



EPISODE 463

The Mind Vs. The Brain & Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess

With Guest Dr. Caroline Leaf

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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'll tell you right now, this is one of my all-time favorite episodes, one of the most important conversations that we can possibly be having right now, and really looking at the realm of how our mind is creating our body, and the neuroscience on this is going to knock your socks off. It's such an important conversation to have because we've been led to believe that we are a victim of these mechanistic aspects of us. When body parts start to fail, there's nothing that controls them, we got to try to get in there and to take a wrench tool and put things back together. And our special guest today has been leading the field of neuroscience for decades, and she's got incredible data on how our thoughts... How our mind is literally creating our brain, our mind is creating our body. And like I said, it's incredibly empowering and also the passion that she emits after 40 years of being in this space, the knowledge base is just phenomenal, but the ability to illustrate these things for us and really bring it to life is just super inspiring. I'm just riding high right now listening to this interview today, myself, and so I'm really, really grateful to share this.

It's an important part of the conversation right now because we're also... Again, we're led to believe that we're victims here. We're just victims. There's nothing that we can do. We need to sit back and wait for something to come along to fix us, to fix our lives, to fix our situation, and nothing could be further from the truth. We are remarkably powerful and we are endowed with the capacity to change and transform so much about ourselves and the world around us, but we have to get plugged back in to the reality. We actually... We can't be unplugged from it, it's happening, but we're just really using our power for small things. We don't even realize that we're just giving our power away. So again, I think this is going to really blow your socks off. So before we jump into that big part of our ability to manage our health, obviously is our nutrition, and for myself and my family, and I could see it right over there, my son, everyday, my oldest son and my younger son as well, we are making sure that we're getting our bodies infused with these super food concentrates. Alright, super food concentrates. And one of those is in the form of these grain dense super foods like spirulina, like chlorella.

Chlorella is one of the most dense sources of chlorophyll, which I talk about in my new book, Eat Smarter. We've got incredible peer-reviewed studies on how chlorophyll



helps to reset our palette, helps to protect our bodies and reset what our brains are doing in association to the manipulation that's taking place with our senses, with our flavor palette. Alright, so helping to reset that hyper-palatability, that addiction even that we have to processed foods. And so chlorophyll has this really miraculous capacity to do that. So that's number one, but we've got that in chlorophyll, but also with chlorella we've got chlorella growth factor, we've got its Chelation capabilities to help to chelate heavy metals. Wow, that's incredible.

With spirulina, we've got one of the most dense sources of phycocyanin, which is one of the few nutrients that's been proven to generate something called Stem Cell Genesis, so the creation of new stem cells. Really, really powerful stuff that you just don't see in Kool-aid jammers. You don't get that kind of nutrition when you're knocking down some Sunny Delight, but you get that in Organifi green juice. Alright, pop over there and check 'em out, it's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model, you get 20% off their incredible green juice formula. It's cold temperature processed, whole food concentrates. This is not synthetic. This is real food. Easily assimilated, just pour into some water, kids love it, and of course adults love it. Kid-tested, mother-approved, but this is just a normal part of our routine. You can also add it to smoothies, but it's just a great way to get whole food nutrition, your micro-nutrients, but then super food capacity with some of those interesting aspects that I just shared. So definitely pop over to check them out. It's organifi.com/model for 20% off. And now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

iTunes Review: Another five-star review titled “Life-changing” from Bianca from Texas. “Started this podcast last month, heard about it from my Master Your Health podcast and fell in love. The way Shawn breaks something, anything down is so easy for me to comprehend and the topics are just unbelievably great and needed, this is for sure already changing my life.”

Shawn Stevenson: Thank you so much for leaving me that review over on Apple Podcast. I appreciate it so very much. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Dr. Caroline Leaf, and she's a communication pathologist and cognitive neuroscientist, whose passion is to help people see the power of the mind to change the brain and find their purpose in life. She's the author of Switch on your Brain, Think and Eat yourself Smart, The Perfect You and Think, Learn, Succeed among many other books and journal articles. And her videos, podcasts and television episodes have reached millions of people globally. She currently teaches at various academic, medical and neuroscience conferences, and she's been featured everywhere from TED to ELLE to the O Magazine and many other major media outlets. And now she's here today on

the Model Health Show to absolutely blow your mind with this new information. And again, buckle your seat belt because there is some incredible empowerment that is about to take place. Let's jump into this conversation with the incredible Dr. Caroline Leaf, thank you so much for joining me on the show today.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Oh, Shawn, it's wonderful to meet you and thank you for inviting me.

Shawn Stevenson: It's my pleasure. I was just sharing with you that it was like 12 years ago, my daughter and I read your book, one of your earlier books, Who Switched Off My Brain?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: And she's only recommended two books ever. One was Bernstein Bears when she was a little kid.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Cute.

Shawn Stevenson: And this one, she demanded that I read it with her. So yeah, you were already a part of my life back then.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Oh, that's so special. I just love that story. That's really special, means a lot to me. Tell her I said a big hi.

Shawn Stevenson: I definitely would do that. Now, I got to tell you, this new book, it is so good. It's one of those books where you read something you've never read before, but you just feel that you know that this is true, just nobody's ever articulated it before, and so it's just like, "Oh, that's true. Oh, that's true. Oh, that's true," constantly throughout the book.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Oh, I'm so glad. Gosh, thank you, I'm very honored. Thank you. Well, I'm hoping to help people see the power of mind, 'cause it's such an unspoken... It's uncharted territory, we know so much about food and body, but we just do not understand the link to mind, and a lot of people allude to it, to be really... And it's not brought in enough into the conversation, you do bring it in, but it's one of the few people that do so.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, yeah, and this was... For me, I got to know how you got interested in this subject matter, you've been in this space, just making such a big impact for... And

again, we've got so many mutual friends who love you.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Oh, thank you.

Shawn Stevenson: And what is your superhero origin or your super brain origin story, how did all this get started?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Well, I've been in the field for 40 years now. It's like four decades, 38 years ago, I started my research journey and I was always fascinated from a young child with the brain and mind, and I was always going to be a neurosurgeon, that was always my thing, a neurosurgeon, and then I thought, "Well, maybe I'll be a psychiatrist, or no, I want actually to get my hands on the brain." And so that drove the passion, and then I ended up not doing medicine, I ended up doing a degree that was a combination of medicine, neuroscience, psychology, neuropsychology and communication pathology. It was a pure experiment. They took... It was the first time they'd ever done it. They took a seven-year degree and squished into four years and they thought, "Okay, let's see if we can train up a different kind of group of people." And there's only of us, I think 60 of us qualified in the world with that degree and then they stopped it because the dropout rate was too high, because it was too demanding.

Now, I say that to say that at the time, I hated it, because it was... We worked seven days a week, we had no weekends, we were in the hospital, in clinics, in neuroscience lectures, in med... We were doing two years... We did two full years of medicine. It was so demanding, but I am so grateful now because that launched me into my honors, my master's, my PhD in understanding mind and brain and understanding the difference in the relationship and how the mind changes the brain, neuroplasticity and how the mind influences not just the brain, but every cell of the body, and then the feedback loop between them and just the power that we have over mind, so that journey is... And then when I was in my early years studying, I remember talking to some of my professors, because in the '80s, and you may not... You may remember, or may not be aware of this, but for example, Daniel Amen, who we both know, he's about 10 years older than what I am, and he studied, but he was studying over the same time period, so both of us were trained in that the brain couldn't change. So I was getting scientific lectures from my neuroscience teach... Neuroscientist lecturers saying that the brain can't change, and I had one neuroscience lecturer who said, "I think this is wrong," and that just stimulated me.



And so I started doing research showing that the mind is different from the brain, and that if you deliberately and intentionally use the mind, you can change the brain. And a lot of my professors told me that's a ridiculous question, in fact, I did a TED Talk on this, and I showed... I said, "Okay, well, that all I need, is for someone to tell... Give me that kind of challenge, and I'll show how not ridiculous is this because we keep changing as humans, so obviously, we're changing and growing, it's logical. So, yeah, I worked with traumatic brain injured patients, I decided to start there. And it's quite a nice story because they... In the '80s, and late... All through the '70s and '80s, they weren't doing much research with people who had suffered brain damage from like a car accident or from sports injuries, chronic traumatic encephalopathy, that kind of thing, because they believed that once the brain was damaged, that's it. So you just teach your patients to compensate. I thought that's such a hopeless view. So I started working with people with really bad brain damage, and I can tell you lots of stories.

But the one very quick story is that I worked with a young girl who had an accident at the age of 16, prior to that, she was an average student, not very good, very average, but not really... Especially math was a problem for her, and I say that and you'll see why. And she had this terrible car accident, she was in a coma for two weeks... At that stage, they thought that if you're in a coma for longer than eight hours, the brain damage was irreversible, so the message to her parents was that she had irreversible brain damage, she was going to be a vegetable... That's literally what they told the parents, and they said, "If she comes around, she's not going to be able to do much." She did come around and she fought back and about a few months into her post... Her healing, her parents contacted me. I was a very young scientist at that stage, new in this whole field, and I said, "Well, if you're prepared to run with me on a research basis, let's see what happens." And within eight months, this young girl's peer group was in 12th grade, she wanted to get back to 12th grade and finish school. She had lost nearly 15 months or so, almost a year of time, and she couldn't even cope on a second grade level.

