

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

**EPISODE 480**

## **Taking On The Psychological, Financial, & Social Fallout From COVID**

**With Guest Abel James**

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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 know you may feel like we're living in a virtual Game of Thrones right now, but I promise you, there are solutions. There's a lot going on in the world, but today's guest, we're going to really dive in and talk about some of the dynamics of what's happening, and also some of the things that we can start to do about it and to help usher and change.

Now, I just went for a walk in my youngest son the other day, he's just nine years old. His name is Braden. So we're going for a walk, and he says the most profound thing to me. He says that your body tells you if you like someone. Your brain doesn't tell you. You can't tell your brain to like someone. Your body tells you. And he's being in this state... When we're children, we know these things inherently. We are really tuned in to what feels right. We can consciously try to tell ourselves that something is acceptable, that something is okay, but we know it. We know it in our bodies. Unfortunately, today, we're so inundated with distraction.

We're so inundated with things that pull our attention away from how we really feel. And we can logically kind of talk ourselves into believing things that simply aren't true. And today's conversation, I'm hoping to help to guide us back inward to ask questions, to be more inquisitive, to pay attention to how we're feeling, and allow that to guide us to more helpful decisions moving forward. Now, obviously, a big part of being able to pay attention to that inner dialogue is just feeling good, is feeling healthy. And there are so many wonderful things that we have access to today. And there's also a lot of things that can throw off that communication.

There's a lot of garbage food that creates garbage communication for the cells in our bodies. And so for myself, I want to stack conditions in my favor. So things that are doing multiple things. So things that might be helping with digestion and helping with cognitive performance. Things that might be reducing inflammation and helping with energy. And one of those things that really hits on the note of immune system benefits of reducing inflammation, of energy, of also enhancing and improving digestion. Funny enough, again, it's been used for thousands of years, is honey. But not just any honey. Not that random Sugar Bear, pasteurized, homogenized, insecticide sprayed honey.

We're talking about the good stuff. Raw, high quality honey. As a matter of fact, the most incredible honey that I've ever had in my life, it's a superfood honey called B. Powered Superfood Honey. This is a honey that also has bee pollen, propolis, royal jelly, all combined together with the honey. Alright, this is that next level honey. Shout out to Mariah Carey.

And it's just like honey. Real love, come over me.

Now here's why this matters. A study published in Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine found that raw honey possesses nootropic benefits. So really helping our cognitive performance, specifically memory-enhancing effects. Also working as an anticonvulsant and anti-depressant as well. It's been noted to have these qualities too. Also honey polyphenols... So the antioxidant polyphenols are found specifically in honey, have been found to have apoptosis supporting activities for rogue brain cells. Or for helping brain cells that need to be ushered out of the way while supporting and reducing neuro inflammation.

Alright. So helping with that recycling process going on with brain cells and reducing inflammation specifically in the brain. That's pretty freaking amazing. Honey has that kind of power. So that's one thing. I love the B. Powered Superfood Honey from Beekeeper's Naturals. And also right now, one of my favorite vibes that I have after I'm done recording, especially if I'm doing hours of recording for different things, different interviews and things like that, I pop in one of the B. Soothed Honey Lozenges.

Alright, these lozenges have this super food honey that we just talked about, plus propolis, Zinc and Vitamin D3. And if you listened recently to the D3 master class, the Vitamin D master class that we just did at The Model Health Show, you know how important these things are for our immune system. So getting rid of the lozenges that have all these kind of crazy ingredients and sugar and all that stuff. All natural ingredients, all designed to enhance immune system function. Now, the key is that Beekeeper's Naturals honey products, they go above and beyond. They're actually doing third party testing for over 70 common pesticide residues that are found in a lot of bee products.

Also testing for some of the most offensive contaminants like DDT, arsenic, lead, heavy metals and making sure that none of that stuff is coming along with the goodies that you're trying to get. So highly, highly recommend, to pop over there, grab yourself some super food, honey. And definitely check out the new B. Soothed Honey Lozenges. One of my favorite vibes right now. Go to [beekeepersnaturals.com/model](http://beekeepersnaturals.com/model). You get 15% off everything. That's B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-Snaturals.com/model for 15% off.

And now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

**ITUNES REVIEW:** Another five-star review titled “thank you” by head pasta. “I love learning from you. This podcast is real world, amazing new information that is provided in an excellent format of excitement for health and wellness. You make us laugh and want to keep learning more. Thank you.”

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple Podcast. I appreciate it so much. And if you're yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for The Model Health Show. It means so much. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Today's guest is Abel James, and he's a New York Times best-selling author, musician, online coach, and creator, and host of the award-winning Fat-Burning Man Show. And on this episode, we're going to be talking about the negativity bias of the human brain and why that matters right now and paying attention to that. Also, we're going to talk about the need to keep our eyes on the financial ramifications of the past year, specific things that we can do right now to improve our health and creative ways, and so much more. So let's jump into this conversation with my good friend, Abel James. Abel James, my brother the legend. Welcome back to the show.

**ABEL JAMES:** It's an honor to be here Shawn. Thanks for having me man.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** First question, right out of the gate, what is the number one health issue that you feel we're actually facing right now?

**ABEL JAMES:** I thought things were getting better. We both started our health online thing around a decade ago. And for a minute there, I felt like things were really getting better, and now you look around, you look at the numbers, and it's grim. Even... I was reading 43% of people over the last year have gained something around 30 pounds on average, which is... Talk about things getting worse, going in the wrong direction. Yet it's barely part of the conversation. The obesity and associated metabolic dysfunction and disease is one of the biggest widespread issues in the States and now across the world, but it's just little peeps here and there. Thankfully with people like you really driving that conversation, man.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, you said it. We've been in this space for quite some time and really creating a shift in the conversation. And now there's this new phenomenon coming about... And people are calling it COVID-19 pounds, that folks are picking up and all these little catchy things. But this is serious business and one of the biggest underlying issues in susceptibility is our underlying health issues. So what do you feel needs to get a little bit more attention right now to help to really make a shift. Because I think you feel the same way. This is also... Even though it's insanity, it's also presenting an opportunity.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, it is. And fortunately, the actual answers and how they show up in your life in terms of results are pretty simple and straightforward. So if you're willing to do the work, which I know you are... And sometimes we follow the wrong rules or the wrong dogma for a while. You follow it hard enough and you get broken, you get sick. So now, hopefully people can find... What I encourage people to do instead of following social media accounts and news

websites, follow people. Follow people who do deep dives into the work, and they will... Oftentimes, I've found, I know you have as well, share many, many daily practices, share many principles like hydration, proper sleep, the boring ones.

The boring ones that people want to skip over 'cause they're so easy, they could never possibly work. But if you do those things, if you move every day, you hydrate, you sleep, and you keep your nutrition in check, then you're... Generally speaking, you're going to be doing really well. But one thing that I'm happy to see happening is more focused on bio-individuality and personalized medicine, looking at people individually in their circumstances, and then paying attention to their nutrition. And then paying attention to their movement and dialing a little deeper. 'Cause general advice and these simple principles do work, but the minutiae is where people get all hung up. And there's a lot there, but try to just focus on the simple daily practices, and you're going to be doing the work and getting the results over time.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** You just said something so powerful, and I love this already. You said that these things are not sexy. And that's... The thing is, sleep is not as sexy as shots. It's just. It just isn't.

**ABEL JAMES:** Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But the data... We've got mountains, mountains of data... Literally hundreds of peer-reviewed studies about the effect that sleep has on regulating our immune system. One of them was conducted by researchers at the Mayo Clinic. And they found that just one night of sleep deprivation radically increases your risk of contracting a virus, if you're exposed to one... So it increases your susceptibility, but yet, if we had that level of marketing... I opened up my social media account to Instagram the other day, and it was this big ad right at the top to find out where to get your shot. And this isn't a conversation about that piece of it, but just the initiative behind it.

I've never seen so much of a push for something... A social push, yet the things that are really sustainable and that are proven... Because this is a conversation too that we can get into about that, that we don't really know the outcome from that, but we do know the outcome from encouraging folks to get better sleep and giving them strategies to do it.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, but then it's a matter of doing that work, not once... Not once. So I... I used to... In college, I taught guitar for a few years. And it was super interesting because the adults would come in they'd pay me money and then they'd be like, "Why am I not getting better?" Like every week, they'd pay me 50 bucks or whatever it was. They'd come in and then they're like, "Why am I not getting better?" The kids though, the ones with the little bowl cuts, even if they're five years old, they'd come in, and they'd get better every single week, 'cause they

picked up the guitar every day. They didn't have some sort of transactional feeling about health or about medicine or about music, where it was like, I pay money and I get results.

