



EPISODE 444

How To Navigate Negative Emotions & Thrive Through Adversity

With Guest Dr. Susan David

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Shawn Stevenson: Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today. I'm very, very excited about this episode, overwhelmed with excitement, and joy, and happiness. And these are all emotions, and I want to ask you, how are your emotions right now? Alright, when I was coming up, I was taught your emotions, keep that to yourself. Alright? Man with sensitivity? Ralph Tresvant, lead singer from New Edition, arguably lead singer, no disrespect. He came out with his solo album, Man with Sensitivity. You need a man with sensitivity. Ladies were feeling it, guys, not so much, keep that sensitivity to yourself. But now we're evolving and understanding that our emotions are valuable, and everybody has emotions, everybody can be emotional. Alright? 50 Cent, he's tough guy, he has emotions, he feels all of them, sadness, he feels depression, he feels angst, he feels joy, and happiness. Alright? Everybody, Genghis Khan had emotions, everybody has emotions.

Throughout human history, it's a part of our evolution, it's part... It's something that's built into the system of humanity, and just to talk a little bit about what are our emotions. These are really neurophysiological states that are brought on about by our thoughts, by our feelings. These are different, these kind of get imbued to become the experiences that we have, right? And also environmental inputs, based on what our nervous system is doing, is going to determine and give valuable feedback in the form of our emotions. So our emotions are very dynamic, complex, and ever-evolving entities. But we tend to put them in these very pithy little boxes and try to manage them. And right now, this time in human history is not about trying to manage your emotion, this is an opportunity to do some real inner work and to become more empowered and more connected and to have a better association, to have emotional agility.

And to truly understand what's happening in our internal world, because this is where the real show is really happening for you right now. You are seeing through your eyes and your perspective, and your experience has never been seen before in the history of human evolution, and it will never be seen before, afterward. You are unique, you are powerful, you are dynamic, and your experience matters and your emotions are giving you valuable data. And also we tend to see emotions as very black and white, they're either negative emotions or positive emotions. And as you're going to see today, this

definition and this very black and white perception is a big part of the problem. We need to be more emotional, agile for sure. And to help to usher in change for humanity when we need it so much, but we need the tools and insights to do it. Because clearly what we've been doing has not been working, but this is a great opportunity for change, and today we have one of the foremost experts in the world in this subject matter to help us to really create some new dynamic connection.

Because being that our emotions are dynamic, we need some dynamic connection and integration, because our emotions are largely controlling, not just how we feel, but how we respond to the world and what we're doing in our lives. And right now, we can have a tendency to feel very trapped and imprisoned with so much uncertainty going on in the world, and we cannot wait around for things to pass over. This is really an opportunity to understand that this so-called norm that we're looking for... Of course, we want a norm of being able to do things, to connect with people, and to live our lives with a modicum of freedom, but the norm that we were experiencing prior to this, what was really happening under the surface is just a festering of massive problems, and it's just a matter of time before some... The poop hits the fan, alright? I'm just going to say it, the poop hits the fan. Alright? We have been operating in a way that has not been sustainable. If we're looking at the health of our citizens, and being that a recent peer-reviewed study, massive meta-analysis, and this was published in the journal, *Metabolic Symptoms and Related Disorders*, determined that only 12% of Americans are metabolically healthy.

Only 12%, 88% of the population here in the United States has festering metabolic diseases, if not full-blown chronic diseases with the average being over two to three chronic illnesses, right now, becoming average, becoming the average. This is abnormal, and it's not okay, and this is something that we can change, but to be able to do that, we need to have the emotional stability to manage all of the dynamic obstacles that we're going to have to traverse to get there. The turbulence that we're going to feel as we grow beyond what we're experiencing right now, and so I'm very, very excited about this conversation today. So, keep in mind that we were just being presented an opportunity right now for change, not to say that all of this is going to be comfortable or that we even welcome it. That's okay if we're uncomfortable and we don't like it one bit, but what are we going to do about it? And that's what today is all about. So, also I want to let you know that this is still going to be something that... It's not just the internal going outwards, but also the things that we bring into our environment are going to affect our emotional stability as well, of course. And what we bring it to our bodies, of course, it's going to have an impact.

And if you're feeling like circumstances of just people, just getting on your nerves, just working your nerves, we've got something for that. There's a recent study, and this was published in biomedical research, and it took test subjects with a variety of different health complaints, dealing with mental and emotional well-being, including anxiety and poor sleep quality, and they were given either lion's mane medicinal mushroom or placebos for four weeks. At the end of the study period, the participants who utilized and were given the lion's mane had significantly reduced levels of irritation and anxiety compared to those in the placebo group. We got things for this, no side effects, just positive effects, because side effects are really direct effects of the things that we're bringing into our bodies. And the overarching thing that we continue to see here, with real foods, with real herbs and things that have been around for thousands of years and documented research, and the efficacy being proven today with our modern scientific method, we see continuously over and over again. These things have tonifying benefits, so just continue to give more good and do more positive things because lion's mane has also been proven to be beneficial and supportive of your immune function.

And also University of Malaya researchers found that... They're testing lion's mane right now for its benefits to be used with traumatic brain injuries because it's been found to be neuroprotective and also stimulate neurogenesis, the creation of new brain cells. You can get this to start your day, this is amazing. So if you feel like things are working your nerves, lion up, lion up. Get that lion's mane. And listen to this, you really need to hear it. Do not miss what I'm about to tell you because something really special is happening right now. From the episode... This being released for about a week right now until the end of Cyber Monday, alright? November 30th, you're going to get up to 50% off Lion's Mane Elixir Mushroom Coffee, the lion's mane blend with the mushroom coffee that I have pretty much every day.

So we get... And we're talking about, number one, organic coffee. Alright, organic coffee, which in and of itself has been proven to enhance your metabolic rate by 3-11%. Alright? Blended infused with lion's mane mushroom with chaga, so you get the immune support, you also get this cognitive well-being in helping to modulate and manage stress better. Come on, right now, you have a limited time, up to 50% off plus, use the code "model" and you get an additional 10% off. Alright. So up to 50% off, it might be 20% off plus the 10. It might be 15% off plus the 10. Up to 50% off. Head over there, check it out right now. Go to foursigmatic.com/model. This is exclusive with The Model Health Show. That's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model. You've got till Cyber Monday, okay? Till November 30th to get this increased discount on top of the already value-packed discount that I give for The Model Health Show audience. This is a very special opportunity. Definitely take advantage, foursigmatic.com/model.

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Now, let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

iTunes Review: Another five-star review titled "Love This Podcast!" by Beautyjunky1388. "I can't believe it has taken me 4 years to finally give this review. I love this podcast so much! I talk about it almost daily and have turned so many of my friends and family on to it! Shawn has the best way of making complicated topics very simple to understand and motivates me to be the healthiest person I can be. Thank you so much for all that you do Shawn you're amazing!!!"

