

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 551

How Your Environment Is Shaping Your Body

With Guest Aaron Alexander

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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. Obviously, movement is an important part of our lives. We can move towards health, or we can move towards devastation. You know, something we could proactively engage in but our culture surrounding us can really dictate the movements that we make, and even our environment can dictate our movement. This is one of the fascinating things that we're going to cover today, is how our environment can influence our bodies, how environment can influence the shape of our bodies, our disposition. And our guest today was just sharing a story before we got started about this phenomenon, when he was in Hawaii, shout-out to everybody in Hawaii, all my friends and family out there, but he shared with me, this phenomenon known as island feet, island feet, not to be mistaken with island boy. We're not talking about island boy; we're talking about island feet. This phenomenon of folks actually having their feet on the Earth and engaging with daily life activities, whether that's hiking uphill for some form of gathering of some sort or just traversing the terrain to go to work or whatever the case might be.

But folks having these really robust... He gave an analogy to almost hobbit-like vitality of the feet, not necessarily with the hairy jump-offs, because we know Frodo and those guys, they had some minor beards on their feet. But just the vitality and the robustness of their feet, because the hobbits, I don't know if you remember this, they were walking up a snowy mountain, shoe-less, alright, these feet naked out there. And I know, I personally thought about it, I was like, these guys must be doing the Wim Hof method, I don't know. But here's the thing, our feet are one of the things that don't get a lot of environmental exposure; they're mostly exposed to the environment, the encasement of our shoe. It's like a container that dictates the out-picturing, the form, and functionality of our feet. This is not to say you can't wear your cute kicks, but this is to say that we definitely need to think about the ramifications that has, because a lot of folks don't realize that a lot of ankle issues, knee issues, hip issues, actually have root with dysfunction with our feet, not always the case, but are more often than people realize. And so, it's these kinetic chains, and so problems with our feet can translate over into problems with other parts of our bodies. Our feet are really special. It's one of the things that make us human, are these feet that we have, these footsies.

Now, what can we do about this? Again, this doesn't mean that you can't wear your cute shoes but have some time barefoot as much as you can. Just kick those shoes off. Exercise your feet, do some exercises where you try to spread your toes as wide as you can. Some people will be shocked of how little their toes can actually spread. Your big toe, put all your toes on the ground, try and lift your big toe, I was just doing this, you know, I got a guy who's doing some physical therapy and keeping those toes down the ground, just lift the big toe and then keep

the big toe down, just lift the other four toes. Can you, do it? It's just like, is that neuro connection, is it really ripe and robust? You could try it now, if you got that down, try to do one at a time. Alright, try play a little piano with the bad boys, with your little feet, with your toes. So, there is many different ways for us to engage and get some vitality into our feet to get more "island feet," okay. Those guys, I mean, come on. This is what we get with 2022. We got the island walk. This is popping. Forget about the real-world science around health and vitality, defense of our bodies against this chronic infection that is just on everybody's mind.

And all of the peer-reviewed evidence and the things that we could do, all the great data, even the entertaining side of getting ourselves healthy, forget that stuff. I want to hear from the island boy, alright? This is the state, and I don't know if you saw, they did a hairstyle that look like a spiked probe. Alright, it's nuts. It's the irony. So, what are you tuned into? I know that you're about that life, you're about that health, life you're getting plugged into the things that serve you, that bring more vitality, that bring more empowerment. And that's what this is about today as well. And part of that vitality toolkit, this is one of the most essential things, the human body requires this in order to function, this is how important this is. All of our cells are communicating through electrical conductivity. This is how our cells, even our brain cells, are able to talk to each other, signal transduction. We carry an immense amount of electrical potential in our bodies, we even generate electricity when we move. This is one of the dynamic things that again, on the surface, using our very limited scope of vision, we can't see the electrical activity that's happening with our bodies.

We might be able to experience, if you've ever shocked somebody, a little static electricity, or if you see one of the scary movies, they're in the bathtub, and then Jason Voorhees or whoever, Michael Myers, whoever you're into, even the little guy, the Leprechaun, might roll up, he's got electrical device, you're taking a nice bubble bath, you try sipping on something, exfoliating, whatever, and then he comes along, the leprechaun's got something plugged in, he's going to drop that bad boy in there, give you a nice little surprise, electrocutions on you, compliments of the Leprechaun. So, our bodies... How are these things possible, you know, is again, that the human body itself is just so much conductivity is possible, and what's behind this conductivity are the minerals that carry an electric charge, and these minerals are referred to as electrolytes, these are literally required for your brain cells to communicate. Deficiencies in these key nutrients lead to deficiencies in cognition and cellular performance overall, even our energy production ATP, the generation, the creation of the energy currency that the human body operates on requires electrolytes in order to make the magic happen, specifically magnesium.

Not to mention sodium and potassium, also critical. Without sodium, it's one of those things, for example, researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as an "on-off switch" in the brain for specific neurotransmitters that support optimal function and protect the brain

against numerous diseases, pretty freaking... And also, on that same front with magnesium, I mentioned as far as the mitochondria, a study published in the journal Neuron found that magnesium is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve cognitive function. This neuroplasticity is the ability of our brain to change and adapt; we need that more than ever. There are a ton of electrolyte supplements on the market, it was all spurred on back in the day, decades ago when folks were getting loaded up on these very crummy versions of electrolytes. Also, in addition, these "sports drinks" just ridiculous amounts of sugar and artificial colors and flavors and all this stuff. Nonsense, nonsense, we are so far past that, that's just, it's not appropriate anymore. The electrolytes, yes, and make sure they're coming from a good source, number one; number two, helping and paying attention to making sure that they're in the right ratios, we're talking about the ratios, these matters.

What if we add a data source, a set of real-world human beings, and looking at what is the optimal ratio, and that's what LMNT has done. Go to drinklmnt.com/model, that's drink-L-M-N-T.com/model, and get a free sample, a free variety pack, they are going to send right to your door for free, just pay a little bit of shipping, they're going to send it right to your door. This is the electrolytes that I use. It is so far superior to anything else. No artificial flavors, no added sugar, none of that stuff, just the saltiness. We know there's many different versions of salt, it isn't just sodium. We think of sodium salt, there's magnesium salt, there's potassium salt, calcium salt, the list goes on and on. We've colored our nutritional education in these very superficial domains. We need all types of these salts, but we need them in the right ratios. The reason this matters more than ever to add in something like this is that our food is becoming more and more deficient in these key electrolytes, so this is one of those very simple ways to support our health and optimal function, and chances are, you're going to notice the difference. Go to drinklmnt.com/model to get a sample of LMNT for free, that's drink-L-M-N-T.com/model. Now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled "Presenting Nothing But The Good Science Stuff" by Momindy. "Shawn presents only the science and I can't get enough. He respects human life in all regards, but his propensity for utmost human health is bar none. He scours the science for us and gives us the summary in layman's terms, sprinkled with lots of humor and culture. I can't share his podcast enough and everyone could benefit from his show. Love it and thank you."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you. That's so awesome. Thank you so much for leaving me that review over on Apple Podcast, it means so much. If you've yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast, leave a review for the Model Health Show, it means so much. If you're listening on Spotify, you know we're popping on Spotify as well, you can rate the show now. Alright, take a second, leave... You know that we need all the stars. Alright, just represent, leave a rating 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. Our guest today is best-selling author, Aaron Alexander, and he's a pioneering manual therapist and movement coach, whose clients range from A-list Hollywood celebrities to professional athletes, and everyone in between. And he's also been interviewing the world's preeminent thought leaders on physical and psychological well-being on his top-rated Align Podcast. And now back for his latest appearance here on the Model Health Show, let's jump into this conversation with the amazing Aaron Alexander. My guy, Aaron Alexander, welcome back to The Model Health Show.

