



EPISODE 419

# Pandemic & Protests: How To Heal & Build Healthy Relationships

With Guest Anne Stevenson

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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 today. I'm so excited about this episode. It's taken a lot to get my next guest on the show. It's my favorite guest of all time for a return visit, favorite person of all time, but it is not an easy deal to get her on. Today we're going to talk about some really poignant, important, timely information about relationships and about relating to each other right now in a world that is like if we're talking about Stranger Things, this is the upside-down, right? The world is very, very different right now, but it's also ripe with opportunity and lessons to be learned, so I'm really excited about this conversation. And she's been with me since the beginning. She's been with me when I lived in a bachelor apartment. I call it a bachelor apartment, it sounds better in Ferguson, Missouri. Mattress on the floor, I didn't even have a dresser, I kept my clothes in a little plastic bin. It's just super scrounging it and just getting by.

But she came into my life and she stuck around. And it's been so rewarding for both of us, I hope. She'll share some of that today, but just a lot of lessons to be learned. And even then, we're finding a way to stretch a dollar. Finding a way to make things happen. I didn't even have a cell phone when we first met, and so she encouraged me to get a cell phone so she could stay in touch with me, or maybe keep tabs on me? I don't know. But even then, it's just like... This back when we had cellphone minutes. Do you remember having minutes? And then it's just after 8 PM, you get the unlimited, so I was like, "I'll call you back after 8:00." Once you see your minutes start to go up, I went over those minutes too many times. I know a lot of other people feel my pain. But that unlimited after 9:00, it was one of those things that just finding little creative ways to make things happen. And part of building financial success and getting out of that condition that I was in, that I grew up in, it's not just making income, it's also finding a way to be creative with saving because oftentimes, there are different ways that we can procure things that we enjoy. And for me specifically, I'm a big... I'm a foodie.

Foodie's become a popular term, but I definitely am a foodie. I'm an enjoyer of food and a variety of different things. But even then when I met her, she knew that I would invest a lion share of my income into food, and buying organic food, and buying these weird herbs, and berries and things like that, that a lot of people didn't know about back then. Buying goji berries 16 years ago, and they weren't readily available at your favorite...

Even your favorite health food store. But today we have so much opportunity to save money, to do things differently because a lot of organizations have upped their game. And we win once we have the competition of markets take place. And one of those companies that my wife and I both know has saved us so much freaking money, even this year so far, we've already saved hundreds of dollars, is Thrive Market.

So Thrive Market is a curator and supplier of all of your favorite organic, non-GMO, just whatever nutrition label you subscribe to, whether it's paleo, keto, vegetarian, vegan, whatever it is, they've got everything curated in categories, and some of the very best products from some of the very best companies. But here's the catch, you get it at 25% to 50% off the retail price that you would find in stores like Whole Foods, or local kind of Mom and Pop health food stores. You save so much on the same exact things. And I know that she feels the same way, we literally kick ourselves when we spend money, extra money, paying extra, when we forget to order from Thrive Market. We just did it for my favorite paleo spicy Chipotle Mayo. We ran out because we didn't re-order from Thrive Market and ended up spending more money. All right, so we've gotten this primal kitchens Chipotle mayo, they have that. Some of the other things we get from there are chia seeds. We get bars and granola bars and things like that for the kids. We get our coconut oil cooking spray, they got avocado oil cooking spray. So many cool things, 25% to 50% off.

Now, here's another big thing about Thrive Market, they're also always dedicated to finding a way to serve the community and it's just tied into their company mandate. So in the midst of COVID and this entire experience where a lot of folks, millions of people have lost their jobs, or their ability to make income, and Thrive Market has raised about half a million dollars already to help families in need. And so when you buy from Thrive Market, you're also investing in supporting our communities as well. So definitely pop over, check them out, it's [thrivemarket.com/modelhealth](http://thrivemarket.com/modelhealth). That's [thrivemarket.com/modelhealth](http://thrivemarket.com/modelhealth). And they also have two different membership options now, so you can get a membership to suit your own lifestyle. You're going to want to keep this membership because it just keeps paying it forward over and over again, saving you money and helping our community as well. Again, they've got organic curated foods from the very best companies. They've got safe non-toxic beauty and health care items, home supplies, and cleaning products. So many cool things. Head over to check them out. It's [thrivemarket.com/modelhealth](http://thrivemarket.com/modelhealth). And now, let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

**iTunes Review:** Another five-star review titled "Amazing" by Angela Stubbs. "This podcast is by far the best I've ever listened to. I love how Shawn gives very helpful, practical and useful

information every episode that I can apply to my life right away. He's so energetic and fun as well, that he makes you seriously excited about making your health a priority. Thank you, Shawn, for all you do to educate others about these very important and often underrated topics.”

**Shawn Stevenson:** Awesome, thank you so much, Angela. I appreciate that immensely, that brought a big smile on my face today. And everybody, thank you so much for leaving me those reviews over on Apple podcast. They mean so very much. If you've yet to do so, please pop over there and leave a review for the show, and on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Anne Stevenson and she's my wife.

I'm so grateful to have her on. She is also the Project Manager for our company. She helps to manage our team. She helps to make me look decent, and she's just such a force for good and an amazing human being on every single level. I was just saying this last night. We were just laying around, I was like, "Everybody wants to be your friend." And just kind of just that vibe and that truth. And if you hear her story, she'll tell you how she didn't have friends when she moved to America from Kenya when she was 12. But thankfully, that story led her to me, and I get to reap the benefits of having such an amazing person in my life. And on that note, I'd like to welcome Anne Stevenson to the show. What's up, baby?

**Anne Stevenson:** Hi.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Thank you for coming back on the show.

**Anne Stevenson:** Oh, I thank you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, we'll just be honest right now. It took a lot to get you on.

**Anne Stevenson:** It did.

**Shawn Stevenson:** A lot of deals.

**Anne Stevenson:** Yeah, a lot of deals were made, and I'm here.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Well, baby, listen, I know that you haven't really got to share this. A lot of folks obviously listening, our amazing model health family all over the places gotten to hear my perspective and all this crazy stuff has been going on with our world with the quarantine, and with the civil unrest going on. So how has it been for you this year?

What is this year been like? I know this kind of started off with me getting injured, and you taking care of me. So how's this year been for you? What kind of... Has this kind of been a learning experience for you?

**Anne Stevenson:** I mean, it's been easy. It's been a free fall. I'm just kidding. What's funny is we went into the New Year, obviously, from my birthday and going to New York and just having an amazing time, and thinking that "Okay, this is going to be an epic year." Cut to a week later, and you basically being out on commission. And it was very challenging. I think, other than, of course, just the worry and not knowing how you... What's really going on with you. But I think for me it was, I knew you are always the person who has all of the answers. You're the person we go to for our family, everybody knows, go to Shawn and now you were not there, in a sense. I had to figure out everything and all the questions and making the decisions of just even for your health, for example, or trying to figure out where to go for the physical therapy.

And all of these things at the same time, having to manage the boys and the food. And so it was very, very, very intense. I guess, I thought I was a superpower, superwoman person then, but it was like a whole new level of showing up, and some days I didn't show up. I just so wanted to cry and I did cry, and I just did not know what to do. And we had DoorDash, Chipotle, a lot of days 'cause everything was just completely out of sort. And, I mean, the best thing I can say, and I think you felt the same way is, everything went still. We had to... It was a hard stop. And, thankfully, even our team, everybody really has been so gracious and understanding while we were going through all of this. And so it just took time for us to just realize, "Okay, the universe is telling us to stop, and we have to listen." So, yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. And it's so crazy, the quarantine came a couple months after we had really already been quarantined.

**Anne Stevenson:** Right, right. We were pros.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I could barely walk. So I talked... Mentioned it briefly what happened. But I'll definitely... I'm going to do an entire episode talking about it, but I had a nerve blocked all the way down my leg and I could barely walk. I couldn't even dress myself. It's super embarrassing. It's nice when you take my clothes off but putting my clothes on for me, was pretty embarrassing. And also just the boys and me being like their dad, them seeing me in that state it's so heartbreaking and difficult. But that's how 2020 kicked off. And then, quarantine hit. Schools shut down, jobs shut down, society shut down for the most part, and now adding on top of that, homeschooling our 8-year-old. So what



was that experience like?

**Anne Stevenson:** First of all, I always, and you know this, I was like, "No, I'm never going to homeschool." Like, "I'm too busy and I'm working from home, and I know the amount of time it will take to do that and do this." And no, again, hard stop. I think the whole world if there's one thing we've realized it's we've all been directed to just stop, and listen, and examine all the areas of our life in a sense. And for me, even with the homeschooling, I was so resistant. I felt like it's one more thing added. Not only... Okay. It's like for the past... I was already a nurse for the past three months, and all of a sudden now add being a teacher. But the crazy part was, luckily you had started getting well, and just to see some light at the end of the tunnel, in a sense, gave me a little bit more courage. Like, "Okay, I can let go." And I don't think fully express the worry that I had in my mind, all those... Every single day and trying to be strong in all of those things.

So when I was able to kind of let go and then COVID happened and quarantine, and the homeschooling quickly turned into a pleasure. I think we quickly realized that, wow, we actually get to control what my son gets to learn, and that actually started to become a joy. And then obviously figuring out our schedule like, okay... I mean, and it was tough at first 'cause I just thought I'm going to give him his work and I will just do my own work. No, that did not happen. Matter of fact, he was getting more frustrated, I was getting frustrated because he wants to ask me a question, so I can't...

**Shawn Stevenson:** All the questions.

**Anne Stevenson:** All the questions. So I couldn't try and do my work, at the same time trying to teach him. And I think the turning point was when he said something like, "When does school start again because I want to go back. I don't like being here at home and learning." And I just felt so bad, I was like, "Yeah, I am such a horrible teacher." And so it was realizing the fact that I had to restructure my whole days, my whole week, and figuring out, okay, 100% attention in what he's learning, and then from there, when he has recess, when he finishes with the day, that's when I'm going to get to work. Or I might even have to work on weekends and that's kind of... And it just slowly ended up being a pleasure, and I'm loving it now. And so funny now that we got into the rhythm of homeschooling, and then school's out.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right, yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** So it's like, "What?" But he's learned so much, I found, I mean from writing his book with you, to just slowly teaching him other things that are not in his curriculum. Just, like



earlier... Was it last week? We were learning about Juneteenth and just going through a little bit of history, and I get to do that. So it was good. I like it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. It's so funny. I think that one of the biggest things was, with the homeschooling, and then everything was in such a flow and then it stopped, it's an anchor, like our days revolved around that. Knowing Braden has these particular things. And I think that that's part of the reason that so many people's practices were thrown off, their sleep was thrown off, their relationships were thrown off, is because of a loss of our anchors. Our thing for years, like we get up, take him to school, go to the gym, and then start the day. And then that thing was already turned on its head when I got injured, and then from there, like you said, you being a nurse for me, and then... It's so funny, but it's not. It's like if you look at this as a total coincidence, I started getting better right when the quarantine happened.

