

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

EPISODE 562

How To Go From Symptoms To Solutions & Reset Your Gut Health

With Guest Mary Shenouda

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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. Have you ever thought about what it takes to build the best body possible? And I'm not talking about the superficial things that we do, I'm talking about the real building blocks of your body itself, what is actually making your cells, your tissues, your organs, your organ systems, and the person that you're seeing in the mirror. Now you already know the answer to this, it's embedded in the very matrix of the human mind. Your body and your amazing brain are made from the food that you eat. Every single bite of food that you bring in, your body is deciding what it's going to do with those nutrients to turn it into human tissue or not. To turn it into human tissue or to possibly use it as energy. There's this judicious program taking place when we eat food, right? And we get to decide what we're making our tissues out of. Now, this is one of the most remarkable powers that we have in our life experience, each and every one of us has the ability to choose what we're making our bodies out of.

We're making our brain cells out of, our heart cells, because again, it's made from the food that we eat. The amazing thing about the human body is that it will do what it's got to do. Alright, if it needs to use substandard materials to patch something up, if it has to MacGyver the situation, just to keep you functioning, keeping you rolling along, it'll do it. That's the amazing thing about the human body, we're very resilient. But I know that there's an intelligence within you that will preferentially choose the higher quality sustainable materials when you provide it as an option. So, this is really leaning into what we're going to be talking about today and how to heal our amazing bodies and where that healing process starts from. Because this interaction of taking something from outside of ourselves in the external environment and putting it into our bodies to then become human tissues, that miraculous process, that whole intersection point starts in your gastrointestinal tract, right?

There's a tube from your mouth to your anus, alright? That tube, it's essentially, there's like a hose, if you want to picture it like a hose going from your mouth to your anus, alright, to your anus. We're talking about not the planet, but you know what I'm talking about. But think about that as a tube, and that tube isn't necessarily you, when you can put things into that tube, but not everything is going to become a part of your human tissue, not everything is going to get pulled into your circulatory system, into your blood stream, alright. There's a process of differentiation that takes place, there's a process of determining what is allowable to enter your tissue matrix that takes place within that tube, within that hose. Now, here's the thing, when there is damage to that hose, when there is punctures, it's kind of like, if you have a garden hose yourself and you've got little holes that are poked into it, what's going to happen?

Stuff's going to start getting where it's not supposed to get. It's going to start spraying out, right?

It's going to be popping up little holes and sprinkling out here or there, and getting things wet in the environment if we're talking about this analogy, that maybe you're not trying to get wet, maybe you're trying to water your lawn and now you're getting the sidewalk all wet, because that hose is punctured. So, this is what's happening within our gastrointestinal tract, when we have this phenomenon, it's called "leaky gut," but where there are punctures or perforations in that hose, that things are getting into places that they're not supposed to be, right? And so, this can set off an immune response, an immune response that can be very detrimental to our health. So, this is really the hallmark or the foundation of many autoimmune conditions that are taking place because of the damage that's being done to our gut. Now, the symptoms can be widespread, the symptoms, we tend to think, okay, if there's an issue with my gut and the integrity of my gut, then I'm going to have gut pain.

Now that might not be the case, even though we have about 70 million Americans annually have gut related gastrointestinal diseases, 70 million Americans annually. It's a huge chunk of our population, but it's not always going to be a physical manifestation in the gut itself or things related to symptoms like IBS, for example, or Crohns, or the like. This can be... Again, this creates systemic issues, somebody can have an issue with the integrity of their gut and they're out picturing their symptoms can be skin issues, their symptoms can be arthritic issues, their symptoms can be migraines. So, things that seem to be taking place miles away in the body are a result of what's happening in the gut, alright? So, now again, even as I say this, miles away, that's simply not the case. We tend to think about that when we're thinking about how the human body is connected, like, why would my head hurt if I have something happening with my gut? It doesn't make sense. The issue is in my head.

And not understanding that it's not miles away, as a matter of fact, it is one. Your head is literally connected to your gut, and there are an immense amount of nerves and nerve fibers that are connecting these two entities. The vagus nerve has become popular right now, Vagus is popping. So, it's a primary nerve connecting the human gut and the human brain, and it's constantly feeding data back and forth about the state of affairs in both the gut and the brain, but primarily most of the data is getting fed from your gut instructing your brain. For example, what the needs might be, whatever nutrient deficiencies or caloric needs are going on, and what the body has kind of stowed away. And your gut can send data to your brain and informing what your status is and your brain can literally send data back telling your gut, Hey, go ahead and increase your assimilation of calories or turn it down.

This is what is not talked about in most programs when people are wanting to lose weight or to improve their health. We have this calorie paradigm; we don't understand that there are

epicaloric controllers that are determining what your body is actually doing with the calories that you consume. Whether or not it's even assimilating most of the calories that you're consuming or if it's a minority amount, this is all talking about this interconnection, and today we've got a very special guest to talk about how this connection impacted her life, or lack thereof, the connection being a little bit stifled and from that in her process of discovery and healing and how that became a movement where she's impacted the lives of some of the people that you watch on the big screen on movies, and folks that you might see on the biggest stages whether it's the basketball court or the baseball diamond, she's behind the scenes fueling these folks bodies with the best building material and taking their performance to another level. And so really, really excited about this episode. Now, one of the things that we share in common, one of our mutual loves, my special guest and I, and it's something that's a part of her programs, is the storied benefit of very specific medicinal mushrooms.

And one of those being Cordyceps, Cordyceps. Now, Cordyceps, this was featured in a randomized placebo-controlled trial that was published in the Journal Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, and it tested 30 healthy athletes for six weeks to record the effects of Cordyceps on their performance. The group that added Cordyceps to their daily regimen had twice the oxygen intake of the control group, and this oxygen by the way, of course, is essential in supplying nutrients to the muscles, preventing fatigue and also preventing the build-up of lactic acid, meaning you can go further, you can go another further, you can keep it moving, you have more capacity. Another study that was done by the same group also showed a 9% increase in aerobic activity from utilizing Cordyceps, this can be a night and day difference, this can be the ability to go an extra two minutes in the UFC match. So, when you hear 9%, that is a significant increase in aerobic capacity. So, what's going on here? How is this possible? Well, we know that Cordyceps has an affinity towards the cardiovascular system and also specifically lung tissue, there's even some great data coming forward about being able to help with reducing the symptoms of conditions like asthma and allergies and things of the like, but this is news to us today, because of our peer review data, but our cultures throughout history for literally thousands of years have been utilizing Cordyceps...

Chaga is another one that's wonderful. Chaga is the highest source of antioxidants of anything that humans regularly consume throughout our evolution. If you think about high antioxidant foods like acai that are very popular, or goji berries or even chocolate, Chaga has more. Chaga is the most antioxidant dense nutrition source that we have access to, it's really, really remarkable, and there are also several studies looking at the connection between Chaga and its anti-cancer capacities as well. So, there's something really remarkable with Chaga, with Cordyceps. Reishi is another one, but the key here is making sure that the medicinal mushrooms that we're utilizing that they're dual extracted, meaning it's a hot water extract and an alcohol extract to get all the compounds, to get these benefits that we're talking about here. One extraction method is not enough, and you probably don't want the duty for most

folks of doing both extraction methods yourself or buying two different products to try to get one benefit. This is why I love Four Sigmatic so much because they do both and they make it easy, simple, easy on-the-go packs, organic medicinal mushrooms, elixirs, and they also combine them, if you're a fan of coffee, you can get organic coffee that is blended, that is combined with wonderful medicinal mushrooms as well.

