

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 572

**Brain Hacks To Improve Your
Memory, Read Faster,
Increase Your Focus, & More!**

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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. We are now living in the information age, couple that with the fact that we're now living in the age of overwhelm, we're living in the age of misunderstanding of all of the information that we have access to, and of course, being that we're surrounded by so much information, we have so much information at our fingertips, we're bound to have a lot of low-quality information trying to seduce us. So how do you make sense of all of this and how do you engage critical thinking when it's necessary. How are you able to be able to retain and to sift through and to understand things better, to read faster, and all of these incredible skills that are more valuable today than ever.

I've been thinking about this a lot, and so I wanted to put together some resources for you, because right now, more than at any other time in human history, we need to be able to learn faster and be able to think critically and to be able to apply the information to our advantage to serve ourselves, our families and our communities, and there is no better person on planet Earth that I could think of to learn from in this particular subject. Because when we go to school in a conventional education, we're often taught what to learn but we're not taught how to learn, and there's many different flavors of learning, and that's part of the problem with our conventional education system, it's a lot of rote memorization, it's a lot of fitting into this particular box, this is how we do things, right and wrong answers, and if you don't have the right answer, then you are not a part of this program.

You're not a part of this system. And so today, we've accumulated story after story, example after example of people who struggled in conventional education who are brilliant in other domains of life outside of that conventional education, whether it's art, music, poetry, whether it's science. A lot of folks don't realize this, when we say that somebody is a brilliant person in our society, we still call them an Einstein, that's one of the names that we still use today, and Einstein did not take the typical track of Education, and I remember back in the day taking a moment to read through his biography and it was thick. It's a thicky thick... I like big books and I cannot lie, type of book, and I was just blown away the fact that he wasn't at some advanced educational Institute, he was working in a patent office, this very low tier job, and he was running all these experiments in his mind. So, what he called these thought experiments, these thought experiments that he would just use his imagination to map things out and how they worked, he ended up applying those things, and he had to force his way in, find creative ways to get his ideas in front of people who can make these ideas more prevalent.

And so, he didn't have a traditional track of education, as a matter of fact, there are many stories and accounts of him not doing well in particular parts of his conventional education.

But today, for somebody who's brilliant, we use the term Einstein, and so again, there are many different flavors and styles of learning, so we want to talk about and tap into that a little bit. But most importantly for this conversation, for the vast majority of us. These tools that you're going to learn today that can help you to read faster, that can improve your reading comprehension, that can increase your ability to take notes and to be able to recollect information like what you're hearing right now, and the list goes on and on and on. We are going to feature some information from world renown, accelerated learning and speed-reading expert, Jim Kwik, New York Times best-selling author, and one of the most brilliant people that I know. And true story, the Model Health Show was really the spark for it to begin was a result of an interaction that I had with Jim. There's so many different stories.

Even my first book, Sleep Smarter, Jim was involved. I can't tell you how again and again and again, his brilliance just has this aura that makes good things happen, and so I'm really excited about sharing this information, we've gone through some of these things on the show in the past, but I wanted to concentrate them here for you, because again, there's never been a time more important for us to learn how to learn, for us to be able to think critically and for us to be able to... There's this new term of misinformation, disinformation and understanding who's even disseminating, what misinformation is, and oftentimes, if we've probably seen over the past couple of years, a lot of times people who are saying that this is misinformation is spouting out misinformation themselves. So how do we sift through it all. How do we strike a balance of understanding even the position that they're coming from when they might be saying to something that's not factual on all accounts, but it might have a thread of fact to it? So being able to analyze and understand these things and to have an open heart, open mind, but also, as we talked about recently, not having our mind so open that our brain falls out, alright. So, this episode is going to be absolutely loaded with tools and insights that you're going to be able to utilize every single day moving forward.

Now, first things first, before most episodes of The Model Health Show, I utilize a little bit of a brain boost from something that is featured in a study published in the advanced biomedical research journal, they found that Royal jelly, this remarkable product from bees has the potential to improve spatial learning, attention span and memory. In addition, it's been found to be anti-microbial, anti-tumor, anti-inflammatory, and also Royal Jelly has been found to facilitate the differentiation of all types of our brain cells and to top it off, researchers in Japan discovered that Royal jelly has the potential to stimulate neurogenesis in the memory center of the brain, AKA the hippocampus. Alright, if you think about the name hippocampus, it's big. It's where a lot of the magic happens, it's not a big part of the brain, but it's where a big part of our life resides with our memory. So, cultivating and supporting our memory is of the utmost importance and, man, there are so many wonderful accounts, Royal jelly has been prized for thousands of years. The Queen Bee, this is what the Queen Bee is about, exclusively fed Royal jelly, the queen bee lives on average one to two years, whereas the worker bees are

living like 15 days at minimum and 200 days at maximum. In general, the queen bee is living seven times longer.

There's something really remarkable about Royal jelly, and one of the big reasons why it's so beneficial to the brain, this has a lot to do with the acetylcholine content that is so concentrated in royal jelly, acetylcholine is a neurotransmitter found in both the central and peripheral nervous system and acetylcholine is thought to be a major player in attention, memory and other executive functions. I utilize exclusively the royal jelly formula that also features bacopa, which in a randomized double-blind placebo-controlled human trial published in 2016, found that after just six weeks of use bacopa significantly improved speed of visual information processing, learning rate, memory consolidation and even decreased anxiety in study participants, these are combined together in B.Smart. B.Smart is the remarkable nootropic from beekeepers naturals, go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model, and you're going to get 25% off their incredible nootropic and also their super food honey is out of this world, and so many other wonderful things for your immune system, for your cognitive health, go to B-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-Snaturals.com/model. And you're going to get 25% off. They just bumped it up. Recently, this discount exclusive right here with the Model Health Show, beekeepersnaturals.com/model.

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

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled, “Inspiring the Lives of Others” by Tman866995. “Hey, Shawn, I could go on all day thanking you for the passion you put into your craft and truly helping to model the way we need to be living, the information you've put in both books and every single podcast for years, I will add, is transcending the health and wellness world, I try and communicate all the valuable details you provide weekly with my clients. You're a great role model for all ages of people, so keep up the fantastic work, brother, much love.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: Much love to you as well, thank you so much for taking the time to leave that review over on Apple Podcast. It truly does mean so much. And on that note, let's get to our topic of the day, on this episode, we're going to have a master class compilation of tools and insights to help you to improve your rate of learning, your reading speed, critical thinking, and the list goes on and on. So, we're going to have a couple of segments from conversations with New York Times best-selling author, and accelerated learning expert, Jim Kwik. Now, Jim has been sought after by the highest educational institutes we're talking, Harvard and the like to the biggest names in Hollywood and movie studios, helping superstars to learn faster, read their scripts faster, retain more information. One of the coolest things that I was able to experience hanging out with Jim, he worked with the folks at Fox Movie Studios, and really just caught the eye of the President of the studios, and he brought Jim into their universe when

they were filming movies like X-Men and the like, and Jim was able to impact and to teach a lot of these super stars who were in these epic superhero movies, ranging from Hugh Jackman to Ryan Reynolds, and the list goes on and on.

Just banana stuff. And through that one time when I was actually hanging out with Jim, he put together a mastermind, we got to go to Fox movie studios when everything was shut down, we saw an exclusive screening of a movie that wasn't coming out for months. It was just the craziest thing. We got to see where the symphony, all the music and scores we're getting done, I got to see relics from superhero movies, like Hugh Jackman's wolverine claws, all kinds of crazy stuff, like these are the cool things that tend to happen when hanging out with Jim Kwik, and it's just a testament to his incredible value. And so, in this segment, he's going to be talking about the impact of multi-tasking and it's probably going to trip you out a little bit. The impact of our devices on our cognitive health today, also how to improve your reading comprehension, the remarkable way that music can impact learning, and also, how to improve your ability to take notes and recollect information and more. So, check out this powerhouse segment from the one and only Jim Kwik.

JIM KWIK: There's good habits and bad habits. I really do believe that we either learned how to learn properly early on, or it was kind of at a default, I don't think that there's such thing as a good or bad memory or good or bad learners. It's just good or bad habits, trained or not trained. And that's really what it's all about. But I noticed some people make mistakes, so I just wanted to talk about a few mistakes people are making when they go to learn something or to study it, and then maybe a few hacks to be able to get over those mistakes.

One of the big ones, and you know this, because you and I have talked about this, what I love about your show is it's kind of like how you and I hang out, we go, we get a juice, and if we just record our conversation, it's pretty much like that's how you are, you know what I mean? It's how you are behind...

SHAWN STEVENSON: DJ Shawn, another one.

JIM KWIK: Exactly. So how do you study smart and not just hard. How do you do it? So I would say there's a few things that you want to stop right away, some of this is going to be common sense, but as we've discussed in the past, common sense is not always common practice, and I really think for people really wanting to make the rest of this year and years coming up, they really want to simplify, because if we can't simplify, if we make it too complex, it becomes insurmountable, we don't do anything. So simple things that you could do. Stop... First of all, I want to encourage people as a reminder to stop multi-tasking, and we get a lot of slack from that, just like when I tell people not to touch their phone the first hour of the day, it's hard because it's something that our brains are getting rewired for things, you and I have talked a

lot about superheroes and having super powers, and you keynoted one of our super hero brain events. But I think there's super villains right now, I think there are three big super-villains that are attacking us, and so it's the three I talk about is the digital ones, digital, first of all, digital overload what you mentioned, there's too much to learn, too little time, like taking a sip of water out of a firehose. How do you keep up with it all?

And so, we're going to talk about that in this episode on how to study it properly so you could retain it and really master it. The second one is digital distraction in our brains, you know this, they're getting re-wired to just be distracted, to wander all the time, and it seems like part of it is these smart devices that you mentioned in the intro, it's rewiring our brains and it's a challenge because of the first thing in the morning when you're in that very impressionable state, that alpha theta state in the morning at a relaxed state of awareness, picking up your phone, the first thing, is training yourself to be distracted.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, exactly.

JIM KWIK: And you study decision fatigue and how we can only make a certain amount of good decisions a day, but a lot of people are suffering from just brain fatigue, and part of what's fatiguing people is just going on their phones and getting all these dopamine hits and every time they get a like and a comment and a share and everything, and if that's the first thing that you're giving your mind in the morning, it's training itself just to be everywhere. And the other thing the problem with picking up the phone besides training distraction is training you to be reactive, which is not what superheroes want to do, right? The first thing in the morning, they don't want to train themselves to just react to everything that's going on. All the fires that we have to fight and everything that, everyone needs something from us, it's better to be more proactive. But the third enemy and I'll go into the solutions is... So, you have digital overload, and you have digital distraction, and then you have this thing called digital dementia, which you've talked about in the past, where we're outsourcing our smarts to our smart devices, and if your brain is like a muscle it grows stronger with use, but it's use it or lose it.

And one of the things I love following you on social media is like your family every morning without fail, so inspiring. You're doing all the workouts, and you inspire people, and not only is it inspiration, it's instructive too. I really think that's what people are looking for, and they want to be inspired but they also want to know what to do. And so, when we geek out, you and I, we talk about how to do that for your mental muscles or just like your physical muscles, faster, stronger, more agile, more flexible, and give it more energy and strength, you want your mental muscles to be more agile and more focused, sharper faster, more energized and stronger obviously as well. But we're not getting that same exercise because we're so reliant on technology to be able to tell us everything what to do today, and how to, where directions and just everything.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh man, I try to do some basic calculations, the other day it was hard and I just... I was like, I'm not going to use my phone, I'm not going to ... I used my phone, even that little app.

