

THE MODEL **HEALTH** **SHOW**

EPISODE 469

Adaptation Energy & Meditation For Better Performance

With Guest Emily Fletcher

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to the Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today. This episode, we're talking about where our results actually come from. All the results that we see in our lives, the good, the bad, and the ugly, all of them are rooted in one thing, they all begin with a thought. Our thoughts are the seeds that then grow our feelings that then grow our decisions that then grow our actions that then grow our results in our lives. It's all rooted in our ability to think, and this is a super power that we all have and we have access to, because truly all the results that we see in our lives are first rooted in our thoughts.

And as we've been talking about here on the show recently and looking at the neuroscience, there is a big distinction between our mind and our brain. Scientists have been looking for years to find the root of consciousness or wherever we're kind of located, where's the mind located in the brain, but our mind is so much more expansive, you have mind in your toes, you have mind in your knee caps. Your mind is not just rooted in your brain, and in fact, there's a governing force, and talking about our conversation with Dr. Caroline Leaf recently, which if you haven't listened to the episode, make sure to listen to that episode. In about 40 years, four decades of research into neuroscience and actually practical applications of this and knowing that our thoughts actually create our brain, our thoughts are not just located in our brain, our thoughts create our brain. From a very practical level, our ability to think literally changes our brains and the connection of our neurons, the axon terminals and the dendrites connecting and all the myelin getting laid down, creating those automatic thoughts that we have are first rooted in our ability to think externally above the brain.

It's kind of like an EPI brain controller is our ability to think. And so that higher order functioning to think externally of our circumstances, to think externally of the physical body that we have, because I want you to think about this. Your body's ability to heal, for example, just say you get a cut on your arm, instantaneously powerful factors beyond our understanding go into action to repair that injury, to repair that cut, it happens automatically, but there's a belief associated with that, your body can do the thing, but we can inhibit that process if you want to start rubbing gummy bears into the cut or pour a little... I don't know pour a little Mountain Dew on the cut.

It's going to inhibit its natural healing faculty. Your mind, your brain, all of these associated things, and that process of healing taking place, it's an automated program, but you can jump in and you can inhibit that process or you can accelerate and help the process along. Now, we might have something that's a more severe injury or condition, but your brain beyond that, your mind knows how to fix the issue. If somebody's ever fixed it, it's fixable, the process and

the programs are there rooted in your genes, but they can be inhibited literally by our thinking, if we're thinking in ways that inhibit our healing process. For example, we're thinking how bad and how terrible and how unfixable the issue is, and we're caught in that web, that really treacherous web of negativity, which it's okay to spend some time there. We've got a process, as we're going to talk about, these negative thought patterns, we've got to allow ourselves to experience the diversity of emotion, sometimes things are not okay.

But eventually we've got to process it and we've got to step in, and there's a place for stepping in, there's a place for allowing, but we've got to step in and think about, okay, if I'm just caught in how bad things are, in this stressful way of thinking, that's just immersing my tissues in cortisol, in adrenaline, and it's suppressing the activity of DHEA and human growth hormone and my immune system function, I've got all these inflammatory cytokines that are just doing all of this excessive activity because I'm so excessively stressed. And I'm so caught in how this is not going to get better, we're inhibiting the healing process based on our thinking. So, your brain has the capacity, your mind above that has the capacity to heal just about anything that you can conceive of. If it's been healed before in another person, it can be healed, but it's how quickly we can get in alignment and have the thoughts associated with that healing taking place.

I hope that makes sense. This is some deep stuff, but it's beyond that, it's beyond depth, it's, what's creating all of this? Because truly, as I've been talking about here on the show recently, we are just scratching the surface on what we know as far as the capacity of human beings. Our human body, the tiny bones in your ear right now picking up vibration, sending that to your brain and creating these electrical signals and you're picking up this data, all of that, everything about you once came from a supernova event, once came from the stars, you are made literally from stars and the creation of a universe, all rooted in the same thing, and here you are. You're a miraculous entity made from star dust, we know nothing, we know nothing of how powerful we are, we know nothing of how expansive and interconnected we are to everything, but we can tap into it a little bit, we can get closer to that connection, we can get some of the static off the line.

And that's what we're going to be talking about here today. So I'm really, really excited about this because I want to empower you and to just get you to remember how powerful you are, to take more responsibility for your thinking and not outsource your thinking as somebody else or other entities that don't have your best interest at heart.

And again, that's what we're going to be talking about here today. And our special guest is amazing, such an amazing wealth of knowledge in this subject matter of taking control of your thinking, but also like what are some of the out-picturing things, what are some of the good results that we can see in our lives backed by data and also, what about our families? What

about our kids? So again, super timely, very, very powerful episode and true story, when she got to my door, there was a little box there at my doorstep, which I didn't know that it was there, a little red box magic delivering every day magic, and it's something that she's a big fan of as well, and what it was, was the delivery of my Four Sigmatic, listen to this. If we're talking about mind management, stress management, recent studies now indicate that Lion's Mane, medicinal mushroom, can encourage nerve cells to grow and repair more quickly.

I've experienced nerve damage before. It is not fun, it's not fun. We have things, your body can repair it, but there are things that we can do, of course, with our thinking, but also with our nutrition, which even our decision to bring in the nutrition, it's rooted in thinking. All of this is interconnected, but specific things rooted in our nutrition that can encourage and help the process to happen with speed. In a recent study published in biomedical research, women with a variety of health complaints, including anxiety and poor sleep quality, were given lion's mane or placebo for four weeks. The participants who used the Lion's Mane significantly reduced levels of irritation and anxiety compared to those in the placebo group. Now, lion's Mane has been used for centuries for its benefits specifically on our nervous system.

And if you actually look at the lion's mane, it kind of looks like a brain, it kind of looks like the incredible webs that stream from our mind, from our nervous system, the tentacles and this dynamic system of electricity really, that's just flowing throughout our bodies, it's really, really cool. Now, on top of that, so we've got the lion's mane itself, which I'm a big fan of the Lion's Mane elixir that came in that little box of magic that was at my door when my guest arrived, my everyday magic from Four Sigmatic. But today, I had the lion's mane coffee blend, so it's lion's mane infused, dual extracted lion's mane, let's be clear, it's not company X, it's not some... You don't want to just run out and get the off-brand stuff, when we're talking about these things, get the best because the quality matters.

It's like you hear about lion's mane and then you get companies X that might be number one, the quality might not be there, but also the extraction method, is it a hot water extract or is it an alcohol extract? When you really need both to get all of the bioactive components from the lion's mane. The quality matters, it's not the same thing when you get the whatever type... When I asked my mom for pumas, I was like, "Mom, can I have some pumas?" I was in seventh grade, sixth, seventh grade, Mom, can I get some pumas? Pumas would come in into the scene, they're coming back, and she was like, "Sure, sure." When she gave me the box, it didn't say puma, the box said panthers. She got me Panthers, it's not the same thing, Ma. Just like with our nutrition, it's not the same thing when you're going to get the rando version of it, get the good stuff, because just like the kids at school, they knew the difference, your body knows the difference.