And also they've got a great Reishi hot Cocoa that I make for my son, it's one of my son's favorite things, my youngest son, it's a highlight of many of his days, he kind of starts his day like I do, I'll have the Lion's Mane coffee is my favorite, Lion's Mane and Chaga, and I'll make my son the Reishi hot Cocoa many days to start our day. So really, really big fan of Four Sigmatic, it's a daily part of my regimen, highly recommend them. Head over there, check 'em out it's foursigmatic.com/model, that's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model. You get a special 10% off discount of all their wonderful medicinal mushroom elixirs, medicinal mushroom coffees and hot cocoas and so much more. Pop over there, and check 'em out, foursigmatic.com/model, let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled, “Wake up people” by [mypuppy101](#). “Shawn, every week I wait for your podcast to drop, so excited to see what your topic will be. Never disappoints me. I've just finished your episode with Dr. Johnny Bowden, and I just want to scream out to people to listen to this and wake up. The information in this show is so empowering. Keep up the great work.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that so much. Thank you, thank you, thank you for sharing your voice over on Apple Podcast, means the world to me, and if you have yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave your review for The Model Health Show. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Mary Shenouda, and she's a highly sought-after performance chef and specialist. Emphasis on the chef part because man, can she cook. Her clients include both professional athletes and Hollywood entertainers. Mary is also the creator and founder of Phat Fudge, P-H-A-T, Phat Fudge, pretty hot and tempting, a high-performance food line of her own formulation.

And Phat Fudge is really, again, in Los Angeles, you could find it at, an array of health food stores, even the most prestigious Erewhon Market for example, carries this amazing Phat Fudge. And after almost two decades of suffering from debilitating illnesses that really appeared to be a mystery to her physicians, and that prescription drugs continued to fail to resolve, she took matters into her own hands and devoted years of personal research into foods that she was putting into her body, and eventually she decided to change the way that she was eating and had incredible... And you're going to hear about this story, resolution to her issues that she's been dealing with literally four years, within months, and this new lease on life would lead her to leave her career in the tech world and start a performance-focused

private chef consulting practice. Now, again, Mary has had an impact on so many different professional athletes and entertainers that you see again on the big and on their respective field of play, but so many everyday folks have been impacted by or were impacted by Phat Fudge and impacted by her mantra that has been impressed upon culture, which is to Eat, Play and Crush. So really, really pumped about this conversation, let's jump into this interview with the amazing Mary Shenouda. Welcome to the show, Mary. This is very special to have you here.

MARY SHENOUDA: Incredibly special.

SHAWN STEVENSON: There's Something About Mary.

MARY SHENOUDA: There's a lot of things about Mary. I'm sorry.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course. We're going to get into it all. The first thing I want to ask you about, of course, your client base is some of the most, absolutely exceptional athletes on the planet, and people we see on the big screen, some of the stuff you get to share with me personally, but we have this concept in our culture, there's this glorified diet that if everybody can just get this particular diet, everybody's going to be set. So, with you working with all these incredible people over the years, and also just everyday folks, is there a one-size-fits-all diet for everybody?

MARY SHENOUDA: You wish right? It would just be so simple, but it is really diverse, so with my clients, every single one of them is different and it's all based on their body chemistry, we're doing tons of comprehensive testing and finding what works for them, and it gets really detailed, 'cause some of these people are elite level athletes, but my philosophy, even though I'm known as Paleo chef, is Pale-you. What works for me...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Pale-you, I love that.

MARY SHENOUDA: May not work for you, and what worked today may not work in six months, and so even if you find a diet that is working great for you now, you're going to evolve, you might change environments, and that's going to cause you to evolve and it is a moving target, which the more time you spend understanding your body and your body's chemistry and the way your body is going to react to foods, the easier it is going to be for you to understand when you need to pivot. But the idea that one-size fits all is false, and I do say if you have somebody who is preaching this one diet, this one modality, run.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Run. This is one of the things that I saw, and I connected with you on early on, was you seeing that because most folks believe that their thing is the thing, and I think we all can be guilty of that at some point, especially if something has helped us so much,

we want to tell the whole world about that thing, but getting to a place where you understand... And there's this term that I'm grateful is starting to integrate our culture, which is metabolic individuality, and so you using that in your practice, paying attention to the person, and not just my thing is going to be your thing, but you do, of course, have some really important principles and I think your principles evolved because of what you went through yourself, and if you could, let's talk a little bit about that because you struggled for years with some particular health issues that... And I want to talk about two parts of it, let's talk about the story and how it was kind of written off for so long as being something that was psychosomatic.

MARY SHENOUDA: I started getting really bad migraines in second grade, and just continued that through grade school, junior high, high school, and into my 20s, migraines that would turn into hives, hormone issues. You start going to the doctor at a young age, and they prescribe you things that don't make sense, and... At one point I came home from the doctor, and I looked up the medication they gave me, it was antipsychotics, and I was like, "What is this for? I don't understand how this helps my migraine," they're like, "Oh, I just thought maybe it was depression or psychosomatic," and you're feeling really betrayed and you go through pain for that long... And I have photos on my Instagram of the types of hives and the swollenness of my stomach, but you're in pain so much, and I'm a really active kid, that you come to terms with it where you're like, this is just going to be my normal. And you're going to... I actually had a moment where I spoke to God, I'm like, "Look, if this is going to be my normal... If I'm going to be in pain every day, please just make sure someone somewhere else is suffering less." I had to make sense of it in that way, and I'd be in the ER at least once a month, because I would be vomiting to the point where I would black out and then somebody would find me and then I'd be rushed to the hospital. When you're young, and they find you like that, they assume you overdosed on drugs, so they're yelling at you, calling you a liar.

"You have to tell us what you took" and you're like, "I swear it's just a horrible migraine," and it's frustrating 'cause you feel betrayed by doctors, you feel betrayed by western medicine, and then you don't get to have a good quality of life. And a couple of the stories I share is, I dropped out of high school as a junior, went straight into corporate technology, and so I'm the youngest by 10-15 years, which means I can't perform at their level, I have to perform above their level, to justify my role, 'cause they're looking for that one, that one mistake you're going to make, and I have migraines, so I'm sitting at my desk with sunglasses 'cause I don't want to go home because I don't want them to think that I can't cut it. And then when you're a girl, they're like, "Oh, did a boy break up with you?" And you're like, if you only knew my head hurts so much right now.

Like when I played basketball, the migraines would affect my eyesight. I had a coach that was really understanding of that and she knew I loved to play, so she would time when she would

put me in the game, I would have a head wrap on and that would give me pressure so I could see, and I would tap her, would take the headband off, would go in, do a couple of plays, look at her, she'd send me out 'cause she knew that I was about to lose sight again...

So, we were making all these like these modifications to still live a life, and it wasn't until my last ER visit at 24 or 25, where they give you morphine and some other medications via IV and they don't actually help the migraine, they just knock you out. But there's side effects to that and it creates this massive anxiety in my body and I'm starting to have a panic attack, I'm like, "You know what, I want to understand what is causing my migraine," and now I'm starting to be as type A in that moment as I am everywhere else in my life, and I was very... It was very dramatic. I ripped the IV out of my arm, I'm like, "Screw this, I'm out of here, I'm going to figure this out on my own." And then I started to do a deeper dive into understanding the mechanism of a migraine? Alright, what's happening to my vessels? Okay. What happens on a cellular level? Okay, the mitochondria, then I remember a report I did on the mitochondria in high school. Well, my partner and I re-wrote the song, the lyrics to the Beastie Boys song about mitochondria. Got to fight for your right to ATP, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my God! Oh.

MARY SHENOUDA: And so, it's like, "Whoa," I had the answers. And then in junior high, I had done a paper on how I believed ADHD and autism was autoimmune-related, and I did a prototype of a bar that had nutrient... And it's like, "Mary, you've been sitting on this for a while." And I found the TED Talk by Dr. Terry Wahls, and that was my gateway into, "Okay, I'm just going to change the way that I eat." And then I did labs that were out of pocket 'cause they weren't covered by my insurance to test for autoimmune, and while my blood tests that the doctors had given me were saying I wasn't celiac, the cheek swab and the stool test definitely said, "You carry both genes." So, I was pumped, I was like, "Okay, I just don't eat these foods," and three months later, every pain in my body, including the headaches were gone. I woke up without a headache and I thought I was dead. I was like, "Wait. This feels like a trick." And it was confusing. I actually shook my head around waiting for the familiar pain to come back and it didn't, and that I rode with that for six or seven months, and then that was sort of the beginning of leaving tech and then doing what I'm doing, investigating with athletes and entertainers and finding what's going to make them optimal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, this is so remarkable. I haven't heard anybody else articulate some of these things that I've seen first-hand as well. When the thing is gone, you kind of look for it, like, "Where's that pain that I was having?", like trying to find... And also, there might be some fear tied there too, that I'll find it again. And so, you got to learn how to live your life without it, like you said, you woke up, you were like, "Is this the... Is this heaven? What's going on here?" You know.