**Anne Stevenson:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right when I can kind of like... I was like peeking my head out of the hole like, "What's going on out here?" And I felt compelled to do something, to serve because I saw what was coming, and I saw all the fear. And I saw all of the kind of impending doom that was going to come as people start to separate physically, and then literally as a result. So that's what I want to talk to you about first is, why do you feel relationships have been so stressed during this time period? During the quarantine?

**Anne Stevenson:** So I think this is from what I've observed, and honestly, I guess it's still a small part and everybody's experience is different. This is just from what I've seen, is from the macro perspective of like, from uncertainty and people either losing their job or time cut off, traveling might be part of people's daily living and work, and all of a sudden all of that is cut off and now you're at home. And that's one, but then two is, these people maybe have had unresolved issues and things around their relationship where you've been able to like run away in a sense and not being able to face them. And so, not only that, even with the kids 'cause I... And that was maybe if I would be honest, thinking about homeschooling, and it's like, "Damn, I had to be with Braden all day?" Even though he's a great kid and all of that, but it's a whole other task. So even in any... With all the relationships with kids, relationships with your partner, the dynamic shifted. And then add on to if it's a financial struggle or small... If you have a small business and all of that getting shut down, which leads to more uncertainty.

So it was like piling upon piling of things. And then you go to the grocery store and the shelves are empty. And you've never... I've never seen that in all of these years of living.

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So it's just, "What is actually going on?" And so all of that coming back into the home and having to face it and now realizing that you are facing it and thinking, "We're going to get back to normal soon," so just leads to the chaos.

**Shawn Stevenson:** There's so many pieces there, I didn't think about collectively. It's just a lot. It's a lot. And what we tend to do, I think, is we tend to vent and take it out on the person closest to us. And like you said, that instance with me getting injured, being an opportunity for us to stop. Everything is stopped for us to focus on what's most important. Which obviously, health is the most important... If you don't have your health, everything else just becomes absolutely a whole different level of stress.

**Anne Stevenson:** But that's what happened with us, I mean, with the hard stop with your injury, we actually ended up spending way more time. We actually talked way more, and the funny part is, we are together all the time, but we had been caught up with the busyness of everything. We were doing the most since we moved to LA. And there was this and there was that and there was so much going on and then you had the stress of your work and not having any time for ourselves truly and just to truly connect. So driving you to all these places, I just became a pro in LA traffic, like I'm so good. I went from being terrified to LA traffic to just being a pro at it 'cause I was driving everywhere. But we got to actually spend time together and have the conversations, which we should have been having for a long time, and we don't even realize that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, I think... And just for everybody, I think it's always important to take a moment, at least maybe once a month. Maybe put a reminder on your calendar, to just put on your calendar and have the reminder pop up, what is the most important thing in your life? What's most important? The most important thing is us. Everything else is secondary and if we get away from us, everything else starts to get stressful, and at some point, it's going to pop off. We're going to have some kind of crazy conflict over something so stupid because we're not taking care of us, our relationship first. So what I'm picking up is, number one, our anchors getting thrown off. Number two, people being forced, forced to face that level of disconnection or the issues that have been simmering under the surface for couples during this time period. It's just like, "You don't got nowhere to run, you can't hide." It's right here, you got to do something about it or you can continue to ignore it. But we've seen this, there are a lot of relationships that have been in turmoil during this time. Some relationships have gotten closer, but and hearing even friendships and especially intimate relationships, and pile on top of that stuff with their kids, like "My kid? I love my kid." But get him away from me, you know what I mean? So, is that all the pieces that you kind of put away?



**Anne Stevenson:** Yeah, but then also the other part of just as a society, there is so much uncertainty and then unemployment.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. Oh man, yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** And there's some people who really do thrive off being around other people. It makes them better in their relationships, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah, true.

**Anne Stevenson:** And so all of a sudden that's cut out where this is where they... I don't know if it's that extrovert or whatever, I don't know these names. But they thrive from the outer relationships and speaking. I can think of my brother-in-law, he loves to speak and he's Uber driver. And he gets to interact with all these different people and all of a sudden you don't have that anymore. And now it's just like drawn away from those things, and I think it's hard, especially your wife, it's like, "I don't want to listen to what you're saying right now." Where do you get the outlet now? So all of those things kind of piling up.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, that's so good. So coming out of this lockdown situation, what do you think people can learn about maintaining their bond under pressure? Because life is going to happen, unwelcomed events are going to happen, probably not to this degree again, but we're going to continue to face things. So what are some of the things that we can look forward to doing? Especially just learning from this crazy situation, moving forward out of this situation.

**Anne Stevenson:** It reminds me, the diamond... Diamonds are created with the pressure.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** Think ET said that on one of the episodes.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah he did. I didn't know you caught that.

**Anne Stevenson:** I did. I mean I... Behind the scenes. Anyways, I think one of the things we get to, as we come out of it, is one, actually recognizing... When we recognize what's actually been going on, and how are we defining this time, no matter how hard it is, we get to create a meaning for it. And I think we all... If there's one thing we can agree, there's all whatever, all of the things, the conspiracies to not, and this is happening, what we can all say is something is going on and there's a huge shift that's happening. And so how



does that affect us and we get to decide and define it. So has this made us weaker, we got to see our weak spots and so are we willing to fix those? Or are we willing to continue to ignore them? Are we willing to take on a new challenge? Have a new vision? I think that's one of the things that we are going to get to do, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** Is what is our vision going to be like moving forward? 'Cause we get to create a new vision if obviously, what was working has not been working and that's why we are here in this crazy 2020 situation. But it's an opportunity for us to create a new vision of what our relationship looks like with our kids, and also with ourself because it's like something has been lacking. I got to see first-hand how my attention, I think with Braden being as independent, for example, my attention's been a little bit drawn back to myself. So it's all of these small things that we get to examine, or with being a nurse to you, and actually, I love it. It was great to me because I got to serve, serve you and take care of you, 'cause you're the one who's always taking care of me and everybody else, and so it was great. So it wasn't like... 'Cause it was the small things of, "Bring me your cup of water, or adjust this for me, or put the ice on your back." Back in the day, it would have been like, "Oh, I'm so tired. I just need to like... Why do I need to..." But now I don't have that little reservation because it's like, I just get to do it. I get to do this, and I'm grateful that you're getting better, so it's the small things.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, that's so powerful. I think you just got me to remember something else for all of us is to understand our roles at the time. Because in relationship context, we have a role, and that role is dynamic though, it's going to change at some point, depending on what's going on in life, depending on what's going on in context of your relationship. Like you just said, and I didn't think about that, me taking care of other people, taking care of you, I just feel that's the most natural thing because I'm just obsessed with you as you know, but just getting up and finding a way, how can I help people to be better, and change the world in my own unique way. But the tables turned, it switched. And I felt so bad because my anchor of being that person, that definition of how I saw myself was now suddenly changed. And I was saying the craziest things to you.

**Anne Stevenson:** Oh my God, like...

**Shawn Stevenson:** I was saying stuff like, "You're going to leave me because whatever..." Just like...

**Anne Stevenson:** You were... I mean you were... Basically, you had... Temporarily you had lost your mind. The best way I can say it. No, but the funny part is, but I got to turn that on within myself



where I have, in a sense, been dependent so much on you kind of deciding everything and I'm going to step in, and I know my role, but coming out of this is I get to define a new... My new self where I can delegate, I don't need you to ask, "Okay, babe, what do we need do about X, Y, and Z?" I had to kind of build that muscle up of decision-making and not... And facing the consequences if this stuff works, or it doesn't work. I got to do that more. And it actually feels good. It's a little bit more confidence for myself too and finding a new way of being a leader where if something is to happen to you, I need to be able to just stand and just figure it all out.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, absolutely. And I think also I want to give people this example that even the very best of us come upon hard times. Like you said, I temporarily lost my mind, and I knew, I had the question right there, I saw it and I would ask, "What is this trying to teach me?" Oh, this hurts so bad, I don't care what it's trying to teach me." I'm battling that whole thing.

**Anne Stevenson:** No, you didn't even want me to talk anything...

**Shawn Stevenson:** No positive... Get the positive...

**Anne Stevenson:** No positive...

**Shawn Stevenson:** What? But I think, again, we have to allow ourselves that grace. And depending on the circumstance, sometimes that grace period's going to be shorter or longer, but it really boils down to your training. And I've invested many years in kind of cultivating the way that I think. And even my health, if my health wasn't as good as it was when that happened, man, we was going, as we're going to all these different specialists and they're doing all the ultrasounds and MRIs, and they're just like, "Your body is amazing."

**Anne Stevenson:** And you didn't want to hear that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right. I'm just like, "Well then why am I hurt?" But at the same time, they were telling me like, "Wow." One of the guys even asked me to come back and be a model for his students and I'm just like... I was kind of irritated when he said it, because I'm like, "But I'm hurt." But at the same time I was like, "Wait a minute. I'm healthy. There's no other problem, is this trauma happened, but I'm going to be okay." And so that's another big thing for us to realize that throughout this process, have compassion on yourself, forgive yourself. I went through a pretty consistent process of forgiveness for myself. I haven't even shared that with you. Even a few days ago, just for even getting caught up in some of the stuff recently and just forgiving myself for it.



And also that experience left such a great opportunity of knowing... Because I was used to being the one who was making the decisions and now it's like you're taking care of me and my identity was shaky, and so... But I got to accept that, man, my wife loves me, and she's got my back. And there's degrees of that because it's like, "Well she got my back. If I'm the man..." But it's just so silly, the things that we have in our minds. And you just demonstrated a whole different level of love for me, and also your mom too, and our kids as well. Braden was helping me walk and Jordan was helping me. He's doing so much around the house to pick up the slack and it's just so many blessings.