JIM KWIK: Yeah, and that's the thing. It's tough. Just basic algebra is difficult, and here's a thing, it's not that... I think we all admit we want technology 'cause it's very convenient, but as long as it doesn't cripple us at the same time, you see all these movies in the future or animations in the future, where everyone's sitting in their pod and being, they have their digital device, and they're all hooked up to that, it's just moving around, they're not exercising, they're all overweight and all that stuff.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What was that movie with the little robot?

JIM KWIK: Which one's that one?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Where the entire future was like people were just so overweight, Wall-E, it was Wall-E, I think he had a little friend who's like, I don't remember her name.

JIM KWIK: And it's...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Eva or something.

JIM KWIK: And it's not a very pleasant picture of where everyone's going, very sedentary, not moving, and just kind of not eating the best foods ever, but it's just our minds, they aren't getting exercise either, new thoughts and new stimulus, and new...

SHAWN STEVENSON: We need that, the brain is just like a muscle. We've talked about this before, you and I, and also with Dr. Daniel Amen. It's a muscle that is basically, if you don't use it, you lose it just like the rest of your muscles.

JIM KWIK: And that's the best news ever because it works both ways. And if you're listening to this right now and you're concerned that senior moments are coming a little early and you're absent-minded, it's not your fault, it's just we're not trained on how to do this, these things, and on... And the good news is though only one-third of that potential is predetermined by genetics and biology, but two-thirds is in our control, and it's the things that you're always talking about, eating the right food and getting rid of negative thoughts and exercise and movement and supplementing and being around positive peer group and clean environment and sleep and brain protection and new learnings and stress management, all these play a role. So, I think a good place to start...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well, before you get to the solutions, man, I want to do a quick recap because these are so important. And you talked about, first of all, something that we need to pay attention to and try to avoid doing is multi-tasking and this one is going to be for a lot of people, it's like, "I multi-task like a boss. What do you mean? I got to stop multi-tasking." When research shows, and we talked about this with Jay Papasan, who is the author of *The One Thing*, how literally, if you look at the studies, multitasking makes your brain work about as well as it does when you're high on marijuana. Matter of fact, they outperformed when you're multitasking, so we have this illusion that we're getting more stuff done, but we're really taking away our proficiency we're really taking away ability to execute at our highest level when we're distracted and multi-tasking, and then you said distractions as well, and the other one is cramming, right?

JIM KWIK: It is... I'll touch on each of these things. So, the multi-tasking, I completely agree with you. The research is showing, there is a study at University of London saying that it actually lowers your IQ, similar to if you stayed up all night, and pulled an all-nighter. It dropped at 15 points. And so, the goal here is you, you could task, multi-task in terms of doing something physical and something mental, you could be on the phone and going for a walk, but two cognitive intensive tasks. It's not possible to be able to do it, and so people are actually... It's taken anywhere from an extra five to 20 minutes to regain your focus and your flow, there's a high, high level, more of errors that's being made, if you're trying to multi-task. So, if you feel like you're multi-tasking because you want to be a better performer and more productive, it's absolutely not true, it's actually taking away from your productivity, the goal is to do one single mental thing at a time. Really multitasking is actually a misnomer, it's the more accurate term is called task switching, because every time you switch tasks, you have to refocus your energy, and so it takes more time and there's definitely more mistakes.

The second thing that you mentioned is just as we're rewiring our brains for distraction is to... Focus is a muscle, just like memory is a muscle for... Your creativity is a muscle. It's not something you have, it's something you do. It's like you don't have creativity, you do creativity. You don't have memories. You do a memory, you don't have focus, you do focus, and the good thing about making it a process is you can duplicate it, there's a recipe there, and because it's a verb as opposed to just a noun. And so, with focus, it's something you could do, but every time... That's the benefit of being mindful, I think most of your listeners have some kind of meditation or mindfulness activity that they support every single day, if not, I would highly encourage it, but it's not the 20-minutes or 30 minutes of meditation and getting in that Zen-like state. Surely that's good to flow through alpha and theta brain wave states and such. And what's even more important, I think, is that every single time you lose your focus, and you bring it back in to a thought or to a mantra, to a point or to a space or to an energy or gratitude, a feeling, a breath, and then you exercise, you build your mental focus, your focus muscles.

So, it's not that you don't get, lose focus, it's when you bring it back that you get the strength. And so, I think one of the things is to be able to set your environment up to win, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

JIM KWIK: So, you talked about stop multi-tasking, also eliminate distractions, to focus when you need to study, you got to turn your phone off. I mean, people are picking up Instagram like over 50 times a day, over 50 times, and if that's something that if you're doing it less, that means somebody's looking at Instagram even more than you are. And there's ways of using technology for your advantage, there's self-control apps like Freedom or FocusMe, to block out certain websites like social media or block out sites that you might visit when you should be focusing on something else, so that's the other thing, it's just... And when I talk about focus, the metaphor that I use is that if you're outside and it's a nice warm day and you have a magnifying glass... Remember when you were kids, used to burn leaves and stuff like that, when you see the light go through the magnifying glass, it creates a very bright focused point there that is very highly concentrated. And it's interesting that the word bright describes it because it also... We use the word bright to describe really smart, intelligent people, but maybe they're not smarter, maybe they're just better focused, like a magnifying glass is doing it to the light.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Interesting.

JIM KWIK: And so, there's a lot of power in being focused, in being... So, if you want to study better.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, one of the things that I want you to talk about, if you can, is this concept, and this is the first time I ever heard this was from you, of recognition versus recollection, when we are actually doing this work to study and assimilate things.

JIM KWIK: Right. Because, okay, so one of the things that I think that keeps people from learning faster is they're so passive about it, it's this idea between passive and active recall, and I actually recommend people don't re-read chapters of their non-fiction book. A lot of people will read something and re-read it again, thinking they're going to get more out of it the second time, right afterwards, and certainly it is, but it's marginal returns because you could easily through the thing, what people found out by re-reading things is to study is that they could delude themselves thinking that you really know the information when you're reading it instead of really... Instead of the better thing to do is to test yourself because it's... Like for example, you read the chapter, and then instead of re-reading that same chapter, close the book and recall and recite all you can remember because there is a difference between

recognition and recollection. Meaning, recognition requires a trigger for you to remember something that you might not get on the test.

It's like when somebody recognizes a face, they don't necessarily remember the face, what they're doing is they're recognizing it because it's right in front of them and they realize that they've seen it before. One of the reasons why names are so difficult sometimes is because you don't get that same prompt, you get the prompt for the person's face, but you don't get that prompt or that trigger for the person's name. And so, studying actively with focus on recollection as opposed to recognizing something, one of the things that best do that is to quiz yourself, read something and then ask yourself these questions because often questions are the answer. And I think a lot of people, Shawn, like when they're reading and people like "Jim, how do you..."

And we did a whole podcast episode on speed reading people are like, "How do you read a book a week? Or how do you read a book a day?" And one of the ways you could do it is, and how do you really understand and retain it, and I'll tell you that if you want greater speed, I always tell people to use their finger while they read, a visual pacer will help boost your reading speed 25-50%, but if you want greater comprehension, you have to train yourself to ask better questions, ask more questions and ask better questions, because as you're reading, they act like a magnet, it's like, Oh, there's an answer, there's the answer, there's an answer. And I think part of being more active in recollection is actually asking yourself, "What do I want to learn out of this? How does this compare to what I already know? How am I going to teach this to somebody else" Because that's all thinking is, it's just this process of asking new questions and answering them also as well. And so, I'm a big believer, is that just don't fool yourself into thinking that you know something, 'cause you could recognize it...

And see if you could really retain it and recollect it by quizzing yourself as you're learning something brand new.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Perfect. Perfect.

JIM KWIK: The other thing I want to mention also is, you mentioned this at the top, is just stop cramming. And the reason why cramming is a big mistake is because they've done studies where they found that the average person loses their focus after 25 or 30 minutes. It's like a kind of like a TV show, and that's our attention span for a lot of things. And so, there's this time management technique called The Pomodoro Technique, which basically means you're setting your alarm every 25, 30, maybe 45 minutes, and when it's done, you take a break. You take a... Not a 25 or 30-minute break, but you're taking a 2, 3, 4, 5-minute break, to do things that are good for your brain. So, what are those things? Movement is very good. Most people sedentary, are way too sedentary, they're sitting all day, eight hours a day, and that's bad for

you. Obviously so movement is key, 'cause as your body moves your brain grooves. The other thing I would suggest is deep breathing, whether it's box breathing, alpha breathing, Wim Hof, whatever people subscribe to, and so you get the oxygen. And also hydrate, obviously. And it's, again, very, very fundamentals, but so many people dabble in these things when they really should really master this process. Because your power comes from the fundamentals. And so, I would go back to...

And the other reason why you don't want to cram is because if you study for six hours straight, not only are you diminishing returns because your focus after past half an hour is... There's these two-memory phenomenon's. Ones called primacy and the other one's called recency. Primacy means that you tend to remember something at the beginning; so, if you go to a party and you remember the people you first met. Recency says you remember things more recent; so, if you're at the party, you remember the names of the last people that you met at the party and you probably forget most of the people in between. Same thing with a list of words. If I gave people a list of 30 words to memorize, they'd probably remember the ones in the beginning, primacy, and then more recent, recency. And the reason why you want to take breaks every half an hour or 45 minutes is because, you can imagine, after a six-hour studies time you learn stuff in the begin, you might retain stuff at the end, but in the middle there's a big dip. But by creating breaks let's say every hour, you create more beginnings and ends, and more primacy and recency, so you pick up a whole lot more data and recollection. So don't cram.

And then I would say the fourth thing that I would stay away from, besides stop multi-tasking, stop distracting yourself, by controlling your environment, eliminating distraction, turning off your phones and so on, don't cram because that's a big mistake 'cause you're actually losing ground, is hack this thing called akrasia. And akrasia is this state, and we know what it is, it's kind of like that state where you're acting against your own better judgment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Why do we do that?

JIM KWIK: Exactly. And so, Socrates... Plato... It was in one of his books, asked precisely, how is this possible; if one judges action A to be the best course action, why would anyone do anything other than A? But we do. We're not always logical. If anything, we're more biological or more emotional. It's like, why do we do this, why do we eat foods that are not good for us, why do we not journal and meditate and work out and eat good food, why don't we do that all the time if that's in our best interest. And so that's what akrasia is, it's this acting against your own better judgment. And so, there are apps out there that helps people to stick with their decisions and their habits and stuff. So, there's an app called stickK, S-T-I-C double K, I believe.

There's one called Dminder, also as well to help you keep you to your commitments. I did a whole episode on our podcast about how to stop procrastinating, and that's one of the big things. There's something called the Zeigarnik effect. Zeigarnik effect actually is a memory principal named after this psychologist in Europe who was watching as she was getting coffee that the wait staff would remember everyone's order, and how, how do they do that naturally without any kind of training. And they called it the Zeigarnik effect, basically that they would remember the person's order up to the point that it was fulfilled, and then after it was fulfilled and they got what they ordered, the meal, then that would just disappear. But the idea here is that if you have something in your life that you're procrastinating about, that if you just start something, you're more likely to finish it, because the brain needs closure. It doesn't like open loops.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right, right. That's how the greatest kind of golden age of TV is getting us right now. These writers are so good at opening these loops, you have to know what happens, like what is going to happen with Colson?

JIM KWIK: Exactly And then you binge watch eight episodes of Scandal or Breaking Bad or whatever it is.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just one more. Just one more.

JIM KWIK: Because they have all these open loops, but we are like that with our life. That if we start something, we have this big drive to need to close it off. And so, start something, somewhere. That could definitely help you with that. But that's the Zeigarnik effect. But so those are the four things that I would ask people to stop, because you want to stop something, but you can't just stop something, you want to start it. So, stop multi-tasking. Stop... Eliminate distractions in your life. Don't cram, stop cramming, always take a break every 30-45 minutes. And then hack this thing called akrasia, which is this idea where we don't finish the things that are good for us.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What do you think about listening to music while you study? Personally, I like more of a quiet environment, but I do sometimes tune in and listen to certain... It's instrumentals. So, what do you think about maybe somebody's like listening to 2Pac trying to study algebra, versus like classical music?