Alright. So make sure that you're getting the good stuff, but in addition to the lion's mane, I had it infused with organic coffee, and a study published in the Journal practical neurology found that regularly drinking coffee has been shown to help prevent cognitive decline and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease. But the quality matters, Four Sigmatic has that quality. Go to foursigmatic.com/model that's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model and you're going to get 10% off to even upwards of 15%, or more, off depending on how many of the goodies that you get delivering that everyday magic, but you're definitely going to get hooked up with an incredible discount, use the code Model, Go to foursigmatic.com/model. I'm a big fan of the Lion's Mane coffee, and also the lion's mane elixir and these are easy to use, dual extracted packets, easy to travel with.

And also like the lion's mane, I like to throw that in the smoothies as well, the lion's mane elixir, so many cool things you could do with it, so many incredible products are done the right way, go to foursigmatic.com/model, and now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled, "Truth in a time where everyone's afraid." EmmaAshJayne, "Shawn gives us the truth, he digs deep and does the research and brings it to his listeners in manageable pieces, such a breath of fresh air in an age of inflated egos and fear-mongering. Keep doing the good work."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you, and will do. I appreciate you so much for leaving that review over on Apple Podcast, and if you get to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for the model health show, it means so very much. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Emily Fletcher, and she's the founder of Ziva meditation and a leading expert in meditation for performance. She's a best-selling author of Stress Less Accomplish More, and she's been featured in the New York Times, Good Morning America, The Today Show, Vogue, ABC, and many other media outlets. She's been named one of the top 100 women in wellness to watch, and has spoken at Apple, Google, Harvard Business School and many other prestigious places. Her meditation students include Oscar, Grammy and Emmy Award winners, Navy Seals, professional athletes and everyday folks from all over the world. And now she's here on the Model Health Show, so let's jump into this powerful conversation with Emily Fletcher.

EMILY FLETCHER: Nice jeans. So I got some Rag & Bone, they're like... It's really comfy jeans. They feel like sweatpants and it's Rag & Bone. I was like the thing is a hip thing the kids wear or whatever, and I was like, "Cool, I'll get some." They're sweatpants with laser printing of jeans on them. Laser-printed pockets. They're sweatpants, and I put them on and I took a photo. I was like, "I don't know if this is like an all-time high or all-time low for..." "I was like, "I'm either nailing it or I'm a real embarrassment to society," and I have no idea which one it is.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Listen, the... So first of all, there's been this evolution or devolution to having stretchy pants. I don't know if it's... Especially with the fitness world, it's kind of dope, you know? But at the same time, it's like, "What's the underlying reason? Can we not fit in our pants anymore?"

EMILY FLETCHER: Well, because jeans are like wearing pain. I don't understand why anyone wants to do that to their crotch, to their inner thighs. It's too rough, it's too rough.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Over time, obviously, you "break the jeans in." Like they're a wild stallion or something. But now, you literally, you buy the jeans and they're already tattered and they do all this stuff. It's so crazy how fashion and human consciousness and perspective about clothes is. We're very strange. And what's up with... Straight up though, what's up with the '80s? I'm sorry, when I see pictures of myself as a kid and I got the long socks with the stripes and the short shorts and the, you know?

EMILY FLETCHER: Well, at least you probably didn't have the bangs, these things and you just spray, you just tease them and spray them, and it was like... Just everything's flat here reaching out like a giant wave, like an ocean wave of a bang and hopefully have those.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ocean spray.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yes, ocean spray bangs.

SHAWN STEVENSON: In the '80s, it was kind of like, "Let's see how ridiculous we can look." Now, it just seems like... And again, I'm not... And some people, of course, they're going to be like, "The '80s was the best ever and best fashion, and all that stuff." No disrespect, but I think everything is just kind of like more sensible and kind of clean cut.

EMILY FLETCHER: But you know that in 10 years, we're going to look back on this and be like, "We look like such ding dongs."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolute ridiculous, absolute ridiculous.

EMILY FLETCHER: We can't help it. I'd be like, "Why was I wearing that flowery butterfly shirt?"

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well... And I've got patent leather Jordans on right now, patent leather.

EMILY FLETCHER: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But these are... They're old school in a sense.

EMILY FLETCHER: Have you heard of GOAT?

SHAWN STEVENSON: GOAT. Yeah, the shopping.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah. My friend is running their engineering...

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what I've got.

EMILY FLETCHER: Really?

SHAWN STEVENSON: No, no plugs, no plugs. But yeah, I got these there.

EMILY FLETCHER: Okay. Well, I'm just there because I'm fighting with my friend who's running their engineering department. I want to hire someone. He's like, "No, I'm going to hire." I was like, "No, I'm going to hire him." And then I was like, "I'm changing the world for the better." And he's like, "We have a \$1.5 billion valuation." And I was like, "Alright, fine. Take him." I was like...

SHAWN STEVENSON: You figured it out it, I guess. But for you, speaking of figuring it out, alright, and you started off your life and your focus, your intention on what you were going to be doing, very different from where you are today. You were on stage, you were an actress. Can you talk about...

EMILY FLETCHER: Thank you for saying that with the reverence that it deserved, the preciousness that it deserves.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I want to know your superhero origin story because my friends were your friends. We get together, we could be friends, that's biggy smalls. Anyways, but just have all been saying the same thing, how remarkable you are in the space, how much of a much needed and excellent teacher you are for a much needed tool that we all have access to, but we often don't realize it. But where did you get started? What's your superhero origin story? Because how do you get from performance to teaching today?

EMILY FLETCHER: So I wanted to be an actress since I was a little girl. I remember I was reading the newspaper on the floor of my mama's bathroom. She was in the shower and I saw an ad, I think on Young Actors Theatre, and everything in my body was like, "Oh, I need to go there." No, I think I said, "I'm going to go there." It was not "I need to." "I'm going to go there." And I said, "I'm going to be an actress," And I started studying music and dance and acting. I started doing shows at my high school, and at this theatre, I'd do like six or seven shows a year. And

then I majored in musical theater, and I moved to New York, I got my first job my second day in New York. I was very blessed. I worked for 10 years, basically non-stop, show to show, to show. I never was unemployed except for like seven months. And then my last show was a chorus line where I was understudying three of the leads, so that means you have no idea which character you're going to play when you show up to the theater, and sometimes they switch you from one to the other, you're just in the dressing room and they call you on midway through. So it's constant fight or flight, it's constant panic. You know that fear of speaking in public is actually worse than death for humans?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

EMILY FLETCHER: Because back in the day, we get kicked out of the tribe, right? Which meant death, but it was like shame and death. So we'd rather just died than have shame on top of death. And one of the roles that I understudied in a course and I was really, really bad at, I couldn't sing it, I couldn't dance it, I was miscast, and it's embarrassing to be on a stage with 3000 people looking at you in a leotard and be like... I just couldn't hit the note, you know? And so I was just... That would lead to just feeling terrible about myself and not being able to sleep, so I had insomnia for 18 months. I mean, you know. I mean, you know how terrible that is for you. And then, long story short, the girl sitting next to me in the dressing room was a meditator and she had a harder job than I did. She was like five roles she was understudying. I was like, "What do you know that I don't know?" She said, "I meditate." And I was like, "Oh God." Was like the biggest eye roll I could muster. And I was like, "One of you." And she said, "No, it really helps my performance, it helps my sleep, it helps this."