**Anne Stevenson:** I know, and I had to thank him, and shout out to Jordan, 'cause I just felt I was so consumed in it, with just trying to figure out... Every day was so different. It's so funny how everybody nowadays is like, "What is today? Is today Tuesday?" We don't even care... We've been experiencing that since beginning of January...

**Shawn Stevenson:** First week of January.

**Anne Stevenson:** And so that was all gone, but he just really stepped up, from picking up Braden and taking him to baseball practice, grocery shopping, and just acknowledging him for just stepping up, like when I needed the help. But this also leads to obviously from self to our relationships, and then to the bigger picture where it's like, "What's that bigger vision? Where have we in... If it's in our community, or if it's our business, looking at our business differently now," because Zoom is popping off and it's created a new way of connecting. We're connecting now more than ever, like calling our grandparents, just checking in on them to make sure they're good. And so these positive good things, like taking it out of this place, this confusion place that we are coming out of, and also businesses where it's like, "Wow, okay, I'm getting a chance to build a new business online," and if nobody has listened, please listen to the Amy Porterfield episode. I just think now more than ever, it's important to create something, and having a presence online and being able to monetize as we've seen with your business, if you've never really taken it seriously. And so these opportunities that we're getting to see where it's like, "Okay, this door shut, but then this other one is opening up in a bigger way," and being able to connect with our community and seeing how we can be of value in the bigger scale.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely. At the end of the day, it's important for all of us to really get how much we need other people, and finding ways to connect and to support each other. When you've mentioned us talking about our vision, and creating a vision, this is something we've done every year. We're here, sitting here right now in... I couldn't have even



fathomed that I would have ever left St. Louis. I kind of felt like, of course, I would have some level of success somehow, but every year we sit down and we create a vision. We write out goals, but even that was put on the back burner...

**Anne Stevenson:** What goals?

**Shawn Stevenson:** 'Cause I literally I couldn't even sit, I couldn't sit. But now it's just like we're having these conversations and starting to talk about what are the things that we want because it's not about us exclusively anymore. It's about... And it really never has been, but now it's even more so, what is the world that we want to create? What does the community look like in our country, our world community? And The Model Health Show, we've been listened to in every country. We've had at least one listener in every country, like 100 and whatever, 70 countries, I think, it's crazy.

We just... By the way, shout out to Mongolia. Just got Mongolia agency reached out to translate Sleep Smarter into Mongolian. Shout out to Genghis Khan, I guess. But it's so powerful that we have this opportunity and this medium. So for you maybe it is starting a podcast. Maybe it is getting online and creating an online store, a blog or... Just about every business you can name, there's an online component. There's a transition space. Or what is your gift? Maybe this is the time like... You've always loved to sing and you just been kind of pining away at an office space somewhere, and now this is the time that you can... By the way, the game has changed. It used to be you had to get in front of whatever record exec or Simon Cowell, eventually when they have these little shows, but now you can create... Put your stuff online, create an audience. The most successful artists are those who just market. It's not even about talent. Not to say you're not talented.

**Anne Stevenson:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm sure you sound great outside the shower as well. But this is your opportunity to do the thing that you love as well. At least be a sidepreneur with it. And I think, again, a big part of it is learning from people who've already done the thing. So Amy Porterfield episode that we did recently, we'll put that in the show notes, Pat Flynn's episode, following Pat Flynn, Jamal King, so many great success teachers with strategies and tactics sharing exactly what they did. Because moving forward, and I want to mention this because it's very important, the way that our society, the way that our officials, our government officials have handled this situation with COVID-19, has created a situation where the treatment is very likely going to be far deadlier than the problem. And we're starting to already see what we're referring to put in this category. Now everything



gets a name, gets a label, these diseases of despair. Because millions upon millions upon millions of people have lost their jobs.

But now people are going back to work. Some businesses have been able to open. But many of these businesses are not going to be able to recover. They should wait for their shots so they can get in there and get stuff back to normal. But people are not going to come flooding back to your businesses because of the way things are structured and because of so much fear. And so we're going to see a series of millions of more business going under. And with that said, we have to find a way to build our financial well-being and to think outside the box, to support each other, to give resources and ideas and think creatively more than ever, because this is, again, this is creating a huge opportunity. It's not an accident. This happened right now, when we have the internet, the barriers are gone. You just have to wake up to that reality.

**Anne Stevenson:** And we know with everything, we've talked about relationships before, how the financial aspect does create a lot of problems in relationships too, right? So this is something that if we are trying to, in a holistic way, look at it, and if it's up-leveling our relationship, and that component still is shaky or missing and there's uncertainty, it's now more than ever a call. At the end of the day, we get to decide, how do we define this time? Can we... Do we want to continue to look at it from this negative place of, everything is so against us? Yes, it is, it totally is, we see that. But as more enlightened individuals that we all are in different sense, we know we can't stay there. We have to up-level. We have to find a way to move forward in this "new normal" ... Do people say that anymore?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah. I wanted to talk about this too, because when you said something earlier about extrovert, you slid that in there, I think this is also an opportunity for us to acknowledge who we are, like our personalities, and know that things can happen, but we still need to feed our spirit. We still need to get our cup filled. And through this process, you didn't have me in the same context, right? But you were blessed to have a friend who you're in constant communication with like never before. Jelisa, shout out to Jelisa. And you guys doing the voice text, hopping on your virtual dates...

**Anne Stevenson:** I mean, #therapy. Voice texts, that in itself has been very therapeutical to me. I didn't even know... 'Cause you have so much thoughts going on in your head all the time, and between that and still the business and the worry, all of those going things, but we never really take time out just to record it. But what's even better is I'm recording it and it can be... Like our voice text, if somebody was to listen, it just sounds... We talk about five different things in one voice text, but that's how our mind works, right? We're not



going in a sequence... I might be thinking about, "Oh, that sweatshirt." And it'd be like, "Oh, Did I put that chicken out of the Crock-Pot?" It's just really random, but it was so... It was such great therapy to be able to not only voice text and connecting with somebody who truly just wanted to be a support system for me and not judging me and... I don't know, it's actually very weird like you're crying with the voice text, 'cause you got to hold it down and you're crying, and then you're wondering, "Why do I have this? Okay, let me let go of my thumb." So it's funny 'cause then it makes you not cry anymore 'cause you're like, "That's weird. Now she's going to just hear, I just kind of cried."

So that. And also when we would do the Zoom dates with our friends, shout out to Zack and Cynthia, where it's like when you talk with other people, and I think that's the missing part. I think the first two months of quarantine, people were just so separate in their little bubble, and then slowly scheduling these dates with each other. And the more you set them and you're connecting, it's like, "Wow, they have a different point of view. I never thought about it that way." But that's the human-ness, us getting back to that, because if we're not sharing ideas, it's different than just, okay, a social media post or commenting, but having conversations. We got to get back to that, got to connect with random people who have a difference of opinion, but with respect and just being able to think differently, it's the only way to grow.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That's so true, so true. And I think that it's another one, a bigger epidemic is with misunderstanding and not a willingness to have these conversations with respect and admiration and patience. These are all qualities that for many of us... I had to learn those qualities, and you're coming into a very heated situation, we're talking about social injustice. This is the most sensitive subject in our reality, is race, and it's a very strange phenomenon obviously because again, looking at the human genome, it's 0.01% as far as our exterior appearance difference in all humanity, less than 0.01% that causes what we would consider to be our race, or our appearance, the texture of our hair, or our skin color. We're so similar, but this thing has created this epic kind of divide, and now we're having these conversations. And what's so beautiful is that never before, I don't think, in recent history has there been so much opportunity and so many people having the conversations. And so I wanna talk about that now as well because, even Chalene, shout out to Chalene Johnson, and we'll put her episode in the show notes for you guys, but you're having a conversation going on Chalene's show about, how can we bridge the gap? How can we talk about these things?

And for me, it was one of the... It was the most difficult episode I've ever done, and just sharing my story. And I shared because some of the biggest feedback was, I didn't really

understand until you shared your story because people know me and they would think like, "That stuff doesn't happen to people like you." When in reality, it's happened so much that I became... I came to a place where I started to accept it as normal. I worked in health to try to find ways to help it, to make people feel better, so we can communicate better, but I just accepted it as business as usual. And so in this complex situation, what are some of the things that we can do to talk to each other, to have the conversations?

**Anne Stevenson:** Man, it's loaded. And again, this is just obviously coming from my experience. I think every person, especially black or white, everybody, it's different experiences and their different way of expressing it, but one thing we do know is the fact of, for most people, I'm not going to say everyone, that we need to do something. I think that's come to the forefront. It's just a matter of how or where. But you said the most perfect thing which is, this is the most perfect time where everybody is able to talk about it, right? And because we're able to talk about it, there's a gateway that's been opened where it's like, you can ask that awkward, weird question that you've always had in the back of your mind to your black friend that... You know what I'm saying?

And vice-versa, where the black person is like, "I've been wanting to share this with you, and it just was never right, and I've always felt that there was this gap, but now we can be able to talk about it." So it's... In a sense, I feel grateful for that because I've had... The last few weeks, I've had so many conversations with my white friends that I would have never in a million years have had, but it's been great because the door has been opened. And also hearing their perspective. And it's painful, it hurts, but that's one of those things that... It's a gateway. So acknowledging that, that should be the first part. But then the second thing before we can even go to, "How do we even tackle it?" is self-care, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** And I think that... You said something, you said something the other day. You said something about, "When we are mentally and physically healthy, it's easier to see others as humans." Right? And so, before we can even get to the deeper conversations, are we able... Are we doing the basic stuff of our self-care from managing our social media intake, 'cause it's been a lot. It has been a lot. From moving our bodies... What are we eating? And I'll be quite honest, those first two weeks when things were hectic, I don't even know, I couldn't figure out what day. I'm like, "Did we..." I'm like, "Did Braden eat?" It was just a whole mess. And it is understandable, but as we are kind of... The clouds are moving and we are seeing a bigger picture, self-care has to be top of the





charts, like the first thing, because then, when we are taking care of ourselves, we get to see in a different lens to the other person, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely, absolutely. I'm just thinking of the times when we haphazardly had our son intermittent fasting on accident, 'cause we didn't know if we fed the kid or not. But like you just said, and you are one of the only people that know this, that I've been working diligently to address this specific issue of getting our community healthier so that we can have conversations about violence, about how we interact with each other. And again, it's just very difficult. It's not impossible to have compassion for someone. It's very difficult if you don't feel well, to put yourself into someone else's shoes, a perspective take or to be patient when your blood sugar is off, simple things like that and we've got the data to show it now. And I'm going to have that for everybody, eventually, coming very soon. So again, I've been working on it for a couple of years now.