Shawn Stevenson: That's such a wonderful review. Thank you so much for leaving me that review over on Apple Podcast. Shout out to Beautyjunky. What a great thing to be addicted to, addicted to beauty. And it's such a great segue into today's topic because, truly, you're going to see that there is so much beauty to behold right now amidst a very complex time. For sure, it's not short of challenges by a long shot, but we have so much opportunity, and I want to bring on a very special guest to help us to truly give us some very practical things that we can do right now to usher in change.

And our guest today is Susan David Ph.D., and she's an award-winning Harvard Medical School Psychologist. Her number one Wall Street Journal best-selling book, Emotional Agility, is based on the concept Harvard Business Review herald as Management Idea of the Year and winner of the Thinkers50 Breakthrough Idea Award, describes the psychological skills critical to thriving in times of complexity and change. Susan's TED Talk on the topic went viral with over a million views in its first week. She's a frequent contributor to the Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, and guest on national radio and television. She's also a sought-after keynote speaker and consultant with clients that include the World Economic Forum, United Nations, Google, NASDAQ, and many other national and multinational organizations. And Susan is just one of my favorite people continuously providing powerful insights, tools, strategies that we can all apply in our real-world day-to-day lives. And let's go ahead and jump into this incredible conversation with Dr. Susan David. Dr. Susan David...

Dr. Susan David: Shawn.

Shawn Stevenson: I'm so happy to have you back on the show.

Dr. Susan David: I am delighted to be here. Thank you for inviting me again.

Shawn Stevenson: It's my pleasure, my pleasure, my total pleasure. And of course, we're going to put your first episode in the show notes for folks, but could you please... Let's start with a brief synopsis of what emotional agility is and why it's essential right now, like super essential right now.

Dr. Susan David: It's everything right now. Well, I'll start with a really baseline definition and then we can expand more on it. Emotional agility is basically the psychological skills that help you to be healthy with yourself. And really this involves a couple of components. The first is being able to be curious with yourself. So we all have thoughts, emotions, stories, everything going on right now, and the ability to be curious with ourselves is really important, and we'll explore what I mean by that. The ability to be compassionate with yourself, that what you're going through now could be exciting, or it could be super tough, and for a lot of people, it's super tough. So it's about being compassionate, and it's also about being courageous. So the short definition is it's about emotional health, what it means to be healthy as a human being, but there are some very specific ways that we can be healthy with ourselves, and these are about compassion, it's about curiosity, and it's about courage with our thoughts, our emotions and with the stories that we experience every single day inside ourselves.

Shawn Stevenson: Yes, and one of the things that you really did for me was helped to change the way that I was labeling things, even for myself, I was doing it at micro-levels. But our emotions are so varied and beautiful and wonderful and provide a lot of great feedback, but we tend to have this concept that we need to be happy, if we're not happy, there's a problem. And I think that right now a lot of folks are feeling that like right now, they're not happy, and so they're kind of identifying the problem and not really looking at what this emotion or what our emotions, the feedback that it is giving us if that makes sense.

Dr. Susan David: Yeah. So, Shawn, this is critical, this is a really important part of emotional agility, which is, if you think about our thoughts, so we might have thoughts like, "I just can't take it anymore. This is ridiculous." We might have emotions. Emotions might be things like loneliness, stress, discomfort, anger, frustration, the full range of emotions that we're experiencing. And then we've got stories, some of our stories were written on our mental chalkboards when we were five years old, stories about who we are, what kind of people we are, what kind of life we deserve, what kind of love we deserve. And the way we deal with our thoughts, emotions, and stories drives everything. It's critical to how we love, how we live, how we parent, how we lead, and indeed how we deal with a pandemic. So what



you talk about, which is so critical, is that one of the narratives that we have in society is that we've got to be positive, that even in the shadow of illness and death, that we've got to be happy, looking for silver linings, grateful, all of these narratives that we have. And what I really do in my work is push very strongly against this idea that we've just got to be positive, and there are a couple of reasons for this.

The first is that when you are experiencing difficult emotions and you try to force positivity, what you're basically doing is you're not living in the world as it is, you're living in the world as you wish it would be, and if you are feeling something that's difficult right now, that is what you are feeling right now and trying to pretend otherwise is not actually dealing with the reality, and you might say, "Well, what difference does it make?" Well, it makes a couple of really, really important differences in terms of our well-being. The first is that we know that people who pretend to be happy or try to be happy or try to be positive, what actually happens is they are very often doing something, which is called emotion suppression. What this means is that they're feeling upset or lonely, and they're saying, "Well, at least I've got a job, I should be happy," or "At least I should be happy," is they're pushing these difficult emotions aside. And we know that when we suppress our emotions in an ongoing way, actually what it does is it is predictive of higher levels of depression, higher levels of anxiety. A second reason why we don't want to just force positivity is that when we do this, it's denial, it's avoidant, and so we are not then actually developing skills that help us to say, "Gee, what I'm struggling with is this. And this is how I need to navigate the situation."

So you're not actually in a situation where you then are able to come up with solutions and strategies to what it is you're facing. So those are some of the reasons why forced positivity is so destructive. But we know that people over time who try to just put on happy actually become less happy, that there is a real decrement in terms of people's capacity. And Shawn, just, by the way, this is not only in terms of oneself, we know that when people try to force others into happiness, actually what it does is it is detrimental to the relationship, it's detrimental to how we develop skills in our children, and even if you are a manager or a leader, we know that when managers and leaders try to push aside the difficult emotions of their team, when they say things like, "Oh, let's just be optimistic. Let's just get on with it," actually, what's so fascinating is the team's blood pressure increases. The team doesn't even know that the managers doing this, but they actually have this physiological effect. And really what this does is

it leads one to experience others when there is this suppressed emotion as being false, inauthentic, and difficult to actually relate to. And so it's no surprise then that forced positivity, as I've already mentioned, impacts on people's well-being, but it also actually impacts on people's relationships as well as their capacity to actually achieve their goals because it is avoidant.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh, this is so good. So we tend to, in our culture, force positivity upon ourselves and force it on other people, "Just cheer up. Don't worry, be happy. Get over it," and we're not using the vital and valuable information that the feedback that our emotions are giving us.