I didn't believe her, kept having insomnia. I started going gray at the tender age of 26. I was getting injured all the time and it was confusing why I was living my dream on Broadway and miserable. So I found meditation and it changed my whole life. On the first day of my first class, I was in a different state of consciousness. That night, I slept through the night for the first time in 18 months, I have every night since. That was 12 years ago. I stopped going gray, I stopped getting injured, I didn't get sick for eight and a half years. And so I was like, "Hello, why is everyone not doing this?" Like, "I found the thing that everybody's looking for. Oh, it's actually just right inside of you." And so I left Broadway, I went to India. I started training for about three years to be a teacher, and then I was not in India that whole time. I'm not that hardcore. My training was very hardcore, but it was not in India the whole time.

And then I graduated, and then I've taught about 50,000 people to meditate, and wrote that book that came out a couple of years ago, and it's been really fun to see the evolution of meditation over this past decade. 'Cause when I first started teaching, it was like a bunch of monks and me. And I was like the accessible one, 'cause you either had to go stop eating meat, and move to a cave, and stop having sex, and like apprentice someone. And then I was like,

"Hey everybody, you can just use this as a tool to be better at performance." And now, as meditations become everywhere, now people think meditation's a free app on your phone that they may or may not ever look at. It's like, "Oh, I downloaded it, so I'm a meditator. I don't actually meditate, but I have the app on my phone."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got the app, though.

EMILY FLETCHER: And so now, I've become this exclusive luxury product, because now people are thinking that it's supposed to be free and that you don't really have to do anything. So anyway, it's been a fascinating journey and I feel really grateful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's amazing. It's amazing. What was it about this, this kind of transformation that you had, what is it about that basically made you shift from devoting your life to being on stage, which in many ways, which we'll talk about, you're still on stage, but in a different dynamic, but what made you want to shift gears and to share this gift of meditation with so many other people?

EMILY FLETCHER: Well, probably, like you, and when I find something that works, I'm like, "Hey, hey, you got to try this." Like, "This is going to make you feel better." I just want people to feel as good as they can. I think at the end of the day, my life's mission is to eradicate unnecessary suffering from the planet. When you see people eating crappy food, or not sleeping, or unnecessarily suffering, it's like, "This is solvable." And I get that some suffering is part of the human experience, but unnecessary suffering is just dumb. Like what are we doing? There is a solution for stress, it is called "meditation." Hello. It's not that complicated. So anyway, I selfishly just went to India to deepen my own practice, and it was in India that I had this beautiful moment where, six months prior, I was in Los Angeles, I was on tour with the chorus line, and I knew there was a bunch of meditation teachers in LA. So I googled, I was looking for group meditation. I showed up to this guy's house, it's just him and his girlfriend, and I was like, "Well, this is not the group meditation experience I was really interested in." But they seemed not crazy, so I went in, I had my purse on my lap, and I was like had to meditate with one eye open. And then, fine, I was like, "Alright, they're not serial killers." Like, "Just go."

EMILY FLETCHER: And I went into the meditation and afterwards, I open up my eyes and I see this beautiful... I don't know if it's a photo or a painting, but it was this bridge with the light at the end of it. And I said, "What is that?" And they said, "That's Rishikesh." I was like, "What's a Rishikesh?" And they go, "That's this town in northern India, we do this retreat there every few years. Are you coming?" And I was like, "No. When is it?" And they said, "It's February." I said, "Yeah, I'm going to go." So cut to six months later, I'm in India, we would go meditate on the banks of the Ganges every morning at sunrise, and so we're walking, walking, walking, and I get to this bridge and the sun is rising on the other side of it, and I stop in my tracks and I start

sobbing, crying because I know that the me in that moment has gone to the me in Los Angeles and said, "Hey, you got to come here." And every time I tell the story, I get full body goosebumps because it's one of those beautiful moments where time just laps over on itself and you are guided.

And so it was in India that I decided I wanted to teach this. But even then, I was like, "Oh, it'll be later when I'm done dancing, when I'm done singing." And so I thought I would just do both. It'd be like a cute side gig when I wasn't in a show. And then my agents would be like, "Hey, could we get a headshot and resume?" And it would take like three months to get them a headshot and resume, meanwhile I would have taught 400 people to meditate, and then it just kept growing and growing, and became very clear why nature wanted to use me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: When you're telling that story, it was very similar, for me, to Doctor Strange. I don't know... Have you seen "Doctor Strange," the movie?

EMILY FLETCHER: mmm-mmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well, he gets injured, which, for you, this could be like a spiritual injury that you were undertaking. And he finds his way, his random circumstance. He goes to a basketball court, basically, and he basically opens his eyes and he sees his picture of where he needs to go. Which metaphorically for him, it was a person who told him. And then for you, it was like seeing this picture and somebody told you. And you found, landed in India. And just going through all of these different processes, and excavation, and human exploration of himself, and he's kind of unlocked this superpower, basically. And he's devoted his life to doing something he wouldn't have thought that he'd be doing, and really becoming an advocate for protection and basically unlocking the superpowers of other people, protecting our realm as well. Not to be disrespectful to his job, it's a big job. But what you're doing, honestly, the most important realm, really, is ourselves. We have a universe that just exists within ourselves. We are it.

EMILY FLETCHER: We are the universe.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so tapping in. And you said something earlier that I want to ask you about because all meditation is not the same. It's a very broad term, especially today. There's so much...

EMILY FLETCHER: "I'm doing a texting my girlfriend meditation." I'm like, "That's called texting." "I'm doing a Facebook meditation." You're like, "No, you're on social media."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mindfully texting, okay, and watching every letter. And they expand... What's up with the auto expand? Every time I try to write like a naughty word, it's not tuck. Why would you write that?

EMILY FLETCHER: It's not ducking. I would never write "ducking."

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what I'm trying to say.

EMILY FLETCHER: No, ducking is not a thing. iPhone.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So what is meditation? What's the nuance here with this term?

EMILY FLETCHER: Okay, so thanks for bringing this up, because I feel like as it's becoming more and more popular, it's going to behoove us to be specific with our language. Because especially for folks starting out, if you just hear the word "meditation" and you're like, "Well, this person told me to clear my mind, and this person told me to focus, and this person told me to let go, and this person told me I need to breathe really fast, and this person told me to slow down my breathing, but... So which one is it? What is meditation?" And so then it starts to feel confusing and you're doing something wrong, and it's easy to get on the meditation shame spiral. And so I just think we need to decide on like, "Okay, let's... We can call the blanket umbrella term meditation, but other than that, we have to qualify. Just like there's exercise, but playing ping-pong is very different than CrossFit.