So we had eight months to basically get her up to 12th grade and get her through 12th grade, which was an impossible, literally an impossible task, I had no idea where it was going to go. She did it, in eight months, using the systems that I developed, which I have refined over the last 38 years, and the most updated version's in this new book. This young girl applied these techniques, she worked with me, but she worked... With me, but she worked, so I can facilitate... We can't fix someone. So what's very key is a person actually doing the work, applying the system, and she went and finished school, not only finished school, but her

mathematical scores were genius level. When we did her IQ post trauma, so at the end of her school career, when she was brain damaged, which was healing, she had a higher IQ, in fact, they said she's off the chart, said she'd become a genius, and if you looked at her other IQ, her previous IQs, she was pretty much very average.

So here is the evidence, and then of someone who was an average student kind of, and how with damage overcame the damage with mind and ended up being a phenomenal scholar going on to get degrees, and she's one of thousands, and now we reach millions, and we get these stories. I don't even work directly work with all the millions, obviously, but the stories that we get back and over my career of 38 years, the trajectory of my career, and in 25 years in clinical practice, and with the work with thousands in research, we've seen this happening all the time, you get your mind right, you can overcome the traumas, the learning disabilities, the brain damage, etcetera etcetera. So that's a long answer Shawn, thank you for giving me time to answer in such a long way.

Shawn Stevenson: That's why we've got you here. That's so powerful. That is so powerful. This is the reason that... I'm so excited to talk with you.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Thank you.

Shawn Stevenson: Absolutely, really... Getting this, truly, so many people, there's this concept of having arrows in your back because you're heading the charge, you're going out and doing this before anybody else is even accepting it as possible, and then having colleagues saying, "You're crazy," all this stuff. But then having to prove. And by the way, so early on, even when I was in school, it was still largely held belief that the brain really can't change much.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Change, yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: Once you get brain damage or once... It's only decline, there's nothing else, but then the concept of plasticity bit, again it came up, and also now, neurogenesis really being at the forefront.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly, exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: And here's the thing though, is that, and you know this, it takes way too long for us to have proof for it to be used in clinical practice, to become accepted as true.

And that's one of the big issues with the system, and this is why I want to ask you about this next step, which is obviously mental health struggles and just that label. You talk about how... And this is one of the first things you cover in the book, how mental health strugglers... Struggles are not your identity.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: Can you extrapolate that a little bit?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Absolutely. And I'm so glad you've asked that because I watched this over my 38-year career going from in the early... Funny enough, in the early '80s, where we thought the brain couldn't change, we had a better approach with mental health than we have now where we know the brain can change. And I did some of the first neuroplasticity research in the world in my field in the '80s, and that was that time when I was told it was ridiculous, and it was only the mid-90s that people actually accepted that the brain could change. So it just shows you how recent it is, and so clinically it's affected how people practice. I've watched people going from having a holistic approach, looking at the person in context, their whole story, if someone's battling with whatever they're battling with, and also separating out things like... Kind of looking at the whole person.

So if you're battling with learning, you're battling with emotions, what happened? Not just lumping a label on because of the symptom. It was never, "Oh, you're battling with learning? You're battling with behavioral issues and you're feeling very depressed? So you're clinically depressed, you have a learning disability, here's the medication." That's today. Then, it was a narrative of, "Okay, well, let's look at the whole story. Let's bring in the whole team. What happened to you? How can we address that back story?" And that changed over the last 38 years with the advances of our understanding of the human brain, which we needed.

With the advances in brain science, technology, medicine, this has taken us leaps into the future, but we paid a huge price, and I talk about that in the book too. And that huge price is that we've forgotten about the narrative of the person. And there's very few clinicians and people in the field. Daniel Amen and myself and a few others are like this. There is honestly... There's more now, but at one stage, there was... The going belief is that if you have depression, it's considered something like diabetes and there's a chemical imbalance. And none of this is scientific, none of it's been proven, all of it is looking for some sort of neurobiological correlate that caused this depression. So the fact you've got this

brain disease and that's why you're depressed, no, you don't have a brain disease and that's making you depressed. You can have one and that can contribute and it could be a tumor or something like that, but over... Your mind is what the... Is the overarching concept here. So you're a person who's experienced maybe trauma or abuse or whatever it may be, or COVID, and grief, and loss, and financial... Those...

So when we're feeling mental health challenges, those are not illnesses, they are actually responses and they are symptoms of an underlying issue, and they're warning signals that we need to listen to. And if we don't listen to them and we just stick a label on and people take that on as their identity, it changes the brain, it changes the body, not... I'll show you how in a moment, but what essentially that does is, in the context of psychology and in population statistics and what happens to humanity, is when you ignore a person's story and you don't allow a person to express and find the cause and the origin, what you do is remove a whole component of a person's functioning, you literally ignore 90% of how they're functioning. You focus just on the biological, which works great if you've got heart disease or something physically wrong with your body, but when we've got a story in our life, which all of us do have, we have to focus on that. So we see happening... What we saw happening from the mid-90s when neuroplasticity was sort of accepted and growing, we saw that leap in medicine technology and neuroscience, we saw a backward movement, however, in mind. So people, they end sort of cutting out the story of mind and saying, "Well, that's... We can't really measure it."

So it would be, "Let's focus just on the biology, let's make everything about the biology of the brain and it's brain, brain, brain, and forget all about the experience." And that has resulted in our current trend that people don't talk about enough, but it's called deaths of despair. And what is happening now in our current age in 2021, and it started in '96 and it peaked, it was really identified between '14 and '15 and it's a massive problem currently, and that is that people are dying 8-25 years younger than they should from preventable lifestyle diseases and disorders. And that's tracked back to the mid-90s. So what I'm saying in total here is that for decades, we've been improving the trend of people living longer. For decades, people have been living longer because of advances, but that reversed in the mid-90s and by the mid-2000s, it was solid in science. So people are dying younger than they should with advances, there's a paradox, and we have to ask ourselves, "How can that happen?" It's contradictory, it doesn't work, but it is, and it's happening because of preventable stuff, preventable lifestyle



diseases.

So when we think of lifestyle, we think of food and diet and exercise, but it's... And stress management, and it's kind of a little category popped in there, but actually, each one of those things is driven by mind. So we've got to re-look at the whole concept. It's not that mind is just a part of a list of things, mind is driving all those things, your mind never stops for three seconds. We can go without food for three weeks, we can go without water for three days, we can go with that oxygen for three minutes, we don't even go to three seconds without our mind working. Your mind is the source of everything. So your mind is the source of what you choose to eat and the nutritional benefit you get from what you're eating. You can lose up to 80% of the nutritional benefits just by the... In a toxic, unforgiving or bitter or angry state, which affects your pancreas for example, and it doesn't secrete neuropeptides that you should have, and there's a whole bunch of stuff. So your mind is driving your digestive system, your mind drives the benefit that you get down to the level of your DNA out of exercise, your mind is driving how you manage that next argument, that next podcast, that next interaction, that responds to the news. Your mind is always working.

So if we don't deal with mind or we eliminate mind, and just try and label people from a symptom. We are going to end up with what we have, people dying younger than they should. And mankind going, advancing with technology, but going backwards with who we are as humans. And that's where we are currently, and then COVID hit, that was already happening and then COVID hit. And COVID is forcing us to... It has added to the problem, but it's also forcing us to shift and it's going to bring us back to where... To the '70s and '80s, and '50s and '60s, when we started looking at the human again, so it's had a very negative effect, and a very positive effect, and not many people talk about the positive effect. So in conclusion to that question, it was a long answer, when you identify with... If someone says you have clinical depression from a list of symptoms and they diag... So symptom, 15 minutes. Diagnosis label, medication or maybe a bit of therapy or maybe a bit of both, you immediately had changed the way that your brain functions, you start, your frontal... Just going to give you simple versions, for example, your frontal lobe, as soon as you get that kind of negative label, you get less oxygen and blood flow to the front of your brain, literally immediately, your identity gets stuck in being in a very negative identity.

So you have... That creates imbalance between the two sides of the brain, so identifying with a toxic label that doesn't actually make sense will affect the



functionality of your ability to make decisions and think with cognitive flexibility and right down to the level of impacting intelligence. And I showed that in my research, when you actually show a person how to shift their identity and not see themselves as a label, so instead of saying, "I am depressed," that's me, "I've got clinical depression." You rather say... Help them to see, empower them to see that, "No, you aren't depression, you're experiencing depression, which is totally okay, totally understandable." And if you grab that depression and look at it, you'll find a message in the depression. You are simply responding in a normal way to an adverse circumstance, when you change that, you change everything about the brain, the body, right down to the level of the telomeres. So there's another long answer.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, so good. Oh, I'm loving this so much, and even just tickling with the telomeres there at the end, it's so good.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Tickling with the telomeres.

Shawn Stevenson: Now, this is one of the most powerful things that I've continued to reiterate for years, just because again, the data exists, every thought that we have creates correlating chemistry in our body, so when you're talking about mind creates your brain, mind creates your body, and... But with that said, one of the most powerful things that we do, but often unconsciously do, is we accept these labels and there's this... It's kind of a personal development statement, but there's science behind it, "when you label me, you negate me," right? When you label me...

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly, beautiful.

Shawn Stevenson: You negate me. And we literally are changing, and... By the way, if you guys aren't watching the video version and seeing Dr. Leaf picking up the brain and pointing to the different regions, make sure to check the video out. Super cute. That's a nice brain, by the way.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It is a nice brain, I like it too. I have a few in here, and there's another one in... Here's a body with a brain, I love brains. They're all over my office.