MARY SHENOUDA: I mean, that ties in other things when we're so used to something, even if it's not good for us, and then it's not there, why are you looking for it still? That's a whole other conversation, but it's like, yeah, like, wait. Don't come back, and then there's a fear of it coming back, what do I eat that day? What if I eat that and it comes back, that type of thing, but it's much deeper and yet I've always been somewhat aware of that side of things...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and you were really a good... You are a good canvas for this because, like you said, you're type A in all these other areas of your life. But you had kind of outsourced this part, having to do with your health and your internal landscape out to other people who are not just telling you they can't really do anything about it necessarily, but even kind of downplaying it and telling you essentially this was all in your head. How frustrating was that?

MARY SHENOUDA: Incredibly frustrating, 'cause you're telling them, "This is how I feel, this is what's going on." They're like, "No, you're not." And I'm like, "Bro, I've been in this body for 25 years", 37 now, "25 years, but for you to tell me based off of a couple of appointments, what's going on doesn't make sense" and it's where I built around the idea that when I'm seeking out a professional or seeking out colleagues, now, when I'm working with my athletes and we have an anomaly, I'm not looking for the smartest person in the room, looking for the most curious person in the room. I make a living on saying, "I don't know, but we're going to figure this out." When someone says, "I know" definitively, I'm like, "Peace."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Run.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, again, like I mentioned you were a good canvas for it because that personality type that you carry, where you're going to be more inquisitive, where you're going to be more driven to figure things out... You had to go through that, so you understand what other people are dealing with, and for you to even say when you were dealing with that, you were hoping somebody else, at least, there was some kind of an outlet where this pain you're experiencing, someone else is experiencing something less somehow because of it or related to it. You created a context where that was still acceptable, when in reality, what you were going through, it didn't have to be, it never did, but this brought you to the life that you have today where you've impacted so many people, and it's really remarkable. But I want to circle back to that TED talk showing up as well, with Terry Wahls. I talk... We had her own... It was years ago now.

MARY SHENOUDA: She is the queen.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. She's a boss, for sure.

MARY SHENOUDA: Her son is a boss too, that's just... Queen.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We'll put that episode for everybody in the show notes as well, Dr. Terry Wahls, and... But this brought you into this domain of understanding the connection, because again, this is something you're experiencing upstairs, right, your head, you've got these migraines, but not really seeing the connection up until closer to that point of something happening with your gut. Right? So, let's talk about that connection, because I think a lot of folks... Today we've got about 70 million Americans have digestive diseases, and we tend to think it's just, if something is wrong with our belly, you've got a belly ache or something, some off-shoot of that, or maybe IBS, but you might have gut issues and it's affecting your skin, for example, or your migraine...

MARY SHENOUDA: Your mood. The way you show up in relationships, your emotional responses to things, the rash on your knee, the cracking of your joints, your arthritis... Almost... I don't want to say everything, but a lot of things can tie back to that, and then sometimes your emotional state can impact your gut, and then that impacts your symptoms that your body is presenting, so it is always connected. It's like when I'm talking to any client, I go, "I want to know how you're feeling head-to-toe." 'Cause something you may not think is related could be related. And I'm usually heartbroken when someone tells me, "Oh yeah, I just have IBS, I've had it for 10 years." You don't just have, it's not a diagnosis, it's a symptom. And so, trying to get people to understand a lot of what you've been diagnosed with is actually a symptom, and we can make that symptom potentially go away through some time, patience and testing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, two things here, number one, I love that you mention this being a symptom, because we tend to... Again, our identity, especially if we dealt with something for a long time, it becomes our identity. So, "I am diabetic," instead of understanding it's a condition. And your condition, your diabetes is not like anybody else's diabetes who's ever existed on planet Earth and ever will exist. Anybody in the future as well, because we're all so unique. It's a category of symptoms, and you get a blanket label when your body is very different. So that's number one. And number two, if you could articulate a little more, let's dig in here, how was your gut health or lack thereof causing issues with migraines for you?

MARY SHENOUDA: So, I have celiac disease, so I can't process the protein gluten. And so, in layman's terms, I eat that, it causes massive inflammation, 'cause I can't break it down. And it causes all these little, microscopic holes, people know this as leaky gut. And then I'm being malnourished, 'cause I can't actually absorb the nutrients from good foods. So, no matter what I was trying to add to my diet because I wasn't removing a culprit, I was sort of doing myself a

huge disservice. And that was then creating this... Inflammation now is like a catch-all phrase, but it's causing this widespread inflammation. And so, something I don't usually talk about, 'cause I don't want them to think it's weight loss, but I lost like 25, 30 pounds also.

And it wasn't weight, it was just widespread inflammation my body was holding on to, and it was the hives, the headaches. So now, if I get gluten-ed by accident, within 20 minutes, that cycle starts all over again. And if someone has an autoimmune disease related to something like gluten, which they don't know... And this may have changed, but the last time I was looking at how long it takes for that repair, or for that damage to repair, the last time you ate gluten, it takes up to two years for the host of damage in your body to repair. So, when someone's like, "Oh, I just had a little bit of gluten," and I'm like, "You just started the clock all over again." 'Cause your body has to repair multiple functions over the course of time from something that you were putting in your body consistently.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, this helps to bring the distinction between an autoimmune condition that can be exacerbated by interacting with gluten. Well, will be, versus somebody having a sensitivity to it, is that accurate?

MARY SHENOUDA: It is. I haven't done a deeper dive in the sensitivity aspect of how long it takes for that damage to repair. In general, when I'm working with clients, I'm looking at inflammatory markers. And we're just removing all the known culprits, and then any of the nuanced culprits, like if they have cantaloupe for example, or lemon, remove that. And because what I'm doing is so like in the moment with the athlete, get them going, I haven't done a deeper dive in if you're sensitive if a little bit's okay. 'Cause people do say a little bit's okay, whereas my reaction to that is if your body is telling you, "I don't like this," I don't think you should have it. But if it's like I'm on vacation, I want to enjoy something, I also want people to enjoy their lives, I guess it's like what is it impacting when it comes to sensitivity. What's your thought on that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I mean, some of the best data we have, there's this zonulin, this... There's this chemical cascade that takes place whenever we eat any food. But there are specific mechanisms that take place in the human body when interacting with this wheat-related protein, it can be in other foods as well.

MARY SHENOUDA: Like casein and all those other things that come up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And so zonulin, it incites the separation of our... The lining of our gut, right? And the... It's kind of this really remarkable... I like to think of this like a netting. But it would be more akin to like... You played tennis, like the racket size of a net, where certain things, very specific things, are able to move from the external aspect of the gut into your

circulation. But this compound, zonulin, can make that go from a tennis racket scale to the tennis net scale, right? Where things are now getting into circulation that aren't supposed to be there. And the vast majority of folks tested have that interaction take place to some degree, right? But it could be so minuscule that you never notice, and it's not a big deal. But this also leans into the conversation about what we're actually eating today versus what our ancestors might have had, because it's not just the wheat for most people, it's the glyphosate, it's the fact that it's this genetically modified dwarf wheat that human DNA has never really interacted with and the fact that it's in everything. So, we got to put everything in context for us. And I love that you said that just it's not about... Unless you have a condition where this is straight-up damaging you, it's not about being neurotic or anything like that, you can still live your life and not be afraid to get wheat-ed... Is that what you said earlier? Gluten-ed, gluten-ed.