Sports. Okay, well, swimming is quite different from football, but they're all sports, so you wouldn't assume that the same technique you would use to swim would be the same technique you would use for football. And meditation is really that vast. There are thousands of different styles of meditation, and because people haven't... I also think because people don't assume that it's a skill, they think that it's just something they should magically already know how to do. And so then, they're like, "Well, yeah, you just sit down and clear your mind." And just because it's simple, doesn't mean that it's easy. Actually, I think that the profundity of this practice comes from the simplicity, meaning that the more simple it is, the more profound the impact can be. And so because it is simple, people think they should already know how to do it, but it is a skill.

So a Ziva, the way that I've delineated it, is I've taken these thousands of different styles and basically put them into three categories, the three M's. So you've got mindfulness, which is really good at dealing with your stress in the now. You've got meditation, which we'll define the difference in a minute. And I would say meditation is really good at helping you deal with your stress from the past. And then manifesting is all about creating your dreams for the future. So mindfulness now, meditation past, manifesting future. And technique-wise, how I

would delineate those is that mindfulness is all about focus, directing your focus, concentrating. Prefrontal cortex is involved, left brain is online. And honestly, what most of the apps are, mostly YouTube videos that drop in studios are teaching what I personally would call "mindfulness," but I'm in meditation snob. Okay, this is different than the meditation portion of Ziva, which is all about letting go, it's all about surrender, it's all about deep rest. It feels and looks kind of like a nap sitting up, like this is a classic trademark move of Ziva meditators. This is great posture for us. It does not look good on Instagram, but it feels amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: By the way, for folks listening, her head was collapsed as if she'd fallen to sleep.

EMILY FLETCHER: As if I was like in a quick heroin nap. I've never taken one of those, but...

SHAWN STEVENSON: I was like, "This took an interesting turn."

EMILY FLETCHER: You know, it was just pre-Broadway or my heroin days. No, I'm just kidding. So that sort of like weeble wobble head bob, it feels and looks very much like a nap sitting up. And interestingly, you're giving your body rest that is about five times deeper than sleep. And we know that because your metabolic rate decreases, heart rate slows, body temperature cools, all which is giving you that rest that you get at the bottom of your sleep, but that happens very quickly in the meditation. And it's actually that de-excitation of the nervous system that starts to create order in your body. When you create order in your body that is the mechanism by which the old accumulated stresses can start to come up and out. And in my experience, it is the eradication of the backlog of stresses that allows you to perform at the top of your game. That is really where you start to get the ROI of the practice, it's not because you're doing a state change. It's not like, "Oh, I was stressed within 10 minutes of the app. I feel better in the now."

That's good, that's a useful tool, but where we really start to see the like, "Oh, my whole life got better. I started making better decisions. My sleep got better. My sex is better. My immune system is better. I reversed my body age by 10 years." That comes from getting rid of the old stress in ourselves. And now, we even know in our epigenetic memory.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, so powerful. And again, I just want to keep reiterating this, we have this within us, all of these things. And I love the fact that you mentioned this very explicitly, which is, this is a skill. Meditation is a skill that anyone can learn and develop, but we tend to come into it like, "Ah, I'm not good at this." Or "This doesn't work for me." And it's also great to understand there's so many different methodologies and on-ramps, and I love that you categorize it into these three domains, which again, our lives are really operating these three domains. And even prior to me knowing about you and about Ziva, these are... I do these

three things, I kind of incorporate them a lot of times, especially if I'm limited on time into one thing. But I didn't know, I wasn't intentional about the fact that one is addressing the past, present, and the future, which is freaking remarkable, that you've already... You've pinpointed that already. And so one of the other aspects, obviously, is deriving some of the benefits of sleep without sleeping per se, but meditation can also improve your sleep quality. So let's talk about that.

EMILY FLETCHER: I'm so happy this is happening right now. I feel like I'm a little bit having the thing that I had in Rishikesh, 'cause I've listened to your podcast on sleep and the way you talk about meditation and sleep, and I'm like, "Yes. He gets it." I feel sometimes like I'm listening to my own inner dialogue about this stuff, and so I'm just so happy to be here and to be having this conversation with you, and thank you for your lifetime of work of helping people stress less and sleep better. It's really making a difference, and I'm just so delighted to be here. Okay, so couple of things. Yes, meditation can both give your body rest as if it is sleep and also make your sleep better. So here's what's happening for most people in the world, is that sleep is the most restful form of rest that they have, and so they're having to use their sleep as a time for stress release. 'Cause as you know, when you give your body rest, it knows how to heal itself. And one of the things it heals itself from is stress. You lay down to sleep at night, body gets a bit of rest, starts cleaning house, getting rid of stresses, body starts to launch into activity, mind corresponds with activity.

What is mind activity? Thoughts, so we start having thoughts, and then your mind is off to the races at 6:00 AM, you haven't slept a wink. That's one form of insomnia. If you start inserting a meditation practice into your day and you start using the meditation for stress release, you can start to use your sleep as a time for sleep. This is why it improves sleep latency because you're not spending two hours of an off-ramp. You're just like... You've already eradicated the stresses from the day, so it's like, "Oh, time to sleep. Good night." It's not that instant, but it can be much faster. And then, also, so we've been tracking people's sleep data pre and post-Ziva, and a lot of folks, before they take the course, their sleep looks like light, medium, deep, wake up, light, medium, deep, wake up, light, medium, wake up, and that takes them eight or nine hours. They wake up, they're exhausted.

And then after Ziva, their sleep signatures will change to light, medium, deep for six hours, wake up. So they're sleeping for less time, but they're waking up feeling much more rested and refreshed because, again, their body isn't having to use that time of sleep for stress release because they've already done that cleaning during the day. And that's really where one of the ways that Ziva is so magical, is because it is, even for 15 minutes, it's about an hour-long nap in the morning and the equivalent of about an hour-long nap in the afternoon, so you're actually decreasing the amount of sleep that you need at night and you're increasing the efficiency of it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It makes sense, especially from the stress domain. That's an interesting I think to pinpoint it to just analyze a little bit more, because for a lot of folks, like you mentioned, sleep is that time where it's like, "Alright, this fool is asleep, let me try and deal with some of this stress." And there's so many incredible process that happen during sleep, especially stress is one of those things that inhibits a lot of things as well. With stress, of course, there's nuance with stress.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yes, there's good stress.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Not all stress is bad. But it's today, of course, the majority of folks are just overburdened with stress and what I call their stress load, their overall stress load.

EMILY FLETCHER: It's that chronic low grade thing that just keeps building and building. It's different than like, "Oh, let me outrun a tiger right now."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right, yeah. And people use that example all the time about running from the saber-tooth tiger. I think we give saber-toothed tigers a lot of credit. Maybe we can use a different animal, maybe a mammoth.

EMILY FLETCHER: Bear. Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm sure mammoths were probably pretty gangster back in the day, but you're trying to make your way from something, but today it's just that chronic low grade stress, just that angst. Social media's contributed to so much to that as well.

EMILY FLETCHER: Especially with our kids.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, oh my goodness. And we see it in the data. It's there, it's happening. But also just the world that we live in, which you could talk a little bit more about as well, it's just like we live in a totally different environment with all the different radio waves and all the different things that our DNA is experiencing.