Shawn Stevenson: She's got brains everywhere. So here's the thing though, is that when we subscribe to a label, it's changing our chemistry, it's changing our biology, and so once we take that on... And by the way, the label, and... I love the fact that you



point to data like, let's... And I love this repeatedly, you're just like, "Just look at the results." We have more antidepressants and antipsychotics than ever before, yet they haven't reduced the prevalence of any of these mental health issues at all, something is clearly wrong.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: They've made them worse.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: They've made them worse. We have a worse problem... I didn't mean interrupt you, I apologize.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh, please.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: But we have a worse problem now than we had in the late '80s, mid-80s, was when Prozac was released, and it was in the '50s that the first antipsychotic was discovered by mistake. They basically as... All psychotropics are anesthetics, they're versions of anesthetics, so they basically numb the brain, so we're sitting now in... As part of the reason why people are dying 18 to 25 years younger, part of it is not helping people manage mind, just stuffing down the symptoms with the drug, and those drugs change the brain, they're psycho-active, which means that they alter the brain chemistry and not in a good way.

And yes, maybe someone who's having a complete psychotic break and they're a danger to themselves, and they may need to be sedated for a 24-hour period or just for, like you have surgery, you have an anesthetic, you don't... You have it for that need, but it's not... These drugs should not be used beyond a need, they're not fixing a problem. But what they've done is they've created a problem, so Shawn, what we're sitting with now is not just the normal mental health issues that people just have, if you're a human and you're alive, your mind's a mess, that's why I called my book, Cleaning up the Mental Mess. So there's... No one's exempt, we've got to stop thinking that mental health affects them and not me. If you're human, you're experiencing adversity, up and down, good and bad, you're in a mental mess a lot of your day and you need to manage it.

So mental health, when it gets very extreme, then we go down to the psychotic breaks and the severe depressions. But those are still not illnesses, those are just warning symptoms that something is going on, that we need to go and find out the story and help you to re-conceptualize that story, and that's what's so vital

that we don't keep thinking that "the drugs haven't worked, the current labeling diagnosing and drugging hasn't worked, the prevalence has increased, suicide has increased, death of despair has increased, lack of... Increase in... " We have a mis-management of mental health, which has created a whole lot of new iatrogenic problems which are... They're damage to the brain from these drugs, which are then producing other illnesses, but they're not the person's pain, they actually damage to the brain, which is then...

And they can be healed, I'm just saying that up front, no one must stop, go off their drugs. So if anyone's listening to this and they're on any form of psychotropics, Shawn and I are not saying, and I'm not saying as a doctor that you go stop... Do not because your brain has adapted, so if you just stop, people have severe withdrawal symptoms, and then your doctors will put you on higher doses and multiple drugs, you need to get with a doctor who understands how to withdraw and there's many, many sites that you can go on, and I've got information on my website, and you need to taper slowly under medical supervision, that's so important, and I cannot stress that enough. I just wanted to throw that in there.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. And also, of course, we want to make sure that the people that you're working with have the same goal as you, first and foremost.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: Like, "let's get on the same page, so we are going in the same direction." And something really powerful just came up is that truly the problem is that the problem is not a problem, in the way that it's written for us, right?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Very good, very good.

Shawn Stevenson: We think that these diagnoses like, "there's something wrong with you," instead of understanding, "No, this is a part of the human experience."

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It's normal. Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: So when I'm experiencing anxiety, it is literally... It is feedback, it's giving me data that there's something that I need to address rather than, let's suppress that calling from our body, and by the way, before we even get into that deeper... You've said this multiple times, but I want to help people to understand it a little

bit deeper, because we tend to think mind and brain are the same thing, so can you reference that distinction for us?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It's so good, I'm so glad that you said that, and I love how you said about, you said that statement a moment ago, about, what was it? said that, I want to just reinforce, you said labels... If you've labeled, you're going to regret it. We also talk about labels locking us in, and you made... What did you just say a few seconds ago that was so good? It'll come back to me now... You said...

Shawn Stevenson: I don't know, that was a stream of consciousness, I don't even remember what it was.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Okay, so we'll just... Just edit this out, but you said something, it will come back, it was so good, I just wanted to say, good statement. Okay, so maybe you can just edit this little bit out, but it... Or keep it in.

Shawn Stevenson: Okay, so was it, "The problem is that the problem isn't a problem?"

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It was that, but then you said something after that, that was so good. I wanted to just say, "Hey, I love that."

Shawn Stevenson: We just got good stuff, that just comes out.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly. You know what? Let them hear this all, it's great. Okay, it's so important to understand the mind-brain difference, and it's very understandable that we don't understand it because mind is considered the hard question of science, and it's not the hard question of science, it's the most obvious question. And why, because of the example I gave you earlier on, you don't even go three seconds without thinking. Your mind is always working, it works 24/7, and it's always on the go. So when you're awake, you have your conscious and your non-conscious mind working, and when you're asleep, you have your non-conscious mind working and then also you have a subconscious mind, but before I touch those divisions, let's talk about then what is the brain? Well, the brain is not the mind. It's physical. It's a physical substance. So if I was holding a real human brain or I had someone's brain who was sitting here and I took their brain out their head, which I would not do, and I was holding a brain in my hand that was real and alive, we could stare at that brain all day long Shawn, it would never do anything.

So why do I say that? Because we're told in the media, through the media, from



the doctors, a lot of the psychiatrists that your brain produces your mind, that your brain's generating your thoughts, that your thoughts are coming from your brain, they're not, at all... There's a whole different pathway. Your thoughts are not coming from your brain, your thoughts are built into your brain, but by another force and that's your mind. So your mind is separate from the brain, but inseparable. The mind has to have the physical brain to express itself, and the mind also needs the body. So the mind needs the brain and the body in order to express itself. So in other words, to express you, so mind is a gravitational force, we can use quantum physics and classical physics to understand it, it's very complicated, but there's been Nobel Prize winning work done on the gravitational fields that we're immersed in, and the gravitational fields inside of us and the quantum fields and electromagnetic fields inside of us. So one of the easiest ways to understand the separation is to think back to school, when you were at school, or when your kid is at school, and they gave us a piece of white paper and then they put iron filings on it.

Do you remember having a piece of white paper with a bunch of iron filings... This blob of all these iron filings, then you brought a magnet into the middle and you put it in, and suddenly the iron filings arrange themselves into these magnetic fields. Now, that is a great analogy for mind-brain. Think of the brain as the magnet, and think of the mind as the iron filings, but also... And iron filing is still substance, but think of the patterns that... What is causing the iron filings to go into those patterns? That's an electro-magnetic force, that's what the mind is like. So the mind is influencing the iron filings, it's influencing... And the iron filings could be the... You could see those as your thoughts that are inside the brain, and the magnet is the brain. So the physical has to... To get a reaction out of it, you need the mind. If you're dead, there's no mind, so there's no reaction in the brain, there is nothing happening in the body, but when you're alive, the patterns, those electromagnetic forces are there. So you and I are generating electromagnetic fields as we speak. The words that I'm speaking are coming from thoughts that are physically built into my brain of all these years of research and everything I know about the field, and as we're conversing, what you know about the field is popping up from thoughts in your brain.

But they didn't just get there, they weren't just there, you built them. So you as a human, you, Shawn went through life, and you went to school, and you went through life and you got married and had kids and you've run businesses, all of those are day-to-day experiences that you've processed through your mind, this force, and then it's been built and the life is experienced through the force, that



gravitational field and that then goes through your brain and is transformed into thoughts that look like trees. So right now, as you are listening to me, at 400 billion actions per second, you and the listeners and viewers are taking my words, and if you're looking at these... If you're just listening, or you're hearing... If you're listening and seeing, you're using... You've got sound waves and electromagnetic light waves, you're taking those and you, what is you? You is mind. You are thinking, feeling and choosing in response to what I'm saying. So mind, if you want a definition of mind, it's this gravitational field... That's the science-y stuff. This quantum field. Psychologically, the mind is how you think, how you feel and how you choose. So as you think, which you're always doing, you will always feel, you never think in isolation, as soon as you're thinking, you're feeling.

And as soon as you're thinking and feeling, you're choosing. So it's think, feel, choose. Think, feel, choose. Think, feel, choose. We're doing that in cycles of these five-step cycles on a non-conscious level at 400 billion actions per second, and that's what you guys are doing right now. And that then generates this energy wave through the brain, and the brain responds electromagnetically, chemically, neurochemically, and genetically, and on a quantum level. And genetically is that switch that switches on and it creates. So you are... The gene is activated, so as you think, feel, choose, it whooshes through the brain, electromagnetic chemical response, and then there's a genetic... The last response is genetic and that genetic response, then build proteins, and the proteins look like... The cluster together and make branches and my words are vibrations in those proteins. At this point, you've grown about 200 branches, but you first grew roots... So as I started, as you introduced me, you sowed the seed that formed the roots of something about mind-brain and our discussion and the kids and your daughter, and... So those are the roots. And as I'm speaking, as...

As you were talking, and you introduced, you grew a tree trunk, which is, "Oh, I'm going to learn about my mind," and then the branches are your behaviors and emotions related. So the roots, the origin story, and as we're talking, we're growing more roots, the tree trunk's getting thicker, we're adding more branches with the data and the emotions. More information, a thicker tree trunk, increasing perspective, improving perspective, you're getting...

And that's a thought, that's what you're doing at 400 billion actions, and that's in your brain, and we have trillions upon trillions upon trillions of these. You never run out of space in the brain. These are dynamic, they're organic, they are always changing. So today we're having a discussion, and I have already learned new stuff



about my own work. So this stuff came up and I grew more information, you grew more information. You know about the brain, so do I. But we, this discussion is enriching our... So we're growing more branches. You learn to drive, you grow the roots and you grow thought of driving. Every time you get in the car, you grow more branches, it's experience. So your brain is constantly getting stuff built into it, so your brain is a responder, not a generator, and that's really what we need to see. It's a responder. So if it's damaged and not looked after, this is really a huge part of what you do as well. You teach people how to eat and also you work on thinking and exercise healthy. I've got your book, which I'm interviewing you about soon, really amazing stuff. I love your work really, I also love your work. You're teaching people to keep this organ healthy and this body healthy, because the mind has to use this to be able to work.

