just want to put that out there and help us to kind of come back to our senses, our perspective when we're talking about human contact, which we need.

And giving advice on social distancing. Even this is... It has so many holes in it, like six-foot, seven-foot, 10-foot bunch. What's the distance that's going to save us? How many people can be in a building that's going to save us, 10, it's 10 people. Who made this...just making it up, they're just making it up. The reality



is, if somebody is infected with the virus, be it Corona, be it a flu virus, be it whatever it is, and they're in that environment, it's in the environment. It doesn't matter if there's 10 people, it doesn't matter, you're going to get exposed. What do we need to do? What do we need to lean on? That's what I talked about in that episode on how our immune system actually works, and how viruses work. So make sure to listen to that episode, please.

But at the end of the day, it's having a true understanding and what we go back to with Chris Hadfield saying that the true antidote to fear is competence. And when we're talking about the close proximity, social distancing, wearing a mask, that's the big thing right now, is wearing the mask, right? That's the thing. I don't see my man Fauci when he's on the podium, he's got his minions in every dominions there, they're all close, they're not wearing mask. But that's that I guess "Do as I say, not as I do". This is not normal, and you're like, "Well, what is normal? This is not a normal thing we're dealing with". Of course, but we have dealt with viruses infections, bacteria infections, fungal infections, the list goes on and on, since the beginning of life here on this planet, it evolve to create the people that we are.

But of course, you want to be smart, yes, absolutely take precautions. But I want to go in a little bit deeper here because I feel it would be a disservice to not share this with you. So, I've already referenced medical data and research showing how human contact helped to evolve our nervous system and our immune system. But when I'm talking about hugging on, and loving the people in your life, especially right now, scientists at the University of North Carolina found that hugs are remarkable and boosting immune system function, they found that a good huge quote stimulates the thymus gland which regulates and balances the body's production of white blood cells, your immune cells. Which keeps you healthy and disease-free. You never heard hugs are medicine. Never heard hugs can help my immune system to work and do its job. I just want to put that out there.

Also, research at the University Of California School Of Public Health found that simply getting eye contact and a pat on the back from a physician can boost the survival rates of patients with complex diseases. Just having that contact, having that acknowledgment that social interaction that touch is actually a healing factor in how our physiology is wired up. Now clearly social contact can obviously be a root of spreading disease, but there's another side of the story that needs to be identified.



The research also indicates the microbiome is the big conversation right now, kind of the final frontier in health and medicine, and we have this incredible cascade of bacteria and viruses and fungi that make up who we are as humans, we have trillions of virus cells, bacteria cells, fungi. We have the microbiome from just fungi that inhabit, that are in and on our bodies. And what we see now on the research is that, yes, some microbes can be harmful, but many perhaps a lot of them are actually very helpful. And when we are in contact with other people, we are exchanging these microbes, this is happening all the time. And what the researchers were indicating is that hugs, handshakes, and even pats on the back, things like that, hip check, we are translating that over and switching and sharing microbe data is basically like your database being sort of like iTunes music database and you're just getting more and more of a collection of music to play.

And here's what's so crazy is that there's this new phenomenon, it's called the pan-microbiome, that is like a metacommunity of microbe species that span a group of people. And if you compare... If you actually look at the data, you see a higher diversity in these microbes by social interaction that we see. This is correlated with less chronic illnesses, lower levels of obesity, higher levels of resistance to infection and longer life spans. We need contact, we need to associate with each other in community to build up our immunity. Once we start to distance ourselves, we become something else. But also there is the other end of the spectrum like we need interaction for our microbes. We have the other end of the spectrum, some microbes can hurt you, right? So we have to find a middle ground where we can start to see these things clearly and not jump to one thing, or we become inhumane and stop associating with each other, and keeping our distance from everybody around us and being in fear of other humans. It's not natural, it's not normal.

And so, with that said, there's one more aspect of how we are being told to interact with each other that I just want to look at some of the facts on and make sure that you have the complete story because we're talking about addressing our anxiety and our stress. This is a potential stressor, an inducer of anxiety that we are not really paying attention to because we're in so much fear of this other aspect of the anxiety. And what am I talking about? I'm talking about the advice that we're being inundated with that if we're going to interact with people or that if we're going to go out in public, and this could be a potential long-term behaviors that we need to protect our face, we need to

wear a mask. Now again, there are context where this is appropriate, but widespread dissemination of information like that... There's another side to the story I've got to share with you because here's the fact, the CDC acknowledged that everyone wearing face masks is actually unlikely to be very effective. They've already stated this.

So why are we doing it? Or psychotherapist Amy Morin explains that wearing the mask does more for our mental health than it does for our physical well-being, by soothing our anxiety and giving us the illusion of being in control. Now, that's what it really boils down to. And we're talking about anxiety, we're talking about our perception of reality and what we want to do to create more certainty because anxiety is tied to uncertainty, is to do the things that we can do. We have power over our thinking, we have power over our actions but it's how we're responding to the things happening around us. But it's all an illusion because, in truth, we are not in control at all. We're spinning around in outer space on a freaking blue ball in the middle of this freaking galaxy that came from another galaxy that came from a supernova, we got this huge gigantic star, that we're swirling around it. It takes eight minutes from the light to leave that star to get to your body, it's like, just don't get me started. Just look from the meta-perspective, we're not in control.