MARY SHENOUDA: Gluten-ed. But more... It's more of like... When you talk about the netting, to use your analogy, it's what I'm not clear on, is so if somebody's sensitive, and that netting expands, how long does it take for someone who's sensitive for it to come back down versus someone who has celiac where it's like, "Oh, we're just stuck here for a little while." And that's why I'm even imagining with someone who's sensitive, the sensitivities are going to vary based on the person.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely.

MARY SHENOUDA: And that's why Pale-you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Pale-you, I love that so much.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, to take this a step further, there can be... Obviously for folks as they're trying to dial in what's best for them in their particular diet... And again, you've worked with all these amazing people over the years, do you like to take the approach of just doing a general kind of avoidance of certain foods to get started, and then integrating things as you go along, because you've got this wonderful Reset program, and I want to talk about that because you don't necessarily jive with... And I say, Jive because also you like jazz. See, I know all these little things about you.

MARY SHENOUDA: Jazz, baseball and hip-hop.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's Mary in a nutshell.

MARY SHENOUDA: It is.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But understanding that these terms have been a little bit twisted in our culture now, of detox, for example, so you have a Gut Reset protocol, let's talk about the distinction here, and then also going into a Gut Reset for somebody to actually heal their gastrointestinal tract and their gut.

MARY SHENOUDA: So, the Gut Reset is the first time I'd ever shared a private protocol with my clients with the public, and it was scary to share... You want me to work with the GOAT one-on-one? No problem, you want me to send something to the general population for them to do by themselves. I was terrified, but so far, so great, the stories that I'm getting from folks, but the way that I work with clients is they come to me, we're going to start to put together the map of what they should be putting in their body, food, supplementation, and then all the recovery stuff. Now, if they come to me and they are eating a standard diet or eating basically whatever they want, and I test them right away, I'm going to get a baseline of what they were eating and we already know they're not going to be eating those things anymore, so I put them on a one-week reset, which is a specific bone broth made with different spices from my culture, from Egypt, and then these nutrient-dense foods that repeat themselves, it's three days of just this broth, and then 4 through 7 is just repeating foods.

And different clients will experience different levels of inflammation loss, some of it's actually quite impressive as the amount of inflammation they lose, but throughout that experience, they're having symptoms, and I have them document the whole process, everything, whether it's bad, like "I had a headache" or "I had a rash" or "this happened to my tongue," 'cause all of that's data points and I tell them whether this is a breeze for you or it's uncomfortable, every piece of information that you give me is telling us a story of what we're going to tackle next. So for the general population, it has a journal format, so you would take that to a functional medicine doctor, like "I did this reset, what happens next?" because what happens next with me one-on-one with a client is like, "Okay, great, with all this information, now we're going to run labs after this week," and now I'm going to know clearly what your baseline is when the inflammation is gone, when you have some nutrient density in your diet, and then we build the diet from there with that information using a team. I'm not the smartest person in the room, I'm the... I don't feel like the Julie McCoy analogy works anymore. I think anybody knows who Julie McCoy is. "The Love Boat." She's the one that... She's the Tour Director, she tells everyone where to go and what to get again, and it's kind of her role by the way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay, you're going to drop an analogy no one gets. I love it.

MARY SHENOUDA: And so, I work with functional medicine doctors, dietitians, food chemists, 'cause I've built use cases over 10 years, and they're all... Could be considered anecdotal because they're individual, but I know what works, has worked and what could work if there's

some anomaly, and then I use the really smart people to validate those hypothesis, when I'm going to put together the program for someone, so that Gut Reset is the kicking off point, if you are going to start a new diet or start a new performance plan or starting to investigate what's going on with your body. And then after that point, everyone likes to revisit the reset after long bouts of travel when they're feeling a little run-down, when they're feeling a little inflamed or sometimes, they're like, I just want to do a four-day version of it. So it's similar to what happened with Phat Fudge is, I put it out there, and then people are telling me how they best use it, 'cause I have my use case, and what's been really cool is hearing a few different doctors have replaced a different reset, that's a little more well-known with my reset in their practice, and I was like, That's pretty bad ass, I feel really humbled by that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's amazing.

MARY SHENOUDA: Makes my mom happy since I'm not a doctor, she's like, "Oh, so you're like a doctor."

MARY SHENOUDA: Sure mom, I'm like a doctor.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I mean even the track that you took, that's not going to be culturally congruent, especially immigrant parents and the whole thing... I know that expectation of you moving on from high school, but of course, you clearly... You're super intelligent. And even in that moment, I think that, if I remember the story correctly, you had almost enough credits to graduate in your junior year and you're like, "I'm done actually."

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, yeah, it was... High school wasn't a joyous experience for me, and the irony is, I'm the first person in the whole family extended not to go to college, so it's very much the opposite in the current story, and my parents are very academic, biochemist and engineer, and so I went in to just figure out my credits for senior year, and she was like, Oh, you just need four credits, or it was like three or four credit, something like that, I assumed it was just for my junior year, she's like, No, you've had Honors classes. You're pretty much done, I'm like, Y'all want me to stay here in this miserable place for another year and a half? I'm good, I'm good. And I chose to drop out. And may have forged some signatures, and my parents didn't know for a little while... I've never been defiant like that too, I was a good kid.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You got to do what you got to do some time, but seriously though, I think that for your parents, even to this point, just even picking up, as I remember the story, for them, it doesn't necessarily mean that, of course they're agreeing with your decision, that whole thing, but just having the ability to hold a space to have conversations, to understand, not to even say that there's not going to be conflict, but to trust that you had an intention and

you were walking in a certain direction, and also, of course, to see the results at some point as well.

MARY SHENOUDA: I mean, I'm sure... They weren't sure like, "What is she doing?" I think it wasn't until I was like 28 that they stopped asking me about going back to school, but I moved out when I was 17. My mom was in tears helping me pack the car. This is very much if you know parents are like, under our roof, our rules. I go, cool, I'll just not be under the roof, so I don't disrespect anything here. But I'm really lucky that while they may not agree with my decisions, they've never asked me to be anything other than who I am. It doesn't mean we don't argue about who I am at times, but I'm very grateful for that. And it wasn't until I was a little bit older that I realized that not a lot of kids get that, which is why I try to pay it forward in some of the volunteer work and efforts we have with my other business to try to pay that essence forward.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. That's what I picked up from it just... It's a beautiful thing, because of course, being a parent it's very... You really... As a parent, you have experience and you really feel like you know what's best, but it's also there needs to be some grace involved to understand that that person has their own soul assignment in a sense. You know? So to help create conditions, and so I saw a little bit of that in your story. But I want to ask you about... Again, you intentionally used the word reset versus a cleanse.

MARY SHENOUDA: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Why is that?

MARY SHENOUDA: When I hear cleanse, when I hear detox, I think juice, I think celery juice for like six days. I think rapid weight loss. I think something gimmicky. I think it's a promise for something. And I'm sure the origin of those words aren't those things, but it's the way it has been used in marketing. And I even say in the Gut Reset, if you bought this thinking, you're going to lose weight, please email me for a refund. Like, that's not the purpose of it. And it was just really the aversion to... It's like, I feel the same way about the authenticity, it's been used in marketing in such a way that it makes my soul cringe, and so, a reset is something where you're like, being kind to yourself, you're just like... We're just resetting.

MARY SHENOUDA: It's super chill. There wasn't a crazy thought behind it other than like, I don't want to be categorized as those things. This is nutrient density, and it does... It mimics... It has a fasting mimicking protocol to it. It does have an elimination protocol to it, but it has dense foods that are just... I also don't like the word superfood. What is a superfood? If it makes you feel super, then it's your superfood, but it might make someone else feel like crap. So, I talk about nutrient density. And that's... I wanted the education to be around that rather than

it potentially being... I don't want it ever to be marketed as like a weight loss program, and I think if I use those words, it would have had the wrong eyes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's powerful. Again, your insights, just witnessing these things. So on the money, this is where everything is going. You tend to be a little ahead of the curve, you know?