So if it's not working very well, then we have this foginess, we have like, driving through a snowstorm without windscreen wipers. So we're dealing with damaged goods. So you want your body in physical health, so you have to look after that, but that's a mind decision to look after that. So they can get your book, they can get my book, and they don't... It just sits on their shelf. Or you can actually study my book, study your stuff, and I teach you how to study, there's a whole chapter on how can you get information in your head and apply it. That's a decision of your mind. Studying means, I'm going to think, feel and choose, and learn this information, and build trees in my brain of how to eat smarter, of how to clean up your mental mess. So that's, everything is mind. So, mind is that force that creates the iron filings, it's the force that creates the memories in the brain, these protein trees in the brain. And Shawn it does one more thing. It does a lot more things, but... When you build a thought, not only do you built trees in your brain, but you also have 37-100 trillion cells in your brain and body. As you guys are listening to me now, you're building this tree in your brain, a thought, with it could be, as I said, these 200, 300, 400, by the end of this conversation, you'll have probably a couple of thousand branches and roots on this thought. So it's one thought made of multiple memories, like a tree is made of branches, a thought is made of memories.

So what's a memory? The branches on the thought. So each thought is a concept with multiple memories. So we build that in our brain, and that whole concept also goes into the DNA of every single cell. How that works, we're still trying to understand, but those tiny little DNA strands also store the thoughts. So whatever's in your brain is also in every cell of your body, which is phenomenal, and that is why we experience, like PTSD is the most obvious thing to recall. That

a trauma happens and whatever, and you recall the trauma and it may be years later, but that trauma as it comes up, that trauma then you recall that whole sensation inside of your body, and that's because you are calling, it's the physical inside of your body. You can experience something and you could... Let's say that you had been bullied by someone, and that day you're very fluey, and now it's years later, and you built a toxic thought. So I've used... Got this little tree to show, it's the living dead. It's like Game of Thrones, it's the living dead. This is not, this is real, but it's toxic, and if you don't deal with it, and you've suppressed it, this memory is in your brain and your body and your mind, three places. So it's in the gravitational field, so that's why you feel it, and you experience this like a photon effect that Einstein spoke about. It's in your brain and it's in your body.

So when you recall it, you're going to... The data comes back, the emotions come back, the feelings come back, the total narrative comes back through your mind, and that's why it's so overwhelming, and that's why these have to be suppressed because... Suppressed, these have to be dealt with, not suppressed because they cause brain damage, like envy, jealousy that we spoke about in the beginning. So these... I hope that makes... I know it's hard to understand, but think of mind as physical. Just step out of the paradigm that you've had for years, where mind and brain have been used interchangeably, and see them as separate but inseparable. This thing can do nothing without your mind. Your mind is you, your unique thinking, feeling, choosing, which happens at 400 billion actions and faster on an unconscious level, and a conscious level it's at about 2000 actions. We're aware of it every 10 seconds. So we can be aware of our mind, of how we're thinking and feeling and choosing, every 10 seconds, which is how we learn to self-regulate. So I've dropped a loaded bomb there. You might want to unpack that.

Shawn Stevenson: If people get... This is one of the most important things that I've ever heard, but I feel like also hearing it for other people, for us to make this distinction because as you know, our system of just assessment of humans, it's been very mechanistic, just Newtonian, it's trying to find the brain...

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Yes. Cartesian.

Shawn Stevenson: I mean, the mind must be here, it's the seat of the soul somewhere, but this is getting into a realm that might look a little spooky. But we, now of course, we've got science to figure this out, because we always were chasing, trying to figure out how all this stuff works. But we do know, like you said, there's a gravitational pull, there's a gravitational anomaly that we are. We're so much more than what



we see when we look in the mirror. That's the big thing, and what you just mentioned as we're evolving in this time right now in human history, getting us back to, but I don't even like to say back to, but forward to a place where we are acknowledging all of it. Mind and brain.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Yes. You've got to bring mind, brain, body into the equation and you've got to understand the relationship. And this is something that you asked me, the first question was what got me into this. As I started understanding as a young student, the power of knowing the difference between mind and brain and the relationship. That's why I chose to pursue this for 38 years. And this is what I've intensively and passionately studied in various different ways with humans. I've never done lab work, I don't do lab experiments because you're not going to get real. I work with humans in the field, and I live... I come from Zimbabwe, born there, but I grew up in South Africa in apartheid era. So I'd spend three days a week working in the areas that were the most affected by the apartheid era and in the transition and the post-era, the socio-economic, political. I've worked in war-torn Rwanda. I've worked with the wealthiest of the wealthy, I've worked with the poorest of the poor, I've worked in corporate education. Every field I could get into, I've got into and to work with humans, to understand what is mind and what's the integration and how can you understand it.

And this book really *Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess*, Shawn, is really an accumulation or a sort of dissemination of all these years into simple language to help us to understand that. And the reason I put science in is because science is so spiritual about... If I may say that, science is so... It changes all the time, it's never the same. And that's why we have to be continually learning, but science is a way of how we can actually then see, if I do this, this happens. And I think one of the key things in science with mind is understanding that when I think, feel and choose in this way, it has consequence. I will build a thought in my brain, and that thought will also build in my body and in these gravitational fields on a subatomic level. And they're going to influence what I say and what I do, and I'm going to get feedback. And if it's toxic, it's going to damage the brain and body, which can be healed, but the brain and body we see from neuroscience is not wired for toxicity. So we're not wired for things like anger, jealousy, envy, all the toxic stuff you can think of. We're not wired for depression, frustration, irritation, anxiety. And that is why when we experience those, we mustn't try and push them away or feel bad about them. We need to actually use them to say, why am I doing that?

We need to embrace them as messengers. Okay, I'm irritated. Why? I'm having an

argument. Why? I'm depressed. Why? See them as helpful. Eastern philosophy has done this for years. They've seen that any negative emotion is something that's telling you a story. And I showed in my most recent research, the same thing. When you see something toxic, not as something that you have to be frightened of, but as something that you should embrace to control, otherwise it controls you, you completely shift the power play. So if I say, "I'm depressed, I'm anxious. This is terrible, I don't know what to do. I'm so..." "As you do that, your brain and body and telomeres and everything, blood, homocysteine, inflammation, the whole lot's going crazy. But the minute I say, "I feel depressed at the moment, I feel really bad, I'm having an awful day but I can work out why and I can manage it." You immediately shift the brain... Even feeling depression with that attitude, you shift the brain and the body and 1400 neuro-physiological responses will now work for you instead of against you. This is profound. This is stuff we need to be teaching people. We need to understand this concept. Sorry, I get so passionate about this 'cause it's so important.

Shawn Stevenson: No, do not apologize. This is the best. This is so good. I just thought about something too. When we're not doing what you just mentioned, which is what our society is unfortunately inundated us to do, when the experience of depression comes up and we don't address it, we become so distant from it. We don't even recognize it anymore, and we compensate. We just continue to compensate. And now it's like... And this is what we're going to get into next, which is cleaning up this mental mess. So we can get closer to seeing these feedback mechanisms from our body and our brain, but also understanding how our mind creates our brain in the first place. And we're going to talk more about this right after this quick break, 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 all on the sidelines yawning and waiting for the next play to cycle back in again. Of course, you get hyped up, you get the adrenaline going, you do your performance, but what if there was something better? Not just for 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 review controlled trials that show the efficacy of things that have been utilized for centuries. And a study published in *Medicine and Science in 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 build-up of lactic acid.

Another study done by the same group also showed a 9% increase in aerobic activity from utilizing cordyceps. And for myself personally, my pre-workout go-to is Shroom Tech Sport from ONNIT. And it's because it was a subject of a double-blind placebo controlled 12-week clinical trial performed by researchers at Florida State University. And 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. That's O-N-N-I-T.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.

Alright, we're back and we're talking with Dr. Caroline Leaf about her new book, *Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess*, which I have right here. Make sure to get your copy ASAP. And before the break, we were talking about how, number one, which is again, it sounds revolutionary, but this is where we really are. This is the truth about how it works, your mind creates your brain. And even right now, as we're doing this incredible podcast, everybody listening, we're growing new roots, we're creating roots, we're growing basically these branches of thought, of association, and it could be healthy or as you gave the Game of Thrones reference, it could be a White Walker type of branches.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: Or you can get some nice handsome Jon Snow branches going. Either way, but we have to clean up our mental mess and I'm going to share this directly from your book because I want to start with this. You said that, "So much in our society seems to convey the message of now. It's as if we've entered an era where we have sacrificed the processing of knowledge for the gathering up of data." So now, I want to really be clear about this because this is one of those moments when I was reading this and it really struck me. Especially, we got social media, we've got the internet, we have so much data at our fingertips, but I've rarely seen a person, especially in the context of an argument, sitting with the idea, really allowing that to play out and to process it and to think about it, think about

different angles of it, thinking it might not be true, and allowing that to really become a basis of knowledge, because right now we're gathering so much data, but we're starving for knowledge. So let's start with that.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: I love that. It's one of my favorite things to talk about as well, though I love talking about all this stuff but it's so true. We have all... We're brilliant. Bottom line, humans are phenomenal. We have this endless capacity in our mind, in our non-conscious mind, which is working 24/7, which is infinite. It's like this massive forest. If you had to visualize flying over a forest with a helicopter and it's just endless. That we have this infinite capacity to build, to respond to everything we're seeing and hearing and build it in our brain. So we're going to do... We're going to do that and we do select, our brain is also very... It's trained to be selective but our brain can't select, our brain is designed... Its mechanisms are selective but it has to be driven by something to be selective. So we've got to be... We mustn't personalize the brain because the brain can't do anything without you. So with your thinking, feeling and choosing, which is your mind. So with all this ability to look and hear and see like you've described, we are taking that and we are growing data banks in our brain, and they're going into this non-conscious mind.