This is about surrender to that idea of illusion, but also fully embodying the responsibility that you have right now because you are that, you are a part of that star, you are a part of this solar system, you are part of this planet you are a part of life right now. If the greatest gift being born right now as a human being in this time, as crazy as it might be of a time, you have such an opportunity to extend on the potential of this universe. And it starts with you doing the things that you can do. The things that you do have control over is your thoughts and your perspective. That's about it. And of course your correlating actions. And so with that said, specifically, experts have said that there is little evidence to suggest covering one's face with a scarf, bandana or other material will offer protection from the coronavirus. A recent report noted that while cloth coverings might prevent some secretions from being passed on to other people, they might also make people more likely to touch their faces because they're adjusting the bandana with their nasty hands.

They could also engender, and this is according to this report, a "false sense of security." What most people don't seem to understand about the mask thing is that it's not to protect you from the world and people outside of you, it's to



protect the people outside of you from you. That's what masks are really for, is to keep the sickness in, not to prevent from getting in to you. Even the very best masks do not eliminate all of the pathogens that are able to make their way through. You still have to breathe. You still have to breathe. And these like ragtag like ones that we're doing, putting the bandana on, it's again, this was about preventing if you're coughing or sneezing, this is not preventing other things from getting into your stratosphere, inside of your body. So you doing the bandido thing, a shout out to Narcos. My wife made me watch it. Okay, she was like, "We're going to... You know, this quarantine we're going to watch." I said, "No, Pablo Escobar, no." She got me to watch it. Pablo says, "We're bandidos." But my wife, she knows, how I work, she's like, "You can learn lessons from this. Pablo had a team. Pablo is dedicated to his wife Tata."

He had a mistress, but he still he's like, "Don't disrespect Tata." So I get that. There's lessons to be found everywhere. But doing that whole bandidos thing, I don't know, because this is the biggest thing I want to share with you guys. A new study published in the Journal of Neuroscience found that the brain immediately determines how trustworthy a face is. We instantly do this when we're in contact with other people, which supports the fact that we make very fast judgments about people. Now the research has noted that our brains are specialized for recognizing faces. We identify each other by our faces, not our elbows or our hands or just our eyes, our entire face and the expressions that we give. And a person's face provides a wealth of information, according to this study. Within seconds of seeing a person's face, we immediately know so much about him or her, including age, gender, their level of ability, whether or not they're dealing with something, ethnicity, etcetera, and fairly accurate assessments in economic status, emotional state, and overall health when we can see somebody's face.

Now, we can't see people's faces. Guess what that does to our brain that is programmed, hardwired through billions of years of evolution to see faces to assess threats? Now, we can't see faces. Does the anxiety go up or down? I'm asking you. It goes up, absolutely. And looking deeper into this, why are masks so menacing? Well, it really has to do with the fear of the unknown. This is a huge player in how we evolved. The fear of the unknown is a major player in our psychology. All the best scary situations, people got masks on. Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, Bozo the clown. Oh, maybe that's just me. Sorry, Bozo freaked me out, totally freaked me out. Anyways, but that is a thing when we can't see somebody's face. Now and also when you're taking it into context, well, these



are a medical... That's scary, surgery. You're going into surgery, this is a life-threatening situation.

Right. There's going to be fear attached to all kinds of different masks that we wear, but now we see it everywhere and all the primal programming and not being able to actually assess a threat or to see a person's face, it can really... What the data shows is that this is going to stimulate, hyper-stimulate our sympathetic fight-or-flight nervous system, all the time, everywhere, social contagion. Should we be doing this to protect ourselves right now? In some aspects, it's appropriate, but being inundated with this idea that all of us need to be walking around in masks like we're in the freaking Purge, we have to think about the bigger psychological and health aspects that that's going to carry, right? If this, then what? If we're protecting from this, then what happens with this thing? This is all I want us to do is just ask questions and to have a broader perspective, to have sound mind. We need sound mind, we need competency right now more than ever.

Is it appropriate? We have to understand what the mask is doing. By the way, if you got a beard, your mask doesn't work already. You can't even have a beard. Stuff's getting in. But it's more so again to keep stuff from you away from other people. It's not about keeping stuff out and you, but this is what most people think is that the mask is protecting them. And it simply doesn't work like that. As a matter of fact, a mask can just be a resort for pathogens to just sit on and in. It's definitely going to be nasty inside of there, 'cause if you're sick especially, it's going to be nasty in there. But even if you're just not sick and you're just... It's going to be gross, but pathogens will just come and sit like a resort on the top of that mask. And guess what's by the mask that isn't covered by the mask? Your eyes. Your eyes. You can be infected by pathogens through those beautiful eyes of yours. But we don't really think about that. Pathogens is sitting on this mask that we're wearing and we don't realize again that pathogens can just sit on top of this mask and, you know, jump off the springboard into your eyes.