AARON ALEXANDER: Thanks for having me. I appreciate this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's my pleasure, man. It's my pleasure. You know, your work has just been deeply impactful, just the last time I talked with you, I really stepped up my game, my hanging game.

AARON ALEXANDER: Cool.

SHAWN STEVENSON: At least every other day, I've got a pull-up in the backyard, pull-up bar, I'll go and hang there and do 20-30 second reps, a couple of sets, and just hang out.

AARON ALEXANDER: That's it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Sans wang out. And it's just very simple principles, but you walk the talk and you've impacted so many people, including many of our friends and colleagues, and that's very noticeable, even in all the recommendations, endorsements that are in your book with some absolute superstars because you're one of them, and I want to kick things off, because I think that we have this concept in our reality that we are shaping our own bodies, it's my job to shape my body, and that is partly true, but we are negating what is possibly the largest shaper of our bodies, which is our environment. So, can you talk about how our environment actually shapes our body?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, of course. Firstly, on the way here, I'm so immensely grateful to get to share any time with you, but I've told you before, but literally, I think eight years ago, I started listening to your podcast and I was scrupulously, maniacally taking notes on all the different little details and exercise recommendations and nutritional stuff, and all that stuff, and you were the primary catalyst and inspiration for me to start my own podcast and I get into my own foray into the social media world and all that stuff, so to be in this moment with you, now it's starting to feel more common, which I'm so grateful for that and harking back to like... So, the moment, the thing I was reflecting on is, that's so interesting, how many of the yous of the past are listening to this and the mess of the past are listening to this right now. I

know that that person is right now there, going through the same motions and that same aspirations and all that, that's just such a wild thing how life works that way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It is, man, so powerful.

AARON ALEXANDER: And then, so within that, you were a part of my environment, my environmental conditions, so you were my audio environment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's a remarkable, that's really powerful.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah. And so, there's a lot of different layers we could go with that, and we were impacting ourselves and each other from an auditory perspective based off of the tones that we're projecting, pacing of our language. There's a researcher from the '60s, professor from UCLA called Albert Mehrabian, came up with a thing called the 55-38-7 principle, 55% of our communication comes from body language, 38% is voice tonality, and then 7% is the words that we speak, and that relates to if there's any incongruence between that. So if we're having a conversation and suddenly my voice starts getting really high or getting really fast, or maybe my eyes start looking away from you or my shoulders start covering forward and my hips go to the door, whatever I'm saying, you're gathering millions and billions of bits of information from your visual field and from your auditory field, and then there's the words that kind of piggy-back on top of that, so as we're communicating to each other, that's really the bulk of the communication comes from actually our movement. And then more specifically, in relation to the environment, in the way that I think you meant it in the question, you've had Bruce Lipton on here, which, he's such a sweetie. I got to go up to his place and we spent the day together for another episode on mine. And just such an amazing person to be around.

One of the things that he brought up in the conversation was that if you want to change a cell in a petri dish, you change the culture that it resides in. So, if you want to create some type of chemical change or structural change or whatever it may be, you don't go in and titrate chemicals on the cell or do some kind of things, little tweezers or something, you go and you change the constitution that it exists in, and suddenly the cell takes shape to, that's a human. So, when you come home, your home is a gymnasium, it's an opportunity for wellness, it's an opportunity for creativity, it's an opportunity for inspiration, it's opportunity for natural light, it's an opportunity for whatever you want it to be, there's no right or wrong, it's just defining, what do you want? Define your goals and then reverse engineer from there. So, for me, one of the things that I find to be valuable is adaptability and longevity and strength and flexibility and joy, and creativity. So, within that, coming into a home environment, something that we can do, like a really obviously one, just what you do, set up a pull-up bar, so now suddenly you

change the shape of your doorway. Before it was just a doorway, the only function of that doorway is you walk through the doorway.

Now, suddenly there's a pull-up bar there, and it's like your arms are lifted up to the bar, it's almost like this effortless, it's just like, "Huh, it just happened." That was fitness, fitness just happened just by you changing the shape of your environment that you exist in. So okay, could we do that in other ways? Okay, so before, we come home, all there is dinner table, coffee table, you may put your feet on, couch, TV, that's all we have space for, that's what we do. So, we sit 90 degrees on the dinner table and then we go to the couch, and then into the bed and then the toilet, and then our office, and then our car, and then a train, and every position is in that same archetypal kind of like hunched over position. Opportunity would be maybe put some floor cushions down on the ground and create enough space that when you come back, it's like inviting for you get all the way down to the ground and get all the way back up, suddenly you're mobilizing your ankles and your knees and your hips and your pelvic floor muscles and your diaphragm, you're helping circulate lymphatic fluid, which needs muscular contraction in order to move.

I think it's just an interesting opportunity or a question to ask, "What is the shape of my environment, if I were to kind of audit my space, what would be the postural potentials from the space?" And come through, and it's like, "Okay, can I tweak that?" And then, "Do I want to tweak that?" 'Cause, it's all just opportunities, there's no good bad. It's just what do you want.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. I think that's a great idea switch because what we tend to see is sitting in a chair bad when it's just a way to be, but that chair sitting from the chair in your house to the chair in your car to the toilet chair, all the chairs you mentioned, the chair in the office, it is putting your body, the environment is having your body in this pretty consistent position that's then going to make you very efficient at chair sitting and maybe take away efficiency from other things, right? So not putting it bad, but let's see it as an opportunity to be creative, this is a version of sitting that we can do, let's dabble in, or we said this before the show started, we'll dabble in, sprinkle in a little bit of some other stuff. And I love, man, I didn't know that you were going to mention that first, that the auditory environment, because then my mind, sometimes I get that Neo, Matrix thing and I was just seeing as everybody's listening right now, and these vibrations leaving my body and entering your ear and interacting with those tiny little bones and helping to create these electrical signals in your brain. Literally, it's shaping your brain, it's changing the very shape of your brain, even at the most minute level, but that expands as you repeat a certain behavior of your auditory environment.

And so, like you said, I became a part of your life prior to even knowing you, and that environment, that shaping of your perspective, it brought you closer into this universe now

where you're here with me, we cannot overlook how powerful it is, what we're allowing into our environment or inviting into our environment. And we get to choose that, but oftentimes we're not aware of it, and that's part of what we do, is we're getting folks to be aware of how powerful we are and how many options we actually have because it's pretty infinite.