EMILY FLETCHER: I think a lot... And I'm sure you know better than anybody about this, but even our food, it's like to eat a mango in the winter time in North America is like... There are no mangoes hanging out in New York State in the winter, and so even though I'm like, "Oh, I'm enjoying this mango," that costs your body something. To microwave food costs your body something. That is not natural. To take a plane, it's not natural, that costs your body something. And so any light in the middle of the night is not natural, it costs your body something. Even a road trip. So all of those things that I just mentioned are burning up what I would call

"adaptation energy." And when you run out of adaptation energy and then you have another demand, the body will launch into fight or flight, whether you've read "Eat, Pray, Love" or not, whether you've read "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" or not. And so the thing is, we don't act in accordance to what we know, we act in accordance with the baseline level of stress in our nervous systems. And so we're constantly taxing it, even in small ways, "Oh, just 10 minutes of social media here. Oh, just 20 more minutes of watching the news there. Oh, I'll just eat this one cheat meal. I'll just have these few cocktails. Oh, I'll just..."

We don't even realize the load that we're under and what that's costing us, and then we're like at an 8.5, just our baseline of stress, and you get some bad news or a pandemic hits, or you're homeschooling your kid while you're working, and then you're red-lining. And then you have no room to adapt. And that's where a lot of folks are finding themselves right now, where they've got loneliness. We know loneliness is worse for us than smoking, physiologically. And so I think we have to be very serious about the long tail psychological and emotional impacts of this collective global change that we've all been through. And even if tomorrow we all woke up and it was "back to normal," which there's only a new world, we're only evolving forward. But let's say we could hang out, where everything's all just dandy tomorrow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Peachy keen.

EMILY FLETCHER: Peachy keen. We're still going to have to deal with what's in ourselves and what we've all transitioned through, especially for kids.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and that's exactly what I want to ask you about, because our kids are really born into it. So much more abnormal behavior, and circumstances, and environment that really our genes have not experienced throughout our evolution. We're just born into it. Babies, they're like three months old and they could fiddle with an iPhone, learn how to get to... So it's very different. So I want to ask you these techniques that you've developed, and again, so many of my friends who are... They're incredibly influential with millions of people that they're impacting, utilize you and your teachings and your resources. Can this be effective with our kids as well?

EMILY FLETCHER: Yep, it sure can. I'm so happy to report that it can, 'cause it's a real experiment. I've been working on Ziva Kids for the past two years, and you don't really know when you do something new. I actually created the world's first online meditation training back in 2013, it was before Headspace, it was before Oprah Chopra, and I didn't know if it would work or not. It was just an experiment. It turns out it can. Turns out... I still think teaching face-to-face is optimal when possible, but you can just reach so many more people online. But anyway, good news is we just launched Ziva Kids and people are loving it. The joy explosion that I didn't know my heart needed is just waking up to parents posting videos of their kids

shaking off their negative feelings, or sitting down and meditating, or falling in love with my costar, Z Bunny. And I guess the best news is really when parents are like, "My kid is actually meditating." Like, "We finished the training, and now my kid is meditating?" Like they can't believe it, and that feels really exciting.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's amazing. You actually brought on... And you didn't just make an online program. So first of all, having this resource at this time in human history come about, it's not an accident, it's incredibly valuable and important, but just moving forward to have this as a resource, number one, but number two, you got folks from like Sesame Street, like freaking... Can you talk about the quality of this... Harvard, to put this together, it is unbelievable.

EMILY FLETCHER: Thank you, thank you for checking it out. So yeah, I started two years ago, I had no idea we were going to be in a pandemic. I had no idea kids would be homeschooled. I had no idea kids were not going to be able to be with each other, or play sports, or see people's faces, or any of that when we started, but I just knew it was our number one most requested course. The parents were like, "I want to share this with my kids. I want my kids to experience this." Or just selfishly, they're like, "I don't have time to meditate my kid's like hitting me on the head with a pillow. Can you teach them how to meditate so we could do it together?" And so we started... The first call I made was to one of my students named Jake, and he was a puppeteer at Sesame Street. And we started brainstorming, he's like, "I would love to be the puppeteer." I said "Great." And then he put me in touch with a puppet builder from Sesame Street. They put me in touch with a writer from Sesame Street. And then I met a mindful youth educator from Harvard who specializes in Eastern practices.

And then I brought on Dr. Shefali, who's Oprah's parenting expert. Many child psychologists... So every single word of every sentence of every episode has been vetted by doctors and psychologists and childhood entertainment experts. And it was a really fun time for me to bring my Broadway background to the forefront, so it was just high kicks and fart jokes. And here's the way to a five-year-old's heart, I've learned, it's very scientific, more butt jokes. All you got to do is talk about butts, and then next, you're in.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We honestly, all of... Not just for kids, all... My wife, myself, and my nine-year-old son, we were just, this morning, we were just giggling like little babies, just with the shake the booty part.

EMILY FLETCHER: It's fun.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it's fun and it's also... There's an essence to it. There's a point. There's a practical application. Let me share what my son said after, because we did, we

checked out some of the... Because there's a segment for younger kids. You were born for this. This is true. Because of your background, as I was watching this, I was like, "This is unbelievable. This is actually unbelievable." And you're speaking a language, when we're talking about the younger group, there's a course for younger kids, there's a group for kids there, I believe, nine and up, nine to 14.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah. So, the whole course is four to 14, and there's a younger one, four to eight, and that's where Z Bunny is really prevalent. He's my adorable puppet CoStar. And then there's one for nine to 14-year-olds. Or we use more other pre-teens, we talk more about the science, about the social pressures that they're under.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you're also even speaking their language like, "Hey, I know some of you guys are interested in this, some of you, your parents just want you to do this." But you actually are looking through their lens, speaking in a different tone, a different language, a different cadence it's amazing.

EMILY FLETCHER: I wear really cool leather jacket. I was like, "Look how cool I am. I'm not an old mom, I'm hip, I'm cool."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Sandy. So my son, after he did the session for the older kids, he's nine years old, so the nine to 14, he said this today, he came into the kitchen because I was just getting some stuff together, and he was in the other room doing it along with my wife, he came and he said, quote, and I quote, "That meditation made me feel really happy."

EMILY FLETCHER: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So it's incredible.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah. It's that simple, right? We meditate to get good at life, not to get good at meditation. So if you feel happier on the other side, guess what? You're going to make better decisions, you're going to make better friends, you're going to enjoy your life more, which is why we're freaking here, that's why we're on the planet to have as much fun as possible.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well, I want to talk more about some of these epidemic issues that are going on with our kids and also dive a little bit deeper on some solutions. And we're going to do that right after this quick break. Sit tight, we'll be right back.