Dr. Susan David: This is profoundly important. Everywhere we go on social media, it seems like people are telling us to find silver linings, just be positive, and the opposite of that is, if you somehow aren't positive, you're bringing me down, you're toxic, and therefore I need to do away with you. That is the messaging that is in our society, and really, what I want to promote is that this idea, we think that we are being positive and happy and that it's actually helping us to be more resilient and more successful, but actually, what we know is that it actually lowers resilience. And I don't just mean this in us as individuals, or us in relationships, I really mean us as a society. When we cannot go to difficult emotions when we can't learn from difficult emotions, we fail to actually develop skills to navigate a simple truth, and the simple truth is that there is pain in the world.

And there is difficulty in the world, and when we just force positivity we are bypassing that reality, and therefore we aren't actually able to show up to ourselves and others. And Shawn, what you point out is this really important aspect of, why? Charles Darwin first described that emotions are functional, that emotions help us to communicate with others, but also with ourselves. And so when we push aside our difficult emotions, we struggle to develop skills that help us to adapt, and therefore thrive in the world because our emotions are critically important in helping us to adapt. And if there was ever a time that we needed to adapt, it's now, it's in the shadow of uncertainty.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Oh, this is so good. It's so important. This is why I want to have this conversation with you specifically, is that there's... I think many of us feel that of course there's something kind of, off with the world, but we can think that there's something wrong with us because we feel fear, or because we feel uncertain, or because we feel sad, or anger. I've heard a lot of people who say they've experienced rage during this time, and it might be uncharacteristic. And so we

might go and just pretend those things aren't happening and try to get back to normal, find something to be happy about when in actuality you're sharing that this is giving us an opportunity to develop some kind of capacity or character trait.

Dr. Susan David: Absolutely. It is profoundly, profoundly important. And I'll give you an example of what I mean here. Of course, when you go on social media and you see things like just be positive, or even beyond that, things like, "Oh, well, you know, if you didn't use your time in quarantine to dust off your screenplay or write a book, it's not that you didn't have the time, it's that you lack the discipline." And so what's really started to happen is this idea that somehow hustle culture, and pushing through, and positivity have become conflated with success, that you can only be successful if you are doing these things, and it is the opposite, and we can explore some of the reasons for this, but the first thing that I would really encourage anyone who's experiencing difficult and tough emotions right now to do, is to not try to do away with them. Don't hustle with your difficult emotions, or think that you shouldn't have them. Your emotions were designed to help you to adapt and to deal with threat, and if there was ever a time that we in humanity, in society have been threatened, it is in the shadow of illness and death. So if you are feeling difficult emotions right now, there is nothing wrong with this. In fact, they are normal and expected.

Shawn Stevenson: Thank you, thank you, thank you for that. And I want to dive deeper into this, specifically, because the real remarkable thing about humans is that, of course, we have these feelings, maybe somebody is really kind of trapped in a loop of fear, and they're using a lot of distraction methods instead of addressing the fear. And so this is giving us an opportunity to maybe look at what that fear really means, and is the fear logical? Or is the fear serving us in some way? So can you talk a little bit about the distraction techniques that we use and then guiding us back to what can we actually do? Because I know a lot of people are experiencing fear. What can we do with this fear right now? Because that fear truly can lead us to potentially better outcomes, if we utilize this opportunity.

Dr. Susan David: Yes. So if we think about these difficult emotions, what we know is that these difficult emotions, thoughts, and stories are normal, as I've already described. We have around, for instance, 16,000 spoken thoughts every single day, and so many more course through our minds. "I'm I good enough? Is my job okay? I'm I going to be safe?" We've got all of this. There is nothing inherently good or bad about a thought, an emotion, or a story. In fact, it is the opposite. These thoughts,



emotions, and stories are helping us to make sense of our world, helping us to understand what we need to do. So let's do away with hustling with whether we should or shouldn't have them, but of course, Shawn as you talk about, what can sometimes happen is we can sometimes start engaging with these thoughts, emotions, stories in ways that are destructive.

And so what I've found in my work, and what I talk about in my TED talk is that often when people have them they tend to do one of two things. The first is what I call bottling. Bottling is where you push aside the difficult emotions, you say things like, "I shouldn't have them," or what we spoke about, "I've just got to be happy. I've just got to look for silver linings." Or, you know, sometimes, even with good intentions... "I'm just going to ignore it, because I've just got to get on with everything that I'm trying to get on with." So bottling is where you try push these aside. Brooding is where you get stuck inside the thought, emotion, story. You get victimized by it. "I'm so angry, I'm so upset why every time I think life is going my way." Now everything happens and it's not effective. So we know that both bottling and brooding don't serve us. They are both actually forms of rigidity. When we bottle our difficult emotions, we are using one way of being with those, we're often getting distracted, we're getting lost on Netflix, we're pushing them aside, but it's a form of rigidity. Brooding is also a form of rigidity, it's getting stuck in that difficult feeling. So there are a couple of things that are really important. The first is, and you've already alluded to this, that our emotions contain incredibly valuable data, our emotions contain signposts of things that matter to us. So let me give you some examples of what I mean here.

Imagine you have got a piece of paper and you're listening to this podcast right now, and you think about some of the emotions that you have been feeling of late, and you imagine writing this emotion on the piece of paper, and that emotion might be lonely, it might be fear, grief, anxiety, frustration, anger, rage, whatever that emotion is, or even joy, whatever that emotion is for you, boredom, okay, so now, turn the piece of paper over, what most people would say in the force positivity brigade is, "Think of something now that you're grateful for." What I'm going to do is, I'm going to invite something opposite, which is, ask yourself, what is the difficult emotion signposting for you? What is it telling you about your values and your needs?

So loneliness might be sign posting that even in a room full of people, even when you are locked indoors with your family, that you can be lonely, we can be lonely in a crowd, we can be lonely on Zoom calls 24/7. So loneliness might be



signposting that you need more intimacy and connection, and that you don't have enough of it right now. Grief, grief is love looking for a home. Grief is often signposting that you have some sense of memory of a person, of a place, of something that was important, and it's reminding you of what it was that was offered by that person or the place and inviting you to be in communion with that thing that is important. If you're feeling frustration, that frustration might be signposting that you need more time and space for yourself that actually you're depleted, and the value that you might be writing on that piece of paper is self-care. So when we push aside our difficult emotions, then we aren't actually becoming adaptive to the world as it is.

And yet when we just face into that difficult emotion with curiosity, the first part of emotional agility that I mentioned earlier, and we say, "What is this emotion signaling that is important to me?" We are now stepping into a place of power, and understanding, and learning. Some of the other examples Shawn, is boredom, might be signposting that you value learning and growth, and you don't have enough of it. Guilt, as a parent, might be signposting that you value presence with your children and that you have spent so much time nowadays making sure that they're on their homeschooling Zoom call, but you are yearning for that presence with them. So slow down into your emotions, don't race for the emotional exits, instead ask yourself, "What are these emotions signposting?" Because fundamentally, our emotions are data.