JIM KWIK: So, a lot of... And this is, I think a lot of the parents could relate to this, when they hear their kids studying, they have the Pandora or Spotify in the background, and the TV and the video games, they're like multi-tasking up the wazoo. I would say that music has been shown to enhance the studying process as long as it's not distracting. So, I'm not talking about music like hip-hop or heavy metal, rap. The music that's been shown to support studying is

classical music, as you would think. Instrumentals. Specifically of the baroque era. So, Vivaldi, Bach, because that era happens to have music a lot concentrated on 60 beats per minute, which also happens to be the resting heart rate, and so it puts you into this, what they call this alpha state, this alpha brainwave state, which is that relaxed state of awareness. And that's a state we go in when we meditate. It's a state we go in when we watch television. It's the state we go in when we do hypnosis. It's where you become highly suggestible. And so, when you're studying something, it helps, let's say you want to... And I believe that if you combine music with spaced repetition... So, we talked about the four challenges that you need to stop, the bad habits like multi-tasking and cramming and such...

There are four things I would recommend people do. So, one of them was, we talked about, is practicing active recall by quizzing yourself. So, it's the difference between recognizing and recollecting something. The second thing I would say, where you can combine with music, is this thing called space repetition. So that's the idea where, yes, you can learn information by deeply immersing yourself, and one of... Another way of learning something is by spacing it out. That through this kind of interval learning, or recall if you will, that if you space things out that you're learning and review it maybe an hour later, a day later, a week later, a few weeks later, then you could drive it from your short to long-term memory. There's actually good software out there like Anki, A-N-K-I. It's like this repetition software, flash cards. So, for people that want to learn a language, for example, or something that could be more repetitive, so what they could do is they can combine space repetition with music, like the baroque music, to learn a language, to study for the medical law exams, to memorize names and faces, to brush up on your geography, to master a poem or lines in a play or in a film. Practicing even musical chords, it could help you also. Space repetition is a very powerful way of driving it deeper inside of you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I think I heard the word intervals in there. And so, it's like how... And this is clinically proven across the board for interval training and exercise, to be so much more effective and efficient than that kind of long-duration, steady state studying/cardio confessional that we would do.

JIM KWIK: That's exactly it. This is just for the mind. This is mental interval training. And so that space repetition really helps, and that space review helps a lot, because it's in that downtime that actually we're getting a lot of the integration and things are moving from short term to long term. So, I would say practice the active recall of asking questions and quizzing yourself, have spaced repetition, and the music that we're talking about here can really accelerate. As long as it's not distracting for people, it's helping to relax you, puts you in a brainwave state where you absorb faster, it's more your unconscious, where your critic conscious mind can only handle so much. Right? That's the part that really gets stressed over everything. And you think about all this, for example, lyrics to songs that we know, how many of them? Hundreds, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Right. Oh, my goodness.

JIM KWIK: But how many do we actually study them, like study this and write it out and... None of them. We all learned when we didn't realize we were learning, we were just having fun. And that's really that unconscious mind that's really processing. The third...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy smokes, man. Wait, man, you just hit something here.

JIM KWIK: Yeah, let's do it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I just the other day, there was a song from 20 years ago, it came on the radio, and I haven't heard in years, and just like I knew all the lyrics. And I was just like, What? I started to really think about, how is that possible? You know?

JIM KWIK: Exactly. So, we learn... We know so much more. We didn't actually learn it in school or anything, we learned so much more than we've ever given ourselves credit for. And so, part of it is because we were just in that unconscious playful state, and I feel like that's a powerful way to learn. It's just like children, 'cause children have that beginner's mind, and we just... Remember we've talked about it in the past, that information combined with emotion becomes a long-term memory. Information combined with emotion becomes a long-term memory, so that's why we remember things through sense, through taste, music, that's bringing us back when we're children, and music is highly state-inducing, and so that's high level of emotion. And speaking of sense, I would actually add that as a third thing. So besides active recall and spaced repetition with music, I would actually add the sense of smell. Because the sense of smell is the most powerful sense that we have when it comes to connecting to our nervous system. Meaning that, I don't know if it was because we needed to smell poison before it actually... To save our life or something, but here's the thing, our environment gets connected to the information. So, if you want even better studying, 'cause that's the theme of what we're talking about, it always helps to study in the environment where you need to recollect the information.

So, for example, here right now I'm doing programs here in Boston area for the colleges and stuff, it would help them to study in the lecture center that they're going to be tested in. Because unconsciously we connect that. And it's something I've mentioned before, where they did this study and they put students under water with breathing apparatus, and they give them words to memorize, and they take them outside, back in the surface to test them, and they put them back in the water and test them, and then which one do you think people remembered more? Back in the water. Because that environment got connected to the information. And so, knowing that and studying in the place, for example, in your workplace where you need to give

the speech or that TED Talk, it always helps to study in that environment. And it's not really practical for most people, so the idea here is to actually, can you take the environment in with you? Meaning using the sense of smell, that if you had a unique and familiar scent while you're studying, one of the methods could help you jog your memory is to spray that on you or taste it during the actual exam. When you have to give that presentation, that book report, or take that test.

That if you chew a strange kind of gum or an essential oil, or a perfume or a cologne, and then you have that same one when you need to recall it, it's going to be more available to you. And so, I would recommend playing with that. And speaking of essential oils, there are certain essential oils that has been shown to be able to activate and wake up the mind. Essential oils like peppermint, like rosemary, helps increase the chances of remembering things that you need to be able to remember, helps improving your focus, helps improve your recall.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fascinating. And there's actually science to back that up, which is so crazy. It's just like our sense of smell, it's one of those things that helps, as Jim is describing, to drive memories deeper and create a stronger connection when we're learning some information. So, utilize that channel, that's just an open thing that's happening on automatic anyways. And peppermint, for example, is one of the things that I saw when I was looking into the research. Using an essential oil, maybe you can just... Right before you get started, maybe you have a few drops of peppermint oil that you, I don't know, wipe on the book or something, or...

JIM KWIK: It's often, yeah, and it's often what you do before the actual act that really shows up when you need to perform. And same thing with doing a light workout before studying can help you to retain information better. And so, anything that's going to be good for your heart is going to be good for your head. So, getting that blood flow, the artery that goes directly from the heart to the brain is the carotid artery, right, and it's just the primary one, and getting the right amount of oxygen and circulation is very important. So, the fourth thing I would actually put is music, what we talked about. So, I make that the fourth thing to do after, what we talked about the different sense of smell. Because there's research done at Stanford School of Medicine basically saying that playing certain types of music, such as classical, a baroque, could help students engage the parts of their brain that help them pay attention and better anticipate and make predictions better. Besides the fact that some musical will actually enhance people's mood, which would be good, just because all learning is state-dependent, and you want to be able to always control your mood and your outlook for things when it comes to studying.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that. You said all learning is state-dependent.

JIM KWIK: All learning is state-dependent. Yeah, it's one of the primary beliefs that we have, you know, when we talk about quick brain, is the state of mind and body, the emotion, the feelings. Think about it, back in school, if you were... People were tested on, oh, what was the state, these state capitals, and name these presidents, or name when... This periodic table, or all this stuff that we learned back in school. Most people don't remember it for two reasons. Number one is relevancy. Relevancy meaning, maybe they didn't see a one-to-one connection of why it's important and relevant to their life, sin, cosine, tangent X, hypotenuse Y. But the other thing is the emotional state people learned it in, the students learned it in. For most people when you ask them, how do they feel mostly when they're sitting in class being lectured to, most people said, oh, I was bored. And that's... On an emotional scale, that's like a zero, but anything times zero equals zero. If information combined with emotion becomes a long-term memory if the emotion level is zero, there's not a lot of recall because that's the first part, the first third of the memory stages is called encoding.

And that's how you actually encode the information, put it in, then you store it and then you retrieve it. But part of the encoding is making, if you want to better recall, is to make it more emotional. What do you see? What do you feel? How is it touching you in a certain way?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh, you know what, when you said relevancy, it just really sparked up a lot for me, because I loathed biology in science. I couldn't stand it. And up until even a few years ago, I'd have these nightmares where I'm in biology class and just like I didn't have my homework or something, or human anatomy, physiology. And I still remember my teacher, she was a little creepy, and she'd be in my dream, and I'm just like, oh no, I got to figure this out. And it's because I just really didn't want to be there. I couldn't stand the process. But what created this connection where I love it, it is my life, it's things... No one makes me study biology every day, but I just I'm very passionate about it now, because the relevancy, with it applying to my life personally. And that's what we do with the Model Health Show, is how can we connect this information to your life so that you want to learn about it, so that it becomes fun and entertaining and engaging, it becomes a part of who you are more easily. And that's really one of the big secrets I want everybody to walk away with, is tying in... The things that you want to learn, tie it into something that matters to you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Why do you want to learn it? Not just, I should learn it just because or it's important to learn, you need to consciously create an association to it. And for me, it's teaching. So, when I'm learning things, I'm thinking, how can I teach this? How can I make this make sense to other people so that they can have their lives changed? And so that's just one of the big takeaways of the many that we have here today. But I want to make sure that we talk about taking notes, because that just blew my mind when you had us to do those two columns way back in the day, you taught us about taking notes. So, let's talk a little bit about that.

JIM KWIK: Right. So, one of the ways that can increase your ability to retain the things that you're studying is to take notes. People don't realize that there's 80% of what you learn can be gone within two days. So, you listen to podcasts, you read a book, you go to a lecture, 48 hours later 80% of it could be gone, and one of the ways to mitigate that from happening is by taking notes. But it's like, how do you take notes? There's all these different ways. And for most people they never really learned a process, or if they did it was kind of like that linear outline... You remember, Shawn, it was like, one Roman numeral... Like, A and Roman numeral one, two, that kind of thing. And the challenge is, so they've done lots of studies and research to find out some of the best ways of taking notes, and so there's qualities to active note taking. 'Cause instead of passive note taking... They say they found the worst way of taking notes, actually which really surprised them, it was by transcribing what the teacher was saying. That was the worst way of taking notes. And it's kind of interesting, 'cause you would think maybe part of people would think is, hey, won't it help me to take notes by having every single thing word for word? And they found actually...

It actually hurt people. And so, first of all, I would say, you don't have to go for those transcriptions. A question I always get is about typing notes and handwriting notes. They find... The studies show that taking notes by hand is actually better for people. So, it's interesting, taking notes by hand is actually better for people, and one of the reasons why is because you could technically type... Somebody could type as fast as somebody could speak, but they can't necessarily... When you're handwriting, you can't write that fast, and it forces you to really qualify information, to filter information, to take notes with purpose, to listen to everything and just write down and hone in on the things that's really important. And that's alone, besides the notes itself, helps to increase your understanding and your effectiveness there. But we would generally want notes that meet this quality. Number one is you want notes that are active.

'Cause I did a whole session last time when you and I were talking about how to learn anything faster, and we talk about the fast method and everything, but the A is being active. Because learning is not a spectator sport, you need to be active. The second thing when taking notes is taking notes with purpose. Like you said, relevancy. You have to know your purpose of what you're looking for, otherwise how do you know if you didn't... Whether you find it or not. Good note taking is also very organized. And so, you have to figure out the best way of organizing information for you. They find that the best way of taking notes actually is in your own words and not the expert's words, but your own words itself 'cause it's more personal for you. They also found that taking key ideas and using images is more effective than just writing everything out. But then how do you take that information and lay it out? Some people are familiar with mind mapping.