AARON ALEXANDER: It's interesting, when you listen to someone, you're familiar with Stephen Porges and Polyvagal theory, I imagine. One of the things in his theory that he's brought to the table is a term known as neuroception. Neuroception is as we're moving through the world, we receive various different visual and auditory feedback that indicates to our nervous system whether we're safe or not, and so there's a lot of sounds that you may hear, maybe you meet a dog and the dog freaks out, it doesn't trust something about you, maybe it's that you have a beard, maybe it's that you're big, maybe it's that your voice is high, maybe that it's low, it triggers some past memory that was like, "Ooh, threat," but we have these consistent auditory cues that indicate to our nervous system via millennia of evolution, depending upon your belief systems obviously, that's... It's since the beginning of humanity, and probably before human, there's certain sounds that indicate safety, like a soothing crackling of a fire, or maybe it's like ocean, maybe a dog snoring, maybe your partner, how you hear your partner breathing and all of those, they literally, they're tuning your autonomic nervous system on a momentary basis.

And so as we're communicating to each other, once again, the way that we communicate, that 38% of that voice tonality, there is a specific imprint or signature in the tone of your voice, and when you speak to someone, especially in maybe like a psychological circumstance, maybe it's like seeing a therapist or something of the sort, there's your words, but when you start to get into territory that makes you kind of be like, "Oh, there's, okay, we're in deeper waters here," your voice might start to kind of crack or might start to get a little bit high for a second. All of those are indications that you're starting to tread into waters that your autonomic nervous system, your deeper mammalian brain, it's saying, "Oh, don't know how to process this." Aha, we're here, we've arrived, now how do we respectfully navigate this space? And so that's the really beautiful thing if you're a sensitive person, which we all are or else you just wouldn't be around, if you've made it to this point, just in human evolution as a whole, and then as an individual, you're still here, you're a sensitive person.

If you're successful in business, if you have halfway decent relationships, if you're somewhat healthy in your mind and body, you're a sensitive person, you're picking up these cues continually, and it's just magical when you start to take a moment and kind of think of that imprint or that signature, that fingerprint in the tone of someone's voice, and then start to pay attention to your own tone. So when you're speaking to someone, I think that this is 70% of the nerve fibers of the vagus nerve, a very popular nerve as of recent, kind of like the iliopsoas muscle, it's kind of like it's having its moment in the limelight, but 70% of the fibers

in that are afferent, meaning they're feeding information from the body up to the brain, and so you're receiving this immense amount of information from your body all the time, and so if we allow the spaciousness to actually listen in and say like, "How does my body feel right now?" When I'm speaking to that person, do I feel really safe, do I feel like a clenching in my stomach, you know, do I feel maybe trapped? Do I feel expansive? Do I feel confident? Now, how's my voice?

All of those are really beautiful tools to be able to check-in and say, okay, am I placing myself in an environmental condition that's conducive for my growth? And then from there, the next thing is saying, okay, interesting, this is a two-way relationship, I can observe my physiological expressions and those are translations into like, they have mental-emotional translations, and then if I want to change my state, I can say, okay, I'm going to go in and I'm going to change the tone of my voice, I'm going to change the pacing, maybe the way that I breathe, I'm going to do a long exhalation, I would do long exhalation and a sigh, maybe I'll relax my eyes and take in that panoramic view, which that's tied into the autonomic nervous system as well to calm your nervous system down. Maybe I'll take a little walk and start to get that, maybe I'll pull my shoulders back, that gait pattern, swing my shoulders open up through my diaphragm and my lungs and my hips. Oh, my God, suddenly I feel better, you know, just six breaths. There was a study from, I believe it's in Japan, they found that just six breaths, you could change your blood pressure in an instant, it's like, we can have such immediate effect on this physical experience, and we're just covered in all of these amazing levers that we can pull on at any time.

We just prefer, well, I don't know if it's summary, I think it's cause our teachers didn't really understand the levers 'cause they never got the education, but we didn't receive that education on how to drive the body effectively, and how to pull on these levers. How do I wake up? How do I go to sleep? How do I relax? How do I focus? Tapping into your senses and your postural patterns are all opportunities to do that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. These for me, are some of the most important things. These are the things that it's like the soil from which everything else comes from, so it's kind of tragic that it has been lacking in our education, however, again, it's just presenting another opportunity. And when you mentioned Bruce Lipton, that ties in so well with all of this. And even walking, for example, that's a vibrational pattern, that action, the activity of walking is creating a certain vibrational pattern in the body that's influencing every single cell in the body. Even if we go to the level of our atoms, they're just vibrating at this ridiculously fast pace, and we look very solid even right now, you look still but everything in you is vibrating like crazy, like some Doctor Strange level multiverse of madness, you know what I mean? And I remember Bruce Lipton talking about how even ourselves doing function, it's really a result of a vibrational input, a signal, there's a signal being broadcast, a certain vibration.

And one of my all-time favorite episodes of The Model Health Show, and I've done hundreds of interviews, and also me doing media and all these other shows, probably knocking on the door of a thousand media pieces, and of all of that, for me personally, one of the most interesting places that I learned the most from was from a conversation with Dr. Kulreet Chaudhary, and she has a book called Sound Medicine. And she just brought to light something that's been just, you know how you got these things just kind of rattling around your brain, like loose change, and then suddenly you get the arcade game to put the change in, it's like, "Oh okay, I get it." And she related to all of the ways that sound is already used in medicine that we just take for granted. Even the name "ultrasound," we're just like, "Whatever," but it's literally a tool that can be used, of course, for imaging, but also as therapy because it is literally using sound to change conditions in your body, and it's so subtle, it's so out of our pitch range as far as our human ears that it's actually unbelievable that it's even a thing.

And this gets into the conversation of, we only experience or notice a certain spectrum of things with our human eyes and ears. And there's so much, literally again from both directions, from ultrasound all the way to sonic, whatever. And we operate in a tiny medium, but everything else is affecting us, and we have the opportunity to proactively expose ourselves to other things even if we don't understand it or to avoid those things. And so, this is another message of yours, is that message of empowerment, and I wanted to ask you about this because what we're talking about is an expression of the body, and I'm wondering if our physical expression, when you see somebody, can our physical expression of our body, how we're standing, how we're moving, can that inform you about our state of physical health?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, yeah, of course. That's such a cool road to go down. You can hear, staying just for a second on the auditory spectrum, you can hear a healthy person, or around the house, if someone is... What is that? That's like a cacophonous... It's like a cacophonous struggling biological system and a more effortless system that the things just seem to work, you don't notice it, so if there's something in your system that you notice, it's probably 'cause it could use some work. So your breathing, ideally, it should be so light that you can't even feel the breath going in and out through the nostrils like you want the hairs inside of the nostrils wouldn't even move to the breath, and so if you can breathe in that way, it's an indication that your hemoglobin cells, your red blood cells, they are efficient enough to be able to release their binding affinity to oxygen, and they efficiently release oxygen into your bloodstream to allow your muscles to function.