Shawn Stevenson: This is so good, so good. This is one of the things that I consistently talk about on the show, and you just gave it a beautiful name, signposting. It's just asking more valuable questions because the brain is a servomechanism, and this instinctive elaboration kicks in when we ask questions, and so often we have these questions ruminating in our minds, just on repeat. Like when I was dealing with health issues decades ago, I would continuously ask, "Why me? Why is this happening to me? Why is it so hard? Why won't anybody help me?" And just kind of reframing the question, "What is this trying to teach me? What is... What capacity or gift could I find in this situation that can make my life better as a result of having had it?" So this is such a great tool for us and is signposting, yeah.

Dr. Susan David: Yeah, and because what you're doing is you are stepping out of the story of feeling like the story owns you, that you're being victimized by the story, and instead what you're doing is you are stepping forward with curiosity, and you're not ignoring, you're not bottling, you're not forcing positivity, rather, what you're doing is you're saying, "What is this teaching me? What could this teach me that

could be really important to me right now?" And again, this is critical because there's this beautiful phrase, which is that, "As human beings, we can never step into the same river twice." And I love it because really what it's speaking to is the idea that the world is evolving and we are evolving as human beings, and again, right now, the world seems to be evolving on turbo charge, but when we... Then are facing into showing up to our difficult emotions with this level of curiosity. What it allows us to do is to adapt to the world that is changing, and what you're doing here is now you aren't being victimized by the world, rather you are stepping forward with a level of intentionality.

When you say to yourself, "What is this frustration or what is this exhaustion signposting?" And you say, "Ah, that I need more self-care." What we actually know from a psychological perspective is that when people start doing this, it actually allows them to understand the cause of their emotion and also what they need to do in order to move forward. And so now you aren't on autopilot watching Netflix feeling upset, now what you're doing is you're stepping forward with greater levels of intentionality. And this is just so critically important for us as humans because we have enormous power in terms of how we come to our lives in the world.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, it's so true. And you just said a really important term, not just for now but just everyday lives of being victimized by what's happening in the world around us. And not really understanding that, of course, things can happen. Bad things can happen. Wonderful things can happen. But being a victim to something is not often the full accurate assessment. Oftentimes, we're not taught these tools that you teach about emotional agility and how do we handle different situations when they occur because they will occur. They're going to continue to occur even when this situation when we turn the page on this chapter in humanity. And so really understanding that we are... This is one of the points I want to get across. We are incredibly powerful at determining how we respond to what's happening. And also understanding that that emotional feedback is such a valuable gift but not compartmentalizing the different emotions like those are good, those are bad, they're all valuable is what I really want to share.

Dr. Susan David: They're all valuable. And, Shawn, I remember when I was little, and I actually spoke about this in my TED Talk 'cause it was such a powerful memory for me. I recall when I was a child when I was around 5 years old, I became aware of the fact that I was not going to be around forever and my parents were not going to be around forever. And this is very common at around the age of five or six, children become

aware of their own mortality. And I remember going into my parents' room night after night and finding my way between them in the bed, and I was petrified. Truly what was going on for me as I was petrified that I would wake up in the morning and one of my parents would have died, and I was trying to reassure myself that everything was fine. And I remember saying to my father, I'm five and my father is lying next to me and my mother is lying next to me and I'm saying to them, "Promise me you'll never die. Promise me you'll never die." And my father comforted me with soft pats and kisses, but he said to me, "Susie, we all die and it's normal to be scared."

And this was so powerful because he wasn't trying to force positivity and say, "Oh, don't worry. I'll be around." What he was saying is, this is the reality and we all die, and yet, courage is not about not being scared. Courage is about facing into that reality with curiosity and compassion. And this was a really powerful lesson because as it actually turned out, 10 years later, my father was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and he died when I was then 15 years old. And the reason that I highlight this, Shawn, is because I feel so much that that conversation, the conversations that I had with my father gave me a sense of capaciousness, of capacity of openness. It wasn't just the, "Oh, I'm going to pretend everything's going to be okay." It was really saying, "Life is fragile. Life is going to change. The world is going to continue to change. And we don't navigate change by arguing with it or by pretending that it's not happening. We never get changed by adopting a particular posture in our life, and that posture is one of curiosity, it's one of compassion and it's one of courage."

Shawn Stevenson: Wow. Well, we are facing an unprecedented experience right now, for sure, that we've never seen before in our generation. And there are some environmental imposed issues where now we have rapid increases in unemployment and folks losing their businesses that they've worked, sometimes generations of having a certain business and now they've had to shut their doors. And you know just from the data that as unemployment goes up, so does depression, and anxiety, and suicide, and homicide. But one of the other little not-so-fun facts that I share about that is that also with unemployment, we see about a 50% increase in the risk of having a heart attack. Everything is going to be shifted when folks aren't able to have employment and to do something as far as that aspect of their lives, it has a big impact on psychology. And, unfortunately, a lot of folks don't get information like what you teach, and, of course, we're working to change that. But what do you see really moving forward throughout this experience as we go forward, really? What I want to ask is, how do you see the conversation shifting

around mental health and emotional wellness as we move forward through this?

Dr. Susan David:

Well, we know that even before the pandemic, the World Health Organisation had told us that depression was the single leading cause of disability globally, outstripping cancer, outstripping heart disease, this is pre-pandemic. We know that rates of mental illness and other related experiences in terms of people's stress and difficulty are increasing. And in many ways, what is happening is there is a long overdue, but forced and necessary conversation around what it is that helps us as human beings be well and healthy. And also what it is that allows us socially to be well and healthy. And Shawn, earlier we spoke about forced positivity. I actually think that forced positivity is something that can be used to weaponize to basically abrogate the fact that our social policies can and do impact on people's well-being. And I'll give you an example of what I mean by this. A couple of years ago I edited a book because when I talk about happiness, I'm not anti-happy. I love being happy. I'm a very happy person. I welcome happiness.

But I recall, Shawn, a couple of years ago, I edited a 90-chapter handbook called the Oxford Handbook of Happiness. Because I'm interested in what is it that makes human beings truly, authentically happy. And one of the chapters that was so fascinating was a chapter that had been written by how where you live relative to your access to employment impacts on your well-being. And it was just this really fascinating example where they were talking about if you live in a community where you're struggling to work because there's no viable work in your community, and so now you have to travel a fair distance to get to work. But your travel route is not served by public transport, or you are commuting a really arduous commute every single day. Now, would you, after one day or two days of doing that commute, would your mental health and well-being be impacted? No, probably not. But what about if you're doing that week after week after week, month after month, year after year, does that impact on you, on your capacity to have an effective relationship with your child who you might not be seeing? Of course, it does. So the idea that people should just... If they aren't doing well in life or if they're struggling, that actually it's because they've got a bad attitude, is they're not being happy enough or they're not being positive enough is just an insult, it's abrogating the recognition that our social policies can and do impact on people's well-being.