No, little kids know that you have to do the work, you have to actually show up viscerally every day and do these things. And that's what really matters. And then the more fancy, shmancy stuff and all the gadgets, those are really... They become super optional when you do the small things... Or the small things over time that really add up, that only feel small, 'cause you do them every day.

Like I forget... People ask me my morning routine on podcasts all the time. It's one of the hot questions. And I forget because these things have become so automatic that drinking a big old glass of water when I wake up. It's just something I do. I don't even think about it, and that's where you want to be. In terms of health, you don't want to be over thinking these things and going to news websites and being like, "Oh my God, this article just changed my entire view of health." You don't want to be there every day. You want to be doing the right things that our grandparents were doing too.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right, that's the thing too, man. Thank you so much for saying that, because right now we're really... Inundated isn't even a strong enough word for all the data...

**ABEL JAMES:** No.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That we're exposed to. And it's a lot it is just trying to flare up and make things that are not necessarily, very sexy. And these things are cool. There are so many great advancements in technology and this term bio-hacking, but that's like the 5%. Like the 95% is where the real change happens. And so we... I want to talk about the next upcoming stuff, but we don't even have this piece handled. We don't even have just go to sleep handled yet. And just don't go that drive-through. So we're still working on that, but there's been this shift that's taken place recently that...

Even prior to all of this stuff happening, I had this kind of... And the same thing with you, we were recommending folks like, "Let's back away from the fast food, the drive-through window." They're not serving up appropriate food. But then I saw the data about 84 million Americans get fast food every day. And I was definitely in that number.

**ABEL JAMES:** Everyday.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Everyday.

**ABEL JAMES:** Everyday.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And so I'm like, "Am I fighting a losing battle here?" Whereas, what can we do to maybe change the ingredients that they carry there. What can we do to make it... Since people are going there anyways to make that better and make it a better option. But now since these shutdowns and the crazy thing... And I want to hear your opinion on this, hundreds of thousands, potentially millions of small businesses had to shut their doors and hundreds of thousands potentially, right now, I've got data that they might not ever re-open. But yet, McDonald's got to stay open. You understand what I'm saying? So can you talk about that paradigm, because for me, it's just very shocking to see something like that manifest.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, I remember driving, in kind of the middle... In the midst of this whole pandemic thing from Colorado down in Arizona to visit my wife's family and went through New Mexico and a few other states, there and back. And I noticed that all of the local international restaurants, the Mom-and-Pops, the Mexican restaurants, the ones that featured their local cuisine in general, all forced to close... All the stools are up and just... And a lot of them had snarky little messages on the outside. Like, we were forced to shut down, we didn't want to do this. To talk to your governor. All of this stuff. But driving by Taco Bell, McDonald's, something I didn't realize had happened where all of that traffic.

All of that food that would have gone to the... Or all that business that would have gone to the Mom-and-Pops instead went to 10 plus cars... A dozen cars easy, maybe two dozen cars lined up at Taco Bell, at McDonalds, at Burger King. And just looking around this whole drive, seeing that over and over and over again. And it's hard not to get bummed out about that. And I think one of the things that keeps me going is that as hard as it is to run a small business... And we've tried many projects over the years and lost our pants many times is that oftentimes, they weren't working... They weren't that profitable to begin with. And even if it was a great business and you were doing a good service to the world and your local community, there's a way to do it again.

With bands, there's a life span, and I see like most of our businesses as like running a band, 'cause I just... I've always loved the small and nimble type thing, but there's always a life span. It's not a forever thing. And if there's a way for you to come back with a more nimble business, with something that... Cut out the fat, so to speak, where you really focus on, "Okay, what are... "You take a step back. What is the world that we're looking at now? It has changed, people have changed, they've gotten sicker, even. They've gotten more vulnerable to any disease that's coming. They've gotten more overweight and they're eating worse too.

So there are a lot of people ricocheting back from that, who realize that they're in a bad spot and they don't want to be there. It's not sustainable. They thought this was going to be a temporary thing, like many of us did just two weeks... And now we're realizing that we have to



actually adapt and make some serious changes. So for anyone who's out there who has an idea about business... I think it is about to be one of the best times to start something that people really need. You just need to be strategic about it and be really careful with your cash going out. Try to do it small and with passion, and with sweat equity, and that'll get you through almost anything.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, I love that again, the reframing of the opportunity right now. But you're also bringing up something that I'm so grateful to talk to you about because you know something about this dynamic. But I don't think a lot of people are paying much attention to what's happening with our financial systems right now. And the fact that the government is literally just able to just print money, like there's not going to be any kind of ramifications. And also being able to use that money in unethical ways. So can you talk about any insights that you have regarding that side of things, and a lot of folks... We're just... Most folks are just trying to be able to just go outside and go to the park or see their grandmother. But there's a whole thing going on with our financial systems that we need to talk about.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah. It would be really nice to have your own money printing machine like some people do. But one thing I realized in this whole past year, especially, is that we do not. The little people like us do not have our own money printing machines, but pretty much every other currency at some level does. Pretty much every other fiat currency. And so if you're trying to work for and save in dollars, even from a business perspective, it's about to get really hairy. Roughly half the money out there has been printed in the past a year. The numbers are so ridiculous. Who knows how transparent they are. But the people who are managing all of this can't even count to a trillion.

They don't know what they're even doing. It's so ridiculous and over the edge that you know the chickens will come home to roost at some point. And this is not the first time a financial breakdown has happened. I would encourage a lot of people just to go out there and look at the books of the history of the Fed, the financial system, and you'll realize that the dollar, while it used to be based on something real. Depending on how you feel about mining and metals, that doesn't even matter. Some things have inherent value and other things don't. And the dollar or other currencies that are printed in fiat are becoming increasingly worthless, so that is going to be...

A lot of people realize, who have had relationship distress, that money does affect our health, it does affect our relationships, and if you're putting all of your eggs in the wrong basket that's going to be trouble for a lot of people. So once again, staying small and nimble and then trying to diversify cash flow in your own life from different things, trying to find ways where you can offer your service to other people and they can provide value to you back and forth.



It doesn't have to be overly taxed or overly bureaucratic. I think if a lot of people, especially for us living in a small community in rural Colorado, it's not the government that's saving us out here, they're just taking half of everything, or they own half of it, and then printing our savings into oblivion. So this will become a huge health problem to the people who don't have their eyes on that part of their life. And I think it's so important, and I know Shawn, you speak about this as well, to view your whole life as your health, to view health holistically.

You can't just say, "Alright, I'm just going to ignore finances and the rest of my health will be fine." That eventually will not work out for you, so you have to talk about your financial health as well. And as rough as it is, I do believe that there are a lot of different opportunities popping up, and more just excited people reaching out. Like I've had so many people, just like a half dozen in the past couple weeks, and this does not usually happen, who are just like, "Abel, I want to join your team. I want to work with you, I'll do it for free." And I'm like, "Where are these people coming from? This is amazing. We don't usually do this, but yeah let's find a way to build our way out of this." I think this is how we're going to save each other and ourselves, is by honoring each other's strengths, working collaboratively, and then building our way out of this, from the bottom up, not the top down.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, and humans are good at that.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, that's what we do.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But the crazy thing is we've been put into this situation where we're being forced to, because we've gotten away from it. Our education system is really designed to make us good employees. So that thought process... Like when I got started in this field it was still very sketchy of whether or not I'm being "entrepreneur" I'm doing my own thing, I'm creating my own thing. I didn't even see it as creating a business, but just like "I just want to help people. I want to help people."

I was "talking to this girl" dating this girl, and this was before... A whole lifetime before I my wife. No disrespect, baby, if you're listening to this. Way before. And I had made this shift, because when I met her I had this job, this just... Working at a stadium while I was in college, and once I started focusing on health and wellness and got so excited about that and wanted to tell everybody, help everybody that I could, and I was like, "I'm going to be a strength and conditioning coach, I'm working on that now." And so when I told her that that's what I'm doing, 'cause he was like, "Oh, how's your job going at the stadium?" I'm like, "I don't do that anymore. I'm working with people in the gym."

She was like, "Oh, so you have a hobby." And I'm just like, "Well, no." But that didn't last very long, by the way. Maybe... Our "talking" ended about a week from there. But anyways, this

paradigm has really shifted, where a lot of folks are now able to tune in to what they're passionate about and to create something, even create a livelihood out of... Even through our phone, Abel. Right here people are creating wealth and creating sustainable livelihoods, taking care of their finances and their family right through this phone.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, and it was really hard and technical to start up websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, certainly just a few years ago. Now I hope people realize that anyone really can do it. Back then anyone kind of could do it, if you had the computers and the technical... And if you wanted to slam your head against the computer for hours every day trying to make this crap work, you could do it.