But the funny thing is, it's at this exact time when this is all happening, that I have put it all together. And so, one thing that is very important, it just kind of brought up from this situation, and I got to talk about this. We got to really dive in and share this is that, at the end of the day, in this conversation and how we're addressing the connection between our citizens of all different races and religions, we have to understand that this is really about perspective. It's always about perspective.

We tend to be hard-lined in one train of thinking and it's from our own personal experience. We can absolutely learn from other people's experience, but it's very, very difficult, very difficult if you have not experienced what they have. And so, when you're listening and learning... I think it's such a great gift to be able to listen and learn from people who have multiple perspectives, so we're not coming at it from this hardline place. And I truly feel... And I've said this on the show, and I feel like everybody, we were born for this. And I have to talk about it, I have to speak up because I was really born for this. I am a culmination of both cultures, the extreme of both cultures. The white side of my family, we're talking redneck, alright. We're talking dirt road, you've been with me to my meemaw's house. But we would go down there and visit my grandmother's friends and I'm this little mixed kid.

And her best friends, Elmer and Netty, Elmer and Netty, okay. And going to the bathroom and you know, wooden outhouse, and just like, this is not an environment that a lot of people would see. And they're going out hunting, they stay strapped up in a different kind of way. But I grew up on this other end of where I'm listening to Reba McEntire and Conway Twitty and Dolly Parton. And then I have this other side, the other extreme of living in the hood where it's drive-by shootings. And I'm 12 years old, I come



out of the store and a little kid younger than me has a gun in my face, telling me to take my shoes off. And if the store owner didn't scare him away, I don't know what could have happened, you know what I'm saying? And seeing drive-bys and seeing... Living next door to a crack house and seeing my family overtaken by that, and the culture around that, Public Enemy, NWA, Ice Cube. I've got this real first-hand, boots-on-the-ground experience of all those things. So I might be somebody you want to talk to and listen to about this because I'm not coming at like just this place where there's social, there's racial injustice.

So growing up in that condition, even as a child, in a predominantly white area, when we lived in a good neighborhood in the county before they moved to the country, I would get called racial slurs, and even my... They would say to my mother, I remember hearing, I remember the words, calling her a n\* lover. So when we get in this conversation about privilege, and you start to see people's mindsets come to the surface during times like this and people posting things like, "Why do bi-racial children largely identify as black." And then they'll put the little tag line, "There's no benefit in being white. There's no privilege." And it's very ignorant because my environment let me know that I couldn't be a part of the culture. I promise you, I was... I got Umbros. Do you know what Umbros are, baby?

**Anne Stevenson:** No, I don't.

**Shawn Stevenson:** This is like soccer gear. I've got the Umbro shoes, the neon, Umbro shorts. I wanted to fit in with the White kids in my school, but they just wasn't having it. They were not allowing me to be a part of culture. I remember a white girl that I liked... And again, when I'm saying this, my cousins that I grew up with are white kids. But she was just like, "Ew." Right? Cut to high school. Because that was elementary, high school, I became a little bit more of a hot commodity. Now everybody's listening to rap a little bit, and just the tables turned over time. But it wasn't my choosing. It was the environment not allowing me to be a part of a specific culture. And so, I'm coming from that place of seeing it firsthand, just little instances that could have been very bad. But, fortunately, I had good people in my life. So I want to talk about this, part of us creating change and bringing...

I talked about the racial wealth gap. It's so huge and it's continued to grow. Starting to close that gap and getting people on a more successful accord, specifically with the black community. Because that, in of itself, once you get out of poverty, it starts to elevate you out of a place where you see consistent violence around you. It starts to elevate you to a place where education becomes more attainable and a higher-order



priority. So I want to talk about this because there is absolutely a portion of taking responsibility. Absolutely. And this is what some of the people... When I would share my experience... Unfortunately, I have never received so much hate, low key hate, when I was sharing some of the things that I went through. And I just wanted to toss this over to you...

**Anne Stevenson:** I know.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Because you've been with me. I came out of the store... We're at the mall. I come out of the store, and I was in the dressing room on a call helping somebody whose aunt had gotten diagnosed with cancer. And I was just sharing everything that I could in that moment. So I was in there maybe 10, 15 minutes. I go and check out, buy a few things and then I come out. And then what happened?

**Anne Stevenson:** There was police out there. It happened so quickly. And that's the thing I think people don't understand. Moments like those, it's... You're so confused. You're like, "This can't be... This is not... This is not happening." Like, "We're better than this." You're like... I don't even know what year that was? We were like, "No. This is... It's not happening." But it was. And one, I mean, from the outside just looking at it, where it's like... You're just perplexed, and angry too. 'Cause you're just like, "What? I'm not doing anything at all." And even though you didn't even have that much money... But you're like, "I have enough money to buy whatever I want from the store," and me too. And even though, of course, they wanted a problem to arise so that they can do something to you, we knew better. And we had... You knew you had to still chill, and bring it down.

**Shawn Stevenson:** But they were still even trying to provoke me.

**Anne Stevenson:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** After they check my bag and see that I didn't steal anything, what I was accused of because of racial profiling. I didn't do anything wrong, and yet they were wanting to hurt me. They were looking for a reason. Even after they saw that they were wrong, they didn't want to take that pressure off of me. And I was so upset. Like you said, I was leaving there and I was like, "Now we're going to just go file a complaint. We're going to sue them." Because the police station was right across the street from the mall, that's why they were there.

**Anne Stevenson:** No. I remember it felt like a walk of shame because we had to leave the store and we left with them. And I'm behind you guys, and I'm just like, The whole mall... Of course,



you feel like the whole mall is looking at you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. Oh my gosh.

**Anne Stevenson:** And you're like, "But we didn't do anything wrong." And so, just the anger that comes with that, the sadness is so deep. But I felt more upset for you than even for myself, and just how this actually even looks. 'Cause it's kind of one of those like, "No, we didn't do anything." You just want to tell everybody. But it's just like no. You just... "Oh, there goes another black guy with the police, walking in the mall. What did he do?"

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yes.

**Anne Stevenson:** And, yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I definitely felt it. And I feel like we've talked about. I came to accept those feelings as normal. Whenever I go to a store anywhere, I really... And I've seen it so many times where people are just doing little things to let me know that they're watching me. And it's so unfortunate and so crazy. And my story isn't unique. And so, when we talk about these things, of course, it has opened up so much love and so much acknowledgment. Because people think it has to be something criminal, it's something that they did wrong. You would not believe how many people were sending me messages talking about how George Floyd was a criminal. And they were saying, "Oh, he still shouldn't have died, but you shouldn't be," fill in the blank, "because he's a criminal." And it's so sick to justify because we always try to find a way to justify when somebody is murdered or harmed in some kind of way by law enforcement. And so, me walking out of there... I didn't have a choice in the matter. They wanted to attack me, what am I supposed to do?

I can't fight back per se, because then... Oh my God, that would open up so many... It's a whole different scenario. But what I did do, was I was like, "I'm going to fight them. We're going to sue them." And then you talked to your mother. And your mother shares something that literally changed my life. She reminded me that that is not a good use of my time. So many people have filed complaints. The man who murdered George Floyd, he had already had 15 complaints of abuse of power. Those things didn't work as well as they should, because this... That's believing that the system is supposed to do what the system is supposed to do. She reminded me that I need to focus on building myself up. Building up my own well-being, my own power, my own influence. So I can truly make a difference in the world. Me getting caught up and spending time invested trying to fight this system is not as valuable as a use of time as me going and building

myself up. And your mother also said something that I want you to talk about. She said that this isn't a matter of the mind, what's happening right now. Right?

**Anne Stevenson:** Yeah. She said, especially lately and just everything in the... The comments, it's just been crazy. And we've just been talking about a lot of... Everything going on, and that's what she said. She said, "This is not a matter of the brain. It's a matter of the heart." And I think at this point, is... Of everything going on. When you saw that video, when you saw that picture, if it went straight to your heart, it didn't go to your brain and you're rationalizing. And some people it did. And she's like. "For those who it's just going to the mind, and you're trying to find all that he did. We don't have any room for that. We don't have any room to explain the justification, the what-ifs. No, this is a matter of the heart. And as we know, when you initially said, we are all inside, we're all the same really. And so, that's just another human being. It's just, we see him as a human being, and when you're talking about some of the different comments and because you shared your story, 'cause I know that in my team we've received most of them being like 99% amazing. But then you'll have the few is like... It's crazy.

But I see it like this, is everybody has, especially if you've listened to the show, 400 plus episodes, have gained something from you positive 100% of the time, each time because you've put yourself before anybody else as far as doing the work, doing the study, and most importantly, it's been always to turn around the finger back to yourself and how can I get better? But the formula and the way you've always been doing it has been from a place... From your experiences, from all of the experiences that you've had, which have been bundled up, and so many people can know so many things about you because you've shared bits by bits, but they've come from traumatic circumstances, but you've made light of them, you've been able to inject them into the message and directing it back to ourselves. Right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** And so, it's so funny that the moment where you're actually sharing it, then you get this. But at the end of the day, the way I see it is, I think we all do have bias, and even like we were talking about how do we even communicate this and how can we get to a better place, it's first, let's examine our own bias. I think that as black, white, African, I know most definitely I had bias when thinking of the black community here in America, but that was from what we were told when we first arrived in America of what black people were and all of those things, and I had to unlearn but I luckily... We had an amazing, my mom's friend, who was able to teach us, sit us down and teach us over and over again. And even right now, we've been together... I don't know, it's 18 years?



**Shawn Stevenson:** Sixteen years.

**Anne Stevenson:** It is, it is 16.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So people could see, you're not that typical with a knowing of the dates and stuff like that. Nope, atypical.

**Anne Stevenson:** It's horrible. But wait... It's teen something.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's all run together.