Now, that is not to say there aren't things that we can do to manage our own levels of mental health and well-being, and we can share and we should discuss some very practical strategies. But these conversations are conversations that

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need to be had, not just at the individual level. They are just as in what you talk about when you talk about disability or when you talk about access to healthy food or... These are conversations that we need to be having at a societal level because there is a societal cost and a societal impact.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, this is reiterating for me that our emotions go both ways. There's an interaction with our environment and what's happening in our bodies, and it's this beautiful dance and we're affected by all these things, even if we talk about how we have receptors in our nervous system and just picking up data from the world around us. It's inherently affecting us. And we can also affect our environment. It's such a... But you just said it. It's a forced conversation we're having.

Dr. Susan David: It's a forced conversation. I think what's happened in many ways is COVID has delivered a gut punch. A gut punch to us as individuals, a gut punch to us in our communities, in our world. And part of being able to be effective with dealing with this gut punch, part of recovering from the gut punch is actually developing and having these skills, and then also having these difficult conversations about the things we need to be talking about, about justice, about access to transport. These are things that we need to be talking about. And you spoke early, Shawn, about individual experiences. If you're struggling if you're struggling right now as an individual, what are ways that you can manage that struggle? And I think that's a conversation that we can be having with ourselves. And there's some very practical ways that we can be with our emotions that are not about forced positivity or lack of intentionality, that are really foundationally very healthy and very important. And I think these are the kinds of skills that should be much more accessible.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, there's a statement that life finds a way, right? Life finds a way. And this gut punch, we were directed at a track, as you mentioned, depression was already the number one cause of disability... Already. But this is giving us the opportunity to look at these broken systems that were designed in ways that the outcomes have not been what we wanted. This is some of the stuff that I talk about here on the show all the time. Right now, we're in a state where the United States is the sickest, self-inflicted nation in history with over 200 million people overweight or obese, about 125 million people diabetic or pre-diabetic right now.

We've got about 70% of the population on pharmaceutical medication right now to manage symptoms, and nothing is getting better though. Everything



continues to go up. Heart disease goes up, obesity goes... We can just look at this, get a... Now, this is giving us the chance to look right in the eyes and say, "Is this working? And what can we do to change it? So this gut punch is needed, but it didn't have to be from a Mike Tyson gut punch.

Dr. Susan David: Yeah, yeah, and it's at a social level and then I think also at an individual level. It's like even if I think about my own life and you probably have had this experience as well. What this does is it is inviting into a place where it's saying, "Well, what ways that I was living might I not want to replicate again?" Like, what are some shifts that have happened for me, in terms of the amount that I travel, as an example, that I want to shift? And I think, really, in order to navigate this kind of situation, effectively, there are some things, psychologically, that are really important. The first is what I call gentle acceptance. And what I mean by gentle acceptance is if you walked out and it was raining outside, gentle acceptance is where you say, "Gee, it's raining." A lack of gentle acceptance is where you say, "I wish it weren't raining. Why does it always rain? Just when I think I'm getting ahead it starts to rain." It's basically when you start fighting against reality.

And if people who are listening are experiencing difficulty right now, it's so important to face into what's going on with gentle acceptance. What do I really mean here? Gentle acceptance is not the same as passive resignation. It's not the same as, "There's nothing I can do. Oh my goodness, I'm just a victim of it." But it is about recognizing that it's only when we accept what is going on that we can start making changes. And so if you're struggling with something in your job right now, or if you are really recognizing that you are feeling depleted, or if you are experiencing these heightened levels of loneliness, facing into whether it's an emotional experience that you're having, or whether it's something that's going on with your job, or the structure of how things are set up for you in your life right now, gentle acceptance is the first way that we need to face in to what's going on in a way that's healthy.

What gentle acceptance does is it starts saying, "What is the is in front of me? What is it?" Another part of being able to be really effective during this particular moment is to bring a very big dose of self-compassion to what is going on for you. Because we live in a world that would, again, have us believe that we are in a never-ending Iron Man, or Iron Woman, competition, where punishing yourself is supposedly the way to success, and where being compassionate is somehow seen as being weak, or lazy, or letting yourself off the hook. And so, Sean, what I would... We've all had... You've had, with your experience, I've had with mine...



We've all had that experience where you go into a restaurant and you see this beautiful image unfold in front of you, and it's this image of a little child.

The child's maybe 18 months old, two years old, in a restaurant, and the child runs off. And as the child runs off it turns back and makes sure that his, or her, parents, or caregivers, are there. And sees the parents and caregivers there, and what does the child do? Giggles and runs off more. Turns, looks back, makes sure the parents, or caregivers are there, turns and runs off more. And what is happening is so beautiful. This is what is called, in psychological terms, a secure base. A secure base is this idea that when the child knows that if something goes wrong that the parents, or caregivers, are going to be able to step in and help, that someone has their back, what this actually does for the child is it is what allows the child to explore, to grow, and to be curious.

And so there's this really interesting thing happens, which is the knowledge that I will be looked after, is the essence of what allows the child to then learn and grow. And such is the truth with self-compassion. When we are compassionate towards ourselves, when we know that we have our own back, when there's all this stuff that we can't predict... We can't predict whether we'll have a job. We can't predict whether things are going to go according to plan. We can't predict whether we're going to be able to see our family and loved ones for end-of-year holidays. There's all this stuff that we can't predict, and so we experience difficulty. And when we show up to that with self-compassion what it actually does is it allows us to be more honest, motivated, connected with ourselves in the world.

And so what I suggest in my work is that self-compassion is actually foundational to our ability to be brave, and courageous, and effective, empowered human beings, rather than being the opposite, which is weak or lazy. So what do I mean by self-compassion? Self-compassion is effectively recognizing that if you're having it tough right now that you did not get a manual for how to live in a pandemic, maybe how to live in a pandemic with your children in a one or two-bedroom apartment, or being alone for this period of time. You did not get a manual. We didn't get a manual. And so, being compassionate is about saying to yourself, "This is tough, and it is expected that it's tough. And 'I am human, and I'm doing the best I can with who I am, with what I've got, and with the resources that I've been given."

And if you need markers, if you need assistance in being self-compassionate,



some very powerful things you can do for yourself are, firstly, just put your hand to your chest. What are you doing here? You are reminding yourself we are very tactile beings. Human beings are very tactile, and sometimes just putting a hand to a chest, putting a hand to where your heart is, reminds you that you are more than these difficult thoughts and emotions that are running through your head. It helps to ground you. In fact, Shawn, we encourage doctors... When doctors are going to give bad news we encourage doctors to just put their hand to their chest, reminding them of their own humanity. Wiggling your toes against the ground reminds you of your humanness, your connection with the earth.