But now everyone can, whether you're a kid, if you're in your 80s, you can spread the word about things you care about. And yeah, there is shadow banning and censorship and the conversation is silenced or inflated on other sides, and inflammatory with paid trolls all over the place. So watch out for all of that. But through it all, there are real people on the other end and there are communities to find, and alternative platforms coming up. And one of the things I think that's really going to be affecting the internet and the conversations in the next few years, maybe even the next few months, is the decentralization of the Internet and data, and the way that media is going to be transmitted and consumed such that if it's decentralized and it's running on a block chain or has cryptocurrency tokens baked in, it's just going to win compared to the totally dystopian, censored, dry, deflated joy-less social media networks that exist right now, it's just... They took the fun out of it. So I think there's going to be a lot of fun coming. We just have to look for it.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Man, that's powerful. That's powerful. You know, I think that... And I don't want this to miss this piece, earlier when you're talking about the change happening in our financial systems it reminded me, I just watched this movie after... And it's kind of pretty old at this point, but it's with Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling, The Big Short.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, good one.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Have you seen that, right? So it's a great movie, and it's a lot of true events that came into making this. And at the end of it, those folks who were in power got away. They got away with duping the entire American economy, essentially. And the point that I want to bring up and ask you about is that these are the same people making the decisions right now. And so folks, we can literally make a movie about it, we watch it, "Oh, this is a great movie." No, that's life, that's what's happening right now, and it's happening again and again and again.

And these are the same folks that a lot of people are outsourcing as far as paying attention to what the media is saying, as far as the mandates and policies being pressed through with our government, for example. That's what's really controlling this, and so my point is, are you surprised to see how many people that seem to be very rational, free-thinking individuals are really just jumping whole-heartedly, buying into the popular narrative that's happening right now?

**ABEL JAMES:** Yes, but some of my background is in psychology and studying the brain, and one of the things you learn is that we're running on autopilot. 95% of the stuff that's happening with you is happening without you realizing it, and when you're in a state of fear, especially a perpetual state of fear, you cannot think rationally in the same way that you can when you're in a different brain state.

Your physiology is different, you cannot process emotions and data the same way that you can when you're not in that fear state. So anyway, we have been conditioned to be in a fear state for over a year now, from all sorts of different directions, and there are a few different articles I've read about how if you look across the different countries over the past year with the pandemic and all this, it's been about 50-50, good news, bad news.

In America though, the media environment puts out 90% bad news. So when you are being conditioned, it's like we don't realize that those little ads that are following us around the internet, like, "Buy this mask, or buy this hat." Or the billboard that you're driving down the highway and just catches the corner of your eye, it's like, "Buy a Big Mac." It's red. Or, "You're not a man if you don't buy this jewel for your wife." These things affect us, and they are something that we wouldn't have had to have our shields up against, historically speaking, as humans. So knowing that we're in this environment, be very careful with your media diet, with what you are exposed to. If you're in that state of fear you're going to be conditioned and almost hypnotized into a different state. And what I'm seeing is essentially hypnosis, it's like a mild hypnosis among the population such that you have these bubbles of people who are living in a completely different reality than other people. And if your reality is being dictated from the top down, that's a very dangerous place to be, it's a very dangerous place to make decisions from, so do what you can to detach.

One of the reasons we live in the middle of nowhere is because we can. We can just go out there and you see how little a lot of the stuff that seems like it matters on the internet, you see how little it actually matters when you might get eaten by a lion or you'll die if you stay out all night because it gets cold up here in the mountains. That stuff is real. The internet isn't real. A lot of the fear, a lot of the messaging, it's just virtual still, and if you turn it off you'd be amazed by the mental space that you get back. It's so worth it. Even just a few minutes a day

don't go on anything, turn it all off. Go away, go on a walk, not with your phone, go on a walk by yourself with someone you care about, with your dog, have an actual human moment.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But then you just have yourself, Abel.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, it's tough, right?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's scary.

**ABEL JAMES:** It's scary. It is.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's scary. So this is probably the best advice that is coming from this episode right now, is what you just shared. It's the most powerful, most transformative. You said something, I had to stop and just take a breath, "The internet is not real." That's deep, man. Because it's like a portal, like you're going into this... And you're detaching yourself from reality once you go into it, and it's so seductive, so sticky, it's already manipulated so many different parts of our brain that a lot of folks, when they step away from it, they get those withdrawals.

It's like, "I got to... Let me just check." We call it the "just checks". "Let me just check really quickly." And having this time just to actually allow you to think your own thoughts, your own original thoughts, not regurgitated... I wouldn't even call it thinking, but it's kind of a regurgitation...

**ABEL JAMES:** Talking points.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Of talking points, of data versus real original thought. We have to step away from that stuff. And so this is leading into something that I didn't know I was going to talk about with you, but I'm so glad that this got sparked. But the other day I shared a really great expose on the CNN Technical Director, basically getting caught on that hot mic talking about how they used fear to manipulate people and to really buy into their narrative. And so he's a technical director one step below the director of the entire channel at CNN. But I want to make clear of course, all news channels do this. And you just said it, specifically here in the United States other people from other countries are shocked to see the amount of negative, death, dying, be afraid. It's like 90% of the data.

And he actually shared this, that they purposefully, after an onslaught of just say 50 minutes of negativity they'll add in a feel good story. And he said it, and we'll play the clip for everybody, he said that it's basically like giving you that little bit of ice cream to deal with the pain that we're going to keep delivering. So you have this sense that this pain is going to end, this fear

is going to end at some point, but it's not, because we're going to hit you with it again. And so they are very specific in this and the fact that he shared this.

Abel, same thing with you, man, from the very beginning, if you have any level of experience in what real health is, you could see this stuff coming from a mile away. I was at my neighbor's house, because I don't watch the news, I went to my neighbor's house when all of this kicked off, and I walk by their television, and I didn't think anything of it, it was on CNN, and there's this ticker going, but I thought it was like stocks. And then my sense... Like I focused in on it a little bit and it was a death toll ticker. And the number is just going up. And he talks about... And immediately as soon as I saw that, I felt...

I just felt this sense of like, "This is just dirty. This is wrong. This is terrible, we've relegate human lives into this ticker." And so in this clip he talks about how they purposely put that ticker up there to keep driving that fear and manipulation, so I'm going to play that for everybody right here.

*COVID? Gangbusters with ratings, right? Which is why we constantly have the death toll on the side, which I have a major problem with, that we're tallying how many people died every day. 'Cause I've even looked at it and be like, "Let's make it higher. Like why isn't it high enough today? It would make our point better if it was higher." And I'm like, "What am I rallying for?" That's a problem that we're doing that.*

*Why don't you guys at CNN show the recovery rates on the death tolls at least?*

*Recovery rates? Oh, who's had it and then...*

*Recovered.*

*Recovered. Because that's not scary, that's... I would imagine that's why they don't do it. Yeah.*

*That's what I figured.*

*If it bleeds it leads.*

*If it bleeds it leads? I like that.*

*I think... No one ever says those things out loud, but it's obvious based on the amount of stories that we do. The fact that we have a segment called "the good stuff" which is a feel good thing but it's a dedicated moment at the end, almost like the ice cream to alleviate everything that you've been through, something sweet to end it with. 'Cause everything else is like dup-able. And the only people that we will have on the air, for the most part, are people that have a proven track record of taking the bait. I think there's an art to manipulation, I think some people have figured it out inherently, but...*

*With the media or just like in general.*

*Media and in just conversations.*

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So Abel, with this being the case, the truth about the narrative is being said directly from the mouths of the people doing it. Do you still think that folks are going to be apprehensive to actually believing that this is happening?

**ABEL JAMES:** I try not to believe hypocrites and flip-floppers, generally speaking. And so when people are just going back and forth and saying the opposite things, it's like, "Well are they lying? Are they confused?" Whatever it is, I'm too confused to follow them anymore and listen to what they're saying. And when you're listening to health advice from people who obviously do not practice health... "Health" is a weird word, and the semantics and connotations behind it are being abused. And I would rather follow preventative health, stay away from as many pills and jabs and whatever else that's kind of exogenous to your body, and unprecedented in some cases to your body.

Stay away from that and just honor nature, honor eating whole foods, trying to keep it simple, and also not being completely afraid of anything modern or cutting edge, that's definitely not the answer, although I would argue from a food direction it might be. From a nutrient direction, obviously vitamin D, zinc, magnesium, there are so many different nutrients that are really important, you can get some from food, but obviously supplementation can be really helpful as well. So I think if you're willing to...