And if you're a person that's more habituated to taking these big gasps of air throughout the day, and you're just dumping this buffet of air down your throat all the time, then your cells get super lazy, and they become kind of like slobbish and wasteful, the way that they release oxygen into the bloodstream. So, a person that's really healthy, and just from a breathing perspective, it'd be kind of almost like they're like a... It's like a Jedi. They're like a samurai,

they're kind of just like a healthy person, just glides through to the room, and I think that that's from a physical communication or body language perspective, I think it's so interesting. Riding back on that, a person, if you are projecting wholeness or integration in the body, it sends a signal to other people that you would be tough prey, you would be tough to attack, you'd be tough to take advantage of, you'd be tough to exploit, so there are so many people that I think that they... I fall into this category, and it's something that I kind of have a trigger, I wig out a bit when I have a sensation of someone that's victimizing themselves or kind of like playing the victim role, and so I've noticed that throughout myself for years, which is why it's such a trigger for me whenever I see it out in the world, I'm like, "Oh, don't do that."

And there was some research that was actually done with this, where the researchers, they went into a prison and they gathered up a bunch of inmates that were in there for violent crimes, and they gave them a bunch of videos of people just walking down the street, different sexes, different colors, different weights, sizes, ages, all of that. And what they found, I include this in the Align Method book, what they found was, the people that would not be prey, they wouldn't make an effort at robbing the person were the people that moved with this integration and this wholeness in the way that they moved. It wasn't 'cause they were bigger, it wasn't 'cause they were blacker, or 'cause they were whiter, or 'cause they were Asianer or any of that. It was if they felt like they had this directionality and this smoothness in this integration with the way that they moved, then they wouldn't be an easy target, and so even as you're moving down, you know, you're walking down the street, you're sending this information out into the visual world, and all of those people that are either passively or actively observing your experience, the way that you're ambulating down the street, you're either holding up a sign saying, "Come and get it," or you're holding up a sign that's saying, "Not me."

And so, how do we start to tap into that? We don't tap into that by in this moment, "Okay, pull the shoulders back," you know, "Puff the chest up," like, "Cool, I got it." You tap into that by changing your environmental conditions, you tap into that if you... The best time to plant a tree is yesterday. The second-best time is right now. Is that they I say that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's 10 years ago.

AARON ALEXANDER: Or whatever, 10 years ago. Yeah 10 years ago, yeah the second best is right now. And so, with that, it's like changing your environmental conditions, expose yourself to ample sunlight, get enough vitamin D, get enough fat-soluble vitamins, A, D, K2 specifically are very important for like bone growth and hormonal function and exposing yourself to cold temperatures, exposing yourself to warm temperatures. All the stuff, like listen to The Model Health Show, tap into a tenth of what you discuss, actually integrate that into your daily life, and it needs to be a daily habit. If you are someone that's like an overnight success, but it took

them 20 years to become an overnight success, that's the way it works. So, if we can seamlessly start to integrate these practices into our daily lives, and one of the things it's very simple, since "Okay, cool, that's very meta-abstract, borderline inspirational kind of jargon, actionably, how do we do that?" Well, a person that has mobile ankles and mobile hips and a good balance of body fat to muscle, hip to waist ratios, all that stuff, the way that we do that is a really simple thing would be just, at least from the mobility perspective would be, like we mentioned before, just to spend some time on the ground each day, like 30 minutes in total.

If you're just checking your emails while you're sitting in a straddle position or a cross-legged position or a 90-90 position, your hips are up above the height of your knees while you're in that position, so you're starting to stabilize the lower back and orient the pelvis, sacrum, spine in such a way that they're strong, you're re-integrating back into those native patterns that you had as a child. Any baby moves pretty darn well 'cause they don't have enough muscle to kind of cheat through gravity, they're just finding that balance and that orientation. And when you see a person move that way, it's almost surprising, like when you see a person move with lightness and levity, you know, Charles Bukowski, he has a bit where he talks about a free soul. A free soul doesn't have any particular shape or any specific indications, but when you're around a free soul, you feel good, you feel really good. And it's like that free soul, that heart, I think that that comes from a lifetime or a month or a year of lifestyle decisions that now suddenly present into this moment. And you're telling the story based off of every bit of information that you've engaged with over the last month, year, decade, and then life starts to open up for you in a different way like, "What is it? Is it 'cause I'm done? Is it 'cause I'm negging or doing some kind of dating hack thing?"

You know, I rig the game, it was like, "No, no, no." We're picking up on a lifetime of information from each other. So the ways that we can do that, I think, again, it just comes back to start to change up the environment and change up your mindset and make these subtle little shifts in your life, which was the whole intention and function of writing the The Align Method, was to create a fundamental user's manual, like a field manual for, how do we inhabit our bodies the most effective way possible in daily life? As opposed to it being something that I sit in my car, I drive to a gym, and I engage in fitness for 45 minutes. It's like, how do we make it so that fitness is who I am? I identify as an athlete. If you're a person with a body and you walk and you put your arms up over your head every now and again, you communicate, I would say you're an athlete. And so, if you can start to identify with those things and start to integrate that into our lives, I think it's incredibly powerful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Wow, that's remarkable. Not only does this answer the question of whether or not our body can display our state of health, but this leads into another part of the conversation, which is not only are we broadcasting our physical state of health, but we're also broadcasting our state of mental health as well. So, can you dig into that a little bit? How

is our posture or our state of physical just...? How it's showing up in the world demonstrating and communicating to the world our state of mental health.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah. Well, so, there's a lot of interesting stuff with that. So, coming back into the concept that your body is covered in these levers that we can pull on to make us to induce certain states. Your facial postures, for example, your facial gestures, it's called the facial... What do they call it? Facial gesture hypothesis, I believe, is the term for it. But each gesture that you make with your face... Paul Ekman is a researcher that has gone very deep on this. I actually did a podcast with him about a couple years ago. I think he's like the top 10 most cited psychologists on the planet, old guy, really sweet. But he traveled to Papua, New Guinea, and various different locations to spend time with tribes that had been untouched to any type of other populations or industrialized culture, and to see if their facial expressions, their facial postures were consistent with the rest of the world. And he came up with 10,000 specific facial gestures, all with specific translations and all with specific meanings.

And so, when we're communicating with each other, if I am happy, every face across the planet is happy pretty much the same, right? And so, if you are faking a smile, for example, then you'll just kind of do this smile with just your mouth and it's creepy, it's like serial killer kind of vibe. Yeah, exactly. So, if a true smile is called the Duchenne smile from an old anatomist, that you would be smiling with your mouth and your eyes. So, you're activating those orbicularis oculi muscles in and around the eye that cause the eyes to kind of squint. That's like a true indication that the person feels that way, feels happy. If you win a race, everyone wins a race the same way, if you lose a race, everybody loses a race the same way. And then there's gang signs and west side and this and that, that obviously, those are learned, but those deep, inherent postural patterns and facial gestures, it's like a binding unifying factor with every human being on the planet. And so, we can tap into that, and all of those facial gestures, they're tied back into the cranial nerves, those 12 cranial nerves, vagus is a part of those, it's a part of that system. And those are all tied into our autonomic state.