All of us have got a five-year-old inside of us. Just like I was that five-year-old saying, "I'm scared." All of us have got a five-year-old inside of us. That five-year-old might be saying, "I'm scared," or, "I need more joy," or, "I need some lightness," or, "I need some love", or "I need a hug." So don't push that five-year-old into the dark. See if you can see what that five-year-old needs, and love that five-year-old. These are ways that we are self-compassionate, where we have our own back in the same way as the caregiver in the restaurant has the child's back. And it's this that spurs us on to greater levels of capacity.

Shawn Stevenson: This is so helpful, so helpful, so valuable. You also brought up something really interesting, which is... And just the way you said it just really hit me, "None of us got a manual on how to handle a pandemic."

Dr. Susan David: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: I know there's a couple of doomsday preppers out there, it's like, "I knew this was coming!" But, in reality, this is all very new for us. So being able to traverse this, and utilize some of these insights is incredibly helpful. And one of the things I've got to talk to you about and ask you about is connectivity with others right now. We're going to do that right after this important message, so sit tight. We'll be right back...

When I was in high school and college our big, sports-performance, game-day meal was Mostaccioli. Mostaccioli consciousness, Mostaccioli performance, and wondering why we're over on the sidelines yawning, and waiting for the next play to cycle back in again. Of course, you get hopped up, you get the adrenaline going, you do your performance, but what if there was something better? Not just for a game-day, but for practice days as well, because how you practice is how you perform. And so if you're dedicated to true sports performance your



nutrition really does matter. And now we have things that have clinical evidence, peer-reviewed, controlled trials that show the efficacy of things that have been utilized for centuries.

In a study published in "Medicine in Science and Sports and Exercise" tested 30 healthy athletes for six weeks to record the effects of cordyceps medicinal mushroom on their performance. The group that added cordyceps to their daily regimen had twice the oxygen uptake of the control group. This oxygen is essential in supplying nutrients to your muscles, preventing fatigue, and preventing the buildup of lactic acid. Another study done by the same group also showed a 9% increase in aerobic activity from utilizing cordyceps. For myself, personally, my pre-workout go-to is Shroom TECH Sport from Onnit, and it's because it was the subject of a double-blind, placebo-controlled, 12-week clinical trial performed by researchers at Florida State University.

They found that utilizing Shroom TECH Sport as a pre-workout showed a direct increase in bench press reps by 12%. They also found an increase in combined bench press and back squat reps by 7% for the supersets, and also were found to parallel the earlier study, with a cardio performance increase by 8.8%, almost 9% that was seen in the earlier clinical trial. If you're not utilizing Shroom TECH Sport definitely check it out. Go to Onnit.com/model for 10% off. It's a world-class pre-workout, and pre-life supplement to use. Onnit.com/model, now back to the show...

All right, we're back, and we're talking with best-selling author, Dr. Susan David, and before the break, I mentioned that one of the most important things that I wanted to talk to you about is our connectivity with others right now. This was already... Another epidemic was loneliness and this feeling of being disconnected from other people. And in strange ways this has united folks. We've had the opportunity, we've got technology now, so folks can connect. And also the families themselves, being quarantined together, and spending more time together, where some folks, on the other side of the equation, are more separate. They're not able to see their families. And so this is a very complex, and different, situation we're dealing with right now. So can you share some of the things that we can do to stay emotionally healthy, and connected, when oftentimes we're in a situation where there's some physical distance, or even within the household you might just be tired of each other, and have some physical distance. So can you share some insights on this?

Dr. Susan David: Yeah, absolutely. So let me first start with, when you're living in close quarters with people. It's often assumed that when you're living in close quarters, that means you're not lonely, but as I spoke about earlier, we know that you can be lonely in a crowd. And so if you are recognizing that in yourself, it's very important to understand that social distancing is not the same as emotional distancing, and that that loneliness might be sign posting that you have a need for intimacy and connection. And so we know a couple of things can happen in close quarters. The first is that there can be very different needs in a couple where you might have one couple that... One part of the couple, that's the person's feeling very anxious, they need to talk, they're constantly wanting to communicate and you're finding another person in that couple who's just feeling so overwhelmed, who needs space, who needs segmentation. And it is really important to do a couple of things. Firstly, to keep your values focused on the relationship. In other words, what you care about in the relationship.

And what do I mean by this? Often as human beings, you know, one form of rigidity is that we get very hooked on being right, "I'm right and you were wrong and I need this and you're not giving that to me." We all know that, walls are made and broken by people being stuck on being right, and we've all of us had that experience where you have a fight with your partner or a spouse, and you go to bed at night and finally, the dust settles and you turn off the lights, and then something compels you to turn on the lights one more time and tell the person, why you are right and they are wrong, and all hell breaks loose again. So we know that we do this. And it's really important to recognize that when we do this, what we are starting to do is we're becoming very unidimensional, again, very rigid, we're focused on being right, and we're also focused on other people being... People who don't listen to us or people who don't care about us, or people who just don't see us for what we need, and it's this very unidimensional rigid way of seeing other people.

So one way we can start thinking about this is to recognize that being right or being wrong is one approach we can take, but another approach is imagine if the Gods of right came down and said, "You are right, you are right, you are right. This person didn't speak to you nicely today," or "You're..." "So if the gods of right came down and said, you are right, you still get to choose, who do I want to be in this situation? Who do I want to be in this relationship? What is it that is the value of the relationship that I can hold on to that's separate from whether this person was right or wrong in this instance? And this is very important because as human beings, we are capacious enough, we are able enough to even simultaneously be

angry with someone, and to recognize that we love them and to go in for a hug. So let's think about whether we can do away with right or wrong, and rather ask, "Who do I want to be as part of this couple in this relationship right now?" So we're doing away with rigidity and instead starting to step into greater levels of emotional agility. Okay, again, curiosity and compassion and courage.

Another thing that's really important here is to communicate our needs, and communicating those needs might be about saying to someone, "Look, I've been in Zoom calls all day, and I need space. Do you mind if at the end of the day, I take half an hour, and I promise at the end of the half an hour, I will be there? I will be there with the kids, with the family, we will be... But I just need this half an hour to decompress." And it becomes a negotiation of sorts between the couple, but this communication is really important. I mean, I've come across couples who are in one-bedroom apartments, where one of them has literally put up a little tent in the apartment, and it's like, "I am establishing a boundary that this is my space that I need right now, and when I'm out of the tent, I'm here, I'm here for you, but this is what I need."