I encourage people actually just to go back and read books. Go back and read books for the simple stuff. Like your book, Eat Smarter, perfect. There are so many examples of just... Sometimes you only need one, maybe three books, to get a good handle of "What are the main principles that I need to follow? What should I do as a daily practice?" And then all the fancy stuff and all of the new-fangled fear-mongering can be readily ignored when...

They have zero credibility, a lot of these people. If Michael Jordan had lied to me that many times when I was a kid, he wouldn't have been my hero. If these people lock you in your room for a month straight and don't give you any food or water and basically say, "You're punished for being bad." And then they opened the door up, you're not going to be the same kid afterwards. And that's kind of how I feel the government, the top-down structures have treated almost all of us at a worldwide scale, they're saying, "You have done something bad, you are punished, you are dirty little disease-spreading humans." And that is not a healthy way to view ourselves or why we're here.

At our best, when we get out of our own way and honor nature, feed our bodies, feed our minds and our spirits on a daily basis then we're so much more powerful than all this lazy disgusting messaging that's coming. But what works is putting you into a state of fear and confusion, this is a psychological and hypnosis process, basically, that's pretty well known. You put them into this state of fear and then just through repetition you are conditioned to accept

this new reality that did not come from you, but you will repeat its talking points and defend it.

And I don't know where this came from, but I heard in 1984 and all these dystopian novels, "We're not meant to be instruction manuals." I was like "That is where we are, we are totally there." It's totally beyond satire, it's being used in a lazy way, totally lazy way to destroy our culture is what it seems like, to destroy our humanity in one way or another. That doesn't need to be a conspiracy theory, when you see it all around you, it's playing out. So protect yourself by doing the small little things in your own life that makes it seem like that stuff doesn't matter, 'cause when you have your health and you have your happiness it doesn't matter, you can have your shields up to it, in a lot of cases.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I love this so much. You said something so cool, which is to read books, these seemingly ancient relics. I remember a time, of course, growing up, going to the library, or when the Book Mobile came.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Oh my goodness, Can you... There's just the feeling. But today, again, we're so obsessed with ideas being present, not... But the thing is, it's not the fact of the data, like for example, the book, there's a natural tendency to process the data and send...

**ABEL JAMES:** Focus in on it.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Exactly. Instead of us not being able to actually sit with an idea, to think about it constructively, we're just going and grazing, grabbing pieces, grabbing a headline, and running with it. And that's what's happening with a lot of folks. So in that same vein with the media and... Read a book about the media, rather than watching it, which there's a great one called Hate Inc, where it's looking at how things are structurally designed, and this is coming from somebody inside of the sphere, how structurally designed to make people hate each other, and how it's become so polarizing. And actually in that clip that I shared earlier from the individual, the technical director at CNN... There's another part of that interview where he talks about... And he says this very blatantly.

He's like, major news networks, we can't be unbiased anymore, we're not unbiased anymore. Where you're actually going to find media real news without all of this negative slant and bias is grass roots, is through podcast, is through... And he literally says these things. And the crazy thing is, again, we've been in this game for a minute, and we started with the premise of wanting to serve and inspire, help people, educate people. We both had the top health podcast in the country, many times.



And now when this happens, all of a sudden what you say on the podcast is controversial. These, on the media are telling us the truth. It's just like literally people jump right out of that. Very smart people. And this is what I want to dive in a little bit more on, because even with my neighbors incredibly... College-educated, all the good things. So many of my friends and colleagues, same thing, they're very intelligent individuals, very logical. But when you give a logical person a bad piece of data backed by pseudo-science from maybe a credible source that they believe they can start to use their intelligence to rationalize that bad decision, to rationalize something that is totally ridiculous.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, and our brains don't rationalize, honestly. When we go back in time and try to rationalize why something happened, you're just making up reasons, generally speaking, from a brain science point of view. And so... I've seen more people than ever, very intelligent people just follow the line... Follow the railroad tracks, wherever they may be going, and... There are a few psychological factors at play. One of them is once you make a decision that goes down a certain road, you want to stay consistent from a psychological and behavioral point of view. And so it's very hard to deviate from a call that you've made and then say, "Oh... "Half way down the line, "I was wrong."

Sorry, I'm going to go over here instead... Very hard to do for all of us. Whether we realize it or not. Usually this happens with our blinders on. And so another thing that's interesting is the people who are friends of mine who have government jobs or their paycheck is coming from somewhere that has more heavy-handed dictates, they're less likely to think freely, I've noticed. They're less likely to speak freely about whether it's the state of the environment and the conversation about pollution versus CO2 versus...

And all the different factors at play. No, no, no. This is my narrative. This is what I'm following. We can't really talk about it. And if you say anything outside of it, then I'm going to jump on you like an attack dog or something. That type of reaction I've seen more than ever. But I could see why it's happening and I have some amount of sympathy and empathy for the... I've worked with the federal government, that's partially how I paid off my loans after college. And you can't speak as freely when someone's your boss and you know that they have a certain way of thinking and your way of thinking doesn't jive with that.

So we're seeing this just play out between these camps, almost... Between these different bubbles of reality. And being up here in the mountains, it's been really interesting 'cause a lot of these people are... Across the old... The 60, 70, 80 years old mountain folk and trying to just get them to do anything would be almost impossible because they came out here to avoid the government dictates and to avoid all of that nonsense. And so it's been interesting seeing some people's reaction to all of this. And honestly how well a lot of them have handled it, the

ones who have been able to just focus on their own internal worlds, focus on improving their own relationships and their own lives.

As opposed to those who are trying to all of a sudden just take this torch of justice and just run around being like, "Okay, what are we fighting for? Oh, we'll go over here and we'll attack... This guy needs to be cancelled." And go over here and... No the climate matters, but not this way, only this way... Pollution... And so if you find that you're just following these things or you have that reaction where you're like an attack dog, but you haven't thought it through, like it's not coming from your conscious thought, just try to take a step back and a deep breath and be like, "Whoa, where is this coming from?"

Really examine. I think it's a good time to examine all of your beliefs. One of the things it's done for me, even being, relatively speaking, well-educated, like going to good schools and doing well there or whatever... A lot of that was indoctrination. A lot of that stuff I learned like you and learning about nutrition or whatever... It's not true.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Hold up. Abel let's not just say whatever... Let's not say whatever. You went to Dartmouth, valedictorian of the class. You are a smart son of... But that's... You are, but that you're just saying something so important, and I want you to continue the system that you're smart in. It's a system.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yes that's what it is.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So continue on.

**ABEL JAMES:** It's a system with rules, and it's a system with agreed upon histories and narratives. And in the past, one of the things I did love about going to, especially like an Ivy League college, was going to school with people who were super open-minded and not really set on their ideas, ideals and dogma religion or sexuality or whatever it was. People were very open-minded. And that has changed. Even in the kids... Like going back and visiting the schools now that's not like that. You're not allowed to talk about things. You're not allowed to sing certain songs. You're not allowed to do comedy. And for me, as a artist, as someone who creates, I know how stifling that is from a psychological direction to try to squelch who you are.

To try to squelch your own ability to think freely or say... To ask a question. I know you noticed in the past year or so, you're not allowed to ask questions anymore, which is a big problem It's a big problem because anything, especially if it's supposed to be science that cannot withstand scrutiny is toast. It's useless. And so if you see that scrutiny is not allowed, that... Whatever is being held up as the answer, I think should come under suspicion?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, blatantly. Blatantly.

**ABEL JAMES:** Blatant.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Man, that's so powerful, so powerful, such a just very basic insight about science, if we can't ask questions and debate and have constructive conversations, just like, Here's the net narrative, here's the message, This is what we've concluded, end of story. And the funny thing is, so many of these things that have transpired over the past year plus. This is what I do, I'm a research scientist, former clinician. I've been in this space for 20 years, it's like breathing to me to analyze data, and so I find that the majority of the data says something else, not even a little bit. The majority of the data says something else, let's talk about this, but for some folks, it's just, it's too much to handle because... And I think that this is another big reason behind it, is that we still want to have this hope that the government is looking out for our best interest.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yes we do.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** We want to have this hope that, we're not being lied to when we turn on the television, but here's the truth, when you turn that television on, you're being inundated with messages of how you're inadequate, you're being inundated with messages for you to buy the next latest, greatest hottest drug so that you can get this result of treating a symptom that's related to something you caused by your diet and lifestyle.