**Anne Stevenson:** But the thing is, it's like even knowing you this long, I am still learning so much, not only about you and your story but also about the black culture. And so I think the gap, even when you were saying... When people are saying certain things to me, the way I'm seeing it now it's like, Oh, you've not been educated, you're not looking in, or even being inquisitive. I just think even the slight willingness, to be willing to just being like, "Huh, okay, I know Shawn said this or I saw that, and I might not understand that, but you know what, let me check that out."

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right.

**Anne Stevenson:** But I think that opens a gate 'cause it's like, Okay, I might not know something, let me go and look, as opposed to these ridiculous... It's not ridiculous 'cause everything does is valid to a point like, Okay, there's black on black crime or in the hood, they're not eating well and all of these things, but never asking, "Huh, why isn't there a Whole Foods out in the hood?" You know I'm saying? Or, why aren't there better resources there? Or, the education system. And going down and just studying and looking 'cause you will find something. And so, I think for me to open that conversation, to take it to the next level, from first, your self-care and really being well, to looking at your own bias.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** And then getting to educating. I don't think we will be able to move as a society if we don't actually get educated and learn. There is no way, there is no way that we will actually get to where we can say that we're all one, because that's the truth. We are all one. Every life does matter. But we have to get to this next step. We need to have the hard conversations. But the hard conversations come when you're educated because you cannot have the hard conversation with your racist aunt when you don't know the

facts. 'Cause then you'll be like, Well, yeah, why is that? Then you go and study. And I saw that a lot with... 'cause I think blacks... A lot of people contacting a black person they've never even talked to in a long time, and then wanting to, "I am so sorry. Oh my gosh, I didn't know it was that bad." For a lot of us, it's like, "Wow, really?"

Which is fine, but to me, again, I see it as like, Wow, okay, you're awakening and realizing there is an issue. But then the next step is, what are you going to do about it? What are you going to do about it? And there's tons of resources, and I think collectively, we all know, we all know that there've been some things we don't want to touch on, we want to kind of like, "Ah, it's too sensitive. There is no place for it." But now is the time. Actually, I want to share a story with you. My sister, she works at the bank, and a customer came in, and after the transaction, it was an old, and he works at the government office or something. After the transaction, it was a white guy, he's probably like 60 years old or something. And he asked my sister, "Can I ask you something?" And she's like, "Yeah." And he said, "Well, you know... "

"I'm just... I'm really confused. I really want to understand what's going on around in our society today", and he's like, "I am a good person, I don't have any... I love all people. I treat everybody kindly and fairly. I don't have these things." And I see this in the news, and I'm just like, "That's not me, and I don't know what to do about it." It's like, "Is there something that I can do about it?" One, when we're talking about the gateway is open where you can have. And it's okay to have that question and it could... Obviously, it's like somebody random too, another black person, but with the inquisitive, he had a willingness just to like, "Let me understand, let me just see. Am I missing something? Is there something I can do better?" And so that opened a conversation with my sister just explaining like that's how you may feel, but I'm pretty sure people that you are around where they might have different biases or racist undertones, for example, or micro-aggressions and stuff like that and you can be able to step in and being like, "No. They're just human or... "

That's pretty much it, at the end of the day, we're really just... We're all human. And anyways, and he was so thankful 'cause he'd never thought about it, and he was like... He's in a... It's a community of like, it's like 500 people, there's nobody of color in his community. And she said, "If my car breaks down and I'm in your town, I would feel very... I would be scared." And he's like, "But why?" He was shocked. So I say that to say, I think everybody... A lot of people do mean well and we've seen that with the protests which everybody, all different colors, and everything, in different countries. But the willingness and having that open door and to listen, and then you educate, and actually acting and challenging, but then at the same time, knowing that we're not... Some



people we're not here to change and it's and... But that doesn't mean you give up, you have to keep going.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, yeah, you just said it. That's so, so beautiful. Some people are literally, they're walking... They're dinosaurs, you know what I'm saying? They're going to become extinct. And shout-out to the raptors and the... What is the other one? What's the fly... Pterodactyls. Shout-out to the pterodactyls out there who are going extinct and missing out on this opportunity to learn and to grow and to connect humanity because, in reality, there is no side, like we are all one team. It's team us, it's team humanity. And this is why we love those movies with the aliens invade, 'cause all countries all of a sudden come together to fight against some outside force. This is an inherent thing in our programming, we've done this throughout our evolution, where it's this tribe against this tribe. And it's always shortsighted because what ends up happening is we end up hurting ourselves, we end up hurting other people. Even this country itself was founded on a genocide of people who were just continuously killed off and pushed into little sections of this country. And then all of a sudden their history is erased, they're relegated to being a name of sports teams, the Cleveland Indians, for example. And shout-out everybody in Cleveland, I'm sorry, no disrespect.

But if you think about it and the weight that would carry, for your people being almost wiped out and they've got a mascot to denote what you once were or what they perceived you to be. Just imagine how that would feel. And I think that the biggest thing from what you said... Well, there's so many big things, but that willingness... The willingness to communicate, the willingness to be wrong, is huge. We keep talking about this, and you know this, this is something that over the last few years, I've said "I'm sorry" more than I have other years prior to that and really looking for... And I do this, I go into the work, I go into the research to find where, if I have a bias, let me go and look at the opposite thing. But most people aren't doing that. They're not coming with another argument because they're trying to play the "devil's advocate", they're trying to be hurtful, they're trying to prove you wrong. And that's one of the big issues that I have to talk about which is deflecting. We have a chronic epidemic of deflecting and missing the point. So I shared a story about a recent incident that we experienced when we were in St. Louis and the cop literally setting people up.

It was a stop sign pushed to the ground, and he set us up. He knew that nobody would see that sign, and he knew that in the neighborhood we were in, which is a "bad neighborhood", he was very likely going to be able to get somebody with the warrant or expired license or tags or something. And when he approached our car, he had the probability that he'd be pulling me out of that vehicle. Hand on his gun, approaching





the car sideways...

**Anne Stevenson:** I was there.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And once he got to the window, I had my ID out, I made sure, 'cause I'm not going to reach for anything. And he was visibly shaking with his hand on his gun, voice was trembling and I immediate, because of the training, we have to train ourselves to... It's unfortunate, we have to remain calm when we are being potentially assaulted, but I did it. My little son is in the back seat. Recently a man named Philando Castile, little girl was in the back seat, his girlfriend was next to him. You were right there next to me, and he was murdered by a police officer. He did nothing wrong. And when the cop shot him, she asked, "Why did you do that?" He said, "I don't know." He has...

We've created a structure where he can kill him because of his fear if he feels threatened. What about us? What if I feel threatened? What do I get to do? Because this is just another person. He's done a few weeks of training, a few months of training, no disrespect, but to have that level of authority over somebody's life. And so when I shared my story, and just again, the overwhelming majority of people was just like, "I can't believe things like that actually happened." Especially to "somebody like you," because you see me as like, "This wouldn't happen to Shawn." When actually it's happened so much that I can't even... I can just tell story after story after story. But I shared that and then somebody commented that this... My personal experience is wrong. My caution about my son going out and him not wearing a hoodie when he goes out running in our good neighborhood. That fear that I carry, because I'm not a fearful person. It's more of a... It's an intense awareness that I try to work on seeing good.

This is another important quality that we all need to develop. I believe that every single person, even the very best, most altruistic, good person is capable of doing the most heinous, disgusting act. And you might think I wouldn't kill somebody, what if somebody hurt your child? What if somebody did something unspeakable to your child, all of a sudden, you're taking another life, and you're defending your child, that possibility starts to elevate. And I also believe that the very worst person that we would deem despicable and disgraceful is capable of the most beautiful and amazing act. And if we can develop those qualities, to see people like that and stop having so much hate, but also having a level of caution as well because this isn't about being stupid and it's all love, and in some instances, it is all love. But there's other stuff too, and all of it's valid. So my point that I really want to make is, I received a message, and the person was saying, as I'm sharing my experience with police violence, and even me doing an entire

episode, and even sharing the statistics, matter of fact, let me just drop a couple of these in here right now, just for folks who didn't catch that episode, which we'll put in the show notes.

In 2000, researchers at Harvard University exposed that expected punishment is significantly reduced for crimes including homicide when the victim is black. So in court cases, overall, when somebody commits a crime against a black citizen, their punishment is far less. There's an inherent devaluation of a black life within the structure of the system. And then, I'll post something like this, and then people are like, "Well, Harvard's biased," just like... And they went to McDonald's University for their degree and they're talking about how this is wrong, you feel me? But so that's number one. Black men are five times more likely to be murdered than white men. And that gets into the conversation that I went in-depth, because it's not just police brutality. It's also of course, in the black community, people kill who they're around. Black people kill black people more often, white people kill white people more often, Native Americans kill Native Americans more often, and so on and so forth.

But there's an epidemic. We just lost a child. He was 17 years old. He was at our wedding, a young black child with his whole life ahead of him. He was just murdered. Literally two days ago. I grew up around that shit. Obviously, I'm tired of it. But it's a systemic issue. He's a good like he, he wants to be good. But what are you born into? And there's this conversation and people were saying this, "Well, the real issue is taking care of your home, it starts at home." Yeah, but the environment itself, we can create the best environment within that home. But once you get outside those doors, your environment, we are a product of our environment, so we need both. And we're coming into this situation. Our parents were born during times when segregation was still legal. It's not that long ago. And people send me videos of people... Black people who are posting videos and sharing their perspective that police brutality is not a black issue. Systemic racism isn't the issue, and it's the Democrats fault, and pointing fingers to a political party, instead of like, "Let's talk about the real issue."

There's only so much of like, lift myself from my own bootstraps, when I have to still, in addition to that, overcome all of these obstacles that are literally life-threatening. One of those instances that was on the docket to be repealed was legislation to protect minorities against harsher punishments in school for offenses. And this particular membership of a political party, who's in power right now was trying to repeal that. I was a victim of that thing. When I was in high school. I was doing everything right on the surface. I was Student Advisory. I was a scholar-athlete, I was in inroads for college credit, first year that it started. As a junior in high school. I had an almost 3.8 GPA. I was



doing all of these great things right. I was teenage health consultant, I was doing all these good things right. And I kept telling the white, my white principals like, "Hey, this guy keeps coming at... You guys got to do something about this." And ultimately, we get into this fight. And instead of me getting suspended for three, five days, 10 days max is what usually... They kicked me out of school for 180 days, an all-whiteboard of education. Because I was in the desegregation program where I'm getting bust out to the good school. They were making an example of me. And I can talk about how it's not fair, but. And you can also say, "Well, you shouldn't have got into that fight."

