

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

**EPISODE 573**

## **The Truth About Healthy Relationships & Becoming The One**

**With Guest Sheleana Aiyana**

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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. It is our relationships that are a primary controller of our health, of our vitality, of our mental health for sure, and our overall success in life. Our relationships even have a dramatic impact on our finances, on our spiritual well-being, the list goes on and on, there isn't a domain of our lives that our relationships are not impacting and impacting very deeply, but primarily it is the relationship that we have with ourselves. So, our external relationships, and in particular, our romantic relationships and our internal relationship, these are of the utmost importance today, especially at a time when there is so much turbulence taking place in the world, everything is very polarized, people are isolating themselves, literally not just figuratively, but isolating themselves, and we're zoning in to our devices, and also our mindset is creating this place where we have this political divide taking place.

In the name of politics, there's this us versus them mentality that is ringing true right now, where instead of being united as humanity, we are, "They're wrong, we're right," in every imaginable way. And the reality is, that's simply not the case. If there is one entity here, it truly is team us as humanity, and us being able to relate to each other in a healthier way is going to help to move us forward, but that cannot take place when we are so bent on the other side, being wrong, and it's creating all of this infighting when we're not allowing ourselves to be compassionate to lend a ear, to lend a space, to someone that we might not agree with and be able to find common ground, so we can find what connects us, which here's the truth, so much more connects us than what separates us, and being able to access that takes a level of maturity, and takes also a level of self-assessment to see the blind spots that we might be carrying. To find a place where even that idea that they agree with where it might even ring true and having the opportunity for us to be willing to be wrong, to be willing to change our point of view, these are all healthy qualities that take work, but again, it starts with having a healthy, inner relationship with ourselves.

Now, the root of the word relationship dates back hundreds of years, and the origin of it actually means sense or state of being related by kindred, affinity or other alliance. Now, what we think about in terms of relationships today, it's often in terms of our intimate relationships, which there's definitely an alliance or an affinity there as well, but also really every human interaction that we have is a relationship, every interaction that we have, period, is a relationship. Whether it's with our pet, whether it's with the room that we're in, it's all a relationship, and here's the thing we are connected to all of it, the room that we're in where a part of the room... We're part of that tapestry, were part of that landscape, now, it's integrating and taking this out further and understanding the power that relationships have and how we

can put ourselves in positions where the environment is going to create more of an affirmative relationship, or we can be in an environment where that relationship is more disruptive.

But here's the thing, and this is one of the things I want you to be able to take away from this today, is that we don't ever have to be a victim of our environment, we can bring it to it. We can bring the light to it, we can bring the wholeness to it, we can bring the happiness to it, we can bring the problem-solving to it, we don't have to be a victim of our environment. But we are in fact still going to be relating with it, even if you don't like the environment that you're in, you're in relationship with it. Even if it's mental, you're still relating with it, if you're just thinking about something, there's a relationship there. So, we can go from the very granular to where you are physically, to where you go in your mind, because that, even though it's something that's not necessarily tangible, then we can get into the domain of every thought has tangible aspects to it, but just thinking about a thing, thinking about a scenario, a person, a situation you're relating to it.

And so, I want you to begin to think about what are you choosing to relate to? So, this episode today is very special because we're going to be diving into this subject matter and looking at the very root of where our relationships are springing from, because where we are in our relationships is not by any means an accident. And I've got one of my really good friends on the episode, I'm so grateful to be able to have her on because I haven't seen it for a while, and she dropped in for this very special conversation. And it's, again, it's one of the most important things of our lifetime, because the root of the problems that we're facing right now as a society is at its core, a series of relationship issues, humans not relating well to each other, not being able to perspective-take and to have a healthy relationship with oneself that we're not out-picturing or negativity and our biases on to other people. I can go on and on and drill down deeper on this, but truly by getting ourselves healthier, we're going to be able to build healthier relationships with others.

Right now, we're existing in a state where there's a lot of... We have epidemics truly, of poor health simultaneously taking place where hundreds of millions of our citizens are experiencing poor health in the form of various chronic diseases, ranging from heart disease to obesity. Here in the United States, right now, we're almost at a point where 50% of our population right now it's... The latest numbers, say 45% of our population is now clinically obese, and within the next few years, we're going to hit 50%. Something is broken, something is off, because this has just happened in the last couple of decades, whereas prior to this, this simply wasn't an issue in our society. And this is opening the door for all manner of chronic and infectious diseases to become more present in our lives, because this is increasing... Obesity, this is a thing about obesity that it's tied to upwards of about nine out of 10 of the leading cause of death in the United States, whether it is heart disease or diabetes, or liver disease and the like. And so, once we understand that, once we can get ourselves physically healthier and

mentally healthier, we're creating a new landscape, a new environment that is more inviting of empathy and compassion. It's not that when we are in a poor state of health that we can't have compassion, we absolutely can.