You're being inundated with messages to keep you in fear, they've set it themselves, that's what it's designed to do. So suddenly to believe that they're looking out for your best interest, it's so far from the truth, it's like... But this is the beautiful part. We can't just brush it under the table, and I think we can have a tendency to do that, just like I have this... There's this artist, this rapper name, mystical, and he said something along the lines of like, If you're going to be all the way down with me... Be down with me, or get from around me. Alright, and so we can be like that. We can have a tendency, but we want to check ourselves and remember that people just want to be happy, they want to be healthy, they want to feel safe, but the way that we're going about that often times, again, it's being taught to us by folks who don't necessarily have our best interest at heart. So we've got to have a little bit more compassion, empathy for folks who are band-waggon-ing some of these ridiculous ideas that are out there and just trust. So for myself, I know that What's likely going to happen, and I talked about this at the very beginning, once these things continue to transpire, that they're not effective.

So we've got... I'm talking. The majority of the data demonstrating how lock-downs are not effective, the majority of data demonstrating how fill in the blank is not effective, we've got

this data, but the folks who put those mandates in place, they're not going to just step back and say, Oh, I'm sorry, we were wrong. They're going to say, double down on it, right? Yes, I know the one mask didn't work, put three on. That's how we flatten the curve, this has gotten so curvy, it just keeps getting more curvy, it's not actually fixing the underlying issue. Yeah man.

**ABEL JAMES:** And it's interesting how tuberculosis just doesn't matter at all... Totally cool, cross the border, all of these other problems that on a worldwide scale are extreme, like Hunger, people dying of starvation, people dying of all of the disease that's associated with and all the breakdown that's associated with carrying extra weight or metabolic dysfunction, these things are very, very well-known but not allowed to be discussed and buried in the conversation, so it's... And to your point earlier, I think, yeah, a lot of people just keep following the line, because it's the world view that the government is here to help, even if it violates history, is a comforting world view that many of us are conditioned to be raised in and forced to be raised in, in many cases. And it's really hard to break out of that. You might lose relationships, you will get attacked from one direction, ideologically or whatever for being the weirdo or being the conspiracy theorist, or all these different labels that they'll throw at anyone who just isn't following all the lemmings off the cliff. That's something that you have to be aware of, but once you are willing to make that change in world view that, "Oh, it's on me to have my health."

It's not on the government, it's not on this doctor, it's really... It's on me, and I'm not saying me is Abel, I'm saying just, it's on you if you want your health, the government barely matters, your doctor doesn't matter if you're not willing to follow that path. And so I think it's really a great example of a time where we have to just take a step back and say, "Okay, it's on me, it's on me, What am I going to do?" But also is a pill or a job, or a diagnosis and identity that comes along with that going to solve all my problems, is that going to lead to healing or not, is that going to lead to lifelong health and longevity? I don't think so. I don't think a lot of these answers that come from the western medical establishment are based on healing, they're based on profit, and that's... Anyone who doesn't think that's true, just watch The Fugitive. Harrison Ford is great. How do people forget about all this... Just like totally laid out narratives of what pharmaceutical companies do squandering our trust, squandering our health, taking hundreds of millions of dollars in government contracts for drugs that they know don't work.

If you do a little bit of digging, I would encourage you, don't dig on the stuff that's coming out today... Who knows how true any of that is, but look a little bit back time and if you can pick up a few books, just the history of or the context of these different worlds of nutrition of the financial system, don't try to learn from websites, but do follow people like Shawn, go out and find real people who are showing up doing the work and trying to bring you perspective in context and hopefully serve the world to help guide us to a place that's a little bit better than what's being offered, 'cause what's being offered, I will not settle for I never will. It's one of the

reasons I moved out to the boonies too, because nature rules here, not some technocrat or is like Zuckerberg doesn't get to come out here on our hikes with us, and neither do the politicians, the local sheriff has priority over them here, and that's... I don't know, maybe that's the world we're going back to, I think there's an optimistic way to look at this, and that's going to be grassroots, I think it's going to be your local community and trying to build strong teams around you.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, I love that. So powerful, so powerful. We've got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back.

Researchers at Yale University School of Medicine, the researchers found that one of the biggest culprits behind our obesity epidemic is neuro-inflammation, brain inflammation increases the propensity of obesity and obesity increases the propensity, the likelihood of neuro-inflammation. They go hand in hand. So we've got to address this, one of the things that's been proven to help to reduce neuro-inflammation is cited in a study published in PLOS ONE, Public Library of Science one revealed that the super green algae spirulina has the potential to, one, improve neurogenesis in the brain. So the creation of new brain cells, specifically the hippocampus is where we get a lot, and the hippocampus is the memory center of the brain, this is kind of important, and two, the study revealed that spirulina is able to directly reduce neuro-inflammation. It's incredible. Alright, it's helping the structural integrity of this master gland, this master organ controlling everything about us, alright. The most complicated object in the known universe is also one of the most fragile. We've got to protect it. This is why for myself and my family, spirulina, Chlorella, ashwagandha, all of these powerful foods are put together in the incredible blend at Organifi, and this is a regular staple here in my family for good reason.

Spirulina, it being one of the highlighted ingredients, not only does it have its benefit for neurogenesis and neuro-inflammation, but also has rare nutrients like Phycocyanin, the same thing with Chlorella as well, that Phycocyanin is one of the few things that can trigger Stem Cell Genesis, the creation of new stem cells, very few things profound to do that, and then Chlorella's in the formula as well. And that growth factor, the Chlorella growth factor, is just remarkable, and also its benefits in helping it by... To metabolize and eliminate heavy metals, and list goes on and on. It's incredible. But the bottom line is this, it tastes good, it tastes good. I've experimented for, you know, at least about 15 years with all these different green formulas, these different green superfood plants. Many of them is not very good, many of them... They shall remain nameless, but I've tried them back in the day before tasting good was an option.

You just like, just get it in by any means necessary, if you got to do the whole, pinch the nose and get it... Whatever, but now, pleasure leads to longevity, pleasure leads to taking your practice on and imbibing it and making it part of your routine, your habits, your daily life. So

this is why I appreciate the fact they created a formula that actually tastes good, all organic, cold process, so you actually retain and get the nutrients that we're looking for in Organifi, so pop over there, check it out. It's [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model). That's [O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model](http://O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model). And you get 20% off, 20% their green juice formula, their red juice formula, and also their gold as well, they got some incredible plants all done the right way, with integrity, again, organic, low temperature processed and yummy, alright. Organifi got that yummy, yummy, [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model). And now, back to the show.

Alright, we're back and we're talking with Abel James before the break, if you're worried about... Because I know a lot of folks feel the same way about the way that our society is going right now, again, it's still ripe with opportunities and things really change, honestly, for the majority of folks when it becomes self-evident, when it becomes the norm. So even though folks that are on the media or in a position of authority, "authority" telling you that things are a certain way, even if they're still hesitant to tell the truth or to be honest about the outcome, just look at what's happened like this, I don't even have to make this up, nothing has worked.

Everything just continues to get worse. Every step of the way, but yet it's just like, "Oh, trust, the science." That's not science. That's not how science works. And so when things become self-evident or better yet becomes the norm, so people are talking about this new normal, we don't want unnatural to be normal, we can create a new normal where health is the norm, where community is the norm, and so when these things become self-evident... So I mentioned going, instead of them admitting, "Hey, this thing didn't work." The majority randomized controlled trials, gold standard of clinical evidence, where we have a specific implement and a specific outcome demonstrating how mask are not effective from everywhere from the BMJ to international nurses study, and somebody... Well actually not somebody... Somebodies, Lots of folks have been sending me the most recent one, this just came out from a researcher at Stanford University, again, one of our most prestigious institutions, this was published in medical Hypothesis. And I'll put this in the show notes for everybody title of the study face mask in the covid 19 era.

And here's what he concluded, there's just a snippet, a snippet, efficacy with face mask is severely lacking, adverse, physiological, psychological and health effects from wearing face mask are well established, the data exists, these things are counter-narrative though, these are all things that, again, way back in the day, back a year ago, I was sharing this data and now somebody who's... They got a little bit of scientific weight behind, just publisher in the peer-reviewed journal, I've a very strong feeling that he go tapped in somewhere with some of the data that I've put out there, and talking about this big issue here, which is not getting talked about, and I want to ask you about this psychological ramifications.



For instance, the human... With children, for example, there's a tremendous amount of mental and social development, the social brain, if you look at the work of Dr. Daniel Goldman and really honing in on social brain, it is like popping with activity, trying to develop, especially in those elementary school years, middle school, and being able to see faces and to relate with people to communicate to get that sorrow non-verbal feedback is critical for the development of our brains. Should we consider just a little bit when we're engagements for our children, for them to be able to do that, does that potential damage outweigh the potential help? So let's a little bit about that, the psychological aspect of what's happening right now. Not just with the facial coverings, but just with the whole thing.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, absolutely. Well, I guess let's start with the facial coverings, because something that's required to be put on your bodily person is an invasion of our bodily space from personal sovereignty point of view, and if you look at children, they'll do what they're told, but it does affect them and when you look at psychology in the way that the brain functions obscuring part of the face is something that's used widely in media in movies, think of Shredder, Bane, pretty much all the foot clan and just like the evil little minions in pretty much every little movie that you ever watched as a kid all the cartoons, of course, there are exceptions, but the good guy does not cover his face up for the most part. He's doing the ops, Batman only shows that part of this face. From a psychological perspective though, covering any part of the face is intimidating because it's obscuring information and maybe obscuring identity, and so wired into all of us is that response whether we're kids are not, and if you look at something like, imagine coming up to a guard dog, a really intimidating giant dog.