The rules are not the same for us. That would not have happened to one of my white friends. It just wouldn't, because I'd seen it, they get into a fight, they come back in three days or whatever. And that's the unfortunate part that we don't see is all the things we have to overcome. So I just wanted to make this point of, we have to be mindful of deflecting, because when I'm making a point about my experience, number one, you have to understand this is my experience. And when I share the data, like literally... Okay, we have this issue now as a culture about police brutality. And right here in the data, the US Justice Department... And again, this is the US freaking Justice Department, this isn't Charlie down at the chocolate factory, I guess, who's coming up with these statistics, that black citizens are more than two times more likely to be stopped and searched during consensual encounters, what's "consensual encounters" where just basically stop and search. Black men are almost six times more likely to be incarcerated than white men. And when we're talking about the issue with police brutality, this was a meta-analysis published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, found that young black men are two and a half times more likely to be killed by police than young white men.

It's all love, we are all one, but we need to address this issue. It's not all lives matter until we address these things, and help to bring everybody up, but we can't do that by deflecting. We can't do that by... When I share what's going on, and we all... This is the big thing on people's minds, that police brutality is a serious issue where we're concerned for our children, and then somebody sends me a message or comments, "But what about black-on-black crime?" We're not talking about that. You're deflecting. We're talking about this issue, and I promise you if we have good policing in black communities where there is compassion, where there is support, and there... This is happening all over the place. There are different police departments all over the country that are doing these things. They're in the community, they're connecting, they're getting to know the citizens, they're there to protect and serve, the crime rates are going to go down. The help and how we help each other is going to go up. And people could start to elevate out of poverty and reduce black-on-black crime as well,



but we're talking about this issue, so stop deflecting.

**Anne Stevenson:** May I interrupt? No. So many thoughts. So many thoughts. I think number one, when you talk about deflecting, 'cause you already know I've seen so much of that, I keep going back to, "But why? Why would you deflect?" right? And no matter, I mean, intelligent, it's like, "I know Shawn. He's amazing, da, da, da, but I just don't know about that story." So number one, I think what I want people who are of other ethnicity that are not black, our friends, family, or associates, what I would say is this, is the fact of when any black person shares their experience and you find yourself with the, "But," or, "If," while clicking or you're watching the news and you read it, you're seeing something that happened to where injustice and it starts to creep up, that is a sign of like, "Okay. There's something I have to work on here. There's a bias in here that I need to observe and see why am I saying that?" because at the end of the day, how do all these people have all these similar stories? And if I'm sharing my story and I'm telling you in detail about it, and you deflect, you're negating me as a person.

You're not listening to me, you're not seeing me, you're not hearing me, and thus the gap gets bigger 'cause what if you did? And it breaks down because it's deeper, obviously, and what if you did? What if you actually had a little bit of empathy towards my story? I ended up typing, 'cause I wanted to know exactly the definition of empathy, but then I ended up on Daniel Goleman's website. And so he was talking about three different types of empathy, and so I'll share those.

So the first one is cognitive empathy, which is simply knowing how the other person feels, and what they might be thinking. So on the basic level, I think that's kind of what a lot of our black counterparts are asking, is that... So then the next one is emotional empathy. So the emotional empathy makes someone well-attuned to another person's inner emotional world. And so this is where when you are educating and learning, watching a documentary, which I highly recommend 13th, you watch that. And you start to really listen in with an open heart to your white friend or somebody's experience online, and even it could be not even a person of color. But even if it's a woman who is sharing about their abusive experience and you actually like, and it does touch you emotionally, but then this is what happens. It says one downside of emotional empathy occurs when people lack the ability to manage their own distress emotion can be seen in the psychological exhaustion that leads to burnout, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Oh yeah. There's a lot of that going on.

**Anne Stevenson:** That's what going... That which goes on, which then will lead to disconnect and then



silence, which again... Then this is that part we've been talking about self-care, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Anne Stevenson:** Where we have to tap back into that, where we are managing. But then this is the thing, is imagine you're feeling that. For example, I've seen that kind of going around like, "Wow, I just want my Instagram feed to go back to normal. I'm just so... " 'cause Instagram has been a good place, a getaway for people, but then it's just now been bombarded with so much, for example. And it's like, "Okay. Well..." Imagine, it's been two or three weeks of this. Well, we've been dealing with every day on top of that, actually regular stuff we have to do every single day.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** So yes, it might feel like burnout, but this is a reality for so many people. Like we're talking about the 17-year-old, our family friend, what they are going through on top of everything else that they have to go through. And on top of that, like people who... With the COVID situation and unemployment, all of these things wrapped up into one. But we still have to show up, we still have to 10 times more be present and aware, like you were saying, so the third one is... Compassion empathy. With this kind of empathy, we cannot only understand a person's predicament and feel with them but are spontaneously moved to help if needed. 'Cause that's what we are asking for, is, you hear me. You're seeing me when I share my experience. But then from there, can you help me? Can you help us? And let's not confuse this, this is not... I don't want you to save me. I want you to be able to stand next to me, being an ally to me, and then being able to speak for me when I'm not there, right? When you see injustice, to call on it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** Because it's like it's easy to say, "I love Anne, I love Shawn. Oh my gosh. They're so amazing." But then if you are in your car and you're seeing a black person walk by and you lock your door, something you have to check. But again, it's not... I don't even see it as being bad. I just see it as a growth that us as humans have to evolve to get to where we really, truly need to be in this huge shift. I think that's what we experiencing is that it's a rising of consciousness that's happening together. And so these small things have to happen and not to feel guilty. I think that we're past feeling guilty. Matter of fact, there's so much information out there, amazing educators, black educators, activists. So many things that we can do.

And for me, it's just asking yourself, if you're curious. For those who are not cool, that is totally fine. I'm not speaking to those people, but for those who are ready, who want to stand next to us, not to save us. Let's be clear, it's not about white save... That's a whole other thing. To stand next to us and to show up and ask yourself like, "Why haven't I? Why haven't I?" I mean, we got Google, like there's so much. And to find out, but yes, you love Oprah. You're ready to hear Oprah story or LeBron James. We could put any prominent, amazing black person who again, rose through the ashes with those same circumstances, right? And you hear their stories. 30 on 30, you hear all those stories of, like they were in this bad neighborhood, bad upbringing, but they rose up. But you never like to ask like, "Wow, why is it all of them are the same similar stories?" And then I think from the curiosity will lead to educating, which will lead them to be a true ally through acting, and we'll probably talk about it a little bit on some of the things that people can do.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, absolutely. That's so powerful. I think that right now, more than ever, we all have the capacity to call out injustice, like you just said. We've been asleep, like some of us, because it's happened so regularly, we put it on sleep mode and we begin to accept things that are totally unacceptable. This isn't about... And one of the big deflection points is instead of addressing the issue, we make it into a political football. And it's like getting passed around, where it's the Democrats fault, they are the racist group really, but they are the kind of racists that act like your friend. But then they are pointing back to... It's the Republican party because of the legislation kicking off with Reagan. And it was caught on a hot mic, and again, check out the documentary 13TH, it's on Netflix. And it was caught on a hot mic, one of Ronald Reagan's campaign members and the strategy they were putting together for them to win the campaign.

He literally specifically said... He was kind of caught on a hot mic... That the conversation a few decades earlier, they can drop it in the conversation when they're out rallying for getting an office. They could say "nigger", "nigger", "nigger", "nigger", "nigger this", "nigger that", "these niggers". And then we had to switch, he said, we switched the language to criminal. We made it criminal and he literally said with his own mouth, and this is something that we just, we know it. We know it, but he was caught saying it. They changed it from nigger to criminal. They changed the languaging in their campaign because now it's no longer politically correct to say the thing. So we know when we say criminal, this is who we're talking about, this category of people. So it's all political parties. People are like, "Well, it's because of this party or that party." That's not human. And I have a big issue with this because what this divide of having these two political parties, is you take on this set of beliefs and you start to negate everything else that the other party says, all their beliefs are stupid. And some of the things from your political

cascade that you're supposed to accept as these are rules and ways of my thinking, you don't even believe in, but you have to accept because you're the cookie-cutter thing.

That's not being a good person. That's not being a rational, logical human being. It's adopting a set of beliefs that you didn't take on yourself, you were given those beliefs by the environment around you. It's not to say, again there's value in it, but even this concept of politics has created so much distance between our society is crazy, and for us to point the finger that one party is responsible for systemic racism, or to even say that systemic racism doesn't exist. I've had so many people send me, not so many, again, it's in the minority, but still. So we're talking about these issues and the solutions, and people are saying to me, "Well, systemic racism doesn't exist, and here is why..." Are you serious? Are you serious? One of our, well, one of my friends, one of my former friend's physician...

**Anne Stevenson:** But this goes down to education, there hasn't been real... You haven't actually gone in and look at the... You haven't looked at the work you haven't research. You haven't spent... And not only, okay, it's one thing to even... If you don't want to believe the stories, but there's another to actually go in and look at the data and to look at the numbers, and the history, most importantly...

**Shawn Stevenson:** The history. Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** The history. The other day, I looked up the definition, I've been so fascinated with definitions lately, and the definition of history, which is, it was something like basically including the past as whole.

**Shawn Stevenson:** As a whole.

**Anne Stevenson:** As a whole.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That this is how it is. Yeah.

**Anne Stevenson:** But that's not been the case where it's...

**Shawn Stevenson:** Not at all.

**Anne Stevenson:** I mean...

**Shawn Stevenson:** We're not taught the whole history.



**Anne Stevenson:** No, no. And it's a lot of things have been left out. Just even with this Juneteenth celebration that just happened. So I didn't even know about it until this year. Why didn't I know? Why didn't I know about Black Wall Street? If, guys, if you don't know, please go look into it and... But then again, we have to turn all of these things, all these amazing situations to a positive to being, I'm getting excited now. I'm really getting excited to learn more about Black history, Kenyan history because I get to teach it to Braden and it's exciting to me because there were so many also amazing things that Black people have done that I was not taught in school. #Igraduated. Anyways, just got to say that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Magna Cum Laude, I was there.