It's just such a deeper drain and requirement of energy to be able to do that, because all of these things, especially when it takes work, it's going to take energy. When it takes work to extend yourself into conversation that you don't agree with and not just express anger, and vitriol, it's going to take energy. And so, to access that energy, to cultivate and have that energy, we need to get ourselves and our families healthier, our communities healthier, physically, and mentally healthier, doing that inner work to have a healthy inner relationship. So again, really, really excited about this episode. Now, the first time that I met our special guest, which is well over a decade ago, she was really a mover and shaker in the realm of nutrition, and we really connected on that point. I remember being at an event and I was there with my wife, and we were hanging out and she actually brought a Vitamix with her, not my wife, but my special guest had a Vitamix that she had brought along with her, so we were in her room making smoothies, talking about nutrition and all these cool things. And it's just one of the great things about her, it's just the diversity of things she's been involved in and the ability to continue to create wonderful things as well.

But even in that moment, we were adding a green super food blend to our smoothies, and this is something I encourage everybody to do today, because it's so simple and it's a clinically proven way to provide our body with an abundance of micronutrients that are becoming increasingly deficient in our food supply. So, we have this concept in our culture of a 'multivitamin', which is often through synthetic means to create that product. Your DNA has not associated with these synthetic versions of these nutrients, we've evolved having these nutrients come from real foods. So how about we did a super food concentrate, but not just that we're talking about the best stuff, organic, cold processed and super green nutrient-dense foods like spirulina, chlorella, but in a way that tastes good where it's combined with other dathogenic nutrient sources like ashwagandha, a little coconut water, and just having a refreshing minty flavor to it.

I'm talking about Organifi green juice. Spirulina is over 70% protein by weight, one of the densest sources of bio-available magnesium and rare compounds like pyocyanin, which now we have purview evidence demonstrating how pyocyanin is able to stimulate the production of new stem cells is a process called Stem Cell Genesis. And it's just remarkable, like Cheerios, can't do that. Alright. This is incredible that this food has this capacity, go to [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model), that's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model, and you get 20% off their incredible green juice formula. They also have an amazing red juice blend and their organifi gold is just absolutely remarkable. Head over there, check them out, ASAP, this is how we truly revitalize

our bodies and flood our tissues with bioavailable nutrients. Go to [organifi.com/model](http://organifi.com/model), now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

**ITUNES REVIEW:** Another five-star review titled “authentic, meaningful and delivered with love and respect” by Epiphone. “I'm a retired educator, principal of 38 years, and I recognize a gifted teacher when I hear one. My husband and I learned about Shawn when we heard him interviewed on Dr. Mark Hyman podcast. We immediately looked him up and immersed ourselves in his videos and podcasts. I've gone all the way back to the first one because I don't want to miss a thing. Our lives have been positively and profoundly impacted by the information he shares, I'm also grateful that he delivers his content with respect and love in these challenging times. It's fresh air and sunlight.”

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's so special. Thank you, thank you. Thank you so much for sharing that over an Apple Podcast, that hit my heart, I appreciate it so much. And listen, if you get to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for The Model Health Show, make sure that you're subscribed through The Model Health show, hit the Subscribe button. Some folks tune into the show every week, but sometimes they miss episodes because they're not actually subscribed to the show. And of course, you can subscribe if you're listening on Spotify or any other podcast medium, you can actually rate this show on Spotify now, so that would really, really help. If you're listening on Spotify, please head over and rate the show, give it the best rating possible. I appreciate you so much, and now let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Now, this episode is for the lover in you, this is for everybody, no matter what kind of relationship you're in, you're going to get some value from this episode. Our guest is Sheleana Aiyana, and she's the founder of Rising Woman, a growing community of more than three million readers.

She has years of experience in relationship therapies, and more than 30,000 women in 146 countries have taken her flagship program, 'Becoming the One', and her new book by the same name is now available, 'Becoming the One, and it's wonderful. Now, we're going to dive into that right now, and provide some game-changing insights about our relationships with the amazing Sheleana Aiyana. Sheleana, welcome to the Model Health Show, so good to see you again.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Thanks, I'm so excited to be here.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** It's been a while.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** It has a few years.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. You're somebody who... You've always supported me, and I appreciate that. You're just a really special person, awesome, and this book, Listen, I want everybody to know that this episode is one of the most important subject matters, period, because our relationships affect, I believe, every aspect of our lives, and it's kind of like the linchpin for our health, our mental health... Obviously, our success in life requires these relationships. And so, I just got to kick this off by sharing the first page. I was like, "No, she didn't. You're just going to get right to the point." You said that when we operate from our past wounds or seek external fulfillment, we might approach dating and relationships as if they're a performance, we show up in whatever way we think will impress the other person or keep them interested, but we can't win someone's love by pretending to be someone we're not. And I made this little action figure thing here, I know it kind of looks like a cup of tea, like a cup of coffee, that's actually a brain-exploding emoji that I drew. I'm a terrible, small cartoon artist, but man, it's just like... It's getting right to the point.