There's a huge wave taking place right now with folks stepping up to try to find how to get a mental edge. There's never been more competition, there's never been more people vying for

attention and looking for creativity and performance and finding ways to really stand out. And so priming and optimizing brain health is truly the wave of the future right now, and for that folks are really tuning into this category of Nootropics. Nootropics are a category of supplements, drugs, other substances that can improve cognitive function, be it memory, executive function, motivation, things like that. But we wanna keep in mind that your brain is really operating on a system that has literally millions of years of evolution behind it. So throwing in a new smart drug that was created last week, might not be a good idea. So we wanna lean into what are some of the things that have historical use that are also clinically proven to be effective for optimizing and improving the function of our brain, we're talking about mental performance.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so for that, I want you to know about a study that was published in evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine. They found that, this little secret, listen in, raw honey possesses Nootropic effects such as memory-enhancing attributes, as well as neuro-pharmacological activities such as antidepressant activities and anxiolytic effects, so helping to reduce anxiety. I didn't know honey could do that. But listen to this, honey polyphenols are also directly involved in activities that help to reduce neuro inflammation. So we're talking about reducing inflammation in the brain. Now, this is another thing that has a parallel wave taking place with inflammation and disorders of inflammation taking place throughout our body, systemic inflammation, but also of the brain specifically, which is connected to issues like dementia and Alzheimer's, but also just poor mental performance. And so honey has that capability as well. But the key is raw honey, the study says, raw honey.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, with this, we need to be careful. We need to be mindful. And for me, this is why I look to Beekeeper's Naturals to get my honey because they're dedicated to sustainable bee practices, beekeeping, and also they have third-party testing for over 70 pesticide residues that are found in common bee products like honey bee pollen, and the list goes on and on. Now, some of those things that are in conventional honeys, include arsenic, lead, mercury, E Coli, not a good, not a good. So we want to bee-have and make sure that we get our honey. They have an incredible super food honey, they have a chill, B.Chill honey also that has hemp in the honey as well. But they have some incredible products that again, you're getting your medicine, you're getting your Nootropic benefits without the harmful stuff on the back side.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, if we're talking about Nootropics, this one specifically, you have to know about. There was a study published in Advanced Biomedical Research that found that royal jelly, royal jelly has the potential to improve spatial learning, attention and memory. Royal jelly. That's what the queen bee eats. It's exclusively the royal jelly. Alright, so this is taking honey, and this is super charging it. This is taking honey and doing a fast and furious with it. Alright, this is the Vin Diesel version. Now, royal jelly also has antimicrobial anti-tumor and

anti-inflammatory properties as well. And royal jelly has been found to facilitate the differentiation of all types of brain cells, so helping your brain to create the cells that it needs and to top it off, researchers in Japan recently discovered that royal jelly has the power to stimulate neurogenesis in the hippocampus. So this is the memory center of your brain, literally creating new brain cells. I'm telling you there are not many Nootropics out there that can do something like that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And the B.LXR product that Beekeeper's Naturals has is phenomenal. It's called B.LXR, L-X-R. Incredible. The basis is royal jelly, but they also have one of my all-time favorite things in there, bacopa. Now listen to this, a randomized double-blind placebo controlled human trial, gold standard of studies published in 2016 found that after just six weeks of use, bacopa significantly improved speed of visual information processing, learning rate, memory consolidation and even decreased anxiety in study participants. Try the B.LXR.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If you wanna boost your cognitive performance, is something for you to kick off your day to get focused. If you are about to go into a meeting or performance or study, or you just want to improve the function of your brain, reduce information, get your brain healthier, try the B.LXR. Go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model, you get 15% off everything they carry. Again, I'm a huge fan of the superfood honey, love the bee pollen, B.LXR, game changer. That's Beekeeper's Naturals. So that's B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-S naturals.com/model for 50% off, and now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright, we're back, and we're talking with Emily Fletcher, bestselling author and founder of Ziva Meditation and now Ziva Kids, which is phenomenal. And before the break, I alluded to something that for me, this is a big reason why I do the work that I'm doing. I don't talk about it as often, but it's a tenet, it's a foundational thing, it's a modus operandi, I care very much about our children because I know that really changing the world, a big part of that is just raising better humans. There's so many different issues. Hurt people, hurt people.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so just creating atmospheres where kids have access. I did some terrible things when I was a kid. I grew up in an atmosphere that we were taught to solve our problems with violence, and so that's how I approached life. And for me, it's about exposure. If I would have known, once my mother-in-law, who at that point she'd been teaching meditation for maybe 40 years or...

EMILY FLETCHER: Your mother-in-law taught meditation for 40 years.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Or something like that. 30 years at that point.

EMILY FLETCHER: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And once she took me through that first meditation, it changed everything, literally it changed my life, more so than any other thing that I've done.

EMILY FLETCHER: Me too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so I have such a connection to that, but I didn't know it was a thing, I didn't know it existed. I was having thoughts my whole life, but I identified with them, I was attached to them. I didn't realize that there was something beyond that. And so for our children...

EMILY FLETCHER: How old were you?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I was maybe 26, 25.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah. I was like 27.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. But it changed every... It was actually a time... I had to learn how to live again, in a sense, because...

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah. You're running a one-legged race your whole life.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

EMILY FLETCHER: Now, you got to figure how to use both hemispheres of your brain.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right, so Forest Gump felt so real. I had to run up out of those braces, man. And now then once I got out of the braces, I realized that I can create my life, I realized that I can create my thoughts, create the way that I want to feel. We are so powerful. And everybody listening you can get to that place if you're not already there, and these moments, these conversations, these tools are there to help us get there. So I want to talk about this overlooked epidemic right now of kids really being trained and inundated to suppress their feelings in a sense. And we talk about, "Hey, you should talk about it, reach out to a friend." There's another dimension that's really the overarching kind of thing that's being forced upon kids. Can you talk about that a little bit?

EMILY FLETCHER: 1000%. This is the exact reason why I made Ziva Kids, because most of us have been trained since infancy to not feel our feelings. And our parents didn't even know they were doing it. We don't even know we're doing it. It's real insidious. We were just like, "Sh, don't cry. Have a bottle. Sh, don't cry. Have a toy. Sh, don't cry, have an iPad, have some Facebook, have some wine, have some booze, have some pills, have some pot." And then the next thing you know, we have an opioid epidemic. Next thing you know, we have 40% of American adult women on anti-anxiety or anti-depressants, and this is not to be a judgment call against that, there's some really good use cases for medicine, and lots of people meditate and use medicine, but I don't think that 40% of adult women have a Zoloft deficiency. I think that we have not been trained how to feel our feelings. And now that I'm a mother, I get it. I get how painful it is to see your kid suffering. I get how painful it's to see your child in pain. And so, of course, your first instinct is to try and stop it, to try and comfort it. But unfortunately, the way that we comfort it is often by repressing.

And you notice, if someone falls down what do you say? "You're fine, you're fine, you're good." And it's like, what if they're not fine? They're bleeding and they're terrified and they're in pain. Do you call that fine? Let them have their experience. Let's be honest. Let's be curious. Let's narrate the reality of the situation. 'You fell down. You're bleeding. Was it scary? Did it hurt?' Let's find out, let's make ourselves as adults and parents resilient enough so that we can hold space for our children to feel whatever it is that they're feeling. And that's not to excuse bad behavior, that's not to excuse irresponsibility or meanness. But you can be angry and not mean, you can be sad and still do your chores. And so I think that we as adults and certainly as parents have to develop the emotional fortitude that it takes to, and pardon this overused phrase, hold space for the bigness of our children's emotions.