Mind mapping is a creative way of doing left to right brain note taking, where you put the main idea in the middle, and then coming out like spokes of a wheel or maybe like branches of a tree, you see the other areas, and then those branches get broken down and so on and so forth. A very easy way that I like to teach people to take notes on, you mentioned, is drawing a line down the page. And it's so simple, but again we keep things purposely elegant, because anybody can make things more complicated. You want things to be so simple and easy and elegant that we're going to do it on a daily basis.

So, I put a line down the page. On the left side, I take notes, so I'm writing down how to remember names and how to learn a language, and how to speed read and all those things. But on the right side, I'm not taking notes, I'm actually making notes. Which is a slight distinction, but this is what I mean. On the left side I'm capturing information, on the right side I'm creating it. Meaning that if I'm going to get distracted and focus somewhere else, I'd rather get distracted on the right side of the page, and on the right side I'm writing my impressions of what I'm writing on the left side. So, it's like, how am I going to use this, or questions that I have, or how am I going to share it with somebody else, or how does it relate to something I already know? So that's the difference between note taking and note making. It's the difference between capturing and actually creating notes, which is just as obviously as effective. And then, again, doing it with handwriting instead of digital keyboard, you'll get a nice lift on there. There was a study done at Princeton University that shows that note takers actually retain more information by hand than by typing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And everybody's got their laptops and their phones to take a little note here or there, but just listening to the expert who actually knows this stuff, to pen this down... It's kind of like when you're writing something, you're, in a way you're spelling it out, you're casting a spell, right? A spell of learning, in a way. And I've got, like I said, all of these notebooks, handwritten notes, just through the years of learning. And today, same thing, I'll take something that I hear that's profound and I'll just, I'll write a little note about it. And it's in my own words as well.

JIM KWIK: I like that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You said also to cater things and find the way that works best for you as far as organization, and I thought about a friend of ours, Julia Roy. And when she comes, if she's taking notes, she's got all these different colors and things are color-coordinated, and just the best-looking notes I've ever seen. I was like, that's just... That's not my cup of tea, but it was really fascinating to see that that's what works for her. And she's one of the most brilliant and intelligent people that I know, and that's the way that she does it. So, finding the things that work for you. Even if you are taking notes on your laptop, employing these strategies where you can.

JIM KWIK: And I like that too because it's just like people's diets and their exercise, is finding something that works for people. 'Cause whatever gets people to do it is what I like. It's not right or wrong, it's just good, better, best for individuals. They did a study where they, a couple of scientists, they set up an auditorium full of people and half of them took notes with the keyboard, the other half took notes handwriting while somebody spoke, and they wanted to figure out who would remember the most, and who would retain the most. And they found, after they tested people afterwards, that the handwriting people won, hands down. No pun intended. Handwriting people won, hands down, 'cause people understood more, they retained more, they remembered more when they wrote by hand. So, I would explore with everybody. I know if it's not something that's new... Sometimes you have to take a step backwards to take a couple of leaps forward, but again it might be individual for everybody.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right, right now I'm going to teach you some strategies to help you to improve your reading speed and also your comprehension, and also do things like remember people's names. Have you ever been in a situation where you shake hands, you meet somebody, and then literally just their name goes in one ear and out the other? So, I'm going to teach you some strategies that I actually learned from Jim Kwik, that I use all the time. Now, a really simplistic way to look at learning is taking something that you don't know and connecting it with something that you do know. That in and of itself creates this melding process, this neuro association in your brain. So, for example, if you're meeting someone new, and we'll say that this person's name is Bob. And of course, it sounds like an easy name to remember, Bob, but for a lot of folks, it can go in one ear and out the other. Especially if you're meeting a bunch of people at one time, for example. Hey, this is Bob, this is Mary, and this is Marcus. And you'll be like, "Oh, hi Bob, hi..." But then you'll forget their names almost instantaneously. Here's how you can remember their names, and literally just lock it in in that moment and potentially never forget.

And so, for example, there is something that you might know maybe from your childhood, if you think about something like bobbing for apples, bobbing for apples, it has the name Bob in it. So, when you meet Bob, I immediately, what I would do is picture Bob bobbing for apples in my head. Bob doesn't know that I'm doing this. It's not anything weird or freaky. You could make it freaky, maybe he's like bobbing for apples and he's got some high heels... I don't know, sorry... Maybe he's dressing a little bit risqué, but then this also is bringing more humor or animation to something, makes it even stronger in your mind, makes it much more difficult to forget if you connect something memorable to it.

So, I'll meet Bob, shake his hand, think about Bob bobbing for apples maybe in his fanciest sequence underwear, whatever it is, boxer shorts. So, we got Bob bobbing for apples. Then I meet Mary, and when I shake Mary's hands, I think about the name Mary. Where would I see

that? Where is something I can recollect from my memory, from my experience that resonates with the name Mary? And it could be getting married. So, I'll shake Mary's hand and I'll think about Mary standing there at the altar waiting for her groom or her lover for life to tie the knot. And then the next person would be Marcus... And I'm just spit-balling here, but Marcus, if you have a name like Marcus, for example, you could break that down, you could think about Marcus, it has mark in it, and I'll think about a marker, and maybe Mark is using a marker and writing "us" on a dry erase board or something like that.

So, we got Marcus, Mark using a marker and writing "us". And I'll remember Marcus. Mary is getting married, Bob bobbing for apples. So, using imagery and taking something that you know and connecting with something that you don't know, which is their names, immediately starts to meld those things together in your mind, so that's one of the strategies to help you to remember names, so you could use animated things like that you can tie it to... So, for example, a good example that I have would be meeting my neighbors. I'm probably the only person in my block that I know everybody's name, and I'm not like the neighbor guy, I'm not like Mr. Rogers out here, but just in passing, you'll meet some people, and one of my neighbors, for example, her name is Erin, and so when I met her, I thought, "Okay. How is it spelled?"

So immediately when I heard it, I thought of the male version of Aaron, A-A-RON, and I thought about Aaron Rogers, and so I was just like immediately I pictured her in Green Bay Packers, shoulder pads, and she's out here throwing the rock. I'll never forget Erin's name. So that was Erin. There's another older fellow who I see all the time out walking his dog, Stan. And Stan, I thought about a character from the old Martin Lawrence TV show, Martin, and Stan was his boss at the radio station. So, whenever I see Stan, I think about Stan from Martin. They don't know I'm doing this, but I know their names and locked in. Another one of my neighbor's name is Troy. So Troy, when I met him, I thought about Brad Pitt in Troy. So, I'm picturing my guy, he's got the armor on, muscles beaming, and I just locked that in, so a lot of folks would probably be pretty...

It means something when you remember somebody's name, it just does. And I don't know if you ever had this experience with somebody messing your name up or calling you something else, you don't have to take these things so seriously, but for some people, it can be a big mistake, like in business or friendships can really throw you off if somebody doesn't, even... If they feel like you don't even appreciate or respect them enough to learn their name. So, this can be a valuable skill in building relationships, in business, and in life in general, so that's why these specific things work. So, I hope that that helps you and gives you a tool, so I can go around a table and meet 10 people and I can remember all of their names, and I've done it many times, and I learned this strategy from the remarkable Jim Kwik.

And another invaluable thing that I learned from Jim was increasing my reading speed, and one of the things that he mentioned in the past segment was using a visual pacer, so this could be as you're going across the words on the page using your finger, but I like, and so does he, using a marker or a pen or a highlighter, using something and tracing across the bottom of the words as you're reading. What that does is it instantaneously increases your reading speed by about 25%. Now, the reason that we don't typically do this or utilize this skill, this very powerful brain association, it's a brain hack, is because when we are in conventional education, this is frowned upon to use your finger. A lot of kids naturally will use their finger to read. Getting started, and we'll shoo them away, shoo away that hand, because you don't want to be that person who's using their hand or a visual pacer to read.

And so, utilizing this consciously now can unlock some mental superpowers because the human brain, we're hard-wired to keep our eye on movement, the thing about the words on the page is that they're static, so having something moving is just instantly clocking in with one of the primitive associations that the human brain has to watch for movement. And also, another piece within that, because even still you're still only going to be able to go through the words as fast as you can say them aloud in your head. You can only read by... If you're using typical reading strategies, you can only read as fast as you can vocalize the words in your head. What that is called sub-vocalization, and that limits us on how quickly we can read because we're forcefully unknowingly enunciating every single word as we go along when we're reading typically.

But what we've got to do, if we really want to increase our reading speed even more past speaking really quickly or speaking really quickly in our head, and I think about the micro machine guy, I think about Twista, shout out to Twista, repping Chicago, Busta Rhymes... People that can speak really, really quickly, but for the average person, they're not going to be speaking that quickly even in their head, so we've got to train ourselves out a little bit of sub-vocalization because we're limiting the actual capacity of our brain. Our brain doesn't... We don't have to sound a word out in order to recognize the word, the brain when it sees the word "cat", you don't have to sound it out in your head, it's already cognitively connected, and so when you see that word, the brain is already... It already is locked in on what that is, but we slow ourselves down when we read the word out loud.

So even... We'll just use a longer word, not just "cat" but like "hippopotamus", "hippononym". So, by using a visual pacer and moving faster than you can enunciate those words, what happens is it forces you to stop vocalizing them. At first, it's going to feel uncomfortable, you're going to feel like you're missing a lot of stuff, but eventually your comprehension starts to go up pretty dramatically, because your brain is going to start to adapt to this new strategy of not sounding out every word and recognizing the word and picking up the data, so reducing sub-vocalization. And some folks try to eliminate it totally.

Now for me, I'm thinking about things in terms of, there isn't this one-size-fits-all thing and the same thing for me, I'm looking at it as far as training, there's so many different types of training and exercise for the body, I feel that there can be different types of training and exercise for the brain.

So when I'm really in research mode and reviewing books that might have very technical data and things like that, that I don't need to really harp over or get invested in a story, then I'll utilize more of a speed reading strategy, but sometimes, for example, if you're just wanting to unwind and hang out in the evening, relax to a good book, you don't have to dart your way through your John Grisham, or JK Rowling's book, you could take the time and read it at a relaxed pace. So I'm not an all-or-nothing type of guy or type of thinker in this domain, I just believe that we should have access to these tools and know that they exist, and know that our brains are far more capable at adapting to different inputs than we give it credit for, and it's just because again, we're not taught how to learn, we're often just force-fed what to learn, and so this can expand our palette so much being able to learn different things that are often not given to us in our conventional education.

So, there's a couple of insights there, so we've got some strategies to help us to remember names, to improve our reading speed, and also, I wanted to share one more insight with you because in the information age, the accessibility is really the big difference. This is the thing that we're experiencing more than ever, that we don't really realize, right at our fingertips at all times, is like infinite amount of data and accessibility to said data and the data's accessibility to you and other people's accessibility to you. I grew up during a time when all you had was a home phone and computers were not in every household, and so if you left the house to go somewhere, you're just gone. That's it, "I see you later". Today, however, constant 24/7 access to you, should you allow it. Everywhere you go, everybody that you know who has your number has access to you.

So, we've got so much influx potential coming at us, and also our brains get hard-wired to seek out and look for more of this information because of the way that social media sites in particular are wired up to keep us coming back for more, searching for the likes, searching for the engagement and seeing what the conversations are, seeing what... All the stuff that's going on out there, there's this deep-seated FOMO, Fear Of Missing Out is taking place, and so having access to our phones is kind of like having a slot machine in our pocket, and if we're wanting to really make a difference in the world, to accomplish things, to have deep focus creative work and productivity, we've got to have a better association with our smartphones because in many ways, our smartphones are making us dumb, ironically.