MARY SHENOUDA: I've been pushing gut protocols, and a lot of what you see now for 10 years professionally but been talking about it since I was in the seventh grade. And now it's becoming easier to have these conversations with athletes' organizations, before they'd be like, we don't have time for this. We're kind of win championships. I'm like, but if you validate their sleep score against their recovery time, and now it's, I get invited to the conversation versus being the squeaky wheel. Or last month, in the same... It was just the coolest day, three different doctors from three different backgrounds all called me to ask me what I thought would support a case they have nutritionally. When before doctors would be like, oh, your food doesn't really affect this, and now doctors want to have those conversations. I almost died in the hospital last year, I think almost a year ago. They gave me some whack medication, and I told them the whole time, I shouldn't have this medication, I shouldn't have this medication. Gave it to me, within seconds, they had to give me an antidote. There's like, six doctors in the room, and I just remember seeing the tips of my feet as my eyes were rolling to the back of my head thinking, this is a sh*tty way to die. I'm like, this is not how I want to go out, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Not like this. Not like this.

MARY SHENOUDA: And after I was stable and they were watching me, they offered me Oreos. And I'm like, do you see my chart, I have celiac disease. Oh, okay, do you want like a Fig Newton? Celiac disease. And again, I just went through this massive experience, and I'm still sort of dry-heaving and I'm like, I'm going to make it my mission to overhaul the food system in the hospital. And there was one doctor in the room who was like, I know that I don't know, and I'm really intrigued by what you know. And so, before there would never be a doctor like that in the room. So, I'm really lucky I never bailed on the message and the soul journey, 'cause I could have bailed on this, and be like, nobody wants to hear about gut health, I'll just stay in tech. But now it's like, okay, I stuck through it, and now it's like, whew, finally...

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's changing, you know?

MARY SHENOUDA: Takes a long time to get to just the beginning.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Oh, so good. Bar, that was a bar, right there.

MARY SHENOUDA: And here we are.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, because I don't think folks realize how difficult it is to change things when the system is just chucking along day-to-day in our healthcare system. We know that based on some data from folks at Harvard, one of the most prestigious, even if you say the name, that the education is not obsolete, but significantly big chunks of it, just within a year or two of the persons graduating from medical school, things change so quickly. And so, the integration now of food, which would be cap... It just seems Captain Obvious, once you get it, it's just so obvious.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: They're just brushing it off as this non-factor essentially in your health outcomes for years just because it's not taught. It's not a part of the curriculum, or it's a tiny, maybe 1% portion, even for folks who go to school for gastroenterology. The organs dealing with the digestion and assimilation, and elimination of food, not learning about food except for maybe a couple of weeks tops. But now, of course, things are shifting because of the state of things, of course, if you just look at the results, how are we doing? It's not working out very well, but as you mentioned, more of these terms being on people's minds, like detoxes and cleanses, but... I'm so grateful you said this, marketers really screw things up. I've been saying this for a long time. It's probably 16 years ago now, that my mother-in-law constructed the first... I saw it first-hand with my wife, she was dealing with this particular health issue, and to be able to recover from it, doing this protocol she put together was a cleanse...

She called it a cleanse and I was just blown away. It really got me into this field at this level, 'cause I was a... I was a strength and conditioning coach and I had very kind of superficial approaches with nutrition, but I had the moniker of eating real food, like let's get the best quality, whatever it is, let's get the best quality of that thing, but that really turned me on to how the body already knows what to do and just getting out of the way, and so that cleansing protocol, next thing you know, 10 years later, then it's like you got your cleanse tea, you've got this product, that product. And like you just mentioned also authenticity being used as a marketing tool instead of just being authentic.

MARY SHENOUDA: Instead of just be, just do it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just a thing. It's just like breathing, until you frame it in a certain way. Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back.

Very often it's the small things that can make the greatest impact. Archimedes said, if you give me a lever and a place to stand, I can move the world. It's all about leverage, it's all about

positionality. And the same thing holds true when it comes to human health and performance. It is truly honoring the things that give us the greatest leverage. No process can happen in the human body without this remarkable sodium potassium pump. This exchange helps our mitochondria to create fuel, this exchange helps our heart to beat, this exchange helps all of our brain cells to communicate, nothing is taking place without electrolytes. Electrolytes are minerals that carry an electric charge, and also, we've got mountains of peer-reviewed evidence as to their efficacy, with every single area of human health. For example, our cognitive ability depends mightily on the function of electrolytes. Take sodium, for example, not only is sodium required to help to maintain fluid balance in your brain itself, a study conducted by researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as a literal on-off switch in the brain for specific neurotransmitters that support optimal function and protect the brain against numerous diseases like epilepsy, like neuropathic pain, how simple, how foundational, how much leverage we can get from making sure that we're getting adequate amounts of the right type of sodium.

Fascinating new study published in the Journal Neuron found that another remarkable electrolyte, essential electrolyte, magnesium is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve cognitive function, truly, we can fight so hard, so mightily to find nutrients, specific foods that can help to bolster our cognitive performance, but it really boils down, first and foremost to leverage and our electrolytes are that leverage. Now, what about the immune system? This is something that is on a lot of people's minds today. Well, the meta-analysis published in the Annals of Clinical Biochemistry titled Electrolyte imbalances in patients with severe Coronavirus disease, COVID-19. It analyzed five studies with nearly 1500 patients with COVID-19 and found that both sodium and potassium, another critical electrolyte were significantly lower in patients with severe COVID-19. Now, this should raise a lot of flags, this should raise up our antennas to understand, hey, what's going on here with our electrolytes? Is electrolyte deficiency leading to worse health outcomes, severity COVID-19 or is COVID-19 and any infectious disease requiring electrolyte for the healing process for an appropriate immune response to be mounted?

The answer is it's both. And the answer is, we've got to ensure that we're getting high quality electrolytes in the right ratios. This is why myself, my family, utilizes LMNT, L-M-N-T. Go to drinkL-M-N-T.com/model, and you're going to get to try LMNT for free. They're going to send it right to your door, you just pay a little bit in shipping, you get to try a variety pack of LMNT. This remarkable electrolyte is not coming along with any binders and fillers, and artificial colors and flavors, no sugar, any of that stuff, just the high-quality electrolytes that you need to thrive. So, check them out. Again, it's getting shipped right to your door. Go to drinkL-M-N-T.com/model. Get your electrolytes optimized today. Now, back to the show.

I want to talk to you about a portion of your reset that it's been around a long time, but you're intentionally putting it in here and its bone broth, why bone broth? Why is that a portion of... A significant portion of the program.

MARY SHENOUDA: So, these things that are trendy right now, have been parts of cultures forever. Bone broth has been a part of my life since I was a child, and so learning from my mom and my grandmother the healing power of it, again, it's that seeing the anecdotal information and reverse engineering it with validating it through science, and I don't like the idea of... Juice cleanses?

'Cause I don't understand how that's going to help repair things in your body, whereas bone broth... Something as simple as somebody drinking bone broth for three or four days and seeing their skin quality change, it's like, what do you... Okay, now, when you see your skin change, what do you think is happening? Now, how does that relate to your joints? How does that relate to your sleep quality? What do you think is happening to the lining of your gut? 'Cause your skin is telling you, "I like this", so the inside of your body is saying, "I like this too." And so, I really feel like a lot of people need to have that experience to understand the power of bone broth, 'cause if I just tell them, "Well, it really helps solve the repair of the lining of your gut, I think. It's like WD-40 for your joints", they kind of overlook it. Even bone broth becoming trendy right now, I will... When I see bone broth in the shelving rather than the freezer, I get really sad, I'm like, "Bone broth should not live with the pasta on the shelf... What is this? Mud water? What is this?"

And so, the first three days, it's the bone broth, so you're getting dense nutrients and then it's also helping absorb a lot of the spices, and the... There's liver in the bone broth, there's dandelion greens in the bone broth, there's nutmeg in the bone broth, and... The fat in there, and the collagen in there is helping with the absorption, and the delivery system, and the bioavailability of the power of those other spices as well. It's also giving you energy and all the good stuff. And then moving into the food portion, bone broth stays in there in lower amounts, 'cause I'm trying to form a habit. I want you to be like, "I don't need to drink bone broth as a soup, I can just have it as a cup with my breakfast." So, then you can continue that on, moving forward. And people will notice the difference in how they feel, and their digestion, and their skin when they have bone broth and then they'll notice the change when they cut it out: Like oh I look kind of drab... Or feel some kind of way."