So if you change the tonicity of the muscles in and round the neck, the masseter of the eyes, the diaphragm, any of that, then those are all feeding back into your autonomic state, so if you want to, and there's been lots of research around this, is why you've probably heard of the pencil study where they put a pencil between your teeth and while there's a pencil in your teeth it forces that smile happening. And so, when they would show them movies and things of the sort, they'd find things to be more humorous and funny, and it would induce this sensation of light-heartedness. They did it with a golf tee, they put a golf tee in people's brow, and then it would force a frown like a resting bitch face and suddenly they'd perceive the world as being a little bit more closed off, so it's pretty darn interesting. And once again, this taps into, ah, okay cool, so there's this imprint, this specific fingerprint of every person's tone of voice. That's just so cool, if you really sink into that and you start listening and start paying

attention to if you're at a bus station, how does it make you feel? If you're at an airport, how does it make you feel? If you're out in nature, how does that make you feel?

We also have an imprint in every one of our postural patterns and every one of our facial expressions. If you meet a person and they're chronically kind of frowning, one, it makes you feel away, because one of the primary factors that make humans so effective as a species is our capacity for communication. The way that we communicate is through attunement. If I can take on your shape, then you trust me more because you don't trust anyone more than yourself.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, right.

AARON ALEXANDER: Right? That's like tribalism 101. I come in, cool, you like Pittsburgh Steelers? Cool, I just happened to wear my Steelers Jersey today. You have resting bitch face? Cool kind of... Yeah, I don't like the world either. So, they're like, "You know, there's something about that person. I don't know what it is exactly, but I like that person." That's what we're always doing. It's in NLP world, Neural Linguistic Programming, that's like one of the foundational principles of it, coming in and having that like a mirroring of each other, and once again, if you're alive and you're doing halfway decent in your life, then you are effective at all of these practices. So, you then you can go under the hood and say, "Oh yeah, I do, do that sometimes," or "Oh, I could do that a little bit better. Maybe I'm a little spectrum-y." It's like, "I'm not really that good at being able... When someone makes a facial gesture, me, I don't read it that well, and I certainly don't embody that myself and respond back for them to feel comfortable."

So, when we say flexibility, and this is with Align Method stuff, it's like, this is where I'm really interested in the conversation around fitness. I think we think of fitness as this compartmentalized thing that we do inside of a box. Fitness is every aspect of your biology. You are movement. So, the reason that you have a brain is to move through the world, talking, movement, thinking, movement, cardiovascular function, lymphatic function, every aspect of you is a form of movement. So, I think we've been sold, largely in western culture, the idea that there is a pill out there that will solve your woes. So, cool, that's like the anti-movement conversation, technically you move yourself to reach out to put the pill into your face, but we've moved ourselves into our present physiological, mental, emotional lifestyle state. So, therefore, there's probably a way to move ourselves into wherever the heck it is that we want to go or unwind it through movement. There's always a movement conversation in that.

And the conversation around fitness, like facial flexibility, is fitness. Postural flexibility to be, say, a dancer, maybe you train improvisation. If you're good at improv, then you're probably not just maybe military, upright, stacked, strong, stiff, like take orders guy. That's one persona,

that's one face. And the initial meaning of persona comes from Greek theater, it was those conical masks that people would wear. I think you had included these in your mask video.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's correct.

AARON ALEXANDER: So that persona, actually, the original meaning from that is a mask that we wear in order to project an identity, so stick up the ass, upright position, that's a persona, then there's also maybe lazy persona. And then there's also maybe creative persona, flamboyant persona, all of those, in order to be able to oscillate throughout those, pick the spectrum, pick the colors that you would like to engage with, that's flexibility, that's fitness. Dumbbell curls, great, just one of the forms of fitness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. Growing up, if I thought about chocolate, I think about Three Musketeers, I think about a KitKat, Butterfinger. I had all these ideas, hot chocolate, chocolate ice cream, chocolate cake, those are the things that would conjure up in my mind when I thought about chocolate. Little did I know that chocolate itself, the original root of chocolate, which comes from something that's botanically a seed, these cacao seeds was one of the most healthy foods in the world. Listen to this, this was from a randomized double-blind placebo-controlled trial that was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, found that polyphenol-rich cacao, or cocoa, without the sugar has remarkable prebiotic effects on the human body. So, what the study found was that folks who were consuming this sugar-free cacao flavanol drink for four weeks significantly increased their ratio of probiotics or friendly bacteria, bifidobacteria, for example, while significantly decreasing their class of firmicutes, which is associated with fat gain. So, there's certain types of bacteria that are associated with gaining fat and these firmicutes. So, the saying in health right now is that if you want to be firm and cute, you got to reduce the firmicutes.

Alright. I didn't make that up, somebody else did, alright, but the bottom line is, wow, it has a really powerful, remarkable impact on what's happening with your microbiome. The study also found that it was able to reduce levels of systemic inflammation measured by something called C-reactive protein. And if that weren't enough, cacao also has these compounds that have a really powerful influence on our mood, like Anandamide, which that translates to mean bliss chemical, right? Serotonin, tryptophan, these precursors that help your body to produce things like Melatonin, that helps you to sleep better. It goes on and on and on, but the quality matters a lot, and when you get real chocolate into something that is even more health-giving, you've got something really special and that's what they have with the new chocolate Organifi gold drink. So, they got the chocolate along with their incredible delicious turmeric formula, and as you know, turmeric has very powerful anti-inflammatory properties, and it also has been clinically proven to have anti-angiogenesis property, so this means that turmeric literally has the ability to cut off the blood supply to cancer cells, alright? And we all produce cancer cells

every day, but a properly functioning immune system and being able to regulate this angiogenesis, which we need, but we need at certain levels, is incredibly important and food can help to regulate that.

So, I'm a huge fan of Organifi, now they've got the new chocolate gold, alright, so pop over there, check it out, just released, just delicious, organifi.com/model, you get 20% off that and everything else they carry. Alright, so head over there, check 'em out, organifi.com/model, it's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model for 20% off. Now, back to the show.

First of all, I've got to just backtrack just a little bit here because you said something really profound and I don't want to miss it when you talked about all these different facets of movement indicating life, and life really... This is, Bruce Lipton as well, was the first person to really articulate this for me is that life is movement, and when life ceases is when movement ceases, and you said that we moved ourselves into the state that we're in, where we are probably a bit deficient to put it nicely, in our variety of movement and patterns that we could be in; we chose to move in that, whether we realize it or not.