And it's not that these things aren't valuable, immensely valuable, but unfortunately today, many people don't realize that our phones are controlling our lives, and so what we want to do

is understand that this is happening because maybe you are wanting to create work on a book or an article, or create a piece of art, or whatever the case might be, study for an exam, put a presentation together, but your phone is right by you, and you find yourself engaging in these "just checks", I'm supposed to be focused creating... Getting done what I've got to get done, but I'll just check Instagram really quickly. I'll just check Twitter really quickly. I'll just check. Just check, just check.

And you know this when you just check, you can get sucked right into that internet black hole before you know it, and 20 minutes might pass by. And the problem, as Jim has articulated as well, is that when you are being distracted by your phone, it takes time... There's a switching cost, it's called a switching cost of you doing that thing and then trying to switch back to the thing that you're supposed to be doing, this multi-tasking is really a misnomer. The human brain is not really wired up to do that, it can switch tasks quickly, but there's still a task switching that's taking place, there might be a faster switch over or a shorter lull for some people, in some brains for sure... And truth be told, women tend to have a shorter lull in switching from task to task.

The female brain is different from the male brain. There are some remarkable differences. However, this does not give us a permission slip to engage in what we believe to be multitasking, which what it really does is it makes us less efficient in everything that we're doing, so to be able to utilize our capacity to get stuff done, one of the strategies, since we know that that phone is a portal that makes us leave reality. I want you to really hear what I'm saying right now, when you pick up your phone and you go into that app, you're no longer here, you're in there, you've left, and you feel all the feelings, you get into that world and you're no longer present, and there's even a delay often times, especially if you're on your phone for a while, there's a delay in you picking up reality again, and so what is the solution here?

Well, for example, I've had the opportunity and great fortune, and it's a labor of love to say the least, it takes you through a lot, a lot of growth, a lot of effort-ing, but to write two pretty epic books, and to be able to accomplish something like that at a time like today, I had to put parameters in my life, specifically with that damn phone. I had to keep it away from me while I'm doing my deep work. So one of the strategies for me that I still use to this day, when I walk into my office to work, to write, to create, whatever it is that I'm doing, researching, to put this episode together, I walk into the office, phone goes across the room, I sit my phone across the room, so it's not in arms reach where I can just grab it and just check. If I'm going to just check, I literally have to stop what I'm doing, walk across the room and pick it up.

It's more time for my brain to be like, "Don't, don't... What are you doing? Stop it. What are you doing? Where are you going? Get back to what you need to do." Now again, if it's within arm's reach, what you do is, "Oh, I'm just going to check the time." Boom, you check the time, you

always see somebody text you, or whatever the case might be, and then next thing you know, you're getting pulled out of your work, and there's a 99.9% chance that that text is not urgent, but it's just because you see it. Now, if your work requires that there's constant access, absolutely keep those channels open for sure, but the things that are not necessary, let's remove or dramatically limit those things. So, for example, I highly, highly recommend that you shut off all the notifications for things that are unnecessary, because when you sign up for the app, they ask you, "Would you like us to send you some notifications?" For Instagram, for Twitter, for Facebook, for YouTube...

And next thing you know, a lot of folks are getting these notifications constantly when people are commenting or whatever the case might be on their stuff, you don't need that, it's a constant distraction and is training your brain to be distracted. Shut those notifications off. And the thing is, these social media tech companies, they are well-versed, they want to get you in and keep you in. Hopefully, you've seen the film Social Dilemma, it's kind of articulating this in a more visual way, and a lot of folks are getting educated through film today, through television documentaries, that's all good. But there's a much bigger story as well, and just understanding that this is taking place, they are using psychological tactics to get you in the app and keep you there as long as possible.

And they're making money, whether you're buying stuff or not, something eventually is highly likely, there's going to be an engagement that takes place that adds money to their pockets. So, there's a vested interest in keeping you on those apps, so what happens now is, when I download the app, "Would you like to turn on notifications?" No, but they'll ask me every so often, the little thing will pop up, a little message, "Hey, turn on notifications," for Instagram or whatever the case might be, they're very persistent in asking you over time, they'll keep on asking, you got to keep saying no. So, turn off the excessive notifications. We do not need them unless it is required for your work. If you work... If you're somebody who's an Instagram specialist for your said company, and that's what you do, cool.

But if you work at a lab or you are a third-grade teacher or you're a police officer, you don't need everybody who comments on your Instagram post to come to your phone. We don't need that; we don't need it. Turn off the notifications that are unnecessary. And also, one more tip here is understanding where your prime time is. So, what I mean by that, your prime time of productivity, of creativity, of get up and go, accomplish things, you want to leverage that so that you can build the life that you want. And what tends to happen is we will unknowingly outsource our prime time to other people's needs. So maybe your prime time is first thing in the morning, and you got goals, you're like, "I'm going to get up, I'm going to write one chapter of my book today, I'm going to write 10 pages today, or I'm going to," fill in the blank; "I'm going to work on this new program that I've been wanting to create for my students."

Then you go to your phone, and you see there's some emails, and then you dive into the emails, you're starting the day with other people's agendas, instead of handling your business first, because the thing is, do you need to do that first thing? Is that email the priority? Is it essential that you do that at 5:00 AM? Versus when you clock in at 8:00 AM or whatever the case might be, utilize your prime time. Stop outsourcing it to others. So, what that might mean is maybe we don't go to our phone first thing in the morning. So maybe give yourself 30 minutes of just me time without picking up your phone, and I know some people right now, they're like, "Shawn, but that... It's my alarm. That's what I use for my alarm." If you've got a problem with the phone where you pick up your phone in the bed, and then you just get on that bad boy, you get to scrolling, listen, we might need an intervention.

This would be an ideal opportunity... I'm just going to throw this out there. No judgment. I'm hella judging right now. No, I'm just kidding. No judgement, no judgement. This might be an opportunity for you to get a real alarm clock. They still exist. I promise you, I actually just saw my alarm clock, that... This true story, it was actually behind a curtain in our bedroom, I didn't even know where it was because I've created this routine to where I'm just... Generally, I'm getting up before the alarm goes off. So the alarm for me, yeah, I actually do have it on my phone, but it's in another room, it's in the bathroom, and so I got to actually get up and go to it, but to be honest, nine out of 10 times, more than that, I'm up before the alarm, and oftentimes, I don't need alarm, I don't even turn it on because I have my day kind of managed to where I have a buffer.

And so, there's many ways of going about this because that's another thing it could be difficult for you get out of bed in the morning, 'cause you've got your phone right there, you could just hit the snooze and you're not getting up and getting after your day, and we get mistaken that we're getting a few minutes extra sleep, but it is really chitty sleep. C-H, chitty sleep, and we're falling back from getting shaken up by an alarm, drifting back in for a couple of extra minutes of low-quality sleep, and then getting ourselves to the place where we have to rush. That's no way to start a day. I know we've all done it before, but we can hack our environment and our brain so that we're no longer subscribing to those behaviors.

So, put your alarm across the room to where you actually got to get up, if you do in fact, need an alarm. Take control of your morning. I know people that literally, they put their phone in their car in the evening because they already know who they are, if it's around, they're going to dabble. So, create some space between you and the distraction, the infinite distraction that is our smartphones. Not that we can't utilize them to great reward and benefit, and there are many people right now who're listening on a smartphone right now, and it's beautiful, but you put that in at your own time, on your own schedule rather than it, controlling you.

So again, super powerful stuff, very practical tools and strategies to increase our ability to comprehend information, to learn faster, to learn people's names, to eliminate distractions, and also part of that morning routine could be things that are good for your brain as well, a ritual for a lot of folks is having that morning cup of coffee kind of getting them online in a sense. And we've got to understand that this, again, this practice has been done for thousands of years of utilizing coffee and caffeinated beverages like vermate, cacao, it's been done for a very long time, it's not that these things are suddenly not applicable or not good for you, it's the way that the modern human utilizes them with low quality coffee beans that are riddled with pesticides and toxic molds and all kinds of other nasty contaminants, and also not respecting the process because when it's higher quality, it resonates better with our cells. Caffeine and human cells have this really remarkable interaction.

It is a nervous system interactive substance. When we're talking about the brain, it truly does impact our brain in a really interesting way. For example, a recent study published in the journal Practical Neurology, details how regularly drinking coffee has been shown to help prevent cognitive decline and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease. That's crazy. That is amazing. Why do people not know this? And part of it, again, the quality of these things matters. If you're having coffee along with neurotoxins, aka pesticides and herbicides or rodenticides... That's a bit of a problem, that's anti-brain health, so having organic high-quality coffee. Plus, researchers at Stanford University recently found that caffeine that's found in coffee is able to defend against age-related inflammation.

The research revealed that light to moderate coffee drinkers, key light to moderate... So, there's a bell-shaped curve here, light to moderate coffee drinkers live longer and more healthily, thanks in part to the protection caffeine provides by suppressing genes related to inflammation. Crazy remarkable stuff. But what if you had the brain boosting power of organic coffee plus high-quality organic medicinal mushrooms, like Lion's Mane is clinically proven to stimulate neurogenesis, the creation of new brain cells according to researchers at the University of Malaya. Wow, you've got something really special. That's what I had today. For most days, I'm starting my day with the Lion's Mane Chaga infused organic coffee from Four Sigmatic. Go to foursigmatic.com/model. That's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C and you get an exclusive 10% off discount of their incredible coffee blends, and also they have a really, really great hot cocoa drink as well that most mornings, even this morning, I made for my youngest son, Braden, he loves to have his little hot cocoa, hot cacao, high-quality organic cacao, while my wife and I have our mushroom infused coffee.

That's just a part of our daily routine. I've never felt any of those weird side effects that folks feel with having too much coffee and caffeine and anything like that, so folks that tend to have a more sensitive system, like I do, this is something that we can lean on because the caffeine content is a bit lower and it's also melding with the Chaga, and the Lion's Mane is hitting these

flavor notes where it really tastes amazing. Blend it with some high-quality fats as well, maybe a couple of drops of some high-quality stevia or something like that, dress it up. Today, I actually had a little bit... I'll tell you what I had actually, I'm going to share... So, I had the organic coffee, and I blended that bad boy with some grass-fed butter, with some MCT oil, with some cinnamon, and a little bit of Shilajit. What do you know about Shilajit? Shilajit, the translation of the word equates to something like the destroyer of weakness. The destroyer of weakness. So, I'll do some fancy things, but my base every morning is my Four Sigmatic coffee. Head over there, check them out, foursigmatic.com/model.

Now I know that we've covered some game-changing insights already, but we've really got to drive this point home, and we're going to hear more from New York Times best-selling author and accelerating learning expert, Jim Kwik, because right now we've got to address these particular issues that he's going to target. Number one, how to strengthen your decision-making muscles, how to find a balance between logic and emotional thinking, how valuable is that today, and also some strategies on how to recover from making inevitable mistakes in life and in learning. This one is really powerful as well, and so much more, so check out this additional segment from the one and only Jim Kwik.

JIM KWIK: Our life right now is a reflection of our thinking, because how we think determines what we focus on, it determines how we feel, it determines what we do. So really the sum of our thinking really reflects our day-to-day life and our relationships and our health and our habits and our career. I always thought it was interesting back in school, they teach you more what to think, but not how to think. And I think that's one of the big challenges in a world where everything is being outsourced overseas, jobs, or it's being automated, there's software that could do a lot of left-brain jobs or...

There's something like artificial intelligence. What do we have as human beings? What makes us human? What makes us valuable in life, in the workplace, and I think it's our ability to think, our ability to solve problems, our ability to make really good decisions. But I think... "But I think" it's one of those things people take for granted because we're not just conscious of our thinking, they say we have an average of what, 60,000 thoughts a day. The challenge is 95% of those thoughts is the same thoughts we had yesterday and the day before that, so how do we create growth, how do we stretch ourselves to new levels and... So, I love this because I feel like you make one little distinction in the way you think differently, and there's Oliver Wendell Holmes quote that says, "A mind once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."