Another aspect of this, Shawn, when we think about loneliness is, we have all had that experience where you go into the kitchen and your partner reaches out for a hug, but you're on your cell phone, and so you don't reach back or where we can literally feel the barrier going up. And so part of emotional agility is not just about being open to thought, emotion, and stories in the way that I described, but also the idea, as I've already alluded to, is that our emotions signpost our values and that values are qualities of action, that if you are feeling lonely, the loneliness is signposting something, the quality of action might be this idea that, "I'm busy and I'm hectic, and life is hectic, but when my partner, when my loved one reaches out for a hug, I am now going to reach back," because the moments of health and wellness and relationship in life are born not out of the big decisions. The moments of wellness in all aspects of our lives are born by the tiny tweaks.

The small changes that we make, where we know that if we were in a sailboat, and we went two degrees in a different direction, and then another two degrees, and another two degrees, you would land up in a completely different place in the bay. So it is with our health and our relationships that tiny tweaks, small changes make a difference. And that tiny tweak might be the tweak of putting cellphone down in every day, connecting for those moments with that person, not bringing your phone to the table so you can be connected with your children. A tiny tweak might be the recognition that you are completely depleted and that



your connection and your relationship is suffering, because it's very difficult to bring yourself with capacity to your relationships if you aren't sleeping if you aren't exercising. And so a tiny tweak might be the tweak of getting a good night's sleep, of getting out the house and exercising in a way that it safe this is really important.

When it comes to distance, when you are feeling lonely in a way because there's physical separation, this is again really important, where you stepping into the wisdom of what that emotion is telling you, and seeing if there are ways that you can connect with your loved ones. And what I mean by connect is not just Zoom, not just "Oh, now I'm having a conversation with you." How do we develop our capacity and beauty in our relationships, in our lives? It's often by expanding what I call depth and breadth. And what I mean by this is, breadth is where you might be speaking with your loved ones in your house or on Zoom about things that you don't normally speak about. So often what we know is in our relationships we become very over-competent, we have the same conversation with our mother, with our parent, we're talking about the same thing all the time. So breadth is where you start speaking about different things, where you draw in different conversations that you might not be having. Depth is where you have conversations with a person that you might not have had with them even though you are their child, even though you are their parent. Things like what is most scary for you right now? What is it that you most want to do when this pandemic is over? What is the dream that you have of your life that you've put on hold?"

These are ways that we can be conversing with people that we love, that develop a sense of intimacy. Because we know, Shawn, that we can have a two-minute conversation with someone that's completely superficial or a two-minute conversation with someone that feels like it is a connection. And if you are feeling a dearth right now in these aspects of your life, think about these things. Number one, I'm maybe right, is it serving me? How can I bring the value of my relationship front and center? What are some small changes that I can make that can shift the tenor and capacity that exists in this relationship right now? And what are ways that I can expand breadth and depth so that the relationship is richer and more supportive? And these are really important every day, but they are important in particular when we feel under stress.

Shawn Stevenson: This is so valuable, so practical. There's things that I'm learning right now that I want to immediately put into place, but I know a lot of you... A lot of other folks are feeling the same way. This has been a wonderful conversation, so valuable.

And this is a massive topic because the real heart of the matter is all that's going on, we're experiencing inside of our bodies. And this, for a lot of us, is a place that we don't normally, knowingly hang out. We don't really realize that there's this entire universe happening inside of us. And so your work is so valuable right now, not more than never, but it's just so special, and so important, so I just want to thank you for that. And if you could, before I let you go, some practical, if you could drop just maybe one or two practical things that folks can do who are just struggling right now with challenging emotions, I think that would really put the icing on the emotional agility cake for us.

Dr. Susan David: Absolutely. So I've already mentioned showing up two emotions with compassion. Doing away with hustling about whether you should or shouldn't have an emotion. One very practical, very powerful strategy is to watch your language. What do I mean by this? Often, when we describe our emotions, we'll use very big umbrella terms to describe what we're feeling. So we'll often say, "I'm stressed, I'm stressed, I'm stressed, I'm stressed." Everything becomes stress, so everything becomes busy. We know that when we do this, what does your body do with stress? It's so big. It's so broad. It's very difficult to move into a space of action when we have this big umbrella term. So instead of labeling something as stress, see if you can get more granular, see if you can label your emotion in a more accurate way.

What are one other two options when you use this word stress? What are one or two other options of what it is you're actually talking about here? So there's a world of difference between, for instance, stress and disappointment. Stress and that gnawing feeling of I'm in the wrong job or the wrong career. Stress and overwhelm. Stress and depletion. When you label your emotions more accurately, what it literally does is it allows you to understand the cause of that emotion and helps you to start putting actual strategies in place. Another very practical strategy is, if we just think about the language we use to talk about our emotions. "I am sad, I am angry, I am stressed, I am frustrated," you can hear that what you are doing in your language is you are defining yourself by the emotion. "I am... All of me, 100% of me is the emotion, but you aren't your emotion. If we think about that beautiful Victor Frankl idea that I know we've spoken about between stimulus and response, there is a space. And in that space of how to choose, and in that choice lies our growth and our freedom, you aren't your emotion, if you create space between stimulus and response, what else is there? You've got wisdom and values and love, you've got your intentions, you've got who you want to be in life, so when you say something like "I am sad." It's almost like there's a

cloud in the sky and you have become the cloud, all of you is that emotion, but you are not the cloud.

You are the sky, you are capacious and beautiful and wise enough to experience all of your emotions, so how do we do this, how do we start creating the space instead of saying "I am sad," see if you can notice your thoughts, your emotional story for what it is. It's a thought, it's an emotion, it's a story. So instead of "I'm sad, I'm noticing that I'm feeling sad." Instead of, "there's no point in even trying. I'm noticing that this is my thought, that there's no point in trying. I'm noticing this is my... I'm not good enough story or I'm not creative story," what you're doing there is you are recognizing that your emotions are data, but they are not directives. Your emotions don't tell you how it is you need to act, you get to choose. So when you do this, when you start saying something like, "I'm noticing that I'm feeling sad." It's starting to create space, and in that space, what do we want to choose? What do we want to put in? We want to put our values in.

Okay, we want to put our values in. So what is the sadness indicating? The sadness might be indicating that you're looking for a better way of being with the world, a better way of connecting, your boredom might be signed posting that you need more growth, and it might be suggesting to you that you need to move in the direction of your values, so you can start saying, "How do I expand my breadth so that I have more growth, how do I put my hand for new opportunities or different conversations with the people? How to expand my depth? How I learn more about something that might be interesting?" What you're doing here is now you aren't being defined by your emotion, instead, you being agile, you're learning from your emotion and you've been agile because you are facing into your emotion again with compassion, with curiosity, and also with courage, because sometimes that emotion might be signaling something that you don't like. It might be signaling that a relationship isn't working out, or that your career is actually not as secure as you thought it was going to be, but when you face into your world in this way, it allows you to move forward in your life with intentionality, with wisdom, and with emotional agility.