AARON ALEXANDER: Or we didn't make an active choice to choose to move another way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this still opens the door for our empowerment because we chose that even if it was unconscious and we can choose other. I don't know if you know you're doing this, but you continue to meld in an opportunity of empowerment for all of this stuff because it can really seem very dire. I know I've spent some time in the last two years, and some of the data that I've been uncovering, and I've had that squinty face, as I'm staring at this data just like... My wife would point out, "You look pissed off, man." And it's just like, it's a pattern, and this is the point I wanted to make is, this is a part of human evolution like you don't got to teach a baby how to smile, the baby knows. When the baby is happy and joyous, it's just there, that pattern is integrated into our evolution in our nervous system and our muscles. The same thing with being really upset and angry or fearful, we can learn patterns, of course, as we go and as we grow, as our brains develop and pick up more things from our environment, but a lot of this is already deeply engraved. So, this is what you were alluding to when just putting the pencil in the mouth and you're getting into that state, your brain has that... That neuro-association is there. Just like I was kind of smiling. So, you're already just leaning towards seeing things in a more jubilant light.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, changing your filter.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is really remarkable stuff, so with that said, this really opens the door for our opportunity to have a shift in our perception, in our mindset, that can then change the out-picturing of our body.

AARON ALEXANDER: Correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, let's talk a little bit about that. How can a change in our minds change the expression of our bodies?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah. Like mind, body, they're just words, the body doesn't know the difference between bicep, brachialis or triceps or sternocleidomastoid, it just knows unity, wholeness, integration, it doesn't know what a heart is, it doesn't know what a lung is, it doesn't know what a liver is, it just knows that symphony, it knows the orchestra, it knows that unity of the whole system. And so even the concept of mind-body is like stories that we tell ourselves 'cause they're indivisible. And so one of the things that you brought up that I think was interesting, is the power that we have to augment the filter that we receive information, and it's just so cool, like there's research from San Francisco State University, particularly around this, and the researchers had groups of students go into slouched-over postures, group of students go into upright posture, which now there's the really popular, Amy Cuddy TED Talk and the research that she's done around that, the superwoman pose that potentially augments testosterone levels and cortisol. There's a lot of contention around it, but I think that if you drawback and you watch somebody walk in like a UFC ring, it's like there's something going on there.

You can see if a person, where their mind's at and if they're going to pretty much win the fight, not 100% of the time, but pretty high percent of the time. Jose Aldo and Conor McGregor, that fight, what was McGregor doing? His body was effortless, he was playing his orchestra, there was no awareness of trumpet player go, sax, piano. Jose was coming out and there was this tension. So, if you're paying too much attention to what's happening here and you're trying to organize the parts, you can't win, like you have 640 odd muscles, 360 odd joints, there's so much complexity inside of the system, for you to be trying to organize that yourself is very challenging. And so, and that's kind of a tangent, but back to the San Francisco stuff, what they found were the people that were in a hunched over position, in the book we call that the mopey postural archetype, we break down five different postural archetypes and their meanings, they would be in that hunched over kind of, essentially the position that most of modern culture, if we are going from chair to chair to chair to chair to bed, to chair to chair to chair to chair to bed like that's your lifestyle, that's the position.

Forward head posture, medially rotated shoulders, hyper-kyphotic spine, valgus knees, like that's the anatomical description for collapse. What's another meaning for collapse? What is the literal translation of depression? Collapse. So, when a person goes into that collapsed postural expression, they begin to distrust the things that they say. So, when they would make certain statements, there was this sensation of whether it was something that was accurate

or inaccurate, I felt like I didn't really trust what I was saying. When they're in this stacked, well-oriented, confident, upright position, suddenly they reported to have greater trust of the words that they would communicate and the statements they would communicate. They were also able to access memories, more like uplifting memories. So, when you are in an upright posture, this comes back to NLP stuff again, you've anchored postural patterns to manifest during specific like mental-emotional states. So, you win the race, always been the case.

You know, you hunted the woolly mammoth, you get to the top a little bit, if you bring it back, shoulders back like you're not protecting your vital organs, you're not protecting your throat, I've won, there's a predator in the room, whoa, contract, defend. I've lost, the woolly mammoth ate my wife, oh, complete deflation, ate my family, family is gone, like finally.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I didn't even know wollie's do that. The whole family.

AARON ALEXANDER: So, when we're in those positions because I would say this is ancestral, if it's not ancestral, then it's at least back to since you were a baby when you are in this upright position, it's an indication that you've won, it means that you can now tap back into that whole Rolodex, that whole index of good times. When I go, not a moralistic bad or good, there's no state that's better, it's just objectively, that's a reminder to your autonomic nervous system that, okay, cool. When have I lost? Okay, rolling back through that. So if I get to go through that postural position, so says research, and research obviously is going to be skewed because they probably are going into it with some level of intention with what they're creating, but just feel it in your own body, take every bit of a research with a grain of salt, just cause someone did a study or there's a meta-analysis and a bunch of studies, all of those have an objective bias, and there's a ton of research that gets thrown in the trash 'cause it doesn't prove what they were looking for, but just feel it, like Conor McGregor, Jose Aldo, enough research.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. We've been steered away from listening to our bodies and our gut, and our intuition. Again, even as we say those things, your body doesn't care, your mind doesn't care. This is all that's actually happening, is that perception, is that your body's kind of response to what's happening in the world around you, it's there, we can kind of numb it, but this leads into another thing I want to ask you about. Can what we eat affect the way that we move?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, of course, you know that. So, if you're eating something that causes you to feel maybe stressed, for example, maybe too much coffee, your body's going to wire yourself up to be in that agitated state. What's the musculoskeletal expression of agitation? Traps start getting tight, I'm going to start grinding my teeth, clenching my masseter. Maybe I'm self-soothing cause I'm trying to work some of this freaking energy out. So, all of that, every bit of food that you put into your body, that's just information, auditory

information, visual information, nutritional information, so all of those are being processed, different processing systems, but same movement-based output. If I eat something that makes me feel sluggish, what do you do after Thanksgiving, I don't love that, my preference is to keep on kind of keeping on with Thanksgiving times, but yeah, you eat some food that feels heavy, hard to break down, inflammatories, suddenly your joints are inflamed. Yes. Strong yes, affects the way that we're going to move. And such an interesting thing when you think of it from that lens, like people... So, I work with clients doing manual therapy, largely, and also helping with training and in various... Essentially, do you know rolfing, we never talked about rolfing before, structural integration, working with fascia and connective tissue, and all that stuff?