And so, I want people to be able to think in a way that makes them more productive. It allows them to perform better, allows them also greater peace of mind, because in this world of...

We've had this conversation in past episodes about digital distraction and digital depression, digital overload, it's really...

It's weighing on people's health, this world where people are comparing themselves to other people in social media world, where they're comparing themselves to this highly filtered life, a highlight reel of everyone else's life, but that all comes down to our ability to think. The ability to think for ourselves to produce new results.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so powerful, man, because thinking is everything really, it's... And I've said this before, our perception is our reality, and it all has to do with what we're thinking and how we're thinking about ourself in relation to our environment, ourself in relation to ourself, and so I think it's of the utmost important for us to really understand our thinking a little bit more, and that's why I'm really happy to have you on today, but also how can we optimize our thinking. So, one of the first things I want to ask you about has to do with decision-making, because that's a big component of our thinking, that has a huge impact on the results we get in our lives, so what are some of the new insights, some of the things you've been coming across lately and teaching in regard to decision-making?

JIM KWIK: Yeah, I think exactly that, that our life is a reflection of all the decisions, the sum total of all the decisions we made to this point, where we're going to live, what we're going to do, who we're going to be with and such, and so these daily decisions, a lot of people are suffering from decision fatigue, you know this. And it's a big health concern, it's just people are wasting their mental energy on decisions that really don't matter in their life, and really, I think it comes down to... I tweeted this a few years ago, I said, "The most important thing is to keep the most important thing, the most important thing." The most important thing is to keep the most important thing, the most important thing, because people are getting really good at things that don't really matter or are using their decisions on things that really don't matter. We've had this conversation in the past about some leaders who are wearing the same outfit pretty much every day because they don't want to waste one of their good decisions, they buy 10 of those shirts, so they don't have to think about... Or meal prep, and they don't want to be able to waste that, but I did a podcast recently, and I called it how to work smart versus working hard.

And everyone always says, yes, of course, I want to work smarter and not harder. I filmed it actually in a power plant, an actual power plant, and I opened it with a story that basically said this, one day, this really busy power plant just shuts down out of nowhere, and it's dead silent, and the employees are running around with their head cut off, not knowing what to do, the operations manager after hours doesn't know what to do, nobody can solve the problem, so the operations manager picks up the phone, calls a local technician, and luckily the technician was in the area and he says, "You got to help me. We're losing all this business, time is money.

We're going to shut down. Please save us." He's like... Technician's like, "You're lucky I'm right around the corner." He shows up and he walks around the power plant, and he goes to one beam, now, this power plant is full of different beams, and on those beams have all these different electrical boxes, and he goes to one specific electrical box and he takes out a marker and he put a big X on it, and he opens up the box, and inside, as you would expect, there are bolts, there are wires, there are screws. Out of all of that, he goes to one specific screw, he turns it not a quarter of an inch, and then bam the entire power plant lights up and the technician's like, "Thank you so much.

You saved the day. You saved our business. How much do I owe you?" And the technician looks at him and he says, "That will be \$10,000." And then the operations manager is like, "You must be crazy, you were here for five minutes, all you did was turn one screw, any of us could turn that screw." He's like, "Give me an itemized bill." And he was like, "No problem," technician reaches in his back pocket, takes it as a notebook, scribbles on it for a second, tears out the page, gives it the operations manager. The operations manager looks at it and says, "I understand," he goes to his desk, takes out his checkbook, writes a check for \$10,000, hands it to the man, and you zoom in on that bill and it says this, "Turning screw: \$1.

Knowing what screw to turn: \$9999." And my message to everybody who's listening is not that you have a screw loose, it's two things, Number one, we live in the knowledge economy where knowledge is not only power, it's profit. Specialized knowledge, that's why I love your show, and I learn so much because it's not just the have and have nots, it's those who know and those who don't know, that those who know wellness and optimization and human performance, and those who just don't know better.

And so there's that gap, and that's why I dedicate my life to accelerated learning, but the other reason I tell this story is not only so you could be an expert at what you do, is that there are usually one or two screws, there's one beam, there's one box one or two screws that really are what I call a focal point, and a focal point, it's one or two things, they call it, other people have called it a lead domino, one of the first early dominoes you hit and it knocks down other things. In military, they call it a forced multiplier, meaning that for the same amount of input, you get multiple outputs or multiple rewards. So, my life based on, you know my learning difficulties that I had growing up from my head injury, you know my sleep issues, which you've helped me a lot with, those deficits has created really a big drive in me wanting to get the most out of the energy that I have. And we're talking about resources. Like going back to MacGyver, he has very little resources, but he has a lot of internal resourcefulness, and I feel like every single person listening to this has a lot of internal resourcefulness, it's things that might not be on an asset sheet...

But they are things like your creativity, your decision-making, your ability to solve problems, your ability to meta-think, think about your thinking, your self-awareness, and that's really the owner's manual. And so, when it comes to decision-making, I'm really excited about this because again, if you could just think about some of the bad decisions we've made in our life and the cost that it's had for us, I'm a big proponent on... We've had this conversation about mistakes, and a lot of people, as we grow older, we're afraid of making mistakes and we're not making decisions, and even I would say not, failing to make a decision is also a decision. You know what I mean? When people have a decision about what to eat or not, they go into default mode, they're still making a decision, so I feel like part of it is decision, it's a fitness, so you want to build your decision-making muscles because a lot of people are so lackadaisical over what's important to them, so they don't really build those muscles, so they don't have that strength, if you will, but then there's also strategies besides fitness, just like in past episodes, we talk about memory fitness and how even if you don't use this strategy on how to remember names, you could still remember names because your brain is as fitter, it's stronger, it's more energized, it's stronger, just like your physical muscles, you could also do that with your thinking muscles, and so there are strategies also...

So, for example, one of my favorite one is really, it's classic, it's called Six Thinking Hats, and I'd say, a great model because I feel like a lot of people aren't able to solve a problem or make a new better decision because they're stuck from one point of view. Do you know what I mean? It's like, you wonder why somebody maybe dates the same person, or they make the same mistake financially in a business, they hire the same people, or maybe they do the same problem with their diet, and they always fall in the same pattern, it's because we never really get out of our own way and see things from another point of view. One of the reasons why I love podcasts is that or reading books is you get to see something from an author, an expert's point of view, and it gives you another perspective, and in order to change your perspective, I remember we did that event that you spoke at, along with a luminous group of individuals, your peers, and we had Quincy Jones was one of them, and he was talking about getting perspective that you have two ways of changing your perspective is changing your place or changing the people you spend time with, because we know that who you spend time with is who you become, because a good way of making better decisions is spend time with people who make good decisions, because you know this from your nervous system and neuroscience, you have mirror neurons and mirror neurons are your to put it or simplify it.

They are your imitation neurons, the reason why it's not just your biological networks or your neurological networks, it's your social networks, because they say if you spend time with nine broke people, you're going to be the 10th, and it's because you're constantly imitating people around you and not just their behavior, you're imitating also, you're adopting their beliefs, you're adopting their values, you're adopting their habits, and we know from habits, first you create your habits and then your habits create you, and it's not just our habits of meditation

and movement and journaling, those are important, but really what I'm very... Those are on the physical plane, if you will, but it's also the internal changes that are going on inside, because when you're constantly doing something, and you show up for it... As you've heard this phrase, as you do anything is how you do everything.

You start the habit of, oh, I'm somebody who follows through, that's an identity level, that's really deep, because you change... One of the most powerful ways to make a transformation stick is to change how you look at yourself, and they say that the two most powerful words in the English language are, I am, because whatever you put after that determines your destiny or your destination in your life, and so one of the ways of changing your identity is by having these habits, because it's like you show up, you show up, and when you show up constantly, all of a sudden you start looking at yourself different, and that's really powerful to look at yourself as somebody who shows up in life because that will ripple into all of your different behaviors, but going back to the Six Thinking Hats, this is a way of changing your perspective, meaning a lot of people don't make new decisions because they're stuck in one mode, and so the summary of it, it was created by Edward de Bono, and he metaphorically created six color hats, and then when you imagine...

And we know imagination is more powerful than knowledge, you imagine yourself putting on this color hat, and you have to look at this decision or this problem through that lens, so for example, let's take...

The white hat. When somebody puts on a white hat, metaphorically, and I'll give you some memory aids, 'cause I'm the memory guy, white is imagine, like a doctor's uniform or a scientist is in white, that reminds you of logic. So, let's say, I want everybody right now, we'll make this interactive to think about a decision that you're struggling with, or think about a problem that you need to solve, and I think everybody has one of those things, right? Going back to Quincy Jones, remember on stage, I was asking him about the problems he had, not just the successes, but the problems. He was like, "Jim, I have any problems." He was like, "I have puzzles," and that's a different way of, talking about thinking... A different way of thinking about something, 'cause for me, when I think about problems, I'm like, oh, something you have to deal with. And I don't know if I would be able to handle this, but puzzle is fun, puzzles have a solution, so it's a different way of thinking, 'cause the words change the way we think also.

But going back to this, when you put on, you think about a problem or a decision you have right now, you imagine yourself putting on the white hat and actually physically you grab something in front of you and put it on so you have your kinesthetic, your muscles in it, and you have to look at the problem or the decision just based on facts and logic, so that's the only way, and that's great for individuals, 'cause some people don't... They're not used to doing it, but when they have that hat on, it forces you to look through that perspective.

SHAWN STEVENSON: To be honest with yourself, and...

JIM KWIK: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: 'cause I think a lot of times we're lying to ourselves on how complicated or difficult it might be. And so actually using logic can really help to get rid of some of the mystery...

JIM KWIK: So that's like... That's like your Spock hat, for people who follow the Star Trek, you have to look at the issue completely logically and more science-based, now another color hat...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Or Data, shout out to Data.

JIM KWIK: There you go. Next Generation.

SHAWN STEVENSON: By the way, that guy was born to play that role.

JIM KWIK: Oh my God, Brent... Oh yeah, completely. So, you have to look at it analytically, and even if you don't feel like that's you, you make it a game, and we've said this, you and I have said this before, that it's not that you stopped playing 'cause you grew older, you grew older because you stopped playing.

And so, this is a thinking exercise, a thought experiment, if you will, 'cause this is an episode all about maximizing your thinking, that's what Einstein used to do, Einstein used to do these... What you call thought experiments. These imagination experiments. And this is what we're doing right now. So, you put on the white hat and then you have to look at it through logic, you take off the white hat. Now I want you to put on the red Hat, so imagine yourself reaching out in front of you putting on the red hat, and the red Hat represents as a mnemonic device, red is emotion, red is heart. So, I want you to think about, Now, how does this make you feel? So, this gives you permission, 'cause some people look at everything logically, but they don't go with their feelings, and that we know that's a superpower also as well. So, think about this problem that you have, maybe it's somebody you need to hire, maybe it's somebody in a relationship, whether or not you want to enter a relationship, or maybe exit a relationship, maybe it's something you have to do with your health, think about it now, from an emotional standpoint, so you're wearing the red hat.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And by the way, some folks ignore that part...

JIM KWIK: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: They're just more bent on logic and not being honest about how do I feel about this, or even just asking ourselves, how do I feel about this situation?

JIM KWIK: Exactly, and then when we're talking about being a better thinker, this gives you more perspective, this gives you a spectrum or a rainbow, if you will, points of view, so you could see something... We've heard of the elephant, right? Where there's an elephant there, and you have these blind monks and they're reaching out and they can't see, but they just feel. And one of them is feeling like the tail and thinks the elephant is a snake, and one of them is feeling like the leg of the elephant thinks it's a tree, everyone sees different parts or feels different parts, but they don't see the whole. And through this exercise, you get to see it from these different points of use. So, what are other different color hats. Take off the red hat, and now what you're going to do is you're going to put on the black hat. So, you put on the black hat. Now a mnemonic device. The black hat is the critic. Alright, so what I want you to think about for a memory aid from your memory coach is imagine a judge in black robes, that's the one that's going to judge.