Shawn Stevenson: Dr. Susan David so wonderful. Thank you so much. I'm right now feeling like if Jiminy Cricket in Pinocchio is this consciousness, "Let your conscience be your guide." I wish you were my voice, just hanging around giving me good advice. This is a time truly when your work is incredibly valuable because we get to practice, this is a great opportunity for us to practice. So I just want to thank you so much for that, and also please let everybody know where they can pick up your book

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and connect with you more.

Dr. Susan David: Thank you, Shawn. And I love bringing these practices and these ideas and research, but you know what, we've all got our voice and you've got your voice, and every person listening has got their voice. I believe so much that every single one of us has a wise part inside of ourselves, and when we un-hook from our difficulty, we can start bringing that wisdom forward. And so thank you for having me. The way people can connect with my work is my book is Emotional Agility, the TED Talk that I mentioned earlier is called The Gift and Power of Emotional Courage. And then third, I have a quiz, which is a very practical five-minute quiz that around 140,000 people have taken, and you get a free 10-page report from that and that asks about how you're dealing with difficult emotions, your values and so on, and you can find that on my website, which is susandavid.com/learn with a South African, Australian, New Zealand, Bostonian accent.

Shawn Stevenson: Beautiful. Susan, you're amazing, and I appreciate you so much. Truly. Thank you so much for hanging out with us today.

Dr. Susan David: Thank you for being with me. Thank you for inviting me.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome, Dr. Susan David, everybody, thank you so much for tuning into the show with me today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this episode. These are the types of conversations that we need to be having right now, and I'm dedicated to continuing to bring you the very best people and the most empowering voices in the world to you, and we're just scratching the surface, we've got so much to accomplish, but yet it really just starts with simplicity and some of the basics that Dr. Susan David shared with us today. And I just want to point back to something very powerful that we have this tendency to do, not just as humans, but especially during times of stress, we tend to bottle things up, and that was one of the things to be aware of, of our tendency to bottle and to stuff things down, just keep it moving.

I'm not feeling this thing and fighting against it, pushing it away and ignoring it, and the reality is that our bodies are really a manifestation of our emotions, and what happens when you keep stuffing things down, you get an emotional constipation and eventually something's going to bust. Something's going to get ruptured, something's going to be hurt or injured. So we want to be able to process these things as gracefully and as much as we can when they manifest, but we have this tendency to not do that in the busyness of life, and like she said,

this is forcing us to withdraw a little bit from that busyness of life and start to reassess things and to pay attention to the things we weren't paying attention to. And it's such a great opportunity and a beautiful time right now, if we take advantage of it, of course, we are not without our challenges, but bottling things up is not going to help to get us to a solution.

And also brooding and just walking around stuck in an emotion, "life sucks, everything's messed up, nobody understands." I've received the message so often, and folks just acknowledging that there are other people out there that are sharing a different perspective, multiple perspectives of the challenge that we're experiencing, and I continue to really make sure that multiple voices are heard, and multiple sides of the story, even through my work. And folks are saying thank you so much for that. However, they're also sharing that they feel like they're alone, they feel like nobody's listening to them and they're stuck in that thought process and that emotion when there's... Of course, it can be in your proximity with maybe family members or friends who you're trying to get across to that, "Hey, this vanilla perspective, this one version of the story is not everything."

And so I want you to understand truly, that you are not alone, you are not alone, and knowing that there's so much more to the story and knowing that a focus on health and wellness is of the utmost importance right now, even though the popular conversation doesn't appear to be focused on it. I can tell you right out it is shifting towards the majority, this is why we see so much turbulence right now because more people than you can imagine are actually of the same opinion as you, that what's needing to be focused on, which is health and wellness, and getting our citizens healthier. Many, many people are saying the same thing, feeling the same way, and is shifting towards the majority, however, this old paradigm has control of popular media platforms and they're trying to control the platforms of the people right now, social media, that kind of thing, but they're being creative ways that are being founded to move around and through those things as well, so please understand, there's a lot of things being shaken up and it's for a good reason because again, the systems that have been built historically have not served us well, and we're seeing the results right now.

We're an incredibly sick, self-inflicted, sick nation, and we cannot ignore this anymore because it's left us susceptible to all manner of other things, but this is something that we can change, we can start to cultivate health, as part of the culture, we can start to cultivate emotional agility, as part of the culture, we can

start to cultivate empathy and compassion and understanding, which we're lacking so desperately right now as part of the culture. This is giving us the opportunity to do these things. So incredibly grateful, we don't want to get caught brooding in the same emotion, we need to look at that emotion and ask... And I love that she pointed this out, it's just a cloud, one cloud in the sky. This emotion, what is it trying to tell me? And understanding, you are not... When we start brooding, that's because we believe we are that emotion.

I am rage, I am pissed, I am sad, I am depressed. You are so much more than that. You can feel these things, but as soon as we trap ourselves in that language, she said, "Watch your language." We start to define ourselves by that emotion when you were so much bigger, and when you realize that this is when you become empowered to actually learn from the emotion and make changes that you feel good about. I appreciate you so much for tuning into the show today, if you got a lot of value out of this, please share this out with everybody that you love, that you care about, and even people that you might not love, maybe you just tolerate, you like 'em a little bit, they're cool. Just share it anyways, share it out, you could share it right from the podcast app itself, send a DM to somebody, or you can share this out on social media, of course, and I would love you to tag me.

I'm @shawnmodel on Instagram and Twitter, and I'm @themodelhealthshow on Facebook. We've got some epic, I'm talking about powerful episodes coming your way very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

My brand new book Eat Smarter is on the way. Eat Smarter is the first book that take you behind the scenes and show you how your metabolism really works. Demonstrating specific foods and nutrients that control your metabolism and influence things like fat loss and weight gain. But you'll also discover how certain foods and nutrients control your cognitive function and influence things like your attention span and your working memory. Plus, you'll also learn the latest information on how food controls your sleep and the surprising science around how food controls our emotional stability and how we interact with each other. It's a very special book and part of an initiative to change our health and wellness systems. And right now, when you pre-order Eat Smarter, you also get instant access to a brand new mini course, the 10 Foods Proven to Optimize your Fat Loss Hormones, for free. It's a \$97 mini course you get instant access to when you pre-order Eat Smarter. So go to eatsmarterbook.com right now and pre-order the book and get your free mini course. Eat Smarter, use the power of food to reboot

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