So, the first thing that I would be thinking about with someone, it really varies depending upon the individual, but the first thing I'm thinking about is lifestyle stuff. A common question with most people that will come up within the first five minutes of talking was, it would be sleep patterns. So, if you're not sleeping well, then good luck with everything else, and then coming into nutrition and then coming into the shape of your environment. And I think oftentimes, we get mired by the physical being like, "Okay, the knee thing is right there, it's contained within the knee," and within that, we have that tunnel vision on that. If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. But winding back into all of the different layers, each one's valuable, nutrition is just one of the invaluable inputs.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. You mentioned sleep being involved here, and in the book, in this incredible addition where you've expanded the Align method, and as folks are listening to this, it's now available, correct? Because you know I get it early. It's at thealignbook.com, and you got some bonuses there for folks as well once they pop over there and check it out, but you share some insights on the aligned morning and the aligned evening.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, let's talk about a possible optimal or up-leveling of our morning routines. Let's talk about the aligned morning, what does that look like?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah. The first thing... I don't think it's going to be overly new for your audience, but the first thing would be exposing yourself to sunlight, like first thing, get up, set the circadian rhythm, get that light in the suprachiasmatic nucleus. It's like you're consuming light through your eyes and through every... The rest of your... All the skin throughout your body as well. So, the first thing would be setting the neurochemistry for the day, orienting yourself around the sun, and start getting up exposing your eyes to the sun. I feel like sunglasses... What a shame? We got sold the idea at some point, that to be... I think for many people to be afraid of the sun, and if you're going to wear sunblock, I'd recommend blocking

out the entirety of the sun, get zinc oxide or something like that, or just get like a sun hat or a shirt when we're blocking out just specific frequencies, UVB or UVA, and taking kind of like a supplement from the sun and putting different chemicals and such in our skin, and that's pouring into rivers, and we end up eating that again, all plastic bottles and the shipping, it's wild when you unpack the whole history of what's... When we're... Kind of become dependent on products to keep us alive, essentially, but the first thing would be, I think, just creating a healthy relationship with the sun, could be a big thing.

Like maybe re... Maybe you have the idea that the sun is like some abusive stepparent coming back, I'll be like, "Thank you, sun." Wake up every day and just with... And then that comes into gratitude. "Thank you, sun." Like, "Thank you, body. Thank you, breath." All of that, there's a whole plethora of research that you've brought up throughout the years on this podcast. It affects your physiology, it affects your mental-emotional state, affects blood pressure, affects all of the parts of you. If you can start the day from a place of just observation, of taking a moment of a reflection of gratitude for the morning, and I think a great place would be, that is literally just having gratitude for the sun, how good it feels in your skin.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's so simple. If you think about it, it's the sun that has enabled us to have life in this expression here on planet Earth, right?

AARON ALEXANDER: Oh, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But then it'll also kill you. It's just like this strange pendulum swing is taking place, and so in reality, yeah, the sun can harm you, but we're talking about a fraction of a percent of people who this actually happens to, and it's been used as an accreditation for us to not get adequate sunlight, which we literally need. When you mention like our body is eating it, it's num-nums.

It's literally one of the most healing substances, generative substances because we did a master class on Vitamin D, and I actually walk people through like, "How does your body do the thing?" And it's really remarkable. It's like a deeply intimate relationship. Again, we would not have a life here without this sun that we are so afraid of in our culture. As you know, we've just been inundated with things to fear, and this isn't about not having a rational... Like, if you're Jim Gaffigan complexion like you're not just going to go out and spend two hours at the beach, just stark naked, that might not be a good idea, but it's starting to acclimate yourself again and understand like you evolve, your genes literally expect you to interact with the light from that big ball of fire, and when you pull away from that, your expression, that physical expression is going to degrade.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know?

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah. So think of it as like a hormetic stressor, and if you work out at the gym for a while, there was a belief that I think it was past age 40, maybe, I don't remember the specific age it was, but it was like you wanted to sustain and just hold on to your joints and your muscles, and too much workout and fitness and all that, it's going to be like, you're going to wear yourself out. It was like, "That's not the way the body works." The body responds to come back stronger and healthier and more well-circulated, a more robust organism through hormetic stressors throughout the day, so when you work out, it creates inflammation and oxidation, and it's like... It's like, "Wow." It's like war inside of the muscles, then you sleep, and you rest, and you drink, and you do all the things, you come back like, "I feel fantastic." "Wow, I'm not like a car."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

AARON ALEXANDER: A car is a complicated system in systems theory, your biology is a complex system. We thrive on variability, we thrive on like, "Get it out there." Like, "Run it, jump it, sun it." You're like, "That's... Sleep it." You're like, "That's what we do." And when you start to pull those factors out, the body becomes confused and becomes backed up. It becomes... It's like... I think that men, especially maybe me, I like to feel almost like a tool, it's almost like I like to have a purpose, so it's like, "Put me on the purpose, whatever it is." "Well, we got to hunt, gather, collect that thing." "Okay, somebody threw a frisbee on the roof, like somebody needs to get the frisbee off the roof." I'm like, "I got it." And as below so above like ourselves, that's your cells. So, when you take them out and say, "Someone threw a frisbee on the roof," you say, "Maybe a robot will get it. I'll just sit here and kind of..."

SHAWN STEVENSON: This frisbee's gone forever.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, I'll... Yeah, I'll maybe look into my screen and narrow my vision and expose a little more blue light to my eyeball or, kind of go into that forward head posture and all those patterns that if you were to look at any animal in nature in that pattern, you would think they were sick or depressed or injured or something, so... I mean, that's the unbelievable thing. If you... Like that positioning now, it's not phones that are problematic, I think it's that people just crave connection, and if you're not getting... Like Alan Watts has used this metaphor like, modern culture is eating the menu and confusing it for the food. And so, a lot of what we're doing with maybe our fitness, maybe... You could say that from a light perspective like we're getting junk light throughout the day, LEDs, and all these kind of like partial... Not the full spectrum, like not the real thing. So, it's like light kind of, but it's not the

good, good, so it leaves our bodies, I think yearning. There's... Jack White has a bit about this. This is getting a lot more abstract, but...

Discussing how analog... The switch from analog to digital, he said that that leaves people in that similar way yearning for more, because the analog, you're getting the full acoustic spectrum, you're getting the full sound. When you go into that digital, it's... I don't know the exact process of what happens, but it cuts it all up and then re-compresses it back together to be a small file to be able to be shared around, and so when we're hearing that, so says the idea from Jack White which I think he's kind of a genius, it leaves us with this yearning sensation so it's like you're listening to it but it's not the full instrument or the full vocal, so we're eating food, similar thing. And so, what happens when we take all of these kind of supplement forms of information as opposed to getting those whole forms from the acoustic spectrum, from the visual spectrum, from the nutritional, from relationships, likely...

I know I'm going way out there in the weeds, so just bear with me, but I would imagine that that would potentially lead a person to having some inherent yearning for something more and not knowing exactly what it is. Enter, callback, Neo from the Matrix. It's like there's, "Oh, you can't sleep at night." How can I have this whirling sensation inside like... Like, what is that? And I think what that is, is we want to just be reconnected back to something more, and nature has all of it, and it doesn't need to be weird. You can bring some plants into your house, you can open the window, you get full-spectrum light coming through, you can take a walking meeting with your friends or your business people, make some eye contact with somebody when you're getting coffee or you're at a checkout line, just have that moment of saying like, "I see you," and through seeing someone else, you see yourself.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's powerful man. So that aligned morning, this is... Of course, it's going to be unique to us. You've sprinkled in so many different ideas for us to chew on and to utilize, but for you... So that aligned morning is going to kick off with the...

AARON ALEXANDER: Sunlight.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Little dabble, a little morsel of some sunlight, and then what else? What are we transitioning into from there?