**Anne Stevenson:** I know. But I did, and I took African-American studies, but I only took one class. But we get that opportunity, now, because if we're not educated and we're not learning about this, how can we speak, again, it's coming from belief. And I think part of having a well-rounded belief, I would assume, is from studying, from studying, experiences, and through action to form, fully form that belief, as opposed to from this ideology place. And it's like, "Yes, prove me..." If I'm wrong, fine, then go and look, what is the fuss about? Inquisitive, I'll keep on going back to that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** But this is also... You just said it, it's perfect, you have to also find out, look into why I might be right. That is the part that it takes courage to do. That's the part that, for somebody that I would consider a friend, very loose friend, we knew, we knew a little bit of this skadouchie douchie, but to say that this systemic racism doesn't exist, he's not having a willingness to just look at the data. He has, like you just said, ideology that it doesn't exist, and also negating my story and my experience. That's no way to interact with somebody, to immediately negate them, and labeling them a certain way. Because there's a statement I first heard Wayne Dyer say, "When you label me, you negate me." And also that I heard from Wayne Dyer, the first time, it was from Saint Francis of Assisi, "Seek first to understand and then to be understood."

Especially in this context with the most sensitive issue, seek first to understand, and if you do have some data, I have to be willing to accept that I might be wrong. However, the vast majority of data, and the society itself is telling you, "Whoa, this thing, this is a real thing." And I have to say this, when you talked about calling out injustice, again, I do not want people to overlook this important point, what we tend to do, unfortunately, is we point the finger. Instead of addressing the issue and calling out injustice, we say it's the Democrat's fault. We say it's the Republican's fault. And we are not taking responsibility.



There are racist people in every single political party, in every city, in every country, all over the world. It's a thing. There have been massive genocides of cultures, so many different stories, even within African communities, even within the Jewish communities, even within Native American communities, fighting amongst themselves and having genocides and having racism because this Indian citizen has darker skin than this Indian citizen, and it's us being able to bring all this stuff to the surface. It doesn't feel good, but that's okay, this is how we solve the problem. And one of the things that I pointed out, and I put together a video and really dove into this issue in talking about how do we experience an issue where we have so much incarceration of Black citizens and Black-on-Black crime and in addition to police brutality being hyper-focus with the Black community as well. And I made it an important point because again, instead of people addressing and acknowledging my experience and my data, I'm a very data-driven person, they send me messages from a Black person saying that it's unfortunate that George Floyd was killed, but I do not stand with George Floyd, because he was a criminal.

And this, what bothers me is not the black person that does it necessarily, it's the following of the white citizens that are like, "See, I like this person. She is so intelligent. Other black people need to listen to this black person because this black person is in truth." She's justifying the behavior of a system that has harmed so many of my family members and this community. And it's unfortunate, this happens in every culture, there's always going to be people who don't really... They're not a part of the culture. They're not a part of the black culture. There's people within all cultures that aren't really about the culture themselves. They manipulate and try to find ways to get themselves out or to manipulate and to be accepted by another culture. My point, and at the heart of all that I'm saying is that we are truly one culture with a bunch of little cool subcultures that we can all grow to love and respect. But to say that this culture is wrong and messed up without addressing the core issues. And in this video, I wanted to share all the parts. Don't send me that stuff.

Don't send this to your black friends saying, "This black person is saying systemic racism isn't a problem. Black on black crime is more important." When we're talking, and we're hurting. And I've seen this first-hand in my own life repeatedly, don't... That's not how to go about this. And be careful about who you listen to. And one of the things I pointed out was a lot of those folks, they're standing in their profile picture with Donald Trump. And I haven't really talked about this before, because I'm so, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, you guys, that I accepted it as normal. It got to a point, it was just like, it's just too crazy for me to even discuss, but I'm not going to do that anymore. There are holes in my



thinking as well, where I can see like, "No." I was thinking that I couldn't do anything about it. And I brought up the character, this is not about politics. I don't give a damn if you're a conservative, liberal, republican, whatever the case might be, these stupid labels. We justify behavior. And I pointed out, it's most black people in truth, a fact, do not align themselves with Donald Trump. So, be wary, be cautious about those that do. Not that not being conservative or Republican is the issue, but the quality of character of the person that they're propping up, where we have, it's unfortunate we can't have these conversations, but this is what we have the opportunity to do.

And I brought up this isn't about race, this is the quality of the character of the person. And the 25 women, 25 women who've come forward to share their story of sexual abuse at the hands of the person that we elected to the President of the United States. And instead, when I bring that up, immediately what people will say, they'll deflect and say, "Well, Biden has sexual assault cases too." "I don't give a shit! Biden.

Whoever it is. Joe Biden, Clinton, Donald Trump, we cannot accept this kind of behavior. We have to stop victim-blaming and saying the women are wrong." It's sick. It's sick and it's very unfortunate. And we are bringing down our ethics and our standards. And the only way to bring it up is to call out those injustices. This individual has been in public, literally and I put this in a video, promoting police brutality openly. And also, the situation, which another great thing to check out on Netflix is When They See Us. When They See Us. A story of the Central Park Five was what the label was given. And Donald Trump, unfortunately, taking out, paying six figures to get this full-page ad advocating for the execution of these four black children. They're young teenagers. And they were finally exonerated, that they didn't commit the crime.

They were exonerated just recently. And instead of him apologizing and saying, "I was wrong for that." Instead of doing that, he said, "Well, actually, they admitted that they were guilty, and we need to take another look at that." These are things that we have to call out and just say, "You know what, this is not a good character." And for me, I said the statement of even the person we might see as the worst person has the potential to do great things. So, I don't think any of us need to be pointing the finger at Donald Trump, or Joe Biden, or Hillary Clinton, or whoever these political figures are as the problem in our society like this thing is happening, it's their fault. These are just representation of our society, our collective. At the ground roots level, it's our local officials, our state officials who we are electing to the Supreme Court, and who we are electing to House of Representatives. Paying attention to these things and the quality of character.



I don't care what party you're in. We have to get out of this whole party mindset and look at quality of character. And look at the capacity to have compassion, the capacity to stand up for injustice, like you said. And so with this said, and again, I know that these are sensitive topics, and I ask you to have some compassion on us today for this conversation because that's what it's really about at its core, is empathy and understanding of our perspective. And having these conversations to talk about things that race and politics, for whatever reason, get people super sensitive, like Ralph Tresvant times a thousand. Okay. And shoutout to people who know Ralph Tresvant. He's the lead singer of a group called New Edition, had a hit song called You Need a Man with Sensitivity. More sensitive than that. And it's unfortunate because for us to grow we have to be able to have these conversations. And I come from a very data-driven place, but I'm also human, and I believe that right now we have the opportunity to change the conversation and to also trust that the people that we do elect to office, they're not going to be perfect.

In talking about Trump and his presidency, there of course been beneficial things that have happened for black community, and then there's some not so-beneficial things as well. We're going to continue to see this throughout all political parties and campaigns until we address the core issues which is really about us, the people. It's not like you said, not saving each other, but standing with each other. And so what are some of the things that we can do to really make this real, to make this movement real of us coming together to create a world that really does work for everybody? What are some of the things that we can take from today and put into play to help to usher this in?

**Anne Stevenson:**

Oh, I've been thinking about that, and I think all of this is going to evolve. One of the first things, and I think we'll keep saying this throughout the episode is nobody truly has this all figured out, right? And we just know we need to do something. And as we are moving forward, as clouds are parting and we're seeing a little bit clearer, we know that we can't stay here. And even if hearing all of those things from political to the racist stuff, and if you have a little bit of extra compassion in you or just a little bit more open heart to sit and just have inquiry on even why those feelings come up, I think it's a great start, whether it's negative or positive. So some of the things that prior to even having a hard conversation or calling out, we first have to deal with ourselves, right? And from what I have seen, is a lot of people are just uncomfortable. You feel like you're... "I'm going to ruffle some feathers." But the thing is the feathers have been flying right now. They're flying and you're going to make mistakes, but it's okay if you make mistakes.

Learning, that is part of the journey, so it's okay. As long as you're moving and your intention is there of seeing us all unite and seeing each individual as human beings and

everyone around and holding them accountable, that is going to be the only way, because this is not... It's not going to be pretty. It's hard, it's heartbreaking, and it's very heavy. But we also have to check-in, a lot of checking in. If it's from therapy or meditation, those have to be a core part of anything that we do. But on the bigger part, on the bigger end of paying attention from election and making sure people are registered to vote, and actually diving into this issues and looking and seeing what are the bills that are out there, I think that a lot of us, we've taken it for granted in wishing that our elected officials are doing the right thing. And it takes more time for us to, again, we got to get educated, right?

So those are some of the things that I can see we'll have to do on from the inner level. And then once we do that and we start doing the work and get educated, it's not doing something big like, "I want to go and..." I don't know. You could do something big, but it can start small. What's happening in your community? What are you doing with your friends? If I'm teaching a yoga class, and all I'm seeing is white faces, how can I make my class more diverse in here? If you're, for example, in an online space, online entrepreneurs, we go to these conferences, and it's like you have one black person on stage.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's usually been me, so many times.

**Anne Stevenson:** And us calling out... Calling them out, the organizer, and being like, "Hey, we need to make this more diverse. We have to speak out." And not only, yes, black people, people of color, or if it's just a room full of just men or a stage and it's only men speakers, where are the women? We need all to be represented wherever we are, but it only takes when we speak up. But then that also comes from, again, having compassionate and empathy. But then that comes from when you learn and listen to the stories and educating yourself. Those sequences lead to... Then you start to have bigger ideas.

I mean, my mom, for example, was teaching people who are on probation meditation for years. Or I love ET and what he does in going to the inner-city schools and giving them motivation and talking to them, where nobody else is going. Their ideas, the more you care, the more you want to do something, things are going to start to arise. And I think together we can make the difference because this is the thing, yes, we know that the black community is suffering and there's so much work to be done, but when they're given an opportunity, they do change, they do rise up to the occasion, most of them, but they're not given those opportunities. Opening doors. If you are... You're standing by the gate and you can open that gate, open it for them and let them in. Or if you're over there standing, and you're already ending like, "Hey, what's up with... We



need... Do you have anybody who's on your team who's black who can actually relate? What about your advertising?" I'll see all these mastermind, and it's like nothing but .. Nobody looks like me. So why would I go?