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that indicator, the skin. Because your skin is sort of like the last place to even get the love, so you just know that that regeneration is definitely happening with your joints, and your ligaments, and your gut lining, like you mentioned. That's one of the things across the board, I know you hear this all the time about people getting on the bone

broth protocol, and their skin just starts to glow and reaches a different level of health. And I know you keep your clients confidential.

But this reminds me of what happened with... Basically, extending at a pretty high level, Kobe Bryant's career, Dr. Cate Shanahan and her wonderful self as well, getting the Lakers on board and bone broth... So, when he would travel, he would find ways to make sure that the hotel that they're staying at, whatever, they're making bone broth.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, yeah. So, all my clients, athletes especially at away games, everything they eat and drink is formulated by me and prepared by me. So, at away games, they have a freezer bag, that has boil bags of their meals, their bone broth, their pre-game, their mid-game... They're on that. And what's cool is that the athletes that I usually work with are at some great level, that the rest of the team or the organization's like, "Why aren't you eating with us? What are you eating? Oh, that?" And then there's that buy-in too, 'cause they see that, the change in them, and it's people like that that really incite that change through an organization. But bone broth travels with all of my clients.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's awesome, that's awesome. Another thing that I would imagine, quite a few folks, not just the people that you've worked with, but just out here on the streets, period, is Phat Fudge.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's talk about Phat Fudge. First of all, what is it? And it's spelled P-H-A-T, by the way. Pretty hot and tempting. And...

MARY SHENOUDA: Do you know that the young kids don't know that it means that? They're like, "what does phat mean?" I'm like, "what do you mean 'what does phat mean?'"

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I mean...

MARY SHENOUDA: It hurts me, oh my God! Am I that old now?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Things changed...

MARY SHENOUDA: So, I used to joke that fat makes you PHAT, fat makes you P-H-A-T, to try to get people to not fear eating higher fat. And it's tahini-based... Being Middle Eastern, tahini, to me, if there is a super food, would be considered something that's super nutrient-dense and it gives us energy. And it was, again, I'm creating something, and then I'm listening to the messages, and then I'm validating it with science. So, I was creating Phat Fudge as a recipe for

my clients, 'cause I wasn't happy with protein bars, I wasn't happy with GU packets. I needed something that was easy for them to digest and had some vital nutrients. And so, I used that, I used tahini as the vehicle, the base, and then you'd add different ingredients to it to make these little squeeze packs. And I would make the squeeze packs for my clients and also make little ice cube freezer fudges. And that recipe, still to this day, is public. And the audience... At the time, I think I had 10,000 followers, they were posting pictures of it in sandwich bags, they were taking it on runs... Mothers were like, "I used this during labor", and all this stuff, and they're like, "You need to turn this into a product." And so, I was like, "Here's the deal: I don't know what I'm doing." I was on Periscope, RIP Periscope.

I was on Periscope with a unicorn head, making fun of it like, "Here's the deal: I don't know what I'm doing. So, if you guys want to order, I put 50 orders on the website, 12 packs each. You want to order that; I'll figure out how to make it into a squeeze pack." In one hour, it sold out. Pretty dope. But it wasn't even that it sold out. When I saw who bought it, I was like, "I didn't know these people were following me... Oh my God, did I say something stupid today? Oh my gosh," I didn't realize who was paying attention. And so, I hand squeezed 600 packets. Still have the muscle to prove the work... From that... The muscle's never going away. It's ketchup bottle over a scale in my house using a vacuum sealer...

SHAWN STEVENSON: You can grab the sh*t out of somebody with this...

MARY SHENOUDA: And so... Come here! And so, I would do that every Monday 50 orders. And it got to a point where it would sell out in less than a second. And people would email me, like, "What is this, a Beyonce ticket? I set my calendar, reminder... " I'm like the recipe is still public, if you want to make it yourself. And then it got to a point where I was going to have to scale. And again, I went to my audience. I don't know what I'm doing. I'm going to figure out the co-packing world. If you guys want to pre-order it. I don't want to go on shark tank. I turned down a shark tank invitation actually. I didn't want to raise funding. I really wanted to do it the old-fashioned way through sales. So, I said, "If you guys want to pre-order over the next 30 days directly on the site, I promise you in six, you will either have a refund or a product at your doorstep". And in 30 days, over \$90,000 in sales on a product that doesn't exist, came in. And that's how I was able to initially start the business.

I almost lost it again two years ago because of manufacturing nightmare. But like that's what started it. And now... And because I had built it from scratch, like played... Wore every hat when things went sideways a couple of years ago, I was like, I did it before we'll rebuild it again. And so that was a product that I made for my athletes that I knew was working for them and working for musicians when they're on the road. And then I turned it into a consumer product. And so, everything that I make for my athletes, again, protein powders from scratch, protein waffles, the pre-game stuff, the post-game stuff, all that will eventually become products for

the main market. Because I've spent the last 10 years testing it on some of the greatest people in the world versus like being somebody who's like "Yo scientist. I think this is cool. Can you formulate this?" It's like, "No, this has been actually tested with some championship ring wearing people".

SHAWN STEVENSON: I see.

MARY SHENOUDA: Humble Brag, humble brag.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, can you... So how would you utilize Phat Fudge if somebody were to partake in the Phat Fudge phenomenon.

MARY SHENOUDA: I made it as a squeeze pack. Just shoot it. If you are an actual performance athlete, depending on your body comp one to four packets, pre-game of the original cacao and then taking the Power Berry, which is cordyceps and beets in it with the original cacao mixing that with apple sauce as a refuel halftime and then using the herbal one, which is a recovery one post-game. So, if you're an athlete. If you're someone like me and you running around, you can interchange 'em however you want. I love starting the day with it as a squeeze pack. Keeps me satiated for a long period of time when I'm traveling or like before coming and doing interview like this, now the audience, the customer base, they do that and then blend it into their coffee, like making lattes with it. They put it in their smoothies, they put it on their brownies or their ice cream to have more fun with it. But my intention was squeeze pack to replace protein bars but make it your own.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's what I've seen. Of course, when I first saw people using it, they were like putting it into stuff.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know. And so yeah. That's so awesome.

MARY SHENOUDA: I had to learn not to correct... Like, no, they have to do it...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Don't do that.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah. I was like, "Wait, no, it's a squeeze pack. What do you?" But it's like, "No, they're going to figure out the best way to fuel themselves Pale-you".

SHAWN STEVENSON: So good. So first of all, where can people get Phat Fudge and also your Gut Reset program too? We got to mention where to actually find those.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yes, so Phat Fudge is P-H-A-Tfudge.com. It has its own Instagram handle; the Gut Reset is on Paleochef.com. And then on Paleo chef across all social platforms.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay. Awesome. Awesome. Awesome. So, I'm going to bring up a little bit of a controversy that took place during the pandemic. You know, there's been a lot of infighting, a lot of divisiveness, but nothing have I seen throughout this campaign was as insightful or inciting of controversy than this tweet that I put out and I reposted the tweet on Instagram, and it got even more rumbling.

MARY SHENOUDA: Okay, okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm going to read it.

MARY SHENOUDA: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Verbatim.

MARY SHENOUDA: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I posted, "Okay. I'm going to say the thing no one else is willing to say, if people had the choice between eating a Pear and literally any other fruit, no one would choose that god*mn Pear". And man, it went bananas.

MARY SHENOUDA: I was so offended.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And specifically, you started a campaign, and just went in and it turned into a whole thing, but people are passionate about Pears.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Or their dislike of Pears.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah. And I think I went to the store and bought... That's what I forgot to bring down. I was going to bring you a basket of Pears. I forgot man. And I did a post on... I do these ingredient highlights. And so, I did an impromptu post on the benefits of Pears for your digestive system. Also, they're delicious. Also, have you ever had Baked Brie with Pear on like a Croissant? I can't...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Some say they're delicious. Others say people would choose anything else, but you know, of course I was kidding a little bit...