If you're covering up your face and all it sees are your eyes, I might not walk up to that dog in the same way that I would if you could see my whole face and my vibe. You can see the narrowing of the eyes when an animal doesn't trust you, and this is happening to all of us when we see anyone masked up, because another thing it does is raises the alarms when you see people with masks on. Something's wrong. The air is polluted. There's something horrible, you know there's a pandemic. So just from a psychological perspective, we see this, or we're in the hospital, like a big accident has happened, so we see this and like, "Okay, all ready, we're on alert." but then even more from like a mirroring and mirror neuron point of view with kids, one of the things that they're doing is soaking up information, they're soaking up... What is it like to interact with other objects? And then other beings.

And do those beings have sovereignty? Do they have a soul? These are questions that are kind of running throughout little kids' heads, and if their face... If all the faces of their friends are covered up and they're having a conversation and they can't see their friends smiling when they smile or doing these micro-expressions, if they can't see that back and forth, then development is stunted in the same way that if you just cut out half the words from the English



language, we wouldn't be able to speak half the language or maybe the entire language would be broken, and so that's kind of the giant experiment that's been happening all around us.

And it crushes me that it's happening to a lot of kids, the lock-downs, where science and research really does not support locking down healthy people, nor masking them, nor medicating healthy people, [chuckle] that's not generally something that's happened on a regular basis and had good effects down the line. So if this is the new normal, it's not a good one, and it's not one that I will ever accept. We don't have kids yet, but my wife and I have conversations we'd like to, and this just isn't the world, so I think we will see kind of alternative communities or different places, different locations will handle this in a completely different way, and if you do have the option of just getting in with someone in your local community, or if there's a way to move to a place where you've always really wanted to go and you kind of have the option of maybe making that call in the next couple of years to raise kids, I think what really matters is the moments that those kids are at home, hanging out with their friends, hanging out with their family with grandma who's not wearing a mask and everyone's hugging. When we go to birthdays and house parties around here with all of our friends, no one's wearing masks, we're all hugging, we're all being humans together, and that's what will really allow us to be humans is some element of that.

Yes, there definitely needs to be some element of caution too, especially if the threat is real, that's debatable, if you look at the data, the story is the same, but the data did not follow the story. We should have had hundreds of millions of people dead by now, like half the planet should have been dead by now, according to much of the fear-mongering that came in at the beginning of this, to force everyone to wear a mask, to force their kids to wear a mask, to force everyone to ignore their health, fatten up, lock themselves inside and then isolate themselves, and it's so interesting the choice of wording to how it's social isolation, which is literally used as a torture tactic for our worst prisoners, and yet we've done this to all of our children, to all of ourselves, to all of our families, and that is some element of psychological trauma, whether it's torture or not, I guess is an element of intention or that doesn't even matter, but it is trauma for all of us.

And every time we see someone in a mask, there's some element of trauma there in the same way that when I lost everything in an apartment fire 12 years ago. The sirens, every time I heard a siren after that for a few weeks, I would start shaking. That happens to you after trauma. We're all there, we're all collectively traumatized from a variety of different directions, and so it's important to acknowledge that, process it, deal with it, and then take more responsibility over your own life, and it doesn't mean always going against whatever the government says sometimes they do the right thing by accident, for the most part, take it on yourself and try to responsibly counteract whatever is happening in culture, whether it's to your family or your

friends, counteract that with a good solid hug and some quality time with people people you love.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Oh man, I love it so much. This is... You just mentioned something, when you mentioned those sirens and it just connected to this... Now, we have a label for it, PTSD. And the factual situation is, here in the United States, we're going to have a couple hundred million people with PTSD from this who are not... They might believe that they're moving through the world and moving beyond this, but it's linked up so deeply in their psychology that is potentially going to stay with them for the rest of their lives if we don't have some healing take place, which fortunately, I do believe in miracles, but we're going to need a miracle, but one of the things that you just mentioned as well is all of these different things that have taken place, they've led to worse health outcomes, and that's what...

**ABEL JAMES:** Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** We would have known this coming into it, because again, if you have any level of understanding of real health, biology, psychology, you could see this coming from a mile away, and so now we've got studies showing this, unfortunately, we have to have studies to show what we already know which is, if anybody wants to, and we'll put it in the show notes for everybody, definitely check out the episode we did analyzing all the psychosomatic effects of COVID-19, or if you could just go to Google, Dr. Google, type in psychosomatic and COVID-19, you can look at some of the studies yourself and see that this, the way that we've isolated has led to higher rates of severe infections, the way that we've created more stress and fear, these things inherently suppress and damage the function of our immune system, and some of the studies are showing how just our perception of fear and just being inundated by the media and watching that ticker is creating this inflammatory response in our body.

These inflammatory cytokines coupled with this "cytokine storm" that's manifesting in relationship to this virus, what do you think is going to happen? Worse health outcomes. So we're wondering why the numbers... Why have more people passed away this year? Is it strictly from this thing? Or is it in addition to the way that we've handled it because... And here's another big piece, and just for folks, if they haven't had, for whatever reason, they're just happening upon this conversation for the first time. They don't see all the data that we shared regarding mass, this is not a bash on that. Being a scientist, I came into it just expecting them to be effective, I've wanted them to be effective.

**ABEL JAMES:** Sure.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But just going and looking at the data, and we had randomized controlled trials already finding that they weren't effective in clinical setting, but then the

argument was, well, we haven't seen it done in a population yet. Well, this was the Danish study, and this was published in the Annals of Internal Medicine. They did a population study. They had about 3000 participants, they gave some mask, a bunch of different ones to keep them changing, keep them rotated, and that's another big argument, well they get nasty, and then they had folks who didn't wear a mask. After they compiled all the data, the folks who got an infection, confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, who are masked versus folks who didn't wear a mask, the difference in the whole population study was 0.3%. Not 3%, not 30%, 0.3%, but here's the thing about me. Because I actually go and dig deeper, there were other subsets of each of these studies, because for me comes up, well, what about accuracy of wearing the mask properly, all these different things.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** They had a sub-group...

**ABEL JAMES:** You can't touch it. You cannot touch it.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** They had a sub-group who strictly adhered to the mask mandates as put forth, versus folks who didn't wear a mask, and in that sub-group who did everything right, the difference in infection rate was 0.1%. Alright. So now the study comes out and instead of folks acknowledging this, unfortunately, who've already bought into the narrative, they say, "Well, this study has this problem and that problem."

I thought you said there wasn't a population study, we have one now. Pay attention to it. Just acknowledge that it exists. And last thing I want to mention, just in case folks are jumping into this for the first time, because for me also is just like, "Well, what's the big deal? Just wear it anyways." This study was published in antimicrobial resistance and infection control, and they recruited healthcare workers to wear N95 mask, which do have some efficacy in this regard, but they cannot be worn intermittently. And so what they discovered was that wearing the N95 mask on their work shift reduced their normal volume of air displacement between inhalation and exhalation by 23%, reduced the volume of gas inhaled specifically from their lungs each minute was reduced by 26%. Their value of overall oxygen consumption was reduced by 14%, and the ability to expire carbon dioxide was reduced by 18%. Now, I'm just like, okay, well, this must be a long work day. No, this happened in 15 minutes of wearing a mask.

**ABEL JAMES:** Wow.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** We have to use a simple cost benefit analysis and see is this hurting us and creating potentially higher rates of not just infection from SARS-CoV-2, but other

infectious diseases and/or chronic diseases, and/or if we're talking about inability, we're talking about the inability to expire carbon oxide, we're talking potential lung damage, heart damage. This is not a small thing. We need to have this conversation about all these pieces.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah. It's so funny because I remember when I first got into bio-hacking, I got this mask that simulated living at altitude, like attitude training, so it's like it restricted your breathing, you put this mask over your face and you go off for a run, and I used it a couple of times, and it was the worst experience. Now, I live at altitude, it's great. It was hard to adapt but that's a way better option. And the idea that everyone just kind of tosses aside any sort of conversation about well could the masks actually be doing something bad at the same time that they might be doing something good. No, no, we can't talk about that. Even if it is a petri dish, it's like you're putting a sock on your face, touching the masks, the breathing in polyester fibers and plastics on a daily basis, like these things, you can pretend that they don't matter and we can be disallowed from ever talking about them. But they still matter. In reality, it will play out, and I think a lot of people will look and feel silly in the years looking at this in retrospect, because not that everyone was swindled or that it's all just made up, but a large portion of this has been extremely mismanaged. I would argue from day zero, from day whatever the whole time.