The CDC says that surgical mask won't stop the wearer from inhaling small airborne particles which can cause infection. The CDC recommends surgical mask only for people who already show symptoms of Coronavirus and must go outside since wearing a mask can help prevent spreading the virus by protecting others from you when you cough or sneeze. Plus, viruses, bacteria, and fungi still have access to the human eyes. And one study from China suggests that up to one-third of the people hospitalized with Coronavirus



experience eye problems such as viral pink eye. So what are we going to do? We're going to wear masks and goggles? We're going to do Horace Grant, James Worthy? We're going to Scuba Steve it out here on the streets? We have to... We want to be smart, but don't take this to a level of ridiculousness.

That's all I'm saying, because we're better than this, we're better than our behavior, but we have to keep in mind there's a social contagion and the herd mentality. If you're the only one who doesn't have a mask on and you're out at Walmart or whatever or I don't know what's open right now, you're going to feel like "Oh, my goodness, I should be wearing a mask." But again, this might be appropriate in some acute instances, but living our lives this way can be very dangerous. And one other tiny aspect that I want us to acknowledge because this episode is about addressing the anxiety, stress and what are some components that we can do to improve our health and to operate in a more intelligent fashion in this situation that we're all experiencing. When we're talking about anxiety, you have to know this. Research conducted by the CDC and published in the Annals of Work Exposure and Health stated that by wearing a mask, the highly thermo-sensitive nature of the human face and breathing pathways can be inhibited leading to increased anxiety, elevated stress hormones, false suffocation alarm in the central nervous system and panic attacks.

If this, then what? If we do this, then what? If we're already prone to anxiety, and we're getting this false suffocation response, it's inhibiting our breathing because we think that this is going to protect us. We need to have a balanced perspective in this. That's all I want us to do. I'm not saying that a mask cannot be helpful, especially if you're sick because it's really about keeping your sickness away from other people, not keeping other people's sickness away from you because it does not work that well. The CDC has acknowledged, I'll say it again, that everyone wearing face masks, this is directly from the CDC, is unlikely to be very effective. They're giving us little candies. They're giving us little treats, wear a mask, stay away from people. What actually protects us? It's having a healthy immune system, it's taking care of our bodies, it's optimizing our sleep, our relationships, having a healthy microbiome. These are all things that are proven by facts. These are not just, "Hey, try this thing. Six foot, seven-foot, eight-foot bunch. Stay away from people." We're guessing. Let's get our society healthy. Let's get our society healthy. Let's take care of each other.

In closing, I just want to share that, what my heart is wanting to say is that we



cannot allow ourselves to be afraid of each other. We're at a point in human history right now, where this can go left really quickly. This situation can be taken to a place that takes us away from... We can devolve to something else. We would no longer be human once we become afraid of each other in our interaction. We need each other. We need each other more than ever, so get well balanced information. Share this information with the people you care about so that they can be more informed. Again, not saying that we don't take proper precautions, but the precautions of the advice to address those precautions that we're often given are just little treats because it's not proven by science. Well, we have proven by science is the things that we talk about here on The Model Health Show. All about that life.

So please make sure to check out the past episode addressing the pandemic and the human microbiome and the human virome as well and all the wonderful information on that episode put that for you in the show notes. And I want to share this statement with you. And this came from a movie that I watched with my family. My oldest son and my wife has been just egging me on just to watch this film that she watched called "Brian Banks" and it's based on a true story and essentially, this young man is falsely accused of a crime and sent to prison and he was like a blue-chip, just superstar and all the colleges wanted him, and eliminated his dream like that. Not only that, put him behind bars and eventually with grown men. And he was a child, he's like 15-16 years old. And you get to see this story unfold and what changed his life. And you have to watch this movie. You have to watch his movie to see how the story unfolds because it is a freaking miracle to see where he ends up. You just can't believe it. But if he didn't have a mentor, if he didn't have a voice of reason, someone to instill something in his spirit, he could have went to a dark place and we never would have heard his name again. And this character, in it his mentor is played by Morgan Freeman. Of course. Of course it's going to be Morgan Freeman, but he said this statement to him that I want to share with you today.

We're all dealing with a very challenging situation right now. But he shared with him that, "All you can control in life is how you respond to life. This is the only thing that is truly within your power. Everything else is just an illusion. We are spinning around in outer space on this big blue ball shared with billions of other people and there are billions of galaxies besides ours." Billions! The only thing right now all that you control in life is how you respond to life. And I hope that today provided you with some new insights and things to implement. Put in practice some of the practical things that we talked about to improve your

feelings of stress and anxiety and overall well-being to boost your immune system, support your overall health, and also for the health of people you care about. Please share this out with the people that you love on social media. Of course, you can tag me. I appreciate that so much. We've got some epic, epic shows coming your way, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care. Have an amazing day. And I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the 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 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.