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's because of... So, there's some wonderful Pear varieties out there for sure. And, but for me growing up, the Pear is going to be included in like some sh*tty fruit cocktail.

MARY SHENOUDA: Oh, that's your experience with Pears?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So that's the... That was the experience growing up. It wasn't until I got older, and my palette was evolved. Having access to... But I know for example, Japanese Pears were wonderful, advent and you know, I would utilize those in cooking and just snacks and things like that. So many different, wonderful varieties. However, me putting that cookie cutter blank statement out, this is the great thing about Twitter. You could throw out a random idea. And... But people were passionate for like, some people were like, I agree, screw Pears. And other people were like, are you kidding me? And they... People had their certain ways, like it has to be at this exact time on this exact day of the month. And like it got very specific. And I'm just like, if you even need to do all that to have a good Pear, it doesn't sound like it's that appealing.

MARY SHENOUDA: I think they're delicious, but like throwing them in smoothies, I like having them with Phat Fudge on them. But it's interesting. You said your experience, how you relate to them is in those little fruit cups.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

MARY SHENOUDA: Whereas growing up in a Mediterranean home, like what's interesting is I got... Started getting sick in second grade. Second grade is when I started eating more school lunches and not my mom's food at home. That was the shift. So, the way I relate to food is what was at home, which was a fresh Pear. Like liver. I love liver. I have an amazing recipe called Bangin' Liver. It's part of the reset and I didn't understand why everyone hated liver. And then I realized how they prepare liver here in America. I went to my friend's house. I was like, what? Why is that gray? What is that?

MARY SHENOUDA: But it's how people relate to food and it's interesting, the American food system. But yeah, I think that pear post made us get back in touch, because you don't remember how we met...

SHAWN STEVENSON: We've known each other for years, alright, but apparently there was a moment in time and I'm going to remember once you tell me, so where was this?

MARY SHENOUDA: So, the thing that I noticed about you first was your energy. And it was such a lifesaver at this moment. We were both at a party in Beverly Hills.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I remember, yes. Oh wow, yes, I remember.

MARY SHENOUDA: And I had just moved to LA. So, this is like eight or nine years ago. And I'm looking around... And nobody in the room is terrible, but I just don't feel like I fit in the room, and the vibe, and the conversations. And I was just kind of walking around with my scotch in my hand and I'm singing to myself, "one of these things is not like the other." And then I just see you holding up the wall by yourself with a backpack and some kicks, just like chilling by yourself. Biggest smile on your face and immediately walk toward each other like, hi, how are you? Oh my God, there's somebody here that's... Just feels different. I don't want to... Not better or worse just different. And it made me stay there longer because I kept jumping in the conversation, I was like, "No, I want to talk about... No... Us". And then there was just this person there that I'm like, this is such... You had a glow around you, and about you. And it was like in this environment, but not of this environment and it stood out to me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's powerful, I remember that.

MARY SHENOUDA: And you don't remember that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Immediately, I remember that because I remember being in that environment and feeling a little out of place but also at peace with it and very just observant of the different kind of cascade of human intentions even, some people were there. So for me, it was even a new thing to see... People were trying to see how important you are and all these different things and just... I had done at that point, again, this is where we connect is of course, is like, I've been through real stuff in my life. And so, I feel like just such curiosity and openness, but also at the same time I have an evolved palette to where I know what I'm not going to participate in it. So, it is like you really do create an energy field around you, and I remember it was so refreshing to meet you as well. I was just like, oh, I saw you and I know you saw me and... And yeah, oh man, I remember that was so powerful.

MARY SHENOUDA: That's how we met.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But we may cut to our pear debate. I'm going to share a couple of these messages some people posted in the pear thread. Alright, so somebody put a shout out to Michael Anthony, he wrote, "Pears take a refined tongue, LOL. He put a LOL on there. And

Maggie Stewart wrote, "I love pears, but they have to be perfect ripeness". And then I replied to that when I said, "See, pears need all kinds of conditions to be eaten, they have to be perfect ripeness". "You have to be stranded alone on a desert island with the choice between eating a pear or eating some of your own thigh meat". "See, pears are not an easy sell". All right, somebody wrote, "Pears over banana any day of the week, pear over any other fruit for me." People have passion about pears.

MARY SHENOUDA: You said pears need a certain condition. But you have to honor that, that's true. I love something that needs a certain condition. If it's just easy...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Come on.

MARY SHENOUDA: But you know what, pears that are super ripe are delicious and pears that are crunchy are delicious, I don't know what y'all are talking about. Pears are yummy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I don't want this to go...

MARY SHENOUDA: What's your favorite fruit?

SHAWN STEVENSON: My favorite fruit? I'm not a big favorites guy. I appreciate stuff but if I have my go-to, what would I normally have a taste for, will probably be blueberries.

MARY SHENOUDA: Blueberries, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love blueberries, but they have to have conditions though.

MARY SHENOUDA: Oh, okay, so blueberries get the pass, but pears don't.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just jokes. It's just pear jokes. Okay, guys, grow a pair. Grow a pair of some sense of humor. But yeah, just having a little bit of sweetness because sometimes they could be a little bit too tart or too sour, so I like to have a little hint of sweetness in the blueberry.

MARY SHENOUDA: Okay. So, are dates too sweet for you?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh yeah, dates, I have gone on dates with dates. There's been times where I go... I've gone hard with dates. Yeah, I like dates, I really like figs as well.

MARY SHENOUDA: Oh yeah, figs.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Like when figs are in season. The darker ones, I really like the darker figs.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah. My dessert, my treat for myself, and trust me, I do crush desserts, people think I eat this perfect diet I'm like, I drink scotch, and chocolate cake, chill we're good. But I do love like a treat, putting a Brazil nut in half of a date. The texture of that particular nut with the date. It's just joy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So many things you could do with dates, period. I literally did the same thing. I'd take the pit out replace it with an almond or a Brazil nut. Yeah, for sure.

MARY SHENOUDA: Pistachios and dates, wrapped in prosciutto, with a little bit of orange zest.

SHAWN STEVENSON: See, that's Paleo chef talking. So, I got to ask you about this because in the Gut Reset program, what I really enjoyed was you had so many little insights along the way as you were taking people through the protocol. And one of the things you talked about, and you didn't know this, prior to this recording, the episode that comes out, or that came out before this, when everybody is hearing this, was a master class on how to improve your digestion without changing your diet.

MARY SHENOUDA: Without changing your diet.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, all things that are around, because food obviously, that's the big leverage point.

MARY SHENOUDA: You mean like environment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, in the episode, we talked about some of this really amazing science regarding how exercise affects your microbiome, and assimilation of nutrients, and the like. But one of the tenets there, and I shared some studies around it, was helping to kind of turn on that parasympathetic nervous system before eating. And you actually have a two-minute meditation essentially, that you recommend before people have their meal.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, yeah, and I'm guilty of standing and eating versus stop... Some deep breaths, a little bit of gratitude, and it seems cheesy to some people "you want to pray before my meal type of thing," but it's like, no, it's actually telling your body like, "Okay, we're going to stop". I experienced this yesterday, and the day before that. I was going so hard with meeting after meeting and interview after interview, and I tried to eat on the go, and I could feel my diaphragm, not even letting the food move down, it was all stuck. And I'm like, "Oh, you didn't stop"? So, I sat on the floor did the breathing, really visualized everything kind of relaxing, and then I felt the food move through the system and get to focus on digestion versus focus on

what's happening next. What are we doing next? What decision we're making, and so there's that cue. I posted a video of me chewing and I was like, this is how long you should chew, and so it was a picture of me chewing and holding my finger up. This is the time it should take to 'cause there's the cueing of relax in your body, and then there's the chewing of your food thoroughly to help the digestive system get going too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Digestion starts in the mouth. Yeah, there's a saying, of course, your stomach doesn't have teeth and that whole thing, but for real, it's going to take so much pressure off of you, but... Man, that's so awesome, what you just said about digestion kind of being halted in a sense and not passing through because of not being in your body, and there's peristalsis. What we're talking about is electricity, the electrical impulses that's moving the process along, that energy can be siphoned to other things, and so this doesn't mean that you can't... Obviously, again, eat on the go or whatever the case might be, but what are you doing most often and having that little moment just to get out of that fight or flight, just even if you change your breathing a bit, just like you just said, a moment of gratitude can just help to shift the energy in your body to support that process.