So this forest analogy has got a lot of... Whole big sections of little trees that are light green but they're just sitting there, they're just like fillers. You could even see them as almost moss on the ground if you wanted to have an analogy, but I can't really use the information in them because they're so far away and they're so inaccessible there. They're this really inaccessible, almost like inside an oyster shell, so it's there but I can't access it 'cause I haven't put it into the ground properly. It's not something that's user-friendly. Maybe it's even the rocks on the ground, could be a good analogy. There's just... It's there, it's in your... It's in the forest but it's not accessible. And so we know we heard that and we now we read that and we know something about that, but we haven't... And that creates a lot of mess. Actually, rocks is a good analogy because now we've got this mess and these little trees... Some that we've spent a bit of time, and that's not the natural design. The natural design of our forest should be this lush, rich, beautiful trees like the... In San Fran, the redwoods, think of those trees and that incredible root system. That's what we're designed for. We're designed for deep intellectual thought.

We're designed for that redwoods forest where their root system is extensive, and all systems are but the redwoods are known for their hugeness and their

plushness and their root systems that are often phenomenal and massive. That is what the human brain looks like. Inside, we have redwoods, that we're supposed to have, and our mind also has this redwood nature, if that makes sense. But we're not always thinking deeply enough, so instead of building these beautiful lush trees, our conversation now is building a beautiful lush tree. But if we just kind of skim the surface, we would just build a little tiny kind of tree that might just disintegrate and have a whole bunch of rocks and stuff covering it.

So that's what's happening, and that causes... And in the brain that looks like these soft protein branches, but the proteins don't form in a very sustainable way. So if you don't do something with that information, energy is never lost, and this is all energy inside the protein. Energy is never lost, it's vibrational energy. It's transferred, it's converted. So if you don't pay any more attention to something, you just gather the data, it's going to convert into heat energy and disappear. So in your forest, there's these little trees and these rocks and these puffs of smoke all over the place. That is the information you've gathered that just it's gone out of your head, it's converted. And that's terrible if it it's something you need. But if you take the time to think and feel and choose in a very systematically mind-driven, mind-managed way, you will actually grow a tree that gets roots and actually starts being... Maybe it's a little bit light green and small but then over time, it becomes this lush redwood tree.

As soon as it's that kind of tree in the gravitational fields, it's also going to be that kind of tree in the brain, and that's the kind of tree that influences behavior. So if you want a behavior change in your life, if you want to be able to have an intelligent discussion about something or be a contributor, or when you think of someone who's wise, it's someone who's well-read and who's thought about it, and they can contribute wisdom to a conversation. They tend to be the ones that are maybe not always the calmer ones, but the ones that can kind of see two sides of the coin. That agree to disagree, that can... And I don't want to use politics but they certainly... You can see this... I'm not going to mention names, but you can see this in certain politicians very easily. The ones that are using wise minds and the ones that are just spouting out all kinds of stuff.

And that's just all around us now, so I use that example. But we do that in our own lives, we're all guilty of that too. So that's what is very damaging for the brain, because those, that dirt, those little trees that you don't build that keep making puffs of smoke, that's in the gravitational field of the mind that creates a disruption in energy. So the non-conscious level and the gravitational field, in that

third level, those little balls of energy rolling through the forest and giving us many visuals, and those are like... Especially where there is lots of toxic unprocessed stuff. Both areas will produce unbalanced energy, and that makes us feel uncomfortable. We feel, ah, something's wrong, and you can actually even feel a little bit depressed and anxious and from not learning properly, and that's not even... I haven't even touched on the toxicity side.

So what we want to do is deal with that through deep level mind brain building. I have a whole section in the book called Brain building. Where I teach you how to not let that happen because it's actually dangerous. It affects you. You talk about helping people sleep and you've actually written a book about sleep. One of the biggest causes of people not sleeping is not thinking deeply enough to build redwoods and having too many of these little things and dirt, and it creates toxicity in the brain. So when you're sleeping at night, your brain is housekeeping. So if you've got a lot of the stuff, it gets rid of it, it tries to get rid of it. And if you haven't used the neurogenesis, you mentioned, every day you're born with when you wake up, a whole lot, thousands, maybe even millions, we're still doing the research of new cells are born in your brain. They are designed for a very specific purpose.

They are designed to be used with deep intellectual thinking, not just gathering of data, but taking... Gather the data, select the data, think it through deeply, build it into your brain, you can't learn everything, choose something. When you do that, you're going to grow that redwood type forest, you're going to use those new baby nerve cells, and you're going to create this brain resilience system in your brain. So learning new information and deep thinking creates brain health, it creates brain resilience, so that you're stronger for the acute traumas that hit us. Like things like COVID, like the phone call that happens, like the thing in your business. Every day there's something that happens that we can't predict, and sometimes it's worse and sometimes it's not so good. If you don't have good brain resilience, that's a problem.

So this gathering of data, in our current, now moment, technological age, creates these patterns of damage in the brain. So literally causing brain damage and it will come out in your sleep, as one of the first strong signs and also in how you're actually just managing through the day. There's a constant feeling of, I just am not getting this right, this living right. All my patients, Shawn, whenever a patient came into my clinical practice, and I have practiced for 25 years, as I mentioned, the first thing I would do would be teach them brain building, which is the first...



In the second half of the book, it's all the... I talk about the neuro-cycle which I know you're going to ask me about, but it's the second half of the book's practical. And the first section teaches you how to brain build. And as humans, we should be like you clean your teeth everyday, twice a day, sometimes three times a day. You should brain build for the least one to two hours everyday to keep your brain healthy. It's one of the best ways of improving mental health and creating the resilience we need just to be humans to manage our mind. So there's a little passionate answer again.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, you've literally helped me so much by... This is one of those things where you're bringing out something that's just like, it's lingering there in my psychology, but I never put words to it. A big part of our epidemic of mental health struggles is related to our inability to think deeply.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow that is like an absolute...

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Huge, huge.

Shawn Stevenson: That just cracked me wide open because as you mentioned, this capacity... Wait, so first of all, a lot of us are walking around with a lot of rocks just rattling around in our head.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: And we're wondering why we can't sleep at night. It's just like it's a rattle just going around, we haven't really created a situation where it's a beautifully landscaped cultivated... Our brains as humans, we've evolved to spend time thinking, thinking deeply.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It's survival. It's a survival instinct.

Shawn Stevenson: Right. And now today, we're just grabbing snacks everywhere. We're grabbing brain snacks and not really nourishing our brain through thought.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: I'm done. This is... Goodness gracious.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: And that's contributing to this epidemic of people dying 8-25 years younger. And the research shows that you give someone a label. This is coming full circle back to our earlier discussion. You label someone, you literally can chop off up to 20 years of a person's life. And that's unbelievable. I saw in my research that those patients that came in, in the experimental and control group, the subjects that came in was so-called diagnosed clinical depression. They had such low energy in the front of their brain. They were identifying as a depressed person, and through mind management, through the neuro-cycle we were able to help them shift that. But here's the interesting thing, Shawn, the shift happens on a non-conscious level. In the forest, that non-conscious forest that I spoke about, the gravitational fields, that concept, the iron filings, electromagnet... That level, and also it's in the brain. So in the actual physical brain. So you don't consciously... I guess, let me say it this way, your conscious mind is always way behind your non-conscious mind and what's happening in your brain. Your brain picks up immediately what's happening in the non-conscious mind. The non-conscious mind is where the truth is. Where what's really going on in your life is happening.

So we can be in a state of denial, which most of us do with certain things in our life. We've all got and it's nothing to feel guilty about. This is the freedom in my message, embrace it all because everything's a message. So if you have... If you are feeling guilty, grab the guilt, find the reason, do the apologizing and move on. Don't ever let shame stop you and block you. But whatever you've got in your life is going to affect how your identity is going to function, it's going to kind of block... So what we saw happening was that if you come here, I give you the science and the evidence that in my clinical trials, and the summary there, that your non-conscious mind is already healing before you feel it. So if you go through the process of, for example, using the NeuroCycle which is... Everyone should be using this, it's pure mind management. It doesn't mean you stop the therapy, you still do that, it enhances therapy. This is what do you do with yourself 24/7. That's what I'm teaching people to do. What do you do? You've got to live with yourself. How do you live with yourself? That's what I'm showing you here.

So as you direct your mind and you manage your mind, your non-conscious and your brain will change before you feel it. And I've got beautiful little pictures in color in the book to show you that change that that's happening. So I encourage people that in the first three weeks of making changes, you very often won't feel massive change or see massive change, but it is happening. The evidence is there, your non-conscious mind is changing, your brain is changing, and that helps us to

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recognize my mind is doing this work, my conscious mind... Well, I'll catch up. Eventually I'm going to catch up with what's really going on inside of me.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, I love it. Let's do that, let's talk about the NeuroCycle a little bit. Just give people an overview of what that looks like.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Absolutely. Absolutely, with pleasure. So the NeuroCycle is 38 years in the making. So the first version was developed 38 years ago to meet the needs of my patients, to give them something that could help them deal with that trauma, that learning problem, whatever. And I was so disillusioned by the therapy techniques that I had been trained to use in my practice, not all of them were bad, a lot of them had great principles, but there was something missing, and that something that was missing was the ability for me to control my mind. So what I wanted to do was to say, there's all these beautiful techniques and therapies and wonderful stuff, but no one's showing me how to actually learn them and use them in my life, so there's a whole missing element, it's like the rocks and the trees, if you just read the stuff, but you don't actually learn how to use the stuff, you've got... So, what is that?