It's been hard to find any good decisions that have affected us as people in a positive way this entire time, yet our personal freedom, liberty has been infringed upon to such a large degree that it's separating us from our families, our children, our communities preventing us from traveling. Thankfully, a lot of that is lightening up, but I really... I will fight hard to make sure that this doesn't happen again on a regular pattern and basis, and if they have to scrub us from the internet and they'll try again, but we're still going to keep on talking about it and try to fight for what it means to be human and have healthy families and communities, and there's just... There's no way that fear 90 plus percent of the time can drive a positive future for us, so we have to build something different.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's a fact. That's a fact. I feel the exact same. You know it, you know it, you see...

**ABEL JAMES:** Yeah, absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** You see how we show up for these things. It's not a surprise, and I'm so grateful for this experience because we get to really see who's about that life for real.

**ABEL JAMES:** Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** A lot of folks were into this domain of real health and wellness, just basic human tenets that our genes expect us to do, that we talk about on this platform, but when it really boiled down to it, they abandoned ship or they're like, "well, I want to say this thing, but I'm afraid." This is not the time to be afraid. Well, you could be afraid, let's be clear, you could be afraid, but this is not the time to hold your tongue. This is the time to stand up for what you believe. Because we're literally writing the future for our children, for our grandchildren, this time right now in human history is one of the most important times, and so... Our actions are required.

**ABEL JAMES:** And I want to say that one of the weirdest and creepiest parts of this whole thing is... Yes, some of these things have been mandates and you can't ignore them, like masks was one of them, depending on your state, but most of this stuff has been optional. It's like they say that you can't do things, but you actually can, like no traveling. But like my buddy came and visited a bunch of times, and it was totally fine for him, he had no problems, and you have to wear masks, but you don't, even in our own county, because there are almost no cases here, let alone deaths here. The Colorado governor said that you don't have to wear masks in this county, but you do because they're still enforcing it, even though they're not, and so that whole weird yes and no, herky-jerky thing is very unsettling for us psychologically. Know that you're there and know that you can't trust the people who are doing that to you. I would argue that.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Facts. Facts. And we talked about this before we got started. One of the greatest forms of manipulation is when you can get other folks to do the work for you, do the manipulation for you, so you don't have to have a mandate anymore, if you get the culture to change in a way, they prop up this thing, so that's what I talk about.

**ABEL JAMES:** Know that it's optional. Try to make it... Try to see where it's optional in your own life and go back to your normal that you want.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Precisely, and just a little bit of a hair going back, when you mentioned the altitude training, wearing that mask, and then it being different once you were there in nature, that's the difference. That is the difference is that... And this was published by the CDC actually, and this was also in... Again, we'll put all this in the show notes for everybody. CDC study published in Annals of Work Exposure and Health revealed that by wearing a mask, the highly thermo-sensitive nature of the human face and breathing pathways being inhibited lead to increased anxiety, elevated stress hormones, false suffocation alarm in the central nervous system, and panic attacks.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yes.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** The mask is the issue. It's not the altitude. It's we can get adjusted to that, but having that mask on our face, the data exists, and if it worked, I'd be the biggest... I'd have on a mask in my interviews.

**ABEL JAMES:** Totally. I would too. Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I have a mask on my face and one around my nether regions as well.

**ABEL JAMES:** Right, right. Just in case.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Just in case. Protect everything, but it's just not the case. So I want to ask you about some more of the good stuff that we can do, because obviously there's a lot of doom and gloom that we can be tuned into, and what I love about your story and where you come from, again, you're an incredibly intelligent... Going through the traditional process of education, thriving in the mediums that you've jumped into, but music is a big part of your life. And music is a big part of all of our lives. It's like a sound track to this experience. So let's talk a little bit about some of the benefits there, I think that even that medium of music has been used for many people right now as a place of solace. Let's talk about some of the benefits we can extract from this.

**ABEL JAMES:** I would say it doesn't have to be overly complicated. But we all know that music is an extremely important part of our lives in our culture, and it does regulate our physiology, which means that if you want to reduce your stress, your heart rate calm down, there's a music that will work for that, and generally speaking, it's going to be music that you like, but it's going to have... Try to think of the beat as like your heart beat, as a pulse, and if it's a slower-type beat, more relaxed, that's going to be good for calming down if you want to... I love putting on music as well, like Dragon Force would get me through, heavy metal would get me through coding days and writing stuff really fast, so you can regulate your heart beat, you can even train... Some of the best runners have used music and the tempo within certain songs to train when their feet are hitting the ground, so you can use it that way as well, but I would say from a psychological perspective, a lot of the recent musicians, including myself rip on modern music.

And that's even in the past 20 or 30 years, modern music is because it's been to base integrated from a lyrical and artistic perspective, and a lot of the equivalent of the lyrics or the messaging within those songs are junk food for your mind, whether you realize it or not, if you're listening to something that's... That has words that are negative in them, where you're hearing things that are degrading from a sexual perspective over and over again, it's that same sort of conditioning putting you into a lower brain state, a lower physiological state, lower spiritual state, if some people want to explain it that way, but for me, I can definitely vouch from a

personal experience when I cut out the music with a negative messaging, as much as it makes you feel like an old parent who's cutting pieces out of the VHS tapes or whatever for their church, it's really important from your own psychological perspective, because everything is a mantra, if you believe that mantras work and you believe in meditation or whatever, then does only that matter?

Do words only matter when you're using a mantra, or does every single word you're ever exposed to and utter yourself, does all of that matter and just all of that condition us. I would argue it's the latter, that everything matters, we're always being conditioned, so if you're talking about music, go and explore music that is new on a regular basis, and one of the things that can really help from a brain perspective, especially if you're raising kids, is instead of listening to these really cheesy hooks with the artificial beat where there's not a human involved in making any of the music, for the most part is just kind of like...

And someone kind of mumbles over it, that's from a brain perspective, low information music where there's not that much there for your brain to do with it, low information.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Junk food music.

**ABEL JAMES:** Junk food music. Yes, but also there's the opposite of that where... And this doesn't have to be cultural at all, but a lot of different cultures have extreme variability in what they're offering from an information perspective, so thinking about rhythms from Africa and South America, or harmony from Chopin or Debussy, or some of these great other artists who played piano and then listening to symphonies, but trying to go for a different mix of rhythms and harmony is really great for your brain. It's something that's going to lift you up, but don't force yourself to listen to music that you don't like. There's no reason to do that, but when you do want to get in the zone, one last tip is that you can put on... Especially something without lyrics, lyrics in the language that you understand can interfere with your own thinking, your own tasks, if you're working on words or writing, but if you're listening to something without lyrics, it's just instrumental or vibey on repeat for a while, then that can help your brain get conditioned to go into the writing zone or go into the work zone or the workout zone or something like that. So don't be afraid to use music that you love to bump up your physiology, and if there are a few junk food songs that you like, that's okay.

There are a few songs that are just... And no part of the human experience should be forbidden, I think, but some parts shouldn't be reinforced as heavily as they are in modern media, if that makes sense.



**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right, I love that. I love the analogy goes right with it. We don't want to make junk food the predominant thing, but if you have something that's not as healthy every now and then, it's all good, keep it moving.

**ABEL JAMES:** It's all good.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This is so good, man. And I'm just going to share a secret with everybody, so when I do a nice bit of my writing, I'll put on these epic movie soundtracks, and so...

**ABEL JAMES:** Dude, I do the same thing.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** No way. No way.

**ABEL JAMES:** Epic movies, yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yes, so we put on epic movie soundtracks to play in the background without the lyrics is just the soundtrack from movies like Avatar or Lord of the Rings, or whatever the case might be, and so that... We've got so many things in common, let's talk about this so first of all, we have the same birthday. Right out of the gate, that's already weird enough, we're birthday twins. Second of all, we were probably the first people to have a number one health podcast with our icon of the podcast being these guys with their shirt off, just like... And I don't know about you, but I'm not the guy to just be walking around with my shirt off, it was just so...

**ABEL JAMES:** Absolutely not.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I didn't even pick it. I didn't pick the picture, my wife did, and I was like, "Babe, are you sure?" She's like, "Yeah, we just want to show so that people know you know what you're talking about?" I was like, "Okay." Your wife did the same thing?