So now I want you to look at this and think about what could go wrong here. You can meta yourself and think, be the critic here, give yourself... But some people live with the black hat and they're just critical about everything, you know what I mean? But it makes sense because that's how they were raised through nurture.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And it could be valuable.

JIM KWIK: Exactly, and it could save you from making mistakes and everything, but you don't see the whole picture, and so the black hat, when you put that on, look at this problem or this decision and think about it, what could go wrong here, and that what... Think about your plan B and such, any negative consequences. Take off the black hat, and now what you're going to do is you're going to put on the yellow hat. Now, the yellow hat is the opposite of the black hat, yellow is like the sun. It's opportunity. So, what could go right here. So that's the more of the... If the black is more of the critic, the yellow is more the opportunistic, more of the... This is like, what are the benefits that could come out of making this...

SHAWN STEVENSON: The outcome you want...

JIM KWIK: Exactly, now some people live with the yellow hat, like a lot of entrepreneurs do this, and they just look at the rosy of everything, they only see that and then they wonder why they don't look at the risk. They don't look at the threats, they don't look at the weaknesses or the competition or anything that could go wrong, they just move towards anything that's

pleasurable. And that's not necessarily good either. So, we went through this, we go through the red and we went through the white, we went through the red, we went through the black and then the yellow, the green hat is the growth hat. So, this is where you need to make a decision or solve a problem, and when you put on the green hat... Green is like growth. It's like plant life. It's like growing grass. And so, this is where you're thinking out of the box, this is the hat you wear where it's like, what could be an out-of-the-box, new, something we're not even thinking about solution to this whole thing. A different way of looking at it. So Green is growth.

And then finally, the last hat is the blue hat, and I saved the blue for last, because the blue is kind of like the manager of all the other hats. It listens to all the other perspectives, the one with the black hat, the white hat, the yellow hat, the red hat, the green hat, and blue is like the sky, it oversees everything else. And so, it listens to everything and then it makes the decision because it heard all the different points of view, can weigh it from different perspectives, and then that's your answer, if you will. And so, this is kind of a fun strategy, and I would really encourage everyone who's listening, not just... You know this. Knowledge is not power. We've talked about this. All the podcasts and the online programs, and the coaching and the seminars, they don't work unless you work, so what I would challenge everybody who's listening to do, is this, is maybe... Maybe take a screenshot of this episode. Post it, tag both of us, and share with us a decision that you applied this to, because then you really get to feel it and see how it works in your life. But I've heard, I've been sharing this for about 20 years.

And again, I didn't create this actual model, it's Edward de Bono, but I've heard so many great testimonials from people and great, amazing stories about their relationship, about their health, about big decisions they had to make, about where they're going to live, and their career. And it makes sense, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely.

JIM KWIK: So, you're not stuck in one point of view.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly. That's exactly what I was going to say, because we tend to get stuck in our way of thinking, and we have access to so many different ways of thinking, like inherently in us, and so it's just having... First of all, just giving permission like you just did to think differently, and here's how you do it. Put on this hat and look at this situation. And so, for myself, personally, I just want to share this. I had started to get more into this fact-based thinking about certain decisions in my life, and that's a big part of my natural approach, but there's also the big feeling part. And I started to lessen the feeling part, and so I was going on more of things of, these are things that I should do, logically speaking.

JIM KWIK: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? But they didn't feel right. And lo and behold, when I keep taking steps in that direction, it just didn't work out right, because I wasn't acknowledging... Literally, your feelings, oftentimes, give you direct feedback, but you cannot just get caught up in your feelings because feelings can be very temporary.

JIM KWIK: Of course, of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, I love this kind of whole brain, whole being thinking. And, man, thank you so much for sharing that. That's just blowing my mind right there.

JIM KWIK: Absolutely, Shawn. I would encourage also, when... Everyone who's listening to this, this doesn't have to just apply to your life. This works really well for teams, so let's say, your business. And let's say, you're a small business entrepreneur. You have a small group of five individuals on your team, and you're facing something that's an issue in your industry or something internally, like, should you do this product, or should you stop doing this show, or whatever you need to do, is get everybody in a room and then take turns wearing these different hats.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

JIM KWIK: This is also great for parents to teach their children at an early age, because it builds empathy. It allows you to... Even if I've had parents actually make out of different color pieces of paper, like these actual hats, and they'll take their children through these exercises.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

JIM KWIK: Children will have a question about school, they'll have a question about going to some... Whatever their decision is, and then you can play with this with them also as well, so it's not just to your own benefit. You can do this with your team, your family, and more.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is something super valuable, too, for ourselves to practice, but also to teach and instill in other folks, this concept of divergent thinking. And being able to really "think outside of the box" and just look at things from all these different perspectives, it's so interesting how many creative solutions there are to the same problem, but when we're in it, we can think that there's this problem and I don't know how to solve it, when there are tens, hundreds of different solutions for it, but we have to be divergent in it, so... Man, I love that so much.

JIM KWIK: And it's an incredibly valuable skill to have right now, when we're talking about skill-based success, meaning, that when we talked about a lot of jobs are going overseas or they're being... AI is going to replace them, or automation is... The three areas that computers aren't as easily going to be able to do that is three areas: Creativity, which is a thinking process. Imagination, because think about the entertainment industry, think about all these wonderful superhero movies you and I geek out about, that comes from somebody's imagination. And then the third thing, a computer is not going to be able to do as well as a human, at least not yet is strategy. And so be able to make these kinds of good decisions and solve problems, that's our value in society. An entrepreneur is nothing but a professional problem-solver. They're taking challenges, whether they're small life challenges or grand, big challenges that are going on that the planet is facing right now.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I love this... I love the six hats, and I also love what you shared, and it's just, still blowing my mind right now. If you want to start making better decisions, get yourself around people making good decisions, because we are, inherently, we just are... We become our environment. If you know somebody in your life has a tendency to make good decisions, be around that person more often. Those mirror neurons can do their work, and what you said earlier, as soon as you mentioned, some really highly successful folks taking a decision off the table because we do get this decision fatigue. At the end of the day, after you've done a lot of stuff, you just don't care. Just like, whatever. What do you want for dinner? Whatever, right?

And having them wear the same thing every day, like somebody's coming with that approach, I think... I saw Dr. Dre did that. He's got a great documentary, The Defiant Ones, he's got like these... I think they're white Air Force 1s he wears every day, but he's kind of frivolous, so he has a new pair every day, and the same outfit. And it's just kind of weird and the same thing with some other folks as well, but that also made me think about Kingpin as well. I'm just saying it might be a little psychotic, but hey, they're winning, so let's just be real about it.

JIM KWIK: You have all the superheroes, Batman wears the same outfit, as Spider-Man, I wear this brain shirt pretty much every day.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But at least I would hope you got a couple of them though.

JIM KWIK: Yeah, I do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, we talked a little bit about decisions and becoming a better problem solver, which just blew my mind with that. Let's talk about... Because one of the things that tends to happen, we make decisions and we might make a bad decision or something that we

feel is a bad decision, something that costs us. What can we do to recover, is there anything that you know about that can help us to recover from making mistakes?

JIM KWIK: Absolutely, and so when we're talking about mistakes, I think a lot of people don't make progress in their life because of the fear of judgment, the fear of looking bad. A lot of people won't go to that exercise at the gym because they're brand new, and I think that's something that's very important to get over, and I'll talk about first, a lot of people make mistakes to begin with, but mistakes are just a sign that we're trying something. It's similar to a child who's learning how to walk, you wouldn't see it, your child stumbles a few times and just be like, "Okay, don't try this anymore, you're looking really bad, don't walk. Walking is not for you." But as we grow older, sometimes we're so concerned about other people's opinions and expectations, so I know of a lot of your listeners take notes, I would write this down and just put it by your computer or something, it's just... You can go broke buying into the opinions and expectations of other people, and when I was working, I help a lot of actors speed read scripts, have focus on set, memorize their lines faster.

And I remember when I was working with Jim Carrey, and we were making guacamole of all things in his kitchen, which is a great brain food. By the way, what you eat matters, especially for your gray matter, so we're making this... And I'm asking him the same question I asked a lot of people like, "Why do you do what you do?" I'm very interested in human motivation because that's a thinking process, and I find out that the reason why he acts so insane, if you will, or extreme onset, is because he wants to give everybody who's watching permission to be themselves, and I feel like... And he calls it freeing people from the concern of others, that's "his religion", freeing other people from the concern of other people, and I feel like constantly we're mitigating ourselves or a way we can express ourselves because we're scared of how we're going to look, we're scared of judgment and what critics are going to say. But the critics, that's the easiest job in the world, because all they do is they don't have to do anything, they can just criticize other people who are trying to do things. So, my first comments on when it comes to mistakes is, you've all heard this before, but in order to learn, you have to make mistakes, that's how we learn, because there's no such thing as failure.

People think failure is the opposite of success, but I feel like in you and I, the people that we get to spend time with and we get to interview for our shows and such, and our personal experience, failure is not the opposite of success. It's part of success. And I feel like there's no such thing as failure. There's only failure to learn, because if you're getting feedback, then you know what to do different, and I just did a podcast episode with Beth Comstock, who's the former Vice Chair of General Electric, which is all about imagination, and she has a new book called Imagine It Forward, and the power of imagination. And we're talking about Edison, who started General Electric, and he was a great marketer, but obviously you've all heard that he tried, he was like, "Oh, I didn't fail thousands of times to make the light bulb, I succeeded in

learning what not to do," and so it's a mindset. So, I would say first start with making more mistakes and fail forward and give yourself permission, but the big thing is, how do you recover from a mistake, and I would give everyone...

I like acronyms, you know this, 'cause we've talked about this in other shows on how to remember names and speed read, I use acronyms. What I would say is, put the mistake behind you and make it OLD, and so the acronym is O-L-D. I want everyone to think about a mistake that they are holding on to, 'cause I think a lot of us have regret and we live in the past, but I always tell people, if you live... If you're living in the past, then you're dying in the present, 'cause you're always looking in that rear view mirror, and then you can't be here, and so you can learn from the past, but you got to live for today and then you can lead your legacy tomorrow. And so, remember OLD. And so, the O and everyone right now, and make this interactive because we don't want to make this theoretical, can make it relevant to you. Think about a mistake you're holding on to, you want to make it OLD, the O is you need to own it. You need to own that, and here's a few things that'll allow you to own it. The A is you need to be accountable for it.

Okay, so I'm going to give you a few A's the here's the first A, be accountable for it, because you need to take responsibility for it. You and I have talked about the time I've spent with Stan Lee, the co-creator of all these amazing Spider-Man, X-Men, Avengers, and he told me in the car one day, he was like, "Who's your favorite superhero?" I was like, "Spider-Man," he was like, "With great power comes great responsibility." And in my mind, because I have my learning difficulties, I reverse things, I was like, "Stan, you're right." But the opposite is also true. With great responsibility comes great power. When we take responsibility for something, even our mistakes, we have great power to make things better, and so first thing is you make, you to become accountable for it. Another A is just acknowledged that you're human, acknowledge that it is a mistake and that you made it, because some people deny and they deny that they made that mistake, and that's a challenge also as well, so you need to be able to acknowledge it in order to be able to... Because some people, what you resist persists and they fight with it, and they try to defend it, but if you fight for your limitations, you get to keep them. And so just acknowledge it. Another A is apologize.

Apologize if you've hurt somebody, if this mistake costs somebody else outside of you, apologize to that person, you can keep it brief, but be clear and apologize in a way that is sincere, obviously.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mean it.