AARON ALEXANDER: Sunlight, hydration, you throw a little mineral or something in your water, throw a little sea salt in there. It is a nice bonus just to help actually be able to absorb that water, and then movement is going to be a really important one, which would be in tandem with the sunlight, so you're walking your body out to the sun. Sometimes we need to get... Everyone's different with this, I think if you're just taking a walk, that's fantastic. "I'm happy, I'm so grateful and happy about that," but pushing yourself past that first five minutes,

most people don't want to do things that are good for them for the first five minutes, so being willing to have... Resting the inner bitch, it's like what Goggins, David Goggins talks about and Rogan talks about the inner bitch a lot.

So being able to just work out that muscle of, "Those things that I know are good for me, that I know are going to be rewarding, I know they're going to pay back, I just need to get through that five minutes," commit to four minutes of it. So, for you that's taking maybe a little jog, that would be a beautiful thing if it's maybe you swing some kettlebells in the morning, maybe put some music on and just start the process, wiggle the hips a little bit, maybe get down low a little bit, whatever works for you. I think meditation is a beautiful thing, maybe your form of movement is intentional stillness, that's movement. I did a Vipassana meditation retreat, it's like 10 days where you just... Essentially just sit and meditate for 10 days. So, you get up at, I think 4:30 or 5:00 AM, guy comes around with a gong, rings a gong, wakes you up, you go, and you meditate for an hour, then take a little break and then meditate for an hour, then a little break and meditate for...

And that's just what you do for the duration of the 10 days, and then that became very evident that stillness is absolutely a viable form of movement, but it's being intentional with that stillness. So, most of our stillness is kind of almost wasted stillness. Your stillness is like... And you're just cell phone scrolling, or maybe you're unconsciously just eating Cheetos, you're hunched over into the couch, you're thinking about the girl or thinking about the thing... You're still whirling. So then there's another level of stillness where it's like, "Okay, I'm going to actually start to work with a little bit more internal sovereignty. I'm going to practice honing in the edge of my blade of my consciousness."

So, any time one of those thoughts comes in, invite it, say, "Cool, thanks for being here," and then come back to observing the breath would be one example, Anapanasati is a Sanskrit way of saying, just observing the breath, and it's a very common meditation practice that's great, but you can observe a... You can observe a candle, listen to some music, just observe the music, and that is a muscle. So that's another beautiful movement practice, I would say, is sharpening that blade of your consciousness through intentional stillness.

So, both of those are great. Whatever works for you if you're going to do... You just find what works. The best nutrition plan, the best exercise plan, the best morning routine... You already know what I'm about to say, it's the one that you'll do. I don't care what you do, just do something that lights you up. So, if jogging sounds just like, "Oh, not into that," don't do that. Do the thing that actually makes you enjoy this human experience, that's the key to longevity. We're trying to inject in ourselves different supplements or eating pharmaceutical stuff in order to allow ourselves to become less senescent or lengthen our telomeres or what... It's like, come on if you don't want to be here, what's the point of longevity? And so, in coming back

and making that be a foundation of the way that you move, the way that you think, the way that you live, the way that you relate, that is health and that's a great morning routine.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Facts, I love it, man. Thank you so much for sharing that. And again, thealignbook.com to pick up the align method. Of course, anywhere books are sold as well, but again, you'll have some bonuses for folks over there, and I highly recommend. This is one of those books that the simplicity and the effectiveness. I'm a big fan of effectiveness, and so adding this to your library, taking some of these tools, adding it to your repertoire, and like I said at the very beginning of this, you're somebody who just is one nugget is implemented in my life repeatedly. It's something I would occasionally do, but then the way that you described it, it just... It turned on another switch in my mind to make it more consistent, and then you see the rewards in life as well, so... I appreciate that so much, man. Can you let everybody know where they can follow you? Get more information and all that good stuff.

AARON ALEXANDER: Yeah, most people probably just go to Instagram, so that's @alignpodcast, and then there's the Align Podcast. They could go back and listen to Bruce Lipton's episode, would be an interesting one, or they could listen to the last one that I did with Shawn I thought was actually one of my preferred episodes, that would be one to go back to, and... I think that's... From there it goes into the annals of all of the different exercises and training programs and all that stuff, but I think that the book is... The promise of the book would be that upon reading it, one, you can open it up to any page and you'll get value from it that you can implement into your life right now, and so the promise upon going through any... If you read 15 pages of the book, it will start to open up your lens to be able to leverage literally any moment throughout the day is... You're just covered with opportunities to get better, we just... For the most part, you need to have the eyes to see it. So that's the structure and function of anything that I do is helping to provide simplistic, tangible information to start to augment the way that we perceive our moment-to-moment life so that literally every moment becomes an opportunity. That's the whole point.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Opportunity. That's been the big message, empowerment. Man, you're the walking, talking representation of what you teach, and folks that aren't seeing the video of this... You're coming in, you're kicking your shoes up, you're perching up in your chair like you know, Tweety Bird, and it's just what you do, man. You will be considered to be like a big guy, you're so nimble and you're so fluid, and you're so... You're just emanating, like you said, you can just tell when you're around somebody, and so... I just want to encourage people to take this message of becoming that person, walking in the direction... Literally, again, walking, we're talking about movement, and so that you don't have to think about your tone, you know, it's just going to be broadcast from a healthy vessel because you've been taking the time to just invest in these small things. These are not big, complicated things that we've got to do to

be a healthier expression of ourselves, to be aligned. And again, that's what I really love about your work, and thank you for hanging out with us.

AARON ALEXANDER: Thank you man. Appreciate you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Aaron Alexander, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. If there's one thing I know about Aaron Alexander, it's that he's an Island Boy. He's a podcast boy. He's my guy, and I appreciate him. And, you know, the story that he shared at the very beginning, I remember bumping into him at an event. This was years ago, and I could see the spark in his eyes. I could see that vitality, what he was wanting to accomplish and to impact, and he's just been moving in that direction to just lean into his information and his principles. He's moving in the direction of making a big difference in the world, of being a source of inspiration, of intelligence, of support, and he said something really remarkable, that he's created the perception for himself... He's a type of person like he needs a purpose, and we get to all... We get to choose the perception that we take into the world, and he is that kind of guy. Frisbee stuck on the roof. He's that kind of guy, you know. And so just jumping in to use his body in creative and necessary ways to get things done.

What can you align your psychology to that pulls your body in the direction of more expression and vitality? Is it being able to dance and have a good time with your kids, and being able to play sports with your kids? Not just take them to their practices, but to be able to actually get out in to play and have fun. Is it being able to compete yourself, is it being able to...? Just finding a way to be able to do life's stuff, whether it's carrying all the groceries into the house in one go, and not being reliant upon other people as you age, you got to tie it to something, especially now. Let's imbue purpose into our movement, and it just makes everything a whole lot easier. I appreciate you so much for tuning in to the show today. If you got a lot of value out of this, please share it out with your friends and family on social media, tag me, I'm @shawnmodel. Tag Aaron, he's @alignpodcast. And we've got some epic shows coming your way very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day. I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you could find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us 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.