MARY SHENOUDA: Yeah, people think that when they're working a lot, they're like, I don't get hungry throughout the day, and I go, no, it's not that you don't get hungry, is that your body is in this one mode and you haven't checked in, and the second you decide to check in, you then realize you're starving... I think people need to understand those different systems in their body or what I experience someone would be like, oh, I just have a heartburn, I just have indigestion, and it's like... What does that mean?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I definitely eat more when I'm not working. Because when I'm working, I'm on a project or whatever. I might fast and might "interment fast," 1 o'clock in the afternoon, I don't really even notice. But 10:00 AM on a Sunday, I'm like, "Where the brunch at?"... It's a whole different ball game.

MARY SHENOUDA: And I implore people to pay attention to when they're not eating, 'cause there's some benefits to interment fasting... Absolutely, I'm an interment faster, but there's also where it goes too far, and you may not notice it 'cause you're busy working and you're not hungry. Back when I was still in corporate America, I would work way too long before it was time to go to lunch and I wouldn't be hungry and my colleague pointed it out, and she was like, "You need to eat something". And I'm like, "No, I'm fine I've got energy and she's like Your face doesn't look right. You need to eat something. And I looked in the mirror and I noticed there was a little bit of paleness, and then I noticed I was actually a little cranky, but I wasn't hungry, and I said I'd take a walk, had some food, and it was a really cool sensation of feeling the blood come back to my face, and if I didn't have that cue, I would have just like bull-dozered through

the day, and you don't get to... Your body is so much smarter than your body is telling you what it needs and we're overriding it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's so true. So, you just mentioned one more thing I want to ask you about even going for that walk in the program, you mentioned, especially when people are working to possibly address an issue they're dealing with or just for their body to reset to get things re-calibrated... This isn't a time necessarily for you to go ham in the gym, so maybe we ease off of that pedal a little bit, but also, it's not that movement is off limits. Of course, we want to make sure that we're moving. But I want to ask you about this. You love to box. So, you throw hands... That's another thing about Mary, she throws hands.

MARY SHENOUDA: These knuckles.

SHAWN STEVENSON: How important is it for us to find something that we enjoy doing as far as movement.

MARY SHENOUDA: You have to find movement that gives you joy, like I have family members that I can't get bought into certain types of exercise movements, and it can be really heartbreaking, but if you find... If you help them find something that they enjoy doing that incorporates movement, they're more likely to stick to it and go towards it. Myself, if all that was available to me was group exercise, I would never, ever, ever attend... Ever, tennis player, I want to be kind of by myself. So, when I would try to force myself into those situations, not only did I not enjoy it, but my body has a resistance to it, so it's finding things I enjoy boxing, tennis, trail running, and those bring me joy on top of actually helping me with movement and exercise. In the Gut Reset though, I do, like you said, recommend just moving, just walking, maybe some light stretching, 'cause you shouldn't be doing boxing unless you are a champion boxer, someone we both know decided to box through the whole reset... 'Cause this person's a beast, but when people ask me What's the best exercise... It's the same thing with Pale-you. What are you going to be consistent with? Something to get you moving. 'Cause you can't put me in a Cross-Fit class, and think I'm going to want to stick with that, but if you have me do my boxing one-on-one, my coach has to stop me like we're done for the day, and I'm like, oh man, are we?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that. And as you mentioned, the last time that I saw a friend of mine, again, world class boxer, they were mentioning they were about to do your program, and your name pops up a lot, and the impact that you're having, so many folks don't necessarily know that somebody that they're looking at on the big screen or watching them on the basketball court on another playing field, these are your clients, and it's really remarkable, you, your story, and being able to turn your adversity into gifts for other people, I mean, doesn't get any better than that. And you're just an amazing person.

MARY SHENOUDA: I appreciate it. It was really important to me when building this, even when I met you those years ago, is that I didn't want my work to be about who I work with, I wanted it to be about the work, and my business on the consulting side is referral only, and it's as such because these clients will come to my social media and be like, she talks about the work, she doesn't talk about her clients, and they feel safe. So, it allows me to really focus on the quality of my work and build this credibility over 10 years where my name does get mentioned, and I'm still always very humbled by it, and I had a client say, at a dinner "I want to introduce you guys, to the well-known Mary", and I'm like, "I'm not well-known." And he was like, "You're not well known, but well-known know you and your work", and I really loved how that was put... 'Cause it allows me to, moving forward, still continue on the quality of the work and then just be really proud of seeing them on the screen or seeing them on the field, now it gets dicey when they're on opposite teams, I'm like, shoot. It's a win, win, no matter what, but one's going to need some brownies after this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well, again, I appreciate you so much, you're amazing. And if you could let everybody know... Because regardless, people can glean so much from you just following your work and you've got so many great resources out there for folks, from the Reset to Phat Fudge. Can you let everybody know where to follow you and also the places they can find Phat Fudge, and the Reset one more time.

MARY SHENOUDA: So Paleochef.com is my website, but most of my stuff gets shared on Instagram, more so than the website, and stories are the most current, I don't always post directly to my feed, read the captions Do people still read captions? Read captions, because I put a lot of information of what I'm doing with athletes and highlights of ingredients there, and I feel like sometimes that gets missed 'cause they're just looking at the fun picture. Phat Fudge on the website, P-H-A-Tfudge.com, got Resets on Paleochef.com, and then you can find Phat Fudge in some retail locations as well, like Erewhon and places like Health food stores and some climbing stores like that. That's it for as far as where to find me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, yeah, I was going to say, "I see the Phat Fudge out there in the streets and stores as well."

MARY SHENOUDA: That's exciting. It's really... It's been... This last year has been really cool seeing it really expand, seeing it in locker rooms too, it's been really cool, like, "I did that." I have this moment; we were talking about earlier where it's like... This moment of where it's very much of course, now you've done the work, of course, but then also the moment of like, "sh*t." And I hope I always have a little bit of that awe with it. I don't want to go full of course. It's a nice balance. I feel like your spirits like that, you know who you are, and you're very certain of

who you are, you're very proud of the man you've become, but there is still this awe about you... It's really special.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mary, you tell it like it is. There's something about Mary, I appreciate you, seriously for coming and hanging out with us, and... That's it, it's a wrap. Mary Shenouda everybody.

MARY SHENOUDA: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So awesome. You're so fun.

MARY SHENOUDA: Thank you, I really appreciate it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. One of the things that really jumped out at me during this episode, and even seeing Mary here with me at the studio, and by the way, make sure that you're watching on YouTube, pop over to the YouTube channel, we're doing some incredible things over there, the Model Health Show on YouTube, subscribe, we have exclusive content there every week that you're not going to find anywhere else, but seeing Mary's skin. Alright, so she's living what she's talking about, and when we had that little segment during the episode, we're talking about skin health and your skin being the outermost kind of expression of your health in a sense, but your skin because it's the outermost portion of your body it tends to get resources last. This is why you got to nourish your skin also from the outside in, but truly your skin itself is going to be made from the inside out, and so integrating some of these wonderful recipes and nutrients that Mary talks about in her programs, truly, it's pretty remarkable what could happen, and seeing these things play out in the real world from high-performing athletes to everyday folks, your body really requires the essential building blocks to make you. If you're not providing your body with those raw materials, it's not going to be able to make the best crib possible.

If you got a lot of value out of this, make sure to share this out with your friends and family, of course, you can tag me, I'm @Shawnmodel on Instagram and tag Mary as well @Paleochef on Instagram, and let her know what you thought about this episode. I appreciate you so much for tuning in, we've got some epic shows coming your way very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you could find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that this 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 transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.