JIM KWIK: Exactly, because people... We all have this radar, we know if something is sincere or not, but apologize for it, because that's a way of owning it, you apologize for it, explain, if you need to, why it happened and explain how it's never going to happen again. If you will.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And if you really mean it, you're not expecting the other person to necessarily do anything differently, it's, you're apologizing for yourself. And the potential for healing.

JIM KWIK: Absolutely, I agree with that completely. So, you're accountable for it and you acknowledge it, you apologize for it, and maybe you need to apologize to yourself also because forgiveness goes a long way. I've spent a lot of time on, especially with my brain injury, through going through SPECT scans, having my brain analyzed, neurofeedback, and one of the best ways to get into those deep healing states, the number one way that I found from personal experience is forgiveness. And studies done in self-compassion, say that when you don't beat yourself up, 'cause a lot of people, they are really hard on themselves, they ate that cupcake, or they didn't work out that day, or they were a little short with their child or whatever it is, and they beat themselves up, and we find in the studies that actually kindness goes farther. When your kind to yourself, meaning that you say, "I'm human, I had a long day and I did make a mistake," but you're kind with yourself, as opposed to beating yourself up, you're more likely to follow through in the future.

So, the O in OLD is you make the mistake, OLD is you own it, you're accountable, you acknowledge it, you apologize for it. The L in old stands for, of course, learn from it. And the whole idea behind making mistakes is that where is the gift in this? And I ask that myself all the time when there's a mistake that's made either by myself or somebody around me is like, "Where is the gift?" And usually, the gift comes from a new distinction that you have or a new learning, and so when I'm doing this and I'm making a mistake and I've made a mistake, what I'll do is I'll even journal about it a little bit because I was like, "What was my intention here, what was the environment that allowed this mistake for happen? Was I multi-tasking, was I taking too much?" Taking on too much, was I exhausted, and I didn't sleep the night before? What created this environment for this mistake to happen, or did I not have enough information? And so I think that reflection is very important because otherwise what happens is you don't handle the D, which the O again, as you own it, the L is you learn from it.

And a big part of it for me is I journal about it because I like to write about it and reflect on it, otherwise there's no learning from it, and then the D stands for don't repeat it. Don't repeat it, because if you truly learn from it, then you're not going to repeat it because the first time you did, it's a mistake, but the second time you do it, it's a choice. Because people, they say... And you've heard this phrase, in self-improvement forever, "insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result". And I don't know if that's insanity, maybe it's

just a poor memory because you don't remember the lesson that came from it, and I feel like a lot of people repeat mistakes and the D again says don't repeat it, because they don't remember the lesson or the pain that came, so they end up dating the same kind of person. They make the same kind of mistake with their health over and over again, or they hire the same person, or they... Again, wait and procrastinate on their taxes or whatever those things are, and in order to not repeat it, I would say a few things, maybe I'll make a... I like iteration, maybe a few Ps.

And I did a whole episode on this back, went deep in it, about making mistakes, P is like, prepare next time. When you learn it and you journal about it and prepare for the next time. I would say plan, when you know something, the situation could come up in the future, plan ahead, and that would prevent you from making that kind of mistake because these thought experiments using your imagination to project into the future, and really imagination is really rehearsal. When somebody is fearful that they're going to make a mistake, whether it's public speaking, and you know this, a lot of people one of the big fears is people, when you and I go to events, even people don't know, backstage, a lot of our peers are really scared to go on stage and do their work, but they're such so mission-driven. They have a moral obligation to do it, so that's the motivation, but preparation is just a signal to your mind, fear is just meaning you need to prepare more, and so I would say the D is don't repeat it because if you really did own... If you'd really do own it and you really did learn from it, then don't repeat that because then it's a choice.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Jim, this is so powerful because people... Even you asking me about, what have I done to get to the place that I'm at personally? And it's literally this formula that you just mentioned, I'm very, very big on learning from my mistakes, I'm very, very passionate about it. But it starts with owning it and saying, "This is my responsibility, this is my bad," even if it's not directly you did the thing. If you were involved and you put something in position or you made the choice to be involved in something, taking responsibility for whatever, you can, because it gives you the part, the opportunity to actually learn from it. And so, learning from it and then don't repeat it because, man, I want that lesson because you better believe I've got this one, I'm not going to do that again. So just like, I cut the cord. And if people can start to embrace this and this, I love, so powerful, this acronym of OLD and man, it's like, it is old, you got to let this stuff go.

JIM KWIK: Put it in the past, and that's the other thing when it comes to mistakes is when I was talking about forgiveness is just you are not your mistakes, your mistakes don't define you, but how you deal with those mistakes can define you, and I'm saying that, using this model of OLD.

And again, going back to thinking, 'cause this conversation has been all about thinking, I wish they taught this back in school, because this is our ability to make mistakes and to grow

through mistakes, I feel like when we do these things also, it increases our integrity with other people. 'Cause they see we own it, that we learn from it, and we don't repeat it. And I love what you said about how it falls on your shoulder that even if somebody on your team did something, ultimately you had a part in it, because maybe you hired that person or you as a manager and you take responsibility and we could appreciate, and we always appreciate leaders who do that because we are forgiving when we see somebody is growing from their mistakes and they're not putting it on somebody else and making somebody else blaming and all the other stuff. And we stay in our power, and yes, there could be some short-term pain, like there is doing a lot of any kind of growth. But I think that even if you do the easy thing, which is procrastinate and put it off and not take responsibility, then life gets really hard.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely.

JIM KWIK: But if you do the hard things and you own it and you apologize for it, and you do everything you can to make it better and learn from it, then life gets a lot easier.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Definitely, I want to ask you about one more thing. There's so many things I could talk to you about.

JIM KWIK: Yeah. I'm honored to be here.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm just thinking about some of the biggest issues that we tend to have as humans, but also as people, especially the Model Health Show community. People who involved in this mission and this movement are really growth-driven, we want to be the best us possible, we want to have the health that we truly want, we want to have the relationships, we want to have the careers that we want, but a big barrier for that is, it's oftentimes not the environment, it's ourselves. We are our biggest trap door, this self-sabotage. We set ourselves up for failure. So can you talk a little bit about the idea of self-sabotage and any kind of insights you can offer to people to kind of move past that.

JIM KWIK: Completely. This comes down to, again, how we think about things and how we think about ourselves and how we think about our behaviors, and I'll give somebody who's listening this, I think everyone could relate to taking one step forward towards a goal and then taking two steps back.

Why do we do things that could harm ourselves in the long term, or we procrastinate, we know we need to do something, but we put it off and we don't have the discipline. And I'll give everyone a framework for this, everybody is always trying to wonder why they're not doing a behavior. Why am I not working out today? Why am I not eating right today? Why I'm not reading 30 minutes a day? Why am I not journaling or meditating? But they could use

willpower and motivation, but it only gets you so far because there are other levels that they're not being addressed. Above the level of behavior is this level of capability, and this is your skill, and I'm really big, I know you are in skill development because we don't necessarily rise to level of our goals, we fall to the level of our skills. Of our training, if you will, and so are you trained in reading faster or remembering names or working out, 'cause you need that training in order to do that behavior. But even if you have the training and the capability and the skill, look at the level above that, and that's a level of belief and values.

Belief and values, meaning that, let's say the behavior is, you want somebody to read 30 minutes a day, and they even have the ability 'cause they were taught, but they have a belief they're not that smart, or they don't value reading, or let's say in my case, remembering names, that's a behavior I want to teach everyone to remember the names of everyone they meet. And maybe they even learn because they listen to a couple of podcasts on how to remember names, capability, but they have a belief it's not important, or they've a value that remembering names is not very important to them or believe they have a bad memory, then it's not going to work. And you wonder why they don't do the behavior, and then finally the level above belief and values is this level called identity, and this is something you and I talked about two most powerful words are "I am". So, let's say the behavior is you want somebody to stop smoking, but their identity is, I am a smoker, that's going to be a hard shift because people are going to try to fight on behavior every single time 20 times, 100 times a day, but their identity hasn't shifted.

And so, let's say the behavior is, they want to stop procrastinating, but their identity is, I am a procrastinator. That's a challenge. And the last level...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Paper's due tomorrow, I just got started, baby. I had two months.

JIM KWIK: Exactly. And you wonder why people put it off, and then the level below behavior, as everyone's thinking about behavior that they've been putting off is this level called environment. Environment, and what I would say at a high level, let's say they want to... Their behavior is they want to read more, but their environment is they have no books, or maybe the environment is too dark, or maybe they wanted, behavior is they want to meet more people, but the environment they're not getting and putting themselves in environment to meet new people, that's going to keep them there or maybe they want to stop smoking is the behavior, but the environment is around smokers, alright. Or they're putting their environment, they want to eat good food, but their environment is they have all those crazy snacks and processed food...

SHAWN STEVENSON: They work at Chuck E. Cheese, like they're Chuck E, they're dressed up as a mouse.

JIM KWIK: Exactly. And the reason why this work ultimately is because when we're talking about thinking, thinking is the process of asking questions and answering them, and even if people are listening, they're like, "Oh, is that true?" Notice is that true is a question.

So, the main questions back in school, watch this. Are the 5Ws, the 5Ws and the H. So questions really are the answer, 'cause that's what questions are that that's what thinking is, it's asking questions. The reason why an Elon Musk could come up with Tesla or something like that, is he was outside the industry looking in, he was thinking, ask himself a new question, why aren't we doing it this way with today's technology? That's what your power is, to be able to ask new questions, but going through the 5Ws and the H, the identity level answers the question of who.

The level of beliefs and value answer the question why. The level of capability answers the question of how, the level of behavior answers the question of what, and the level of environment answers the question when and where. So, it's tight, and what I'm all about is having congruency. The reason why it's not just about when people see me memorizing 100 people's names in an audience or 100 words or numbers, or they know I read a book a day, is that there's a structure to this because it's about... We use such a small percentage of our mental potential, but when it's completely aligned and your whole self is like whole self-learning or whole self-thinking, and then it becomes almost what appears to be effortless to yourself compared to what people are struggling with. And part of it, again, is going back to this knowledge gap, is there are some people who know, some people don't know, but I'm hoping during this conversation, the distinctions people learn, whether it's the Six Thinking Hats or the OLD method about making mistakes and how to own it and learn from it and don't repeat it, or it comes down to this framework, these five levels of transformation, it gives you these distinctions, so allows you a new way of thinking about it, and because you're thinking about different, you'll get different results, and isn't that what we all want.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright, I hope that you enjoyed this compilation. One of the most remarkable things that I really was able to extract from these conversations with Jim was the fact that, yes, a portion of our cognitive potential is determined by our genetics. Absolutely, but up to two-thirds of your cognitive potential is determined by your lifestyle, your environment and your training. Our brains have infinite capacity to grow, evolve, there is yet to be a supercomputer that can match the capacity of the human brain, we are just uneducated on how to utilize what theoretical physicist, Michio Kaku calls the most complicated organ in the known universe. That is the human brain. Alright, so utilizing some of these strategies, we're starting to tap more into our limitless potential, and again, I hope that you got a lot of value out of this.

Definitely check out Jim's amazing New York Times bestselling book, Limitless, the same name as well, and of course, he's been a frequent guest here on the show, and we'll have all of his past interviews for you in the show notes. If you got a lot of value out of this, please share this out with your friends and family, take a screen shot of the episode, tag me and tag Jim @Jimkwik on Instagram, by the way, if we didn't say, that's his real name. Alright, what are the odds? How are you going to have the name Kwik and you're an accelerated learning expert? If you know his story, this was not his intention, and when he was in school, he actually struggled tremendously, and that really evoked his life's mission and his gift by figuring these things out for people who were struggling with learning, and he's really unlocked his superpower. And so, to pay that forward, take a screenshot, tag Jim, let him know what you thought about this episode, we've got some powerful master classes, an incredible guest coming up 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 a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much, and take care. I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.