And I didn't actually know what that term 'hold space' meant fully until a friend of mine... I've been going through a very challenging time these past few months, even on top of the pandemic, and I have a friend who has done extraordinary amount of work on herself and has the capacity to see and feel me. She just said, "How are you doing?" I think something in my body knew that she could hold the bigness of my sadness, and I just started sobbing, crying. And she just crawled behind me and wrapped her arms around me and her legs around me, and she was like, "Just lean in." She's like, "Feel all of it, feel all of it, Emily, feel all of it." And then when she felt like that had cleared, she said, "You know? What if we meet this pain with love that is even greater?" And it was such a masterful way to help me through that catharsis. I was like, what if we could do that for our children? Instead of just like, "You're fine, you're fine, you're fine." And that's often because we are hanging on by a thread. So if we develop our own meditation practice, we get out of fight or flight ourselves, then it's like, "Yes, you're sad right now, yes, you're angry right now, but I can sit in this with you."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's so powerful. Recently, just to reiterate this point, because what you're saying, this is backed by so much solid science, we just had on Dr. Caroline Leaf, and she talked about how truly we are storing these experiences in our body and repressing our experiences is one of the leading ways that's contributing to our deaths of despair, higher rates of chronic illnesses, mental health issues, the list goes on and on. Is being able to process our experiences. When we are really taught to just get over it.

And of course, there have been many times... I've got three kids, many times through their development where I just want them to get back to the vibe. You might again, fall down, you're alright, that kind of thing. But there's also been times where I'm just allowing it to process. This doesn't mean I'm like, "I'm out. Figure it out." But sometimes there are cases where I do create a situation. And I think, there's this term like conscious parenting, where I do say "figure it out", instead of always trying to fix the problem for somebody, allowing them to figure something out themselves, allowing them to lift themselves up in certain dimensions. Now, we're not talking about your kid gets hurt and you just leave them there on the curve and you drive off. We're talking about just allowing more processing but that's more of like a really visceral experience, but just in the day-to-day. If there's an upset-ness, like something happens in class, something happens with in a communication with a teacher, I'm very... I feel it, I feel a pull to problem-solve whenever my little guy's upset, especially I've become more sensitive as time is going on as well. Now, these Disney movies, I just watched... We just watched Raya and the Dragon. At the end of the movie, I'm over there, I got a lump in my... I'm just looking over. Everybody's cool. I'm just like ooh.

EMILY FLETCHER: So would it give... And so just to push this one step further, what if you let it out? Like what if you let that lump in your throat actually be tears.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm right there.

EMILY FLETCHER: Okay, good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If it's going to come, it's going to come.

EMILY FLETCHER: Okay, good. 'Cause then what a beautiful model to give to your children. And I'm not suggesting that we have to be perfect parents. I'm suggesting that you can actually be exactly where you are and model by example, like "Mommy's feeling sad today." "Daddy, I feel angry." You can again be angry without being mean, and so if they see you processing and experiencing the full range of your emotions and that feeling safe to them, and they will feel more safe inside of themselves to feel the full spectrum of their emotions. And so the way that we illustrate this inside of Ziva Kids is actually with these puppets called the stormies. So there's the mad stormy and the sad stormy, and the scared stormy, 'cause really at the end of

the day we're either like mad, scared or sad. And so Z Bunny is training to be a superhero, like you said, these tools are here to unlock the superpowers inside of us. And so as he's training to be a super hero, he comes up with these challenges that bring up these big emotions. And then I teach him tools that help him to move through those emotions so that he can move towards his goal.

And I'll share a little secret, when I did the first beta test, like a year and a half ago, I made the stormies, but they were stress monsters, and I released it. I wrote it, shot it, released it to a small audience and I was like, "Oh no, what have I done?" 'Cause kids are so literal. I don't want them to think that their emotions are monsters. I don't think that they are monsters for having these feelings. It's the opposite of what I want to do with this course. And that's why you beta-test everybody. And so then they became the stormies, which is like that Maya Angelou quote, "Every storm runs out of rain, even on a cloudy day, the sun is still shining inside of you, even when you're feeling big feelings, you are still 24-hour-a day bliss. That is your birthright."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. I'm just going to melt into that for a minute. Wow. You said something earlier that it's going to strike us different ways. If you haven't cultivated the skill of doing this it can also sound a little bit like, "I don't want to do it," as well, which is surrender. You said that, my tendency through my life, I was really taught to be aggressive, to grab hold of things and to fight. So for me, surrender, the surface level concept of it, it's very like I don't want to let go. Are you kidding me?

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah, it doesn't feel safe, or feels weak.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But there's a difference in what that really means. Can you talk about that?

EMILY FLETCHER: To me, surrendering does not mean giving up, it means trusting that nature has more information than we do. It's actually a huge act of reverence. And if you're going through life thinking that you have all of the answers and you have to do everything by yourself, one, it's wrong, two, it's not sustainable, and three, it's not fun.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Those three.

EMILY FLETCHER: So stop doing that. We have a whole other hemisphere of our brain, the right hemisphere of our brain is all about surrender, connection, intuition, is where we get our downloads, it's where creativity is whispering to us. And because most of us have been using our left brain for so long, "I got to do it myself. Think, take action, achieve, make money, so we could be happy in the future," because most of us have been in survival because we didn't feel safe enough to feel our feelings, and then meanwhile we've got this whole reservoir of joy and

magic available to us, but many of us have not been taught the skill of how to access it, or how to take that right brain to the gym, and that's why meditation is so powerful. Because yes, you start to access it in the sitting, but then over time you start to increase neuroplasticity, that corpus callosum thickens, the whole machine starts to fire as it was designed, and then you start feeling this flow, this serendipity like, "Oh, nature does have my back. Oh, I thought about someone and they called." Oh, I show up on Shawn's doorstep and there's a box that says, everyday magic. And I was like, "Oh, that is right. I am an everyday magic."

And it's just that... When you just get that little extra pep in your step, that extra little high five that wink from nature that to me is when your whole brain is firing as nature designed. We were not designed to be sick, stupid and tired all the time. That would be mean. And nature is not mean.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that is powerful. That's so powerful. So this really is a good segue into something else that you've been... You literally, I've just heard about you doing this first-hand, even being here with me right now, this part of manifestation, and I've had this conversation in different dimensions on the show a few times, but I really don't think we get it, we do not really get how powerful we are. We do not really get that. Now, this is nuance here as well, we know nothing, we know nothing. We think that our lives are so solid and it's just like seeing is believing, and I'm a scientist, so I really operate in that domain, that's my tendency, but there is a, there's an aspect of life that we even have science on now as well, in how we're connected to things and how like the phantom DNA experiment and how human DNA literally affects the things that make up life around us in the bio-photons. We affect the environment around us, just with our thoughts, just with our being. It's happening automatically whether you realize it or not. And so you're constantly manifesting, but that term can throw people off, but you're constantly doing it all the time. It will shock you how quickly things can happen in your life when you actually do what Emily is about to tell you to do.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah, so you're right, that term manifesting gets a little, people will roll their eyes. They're like, "Oh, you want me to just watch The Secret and manifest my dreams? I have a job, thanks." But the reality is, just like you said, we're manifesting all day, every day. You want to know what you're manifesting? Take a look around your life. How's your relationship? How's your bank account? How's your health? How's your body? Your current situation is a by-product of everything you've been thinking, acting and believing your whole life. And interestingly, fascinatingly, our thoughts and actions and beliefs are mutable. We are not 100% a victim to our past or to our genetics or even to nature. And where this becomes perhaps seemingly antithetical to what we were just talking about, it is a two-way street, meaning that we can manifest, we do have some say in the story, and we have to surrender. And the way I like to... The way I personally reconcile that is that it's 50-50. Look at a human

brain, it's 50% left brain, individuality, 50% right brain, totality. And so it's not meant to be just you. It's not meant to be just nature, it's a relationship. And in any good relationship, you have to talk and you have to listen. They say that prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening.