What is that... How do I learn how to take the data that's coming in, choose something and think about it deeply to build it into a thought in my brain, how do I do that? That's what the NeuroCycle is, that's what I developed 38 years ago. I developed the how, the vehicle, the system for how you as a human can get hold of your mind... How do I get hold of my thinking, feeling, and choosing to catch these thoughts, these toxic ones, these patterns, these bad habits, these traumas, these things, these responses, that are getting me stuck and making me... That I'm ruminating and my mind's going crazy and I hate responding like this, but I'm respond...

How do you get that under control and how do you build your brain, all that stuff, that's what the NeuroCycle is. So it's five simple steps, because if you're working with someone who's in trauma, you can't give them five hours of explanations. So I had to refine, I had to go through a process of understanding and refining. So I've taken five... Okay, backtrack for a second, I studied the inner process, I studied the science of how thoughts form in the brain from the mind. So what is the mind? Developed a theory of mind, and then how do they grow into the brain, what's the process, how do they go into the mind and how do they grow into the DNA? How do they get there, and can I influence that, can I control it? Yes, so the five steps of how you use your mind to grow these in your brain and in your mind



and in your forest... And your DNA, sorry. And how to control it. So that's what the NeuroCycle is. Five steps that are based on solid science. So each step, and in the book, I do explain the five steps and I do give the science behind them, and if people want to read the science, they can skip it or they can read it, but there's an explanation of what each step is doing in the brain, so what I can do, if you want, Shawn, is I can give a broader overview of the concept with a simple explanation, just a couple of brain and body things.

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect, yes.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Then people read more and then we can maybe do an example or whatever you want from the...

Shawn Stevenson: That sounds perfect.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Okay.

Shawn Stevenson: Let's do that.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Perfect. Okay, so the first thing is that you have to prepare your brain, and that's something we're all familiar with, priming our brain or preparing our brain, brain preparation, and that's not one of the steps, that's just preparation. So what are those things? Everything that we're familiar with breathing, tapping, havening, meditation, you name it... Anything that you can start getting your neuro-physiology calmed down, because when we are busy, busy, busy, hurry sickness or experiencing frustration or dealing with a trauma in our life, we get worked up. So what we want to do is before we do the work of cleaning up the mental mess, it's very important to prepare the brain. Obviously involved in all of that is diet and exercise etcetera, but those are the big picture things. So in this moment, right now, let's say that you have an argument with someone and that you've got to get your head together and you've got to get into a TV interview or you've got to get on a stage, or you've got to go into a business meeting, or you've got to... Have dinner with your in-laws, I don't know what it is, but you've just had a thing that's disrupted your life for a few moments, how are you going to get yourself back together again?

We can take that as one example, and then we can take another example of... Let's say that you were abused as a child and you've never dealt with it, and now you're an adult and you can't... Your relationships are just messed up and you realize that

you're depressed and you're trying to find out why. And so in other words, sexual trauma can be pervasive. So that's a big thing, that's a... I'll approach the five steps from those two angles, one, how can I use it in the now? And I'll call that basically a NeuroCycle life hack. And that example will be people pleasing or responding if someone says something toxic to you or you find yourself ruminating or... So it's interactions and it's in your own head. You might find that you just can't get your thoughts under control and you keep ruminating and it's affecting how you're working and so on. The other thing is the more long-term stuff, like a toxic trauma or a toxic bad habit, maybe you've got a really toxic habit that is keeping you stuck.

So those take... Those are a little bit different, both use the five steps, but they use them... One, you will use them in a five minutes or five seconds, the other one you do for 15 to 45 minutes every day for 21 days, and then you're not finished because then you've built a tree, but it's small, you have to grow it and give it energy, you've got to water it. You have to spend another 42 days of doing the fifth step, which takes you about a minute a day for 42 days, so it's very little time, but it grows that tree into a redwood, it gives it enough energy that it will impact your behavior.

So if you're in that relationship issue, or you're in that argument that you've had repeatedly with the same person, it's the same pattern, having done this work over 42 days as the trigger occurs, this will pop up because this has been destroyed and you've re-conceptualized it, you'll remember this, and you'll remember, "Ooh, I used to," and you might even start reacting in that way, but this is not energy anymore, this one dominates, and so you'll have behavior change. Or you're in that relationship and that sexual trauma maybe has pervaded your ability to... You're totally anxious and you can't form relationships, you just lost hope, you... Whatever, but you work through this process, and it might take a few cycles of 63 days, what would that look like at the end? What that would look like at the end is, "Yes, I went through trauma, it affected me, this is why I'm feeling anxious, but now I know why, and now I know how to manage the anxiety, and I can explain that in my relationship and I can now work on another NeuroCycle to work out how I can actually improve the relationship," 'cause maybe your relationship's on the rocks because of that, so you've got to...

Can you see what I'm saying? So we give up too quickly, we do something... So people will do these five steps, and think, "I've done it once, why had my life not changed?" Or people go to therapy and... You have to persist and pursue, it takes



63 days to form a habit, it does not take 21, it takes 21 days to create the neuroplastic changes in the brain where you have found this, pulled it apart, we can embrace process and re-conceptualize it to deconstruct and reconstruct it into a healthy thought, re-conceptualize... You remember the past, but it's re-conceptualized, it takes 21 days to do that, but it takes 42 days to give the sufficient energy to move out of the non-conscious into the conscious. It's like when you drive, at first you're very conscious of the process and then comes the day like now you don't think about driving and we think we're driving automatically, but we're not at all, there's a huge dynamic intelligence occurring, you get in that car, you pull up your driving thought from your non-conscious mind, it's intelligent and you add new branches because you're driving, it's a new experience. So that's what I'm talking about, okay.

So prime the brain and prepare the brain, because otherwise you have neurochemical chaos. When the brain's got a lot of chemistry flying around and energy going crazy, it's very hard to get anything in here properly. So we just want to... A little bit of breathing can reset the brain, and one of the most powerful techniques... And I teach you quite a few and it's easy to find preparation, I do give lots of examples, we have an app, by the way, that also goes with this called the NeuroCycle app, and there's lots of... I walk you through this process obviously, like therapy, it's literally therapy videos or audio. So an example of brain preparation that you could do in 60 seconds, that is phenomenally powerful is what I call the 10-second pause, and this is how you do it, so this is now the preparation, okay. So we're going to now do a NeuroCycle, but before we start, we're going to prepare our brain, and the 10-second pause is you breathe in for three counts and you breathe out for seven. The reason you breathe... The reason the exhalation is longer than the inhalation is because that pushes oxygen to the front of the brain, increases blood flow, increases what we call the alpha energy of the brain, and the gamma energy in a balanced way, which means, I'm now going to be insightful and integrative in my thinking, which is exactly what we want.

We want deep introspection, insight, and we want to integrate. That keeps us in perspective, people that argue and say, "This is my way or the highway," that kind of... You can't tolerate other people's opinions or don't know how to disagree, they have got very low energy, low gamma, low alpha at the front of their brain, they've got a brain fog, okay. Whereas, but when you let that fog... You drop back, you can actually then learn how to actually agree to disagree and still like the person and not cut them, that kind of thing really, so that's one of the benefits.



So this breathing, you want to increase your activity in the front of the brain, so that's why you breathe out for longer than in. If you do this, it takes ten seconds, three in, seven out. If you do this six to nine times, which is 60 to 90 seconds, you would have stabilized the neuro chemistry in the brain and pushed enough blood and oxygen to the front of the brain and got this balance of what we call the alpha wave, the gamma wave, also the correct boost of what we call high beta and beta and delta and theta, everything is doing... Things are doing what they should be doing. You've prepared, you've laid the table, you're ready to eat, okay.

So another component that even makes it more effective is you add three words to the 10-second pause, and those three words are as you breathe in for three, in your head, you say... In your mind, you say, "think, feel," so it's you breathing in. It's three counts, and it's, "think, feel," so you're saying... So you're adding words, you're adding a cognitive component, so it's not just one, two... You can do it with your fingers, so like that as you breathe in, but you're saying, "think, feel," you can even say it out loud, but you're adding a cognitive component to it, and then when you breathe out, you say, "choose." Anyone who does yoga knows about ocean breath, how you push the breath out, that's what you're doing, you want to push that out, so it's a deep inhalation, it's not just a surface one, it's a deep belly breathing, blowing up, like blowing up a balloon into your chest, into your head and then whoosh it out, that kind of breathing, six to nine times is phenomenal at priming the brain. Side bar, it's fantastic if you're in an argument or you've just got to calm yourself down quickly, or you've got to get yourself back together for... It's a great stabilizer, okay.

Shawn Stevenson: You just have to train yourself to be able to access that in that moment, yeah.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly, exactly. And you don't even... That's why I say, you can just, for a moment, you can just say, "Give me a moment, I'm just going to process this," and we you should all be doing it anyway, we shouldn't be reacting and firing back, we should always wait 60 to 90 seconds before we respond in a highly heated situation, because we are going to say the wrong thing. In that 60 to 90 seconds, we are going to say the wrong thing because there's too much chaos in our brain, we don't have enough balance, so our mind is worked up and our brain is getting this whooshy energy through the brain, so it's all messed up. So you're not going to react well. I talk about that in the book as well, that describes what I've just... And there's a bunch of other neuroplasticity techniques that you can use...