**ABEL JAMES:** Yep. Same thing.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Come on man, see now I'm getting chills. We also... I just found this out about you, I graduated in three years of high school.

**ABEL JAMES:** Really?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah.

**ABEL JAMES:** No way. It doesn't surprise me one bit. Yeah, it's... We're practically the same person.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And so did you. And you did it on just being smart, so I got kicked out for a year and so I had to... But anyways... Yes, but you know, same thing, high GPA, student advisory, all those things, but in school... And I don't know about you, probably the same thing, it just wasn't really that difficult, but it's really what's... Being what we can apply in the world, and you said this earlier, the college experience was good. There were some things there, but it was more about the people, it was more about the connections and the environments that I was in that heretofore I wouldn't have been able to interact with. So yeah, I think that's hitting on our similarities, now we know that we also listen to epic movie soundtracks while we work. That's crazy man.

**ABEL JAMES:** I listen to that when I'm working out sometimes too, it's good for deadlifts I find.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Oh, oh my gosh. Come on, got to put that Superman on. Well, man, listen, there's... You're somebody that I could just talk to all day, I've got so many different things that I admire about you. You were really instrumental in kicking this off for me, in the podcast medium. I think we started maybe doing this at the same time as far as this format of the show, but you built a platform and you invited me on, and it just kind of helped take things to another level and spread my mission, which is very similar to your mission of just inspiring folks, getting people educated, getting people asking healthy questions, having healthy dialogue, so I appreciate you to the moon and back, man.

**ABEL JAMES:** Hey, likewise, I appreciate you too. We need you more than ever, Shawn.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Alright, my man. Well, listen, I receive that. I can't let you go. I got to ask you one more question, because we talked about this being a time truly in our lifetime for us to speak up, to share our perspective, to ask questions, but I think that a lot of folks are apprehensive because of a fear of somebody saying something negative back or getting pushed back, or somebody not liking them, or whatever the case might be. Humans, we do have this heavy tendency towards a negativity bias, so we latch on to that negative thing. You might have 10 people who comment, nine of them say, This is absolutely right. This is... I understand, I was wondering about that same thing, I saw this study, but then that one person is like, "Your mother didn't even give birth to you, she you out on the rock." Like the sun hatched you or whatever... They'll say something crazy. I don't know, I don't know where that came from, actually I do know where that came from. My mom would say that to people, so people can say something negative, and we have that negativity bias. So how do you deal with that, with getting any kind of negative energy coming your way in a time when you feel it as a necessity for you to share your perspective, share your voice. How do you deal with that?

**ABEL JAMES:** I love that question. I would encourage people, if you have the option to not have that conversation on social media, don't do it in a way where you can't see and connect with people, even if it's just over a call or over... Having something where the other person is there, I think is so important and social media is just... Who even knows if it's another person on the other end...

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right. True enough.

**ABEL JAMES:** At this point. And every time I log in... And I do log in, I want to be there for people, I want to connect with people who are trying to reach out and that sort of thing, but you do take arrows and we've seen each other take arrows, and it's not fun to see your friends or yourself get hit with some stuff that may even be fair, sometimes, that may be constructive criticism, even that's hard enough, but when it's just hateful, it's lazy. It's super lazy... For me though, it's interesting because I got used to this playing live shows as a musician, so I would have a few dozen or a few hundred or even a few thousand people in the crowd and hecklers were not respected. They were not the people who were in charge of the room, and I was the one with a microphone and I would heckle them back, and that was part of the game. And on social media, it's not like that, it's not constructive, it's not fun, it's not good-natured usually, so do have these conversations, but have them strategically and don't get cancelled, I mean it is... I wouldn't... I try not to get cancelled, I know either of us could be at any point because they keep moving the goal posts as far as that goes, but there is such thing as over-sharing, there is such thing as the...

I make a point to not say certain things on Facebook, for example, or Twitter, that I would totally say to my wife or my best friend, and so be very aware of the circumstances of where you're having the conversation and try not to have virtual conversations, have real conversations with people, whether that's over a virtual connection like we're doing right now or not, doesn't even matter, but make sure the other human is there if you do want to engage in this sort of deeper type thing, because it sucks to lose friends, offend people, to be misinterpreted and this is happening more than ever to everyone, so just try to humanize it as much as you can. And then when you do take those arrows... I don't know. It hurts every time. Almost, sometimes it doesn't hurt. Almost every time it hurts though, but keep in mind that it's lazy, the heckler is usually the lazy one, unless they're funny, if it's funny then it's great, but most of them are not funny.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, I love it, man, thank you for humanizing this conversation, bringing it back to what's real, and I said a statement a little while ago that... And it's a mental health tip, stop arguing with people who are committed to misunderstanding you.

**ABEL JAMES:** Yes, exactly.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** It is very easy to do that right now, so if you get hit with an arrow, there might be a tendency to try to pull the arrow out of your leg and launch it back at them, it's... First of all, it's gross. You don't need to do that. I think we can also be lured into a trap because we think that people are operating from a rational perspective, but oftentimes, it's just not the case, and so just...

**ABEL JAMES:** Oh man, I got baited pretty hard, especially during some of the rioting and the racial stuff, being a White guy, I would get baited into... They would try to get me to say things, be careful of the online landscape, and this doesn't just happen to public figures anymore, this happens to everyone, so try not to get dragged into that to your point.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, yeah, you just... Why do you keep dropping these jewels man. It's so true, it's so true. Keep your head about you. But I'm going to restate this that I do want everybody, if you feel a calling to express yourself, to share your voice, do that, this is a time to do it but take Abel's advice of, let's be strategic, be intelligent, be evidence-based, but also be heart-based, because at the end of the day, we've got to have a little bit more compassion for folks who are... Best analogy, who are just trapped in the matrix, who are still just in a process of trying to figure stuff out and they want to be safe, they want to be happy, they want to feel good, have a little bit more patience and empathy for them, know that they'll come around eventually. If it's only when the entire society has changed and health is norm and they're like, "You know what? That was silly what we did." Making all the kids stay home for a year. That was crazy. Do remember we did... Even if it's to that point, it's all good, have compassion, keep it moving, Abel, you're a super hero. I appreciate you so much, brother, and can't wait to do this again.

**ABEL JAMES:** Right on. Love you, Shawn, thanks so much for having me.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Love you too. Abel James, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today, I hope you got a lot of value out of this. So many nuggets of wisdom for us to really just ruminate on, to think about and to employ in our lives. Obviously, this is a very complicated time in human history, but this is an opportunity for us to write where things move forward and also, we're literally creating history right now, and so I want us to be more empowered and to understand, yes, there's a lot of different things that might seem out of our control, but we can control the controllable, we can control our habits, we can control our thinking, and we can also control our ability to communicate, to express ourselves, to speak up, to have conversations. We have to remain human through all of this, and this is one of the big takeaways that I got from this conversation. And also understanding, we do have a grave potential for a lot of PTSD from this experience. But this is something we can change. It's not

already written, but it's going to take us to step up and stand up and to speak up, and I think that for me, one of the biggest places of emphasis is for our kids and helping to create healthy environments and encouraging and using this as an example to have more critical thinking, to ask questions, to question everything, to look at different sides of every equation, especially, especially when it comes down to determining our way of life, question things.

Questions are really the answer, and this is one of the things that the human brain is just... It's geared towards. It's literally designed to answer questions, it's an instinctive capacity, it's a mental reflex. It's called instinctive elaboration. When you pose the human mind a question, it seeks to find answers, and so the question is, what questions are you asking? And right now, we need to ask different questions, we need to ask big questions, we also need to ask small questions about what do we choose to do? And so I hope that this conversation sparked some different ideas, some new questions, and I highly encourage you to share this out with your friends and family, you can tag me, tag Abel as well. Tag us both on Instagram, and also, we're both on Twitter as well, Facebook, all that good stuff. So wherever you hanging out, whatever your universe is, give us a tag, let us know what you thought about the episode and also make sure to stay tuned because we've already kicked this off, we're officially dropping two episodes of the Model Health Show each and every week.

We're just going to keep on delivering the goodness to help to not just counteract the negativity, not just counteract the pseudo-science, but to help us to catapult to another level, because right now we're existing... We're in a really strange valley, there's peaks and valleys of evolution of not just of human health, but also of human consciousness, and so we want to get to that next level. And sometimes it takes for things to go a little bit crazy to push us to change, and so that's what we're going to do, we're going to keep on delivering that goodness. So every Monday and Wednesday or Sunday, Tuesday, depending on where you are in the world, I'm going to be dropping a new episode for you. Alright, and now listen. What we have coming up next, epic, epic episodes 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](http://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.