And so that's why the Ziva technique it's like mindfulness, which is like, alright, let's just CTFO, and let's just bring it into the here and now, then we'll meditate, then we'll surrender, then we'll actually get into the space where we can access source energy and hear that intuition, hear those whispers from nature. And then in the manifesting piece, all I teach people to do, it's ridiculously simple. I just say, "Hey, after your meditation, ask this question, what would I love right now?" Real Simple. No one's doing it. People are asking, "What do I need? What do I want? Let's go to their Instagram. What's going to make me more money? What's going to give me girls? What's going to give me..." "And it's like all of that is lack, a lot of that is ego versus "What would I love?" That's spirit. That's a possibility. That's present moment. That's listening. And when you ask that question from that de-excited Space, and also when you've just flooded your brain and body with dopamine and serotonin and you're already feeling good, which PS is the whole secret and point of manifesting, it's about how good can you feel right now because the better, you feel right now, one, the better decisions you're going to make, and two the higher quality things you're going to attract because we are in fact impacting everything around us just by our state of being.

As you start to combine that with a very specific order, which I... Look, I would say that you're placing your order with the cosmic waitress at the cosmic restaurant, you want to talk science, it's that you're programming a reticular activating system, which is the RAS, which is the bundle of nerves at the... Sorry, the bundle of neurons at the base of your brain, which is really the brain's filtration device, and so because at any given moment, we have hundreds of millions of potential input available to us and the brain cannot process that much, we have to filter some of it out, and this is where the combination of meditation and manifesting becomes so much more powerful than either one alone, because if you're in a state of fight or flight, your reticular activating has to filter out for potentially life-threatening situations.

And if you're perceiving everyone and everything as if they're out to get you, then you have very little room left for your dreams. So you get out of fight or flight, first you get in to stay and play, and then you take the time and the discipline of asking what it is that you actually want. Then you're teaching your brain what to look for and what to filter out.

And the thing is, it's always there, all your magic, all your miracles. It's all waiting for you. Nature is literally just asking you to open up your hand. But a lot of us, because we've been so scared our whole lives and we've had so much trauma and so much stress that the very thought and idea of surrendering, of letting go, of opening up our hands feels terrifying. But the reality is, where do you think your desires came from? Nature. Nature gave you your desires and

wants you to bring them into the manifest, because at the end of the day, we are all extensions of nature. You are the universe. The universe is you. And when you start to really get into your own heart and brain coherence, it's easier to get into coherence with other people, and it's easier to see the sort of unified collective thing that we're all dancing with each other and we can all help each other.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Fight or flight or stay in play. I want to stay in play, I hope everybody stays and plays with you. Can you please let everybody know where they can take advantage, oh my God, Ziva Kids program and also just all the other good stuff they can connect with you on.

EMILY FLETCHER: Yeah, so everything can be found at zivameditation.com. So it's kind of a weird word, but it's Z-I-V-A, it's a Sanskrit word that means bliss, So zivameditation.com, and there you can find the kids course. And I'd also love to give to everyone the first three days of Ziva online, 'cause a lot of folks might not have kids, so they can get that at zivameditation.com/preview, and that's just the first three days of our most popular adult training.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you for that, I appreciate it. Listen, this has been fantastic. I can't wait to talk with you more, and I appreciate you so much for making that decision. Like I said, you were really born for this, with Ziva kids, it was just... I could not believe how awesome it was, is was so awesome to watch and to just sit there and to giggle with my kids, and to also see the bigger picture and how much this resource is needed at a time like this, and also just for whatever the future has in store to have something like this. So thank you so much for taking the time and energy to create it. It is well worth it, and it's going to help a lot of people.

EMILY FLETCHER: Thank you for saying that, and thank you for your lifetime of work, for helping us all be healthier and happier and to sleep better. It's really a gift.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's my honor. Thank you so much, I appreciate you. Emily Fletcher, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. This is an incredibly important topic because truly, our lives are a result of the way that we think. I really remember my friend who's also been on the show many times, Eric Thomas or ET, the hip-hop preacher, number one motivational speaker in the world. Definitely check out any of his episodes here on Model Health Show, if you happen to miss any. They're all insightful and powerful, but I remember him saying it, and it can sound so harsh, it can sound so just gripping when he says this statement, but he said that your life is the way that it is because of the way that you think. And he was talking with people in the form of what they're struggling with and how their lives were not the way that they wanted them to be, and the fact that to articulate something like that can seem controversial. But our thoughts truly

determine our decisions and our decisions truly determine our actions that we take in the world.

It is rooted in our ability to think the thoughts that are serving to us, it is rooted in our ability to think the way that we want to think, that's in alignment with the way that we want our lives to be and the outcomes that we really want.

So are our thoughts in alignment with the life that we want to create? And we can make that happen. We're not a victim of our thoughts. We are the ones doing the thinking. But it seems like when you're trapped and caught all into those thoughts and you believe that you are those thoughts, it can become very difficult to change your thinking and thus change the way that you feel, and thus change your decisions and thus change your actions and your results in your life. But truly, these things are in our hands. No matter what we've been through, if we continue to think the way that we think our lives are going to continue to be the way that they are. And if we want change, we have to change the way that we are thinking, truly, I've been through tough circumstances. I've been through circumstances that man, most people would do anything possible to not go through, but my life has been transformed time and time again. There's a statement of being a twice born-er or even a thrice born-er. My life has been transformed over and over again, and it's been transformed by reforming and transforming of my mind. And that's what we all have possible.

But sometimes going to that next level, that next life, we want to bring the old thoughts and the old person with us, and it can seem uncomfortable thinking about that new reality. For that butterfly when they're in that cocoon, that caterpillar it's probably a little bit suspicious, it's probably uncomfortable, the same thing existing in that egg, the baby chick, existing in that egg, it's getting uncomfortable in there. But it's like a whole new world that's just waiting to be able to tap into and to experience. But because we outgrow this world and sometimes we try to fit our potential into these small containers, and especially when you get tapped into information like this, and you remember how powerful you are, that's what these messages are about, these are not... The fact that there's something outside of you that you're missing, it's reminding you of how powerful you are to effect change in your life and to change the world around you. That's what it's really about. You have it all within you already. And these are just reminders for you to access it. And I hope you got a lot of value out of this episode. If you did, please share it out with the people that you care about.

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