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect.



Dr. Caroline Leaf: To help prepare and prime the brain. Okay, so now, let's talk neuro cycling. So now the first thing is you gather awareness. I spent a lot of time choosing those, the words that I use, because I wanted to convey the concepts. We spoke earlier on about, we shouldn't be frightened of things like depression and anxiety and anger and guilt, and yes, those are toxic, but if you're frightened of them, you make your brain more toxic, you create more damage in your brain. But if you say, "Okay, I know that they're a problem, but they aren't an it. They are a response to something that's going on. They are a symptom of an underlying cause, they're a warning signal like, your alarm goes off."

So if you see them in that way, a study came out of Japan and Tokyo just recently... Japan and Texas University, which confirmed the research I had shown 18 months... A year ago, which is in the book, saying that if you do what I've just said, if you embrace, if you gather awareness and see the message... And see it, for what it is, is that there's a message in it, instead of trying to push it away and, "This is terrible, I must get rid of it. This is a symptom, I must just get it... I must just push it away. I mustn't do this, I mustn't do this." You get the white bear effect. Tell yourself not to do something, you're going to do it, okay. So you don't do that, you don't tell yourself, "Don't do this," you just... You rather say, "Why am I doing it?" So you never say to yourself...

Let's say that you get mad in traffic, "I mustn't do this." That will guarantee you will do it. But if you say, "Why am I doing this? Why am I getting so worked up?" There's a message in this. There's something good about this. That heals the brain, so gathering awareness of that in that way heals the brain versus if I, "Oh I mustn't do this, I mustn't do this, I'm so bad." Can you see the difference? That one, the second one is causing brain damage. The first one, where you're gathering, it's the gathering awareness, it's very positive, it's hopeful, it's, "Okay, I'm messing up. Sure, I said the wrong thing. I was awful, but it's okay, I'm going to fix this because there's a reason why I'm doing that." Can you just feel how much calmer you feel just hearing me say that?

Shawn Stevenson: Right. Yeah.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: It takes away all... It makes you not feel defensive, you don't feel like you have to justify, you don't feel like you have to hide or withdraw. You actually can go forward into this thing, "Okay, I've just messed up, it's okay, I'm going to fix this. There's a why behind why I did this." That's what gathering is. You gather



awareness. "What am I doing? Why am I doing it?" It's the attitude of, "I'm going to gather this." Think of an apple tree that's full of apples, and you sit under this apple tree, and you just bump it and all these apples land on your head and nearly knock you out. That's what we're doing when we go, "Oh, this is terrible." Everything's hitting you and you're confused and it's sore. Or you can say, "Okay, that's a really full apple tree. There's a lot of emotional stuff going on there, there's a lot of physical warning signals, but you know what, there's a reason, there's a root, there's a tree, there's a core. Okay, I'm going to go up, and I'm going to pick the apples and I'm going to put them in a basket. I'm going to gather awareness." See, there's such a difference.

Shawn Stevenson: I love that.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: So that's what the first step is doing, and it does all this beautiful stuff in the brain, balancing the hemispheres, getting the blood flow. And your telomeres, your telomeres... Now what is a telomere? We talked about... I loved the way you said tickling telomeres earlier on... Your telomeres, DNA strand, for those of you that don't know, pull out the DNA, the chromosome of the DNA strand, it looks like an X, and where you see my fingernails, which are conveniently pink today, so it's easy to visualize this, your telomeres. So telomeres do a lot of things, but one of the main jobs we've seen in current research on mind-brain work is that they show what's going on in your mind, and the impact of mind on body, so we've seen them as a tremendous link between the two. There's been quite a lot of research, but not that much research done, and it's very new research, and so I decided to start doing some of my own research, and I put this information in the book.

Now normally what happens is that every second you're making millions of new cells, and the quality of those cells determines the quality of everything in your body and your brain. So if I am in a worked-up state and I'm not managing my mind for 10 minutes, how many seconds have passed in 10 minutes? Let's just take one minute I'm worked up, 60 seconds have passed. Every second I've made millions of cells, I've just made 60 million bad cells. How did those bad cells translate? Vulnerability in my body. My body's not going to be as healthy in that moment, and it is a while before I turn those cells over again. So here's a very simple but very complex example of mind-brain. Where do telomeres come in? They influence cell division, so if they are not strong and healthy, if they're short and like a worn... They're wearing out and they're not working well, you're going to produce unhealthy cells. And so we saw, for example, in my study with our

subjects, at the beginning of the study, we looked at psychology and narrative and blood and brain and all kinds of stuff, we saw that their telomeres... 'cause they all came in with big things, clinical depression, traumas, lots of stuff, we saw that the telomeres were weak, they were shortened. We look at telomere length, you look at the quality, etcetera, through the testing, and their telomeres were short which meant that they were biologically not that healthy, so cells translating to biology.

So a simple example here is that some of them were like say... Let's say they were 30, but they had bodies... Because of the mind management and telomeres... They had bodies that were actually 30 to 40 years older and unhealthy than what they were. So we have a 30-year-old with a 65-year-old body that's sick. That person, if you're 30 and you have a 65-year-old sickly body, you have increased your vulnerability to disease by 75% to 98%, which is insane, and when you're in that state... There's so many things I can tell you... But when you're in that state, you'll start saying things like, "I... I... I..." "You become very self-focused, and there's self-focus with the idea of improving, and there's self-focus with the idea of being stuck. If you're "I... Me... I... I..." "stuck, you actually can increase your chance of cardiovascular disease by 42% in the next 12 months. I can go on, on and on, and they're scary statistics, but you can reverse it just as quickly. So we showed that within three weeks, you can start improving the length of the telomeres. By nine weeks, and that's why nine weeks is so critical, by nine weeks, we had significantly lengthened the telomeres in the subjects.

Shawn Stevenson: Incredible.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Well, they had. We didn't do it. They were doing it. How? Through the NeuroCycle. I didn't do drugs, and we didn't... They got no medications, they got no... We didn't even look at diet, etcetera, which obviously it's important, but I just wanted to show the power of mind, so through pure mind management, we brought their biological and chronological ages together, so that 30-year-old no longer had a 65-year-old sickly body after nine weeks. Nine weeks, it's nothing, that's no time. They had their own 30-year-old body. Their homocysteine levels had significantly dropped, which meant the inflammation through the brain and body had dropped, and you and I know inflammation that stays there longer than it should, is going to increase your susceptibility to disease. That's why people are dying from preventable lifestyle diseases. I'm giving you the keys of how to get into this preventable state, proactively.

Shawn Stevenson: This is priceless because people... You're literally talking about our telomeres are a biological marker for aging.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: As a reference point, and people, we're spending all of this money for anti-aging cream and anti-aging this and that, when our mind has the power that supersedes all of that. So powerful.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: All of it.

Shawn Stevenson: So gathering, that's number one, so...

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Awareness. Gathering awareness.

Shawn Stevenson: Number two?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: And a simple version of... Okay, so, just to gather these... Just to help people, why do I gather awareness on? What are the apples I pick? You pick the emotional warning signals, anxiety, depression, whatever emotion, you pick the physical warning signals, what's going on in your body from the DNA, so what are you feeling heart palpitations, GI symptoms, stress in your shoulders, whatever, and then you also look at your behavioral warning signals, what are you doing, what are you saying, what's your body language, what words are you using, what are your behaviors, what are your real... How are people responding? What are you doing at work? So you look at all those signals and then you also look at your perspective, very important, the perspective is the tree trunk, this perspective would be a "life sucks" perspective, this one is "Okay, I've got hope." So perspective is kind of the overarching view that you have when you're in that particular state... Okay, so that's what you gather awareness on, and you don't...

Shawn Stevenson: So gather... So there's five steps to this NeuroCycle, is that correct?

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Yeah, yeah, yeah, there's five steps.

Shawn Stevenson: So, we'll bullet-point the rest of them, I want everybody to get the book and start to put this stuff into action for themselves. So gather is number one. So what is...

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Gather's number one. Number two is Reflect. Reflect, and if you think of reflect, a

mirror reflects, light reflects, if you put light through a prism, it reflects multiple colors, it breaks up... So reflect is very big. It's this huge complex reflecting on, it's ask, answer, discuss. So the second step is reflect. How? Ask, answer, discuss. As you ask yourself, and you're having this discussion with yourself, as you ask yourself, you answer yourself and you discuss with yourself. I feel depressed because of X, Y, Z. Why? Because of X, Y, Z. Why? Because of X, Y, Z, and you keep... Oh, and that means this, this... And you have this whole... And you can literally go into what I call the multiple perspective advantage, which I also teach in this book, which is creating space, it's standing back and observing yourself. So here I am, Caroline, Caroline. Caroline mental mess, Caroline wise. Pick the apples, Caroline, why... What apples are you picking? Caroline, now reflect, ask... So you almost do it in this creating mental space, which does the most fantastic stuff in your brain and body, and I don't want to belabor the point, but your telomeres are going to love it, your homocysteine levels are going to love it, you're going to drop your cortisol levels and you're going to increase your DHA levels, which is really good.