Making it diverse, and because of that, it only gets better, your event gets better, your mastermind gets better, your yoga classes... I remember one time I was in this... I went to this hot yoga, and of course, I'm the only black person in there. And it was an amazing class, but all I can think of was, "Wow, this would be so great for that single black mom who is worried about her teenage son out in the street, she's working two jobs in the hood, on food stamps. If she could get that experience, what that would do." So, collectively, even by getting these ideas, and we're going to come up where things are awesome. We don't have it all figured out, but together we can make something amazing happen.

**Shawn Stevenson:** You're so beautiful, too. You just... So, one thing that I want to... I don't want to leave the episode without sharing. Even when I was down with this injury, which literally brought me to my knees, it was maybe a week that I still didn't serve you. I was still making your coffee every morning, like this morning, bringing it to your... Low-key.

**Anne Stevenson:** Oh thank you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** My wife is a cuddle monster. She likes to get to her little spot, and our son is the same way. Braden is all about that comfy, comfy. And so, since I have you here, you can share what your favorite coffee is.

**Anne Stevenson:** Lion's Mane?

**Anne Stevenson:** Oh, wait, wait, wait. Okay, this...

**Shawn Stevenson:** You're not even there. You're not even there, so you just get the final cup. But the Lion's Mane coffee is your favorite?

**Anne Stevenson:** Yes, Lion's Mane coffee is my favorite. I absolutely like... I... We... Vein.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's in your veins.

**Anne Stevenson:** Just give it to me. I think at this point in the morning, I'm just like, "Coffee."

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah, sometimes I'll be talking about something, and she will be like, "Coffee." That'll be



her response or interruption.

**Anne Stevenson:** I mean, you take so long. I mean, why?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Baby. See, she needs that hitter, quickly. So we do the Lion's Mane, which Lion's Mane, University of Malaya found to stimulate neurogenesis, so the creation of new brain cells. It's crazy, and it's been found in clinical trials to be effective for traumatic brain injury. So it really is great for your brain. It's great for thinking. That's what it's really all about. Lion's Mane is for that optimal brain performance, but it's combined with... It's dual extracted, by the way, you have to make sure it's dual extracted, alcohol extract and hot water extract, all together in one with organic coffee to Four Sigmatic, which is just our favorite thing ever. So, [foursigmatic.com/model](https://foursigmatic.com/model), you get 15% off everything they carry. They also have a cordyceps coffee formula. Cordyceps is good for that sports performance. You got massive clinical evidence now with cordyceps being able to improve cell oxygenation and stamina. So endurance, specifically, being able to go longer, stronger.

So definitely check them out. It's [foursigmatic.com/model](https://foursigmatic.com/model), get 15% off everything they carry. Our son Braden is super into their Reishi hot cocoa right now. That's his jam, that's his morning jam. He had it today as well. So, they got great stuff for kids as well, mushroom elixir's if you're not into coffee. They have the hot cocoa, and they also have the straight mushroom elixir itself. So again, check them out, [foursigmatic.com/model](https://foursigmatic.com/model) for 15% off. And did you have any parting things to share with everybody before I let you go? But I'm actually not going to let you go at all. You know this.

**Anne Stevenson:** Never.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Never.

**Anne Stevenson:** We know, I think black people, we know it's a lot. It is a lot. It's 400 plus years of a lot of hurt, suffering. It's a lot of pain, it's a lot of things to process, especially for those... Again, I'm only speaking for those who feel called to do something. I know it's a lot, but know that it is not up to just you. There's so many amazing educators, so many people who are standing aside and have a lot of information also to share. So you don't have to feel you have to do it all. And it's just doing your part with yourself, your family members, your community. Of course, when you get called to doing something bigger, if it aligns or not, whatever resonates with you. So, whatever has fired you up through this whole injustice route that you've awakened to, that is calling for you.



For me, it's lately has been education. I had no idea about our education system. And finding how can I be of service in those areas, or learning more about it. We will provide resources in the show notes on, from books and things that you want to read on how to be anti-racist, and or just learning more about our history and the struggle. Because when you learn, then you understand our pain, and when you understand our pain, you can show up better for us when we are not able to show up for ourselves. But it's going to be a journey, and taking your time to take care of yourself and also having those deep conversations, because the best way we've learned about learning is you watch it, you read it, and then you share it, like sharing with a friend, like, "Did you know such and such?" or if you have your black friend, you're like, "I didn't understand this part. I read this book but is that how you guys feel, or... I didn't understand this."

That is the only way I can see us moving forward, those deeper conversations. And from there, things will slowly sprout and we can get to where we're supposed to get to, which is we're visionaries, we're all, we're in a time right now where things are shaking, things are moving. And visionaries are getting to see a bigger, brighter, more just world, and we get to play a part in that, but it takes, it's going to take, to go through this mugginess, the uncomfotability, to get to where we need to get to. And it's going to call in for all of us as much as we can. Like my mom said, and I'll close with that, is this is a matter of the heart. It's not a matter of the head. And a lot of it does not make sense when you use your head. And you have to go back to your heart. If anything's made you uncomfortable during this conversation, just go back to your heart, 'cause at the end of the day, we are human, we love, we have a family that we are raising to be loving to every individual that we meet, and I know that you are too. So let's meet there at the heart.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Ah, I love you so much. Thank you for that, baby. That's powerful, powerful. I would say that I look forward to talking to you again soon, but I want to talk to you a whole lot more, and I love you and I appreciate you. You are the most remarkable human being I've ever met on every level. And thank you, you've inspired me so much today like you have no idea. I can't wait to talk to you more. And you got to come back. All of us people, we're going to make sure, we're going to demand that Anne comes back on this show. Alright, thank you, baby.

**Anne Stevenson:** You're welcome.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Everybody, thank you so much for tuning in to this episode today. I just want to say this, I will stand with you. If I ever am in your presence and there is an injustice that you are facing, I got your back, I will stand with you. And that's what this is about ultimately.

Again, we've gotten into this place where we've made this into a political machine, a political football, pointing fingers, and not looking at the quality of character. And this is a matter of the heart. What does your heart say? I don't care if the conversation is about the president of a family, the head of the family, the president of a corporation or the president of a country, we have to speak out about injustice.

And we cannot continue to accept that these things are just business as usual and normal. They're not normal. And the great news about that not being normal "normal" is us creating a new normal, being able to have all this stuff come to the surface. And I'm tired, guys, I'm tired and I know you are too, I'm tired of choosing between the lesser of evils. Is that where we're at? Is that the standards that we're going to carry? Let's demand better. And for us to do that, we really have to tune into our hearts and for us to acknowledge the pain, the struggle, the strife, the suffering of other people because if they're suffering anywhere, that suffering is going to be felt everywhere at some level.

If we're looking at quantum mechanics and string theory and all this stuff, we are literally all connected here. We're literally from the same source, we're made of the same stuff, but we are continually evolving as a species. That's our job, that's our role, that's why we're here. We're here to push humanity forward. And sometimes, for us to do that, we have to address the problems of things that have been holding us back from reaching our greatest potential. And so asking more of our leaders, asking and demanding greater character within our leaders, and of course creating that character within our own homes. It starts at home, for sure. However, it extends out to our community and vice versa. We have to be able to touch our community, to reach our community, to invest in our communities and invest in our own homes. And thanks to my wife sharing this and bringing it back continuously to self-care. And we're talking about the level of empathy that we've been experiencing for all the different strife that's been going on in the world. It can be emotionally draining, absolutely.

We have to take care of ourselves. We have to get ready for the mission ahead. That's going to require you to be strong. It's going to require you to be mentally and physically capable. At the same time, that emotional agility is key as well. She brought up data from Daniel Goleman, which is amazing, that's why I love this woman. But Daniel Goleman was one of my all-time favorite guests, all-time favorite moments on this show. He's such an inspiration and hero of mine. So we'll put that in the show notes as well. The topic of emotional intelligence, he literally wrote the book on it. And I think it'd be very valuable in this situation as well because this isn't just about being tough, this isn't about going one direction, because I'm pro-intelligence in all facets of life and not





getting into the realm of ridiculousness. So we stand up for character, we stand up for equality.

We don't go so far that, "It was just Father's Day." Already Father's Day, honestly, let's be honest, let's just be honest, not a big deal. Okay. Historically, we'll get the tie, maybe a mug, little handwritten letter. Handwritten letters are honestly my favorite. I still have Jordan's, my daughter's. I love the handwritten letters. This year, my oldest son has a job, he bought me some Nikes, man. He bought me some shoes. I was like, "I like this Father's Day thing now," but honestly, Father's Day is already not a big deal, but there's people saying Father's Day is offensive to single mothers, like we could find places to be offended by everything today, absolutely. And our points are valid still, but we need to be able to tether that line between being ridiculous and hurting ourselves with our ideas and being open-minded and looking at the bigger picture and how things affect the whole because the micro matters and the macro matters. You feel me? The micro and the macro both matter. And you practicing and working on yourself, employing meditation, right thinking, right nutrition, taking care of yourself, getting adequate sleep, building healthy relationships, but training your mind, you're going to be able to better traverse those situations.

And that's one of the things that I've really worked on, is understanding that there's this acute thing happening, but there's also a bigger picture. And being able to move and maneuver and look at things from a broader perspective has been incredibly valuable. And also being able to zoom in and look at what is the root of this thing has been incredibly valuable as well. To do that, it just takes that work, working on yourself. More so than learning about what's going on in the world, learn about what's going on with you. That is the most important mission of the day, and I appreciate you so much. Thank you so much for being a part of this conversation today. I really wanted to just have this conversation to also give some tangible, actionable things to do, but just to broaden our horizons, to lean into the discomfort a little bit and talk about some stuff that people are easily... These are very sensitive subjects, and unfortunately, those are the things that keep us from going to the next level if we're not willing to talk about them. And I just appreciate you so much for joining me in this conversation today.

If you got a lot of value out of this, please share this out with your friends and family on social media. Of course, you can tag me, I'm @shawnmodel on Instagram, I'm at The Model Health Show on Facebook, and I'm also on Twitter from time to time as well, I'm @shawnmodel there too. And again, I appreciate you so much. We've got some powerful, epic, epic episodes, incredible guests coming your way very, very soon. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

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