You want a great cortisol/DHA ratio, I can go on and on... You even drop prolactin. Prolactin is a hormone we normally associate with breastfeeding women, but it's a hormone in males and females, and there's a lot of new research coming out showing prolactin is also related to how we're managing our mind, so we saw prolactin dropping. Anyway, I can go on and on, but the point here, you get the general gist, is when you reflect in this way, and you gather in this way, when you do these steps, you are literally changing the physiology, the neurophysiology, you're taking broken neurophysiology, you're taking literal broken stuff and you are changing the wiring, so as you gather awareness, the minute you gather awareness, the little protein bonds holding this toxic thought with all of its data and roots and the whole thing, you're actually weakening the bonds, which makes it malleable, which makes it changeable. As you reflect, you weaken it even more, you're removing energy and you're starting to gather that transfer the energy into building a replacement. By the time you get to step three, which is write, the famous write, everyone tells you to write and you shouldn't write before you have gathered and reflected, as there's a reason...

And I've put it in the book, there's very clear brain reasons, you've got to gather, and in that way, prime the brain, and I gave you an example, breathing; gather, apple picking, the four things; reflect that deep ask, answer, discuss, then you write. When you write, you pour your brain on paper, vomit the words on paper, you're putting your mind and brain on paper, you're pulling out the forest. And if you write in a way, and I've developed a system called the Metacog, which is in

the book, also in the NeuroCycle app that goes, that you can get as well, there's a whole video on how to do it. It is the most powerful way, we've had... I had patients in my clinic that were... When I was practicing that had severe... That were diagnosed with severe schizophrenia, I don't believe schizophrenia is an it, it was a symptom. So I approached it as I've really explained. So that was a symptom of something going on, but they were so traumatized that they had multiple different personalities, which is very often a mind manifestation of extreme trauma, and they had been put on every therapy under the sun, and I taught them the NeuroCycle, and what we did was we used a massive, big white board, and there we would take a concept and I would say, "Okay, now start, gather awareness, reflect, and on a specific aspect, now, write in the Metacog.

And as they were writing, and this is an extreme example, but it's so powerful. As they were writing, we could see the personality split, we could see... So they were just talking as though it was one conversation. At the end of it, we could see five different people seeing this particular incident. And they stood back and they said, "I didn't know." And that was when we were able to start re-combining the elements of their mind and start dealing with the trauma, 'cause mind splits and you may have psychotic breaks and disassociation when the trauma gets too much. It's pure survival, it's a pure survival mechanism. So to reconnect the mind... So there's just an extreme example, but it could be something as simple as you have the same argument with your spouse, which is so common, because... And you don't see it... You do this, gather, reflect and write to the Metacog, you will be astound at what you see, 'cause you're pulling stuff out of the depths of your brain, you're forcing the two sides of the brain together, you're digging in that forest and you're finding... You're literally going into the forest and you're digging up the tree and you're up-ending it and you're looking for those. The Metacog as the third step is helping you. So you can see each of these is very scientific, very systematic.

Your fourth step is the re-check, where you go and look at what you've written because that Metacog, I can guarantee, is a big mess, and that's what you want. It doesn't have to make any sense, you just get it out. The re-check is where you make sense, and you look back, "Okay, what is this? What am I saying? What is that... Patterns, triggers, activators... Use colors, circles, draw pictures, arrows, phenomenally powerful experience, where you do a mental autopsy to reorganize, where you're digging around and finding, "Where's the tumor? Oh, I can... There it is. I can get it out. What can I... What's my antidote for the tumor? What's my... What can I... There's my trigger, there's my activator, there's the



root." You start seeing the roots, you start getting some... You start digging... The ground is being dug away, and you can start seeing the roots coming up. So you're literally there with a spade in the re-check, digging the sand around the roots and digging up the tree and you're pulling it up and you're starting to see that root and that root, it takes a full 21 days to get the roots out, you're not going to get the roots out on day one, but the re-check is starting to... Each of the steps is taking you in that direction. The active reach then is at this stage, you've done a lot of work, mentally, you can carry on. Physically, your brain can't.

Okay, so a wise mind can carry on forever, but a mind that is... That the outside of the forest is the, sort of the active mind that's going on all the time, it gets tired, the brain gets tired. So you have to finish, active reach is your conclusion step, for the day, so you would have done this process over 15 to 45 minutes max, and then you stop. With your active reach, which could be anything from a simple statement, an action, something like, "Each time when I catch myself wanting to snap," maybe that's what you're working on a pattern in a relationship, "I am going to say, X, or I am going to squeeze a stress ball, or I am going to visualize something, or sing a song in my head, or make a statement." Someone with sexual trauma, maybe they'll say something like, the first day they discover, "Okay, this is definitely something going on, and I feel shame, that's the big Domini, I am not shame." So that active reach, you literally practice, you practice saying it seven times at least during the day, how? In the NeuroCycle app there is an active reach reminder, like on your iPhone, you can put in your reminders, you set it to pop up on your computer so if you're using the phone or if you're using the NeuroCycle app, you can actually put the reminder in, and then it pops up and then you'll read that, all you do is read it.

It keeps setting your conscious awareness, giving it more energy, and it's positive, it's healthy, it's anchoring you back in mental peace, and that's so important to do that, so it's an action, but it's an action that leads you to progress forward in hope. So it's a beautiful thing as well. And it's doing beautiful stuff in your brain, I can go on for hours and hours about that, but that's the essential concept, and then how to apply all of that, I've broken up into different sections.

So the first section, is Brain Building. So those same five steps, you learn, you use to brain build, so that's learning, so this is great for parents in homeschooling, it will help your kids learn how to learn, 'cause that's what the brain building does, and then you as an adult and whatever, everyone should brain build. So it's basically the same five steps where you would, the gather becomes, gathering



what you're learning, so reading, and the reflect is understanding what you read, and the write is writing it down in the metacog, so it just, it's the same process, but it's just done as a building versus a detoxing. So the one you're detoxing, and rebuilding, the other one you're actually building, something in your brain, same five steps. I've also got in here how to deal with trauma, acute trauma, which is the sudden stuff, the big T trauma, which is those things like war and rape and that sort of stuff. And then there's the small T trauma, which is equally as damaging, but it's the little things that happen every day, like maybe you have a boss at work who's constantly on your back, or you have a sick family member, and it's just constant little traumas, how to work with those.

I also have a section in here on how to deal with toxic habits, like if you keep arguing with your spouse, there's a pattern, or if you're always getting angry in traffic or if you always get really, whatever, those toxic blocks in our life, how do you fix those, and then I have throughout, and then I also have how to build good habits, so to use the NeuroCycle to build, like they can take your book, where you teach and then they can use the NeuroCycle to learn what you teach them, to build good eating habits into their life. So it's building... So I talk about NeuroCycle is for building good communication, good diet, good exercise, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So there I try and give you the whole picture and then throughout there little hacks, like if you get stuck in people-pleasing, what do you do in the moment? If you have that argument, what do you do in the moment? So these are the little five second ones. Gosh, I've said such a lot, I always say a lot.

Shawn Stevenson: I love this so much, and it's so... Your book is so rich. It's just absolutely rich with just wisdom but... And I want to encourage everybody to, already, our branches are spectacular, but to take it another step is to put some of these things into action for ourselves, so I want to encourage everybody to get their copy right now, *Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess*, this book is... And coming out right now, we super need this. So I'm grateful for you, I'm grateful for you putting your time and energy and your experience into creating something this special for everyone, and can you let everybody know where they can pick the book up and also where they can just follow you and find out more information.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Absolutely, well, they can get, and pick up the book wherever books are sold. But they can go to the website, cleaningupyourmentalmess.com and then that'll take you to all, Amazon and everything. My website is drleaf.com, and my Instagram and all my social media handles are Dr. Caroline Leaf and there's tons of stuff on

all of those, like all of us who are all giving good content on our pages, but that's where they can follow me on Instagram, they'll get access to everything, as well, through there, you can get even to the book, and so on, so drleaf.com. And Dr Caroline Leaf on Instagram and...

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Wherever books are sold.

Shawn Stevenson: Dr. Leaf, this is one of my favorite episodes, this is so rewarding, and, this is going beyond what we see out here, which is so focused on the minutia of, again, we mentioned earlier, the mechanistic thinking about how all this stuff works, and it makes us feel disempowered, because once something is wrong with the mechanism, you're broken.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: And that's the end of the story so this was incredibly empowering, and I appreciate you so much, I can't wait to talk more.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: I can't wait to talk more as well, I'm looking forward to interviewing you soon on your book, so that's going to be exciting, and I really appreciate that, if people also want to know more about the NeuroCycle, I do... I've got a podcast, Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess, where I'll be interviewing you, but I do a lot of Neurocycles on there for people just to get the hang of it as well, so that's another place they can connect with me, but thank you, Shawn, it's been so great, thank you for giving me so much time to share all the concepts, and I really hope it helps all your viewers and listeners.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome, it definitely will, I appreciate you so very much.

Dr. Caroline Leaf: Thank you.

Shawn Stevenson: Dr. Caroline Leaf everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today, I hope you got a lot of value out of this. This is one of the most important conversations that we need to be having right now and really looking at where science is and where humanity is, we've really lost touch with what is most important about us, and it is an intangible thing. And it is our mind. And it's just so empowering once we realize that we ourselves can use our minds to create

our brain, we can use our minds to create our bodies, and to know the mechanisms behind it today is just super inspiring for me and again, I hope you got a lot of value out of this episode, make sure to pick up her new book right now, *Cleaning Up Your Mental Mess*, it is an essential in your library, and if you got a lot of value out of this episode, please share it out with your friends and family on social media, and you can tag me and you can tag Dr. Leaf as well. I appreciate you so much for tuning in and we've got some epic shows coming your way very, very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com, that's where you can find all of the show notes, you could find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well, and please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much, and take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.