So, let's unpack what this means, because immediately it just made me think about in relationship contexts, today, when folks are looking for love, in a sense, we have a representative that we put forward. And this is really getting to the heart of that.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, well, and I think so much of our culture really does tell us that there's somebody outside of us that we're waiting for to come and complete us and make us whole, and so we've all sort of been wandering around with this idea that I'm looking for my other half, I'm half a person. And we also have a lot of these beliefs that we're broken somehow, and really, when we're operating from that place, there's no way that we're actually going to call in a healthy aligned partner because we don't know who we are, and we don't know what we stand for. And so, a lot of this book is really a reclaiming in relationship to self and knowing that when our relationship to self is anchored in truth, then our relationships to everybody else will be anchored in truth. So, it's that foundation that we live from.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's facts. I'm wondering, and I think of other people wonder as well, this is called, Becoming the One. I felt like some Neo vibe as well, but ultimately, you bring about the fact that the most important relationship that we have or will ever have is the relationship we have with ourselves. So can you share why did you make that the emphasis of the book.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Like I said, there's so much media influence and cultural influence that tells us that we're waiting to find the one in order to be happy, but actually it's the opposite, until we are happy within ourselves and we recognize that we are whole, we won't be able to create those kinds of relationships that we want, so it's shifting from fantasy to reality, but in a really beautiful way. 'Cause there's actually so much more magic and medicine that can happen when we're anchored in reality, and when we can say, "Here's who I am, here's what I

stand for, here's what I value." And we go out into the world from that place, we're emanating our essence and then the right people can really come into our lives, and I had so many experiences through childhood and growing up in really dysfunctional chaotic environments that shaped my experience of love in relationship to be really chaotic and dysfunctional, you could almost not even call it love, it's just repeating trauma patterns.

And it's been such a huge journey for me to figure out, "Okay, what is at the heart of this?" If I really want to be in relationship, if I really want to experience love and family and connection, what's in the way? And so much of that for all of us, is really our past wounding, our stories, our walls, our guards, all of the defenses that we've built to protect our hearts, because along the way, we learned that that's what we have to do. And I think ultimately, relationship is the greatest gift, we're literally here to be in relationship, if we're not in relationship, what are we here for? We know that our health improves when we're in relationship, we know that one of the leading causes of depression is loneliness, and that's not just to say romantic relationship, this is just friendship, family connection, community. It's literally wired into us, we need it to survive, and yet we don't prioritize it, or we approach it very nonchalantly, like we just fall into relationship, your life partner, your romantic partner, that is such a big decision. But we don't actually set a foundation for that, we don't prepare. And I want to change that.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. That's... The way you even said that that's remarkable because we're not... We abandoned logic in a sense when we're doing the relationship thing. And love has its own logic, emotion has its own logic, and this is even speaking to the communication and connection that we have just within our species. Like some of the conflicts that I might have with my wife, which... She's my best friend, she's amazing, but it's me, I'm a very... I tend to be very logical and analytical, and just... That's just how I roll. And she might have something that I'm just like, "That's not logical." But using that language with her and also me saying that ultimately, if I really want to pick this apart, that's not a logical statement for me to say it's not logical because her emotion has a logic to it. And so, but I think it's kind of like we fall... Like you said, we fall into it, we fall in love. Are you going to get up though?

It's just like... So, coming into it as more of a complete person, and this is what you're really advocating, because I think that... And let's talk about this. One of the things that folks experience consistently is this pattern, you even said the word pattern, of being in the same type of relationship or attracting the same type of people, it might not be exactly the same, but the same trauma patterns. So, let's talk a little bit more about that specifically, what a trauma pattern is.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, well, most of us have a script that we're living out. We're running on a story that we either inherited or that we began to create when we were very young, and usually that conditioning is happening in our first family environments. What are we observing



about love and about connection and about communication and safety, and are we safe to express ourselves, are we not? All of these things. And we eventually, we become adults, or at least we have adult bodies, and then we end up in these romantic partnerships where we don't realize that we're actually wanting to resolve some of old wounds, we're wanting to get complete on some of those things and especially we're wanting to be seen, heard and understood in the ways that we didn't feel like we were when we were young. And the challenge is, is that when we attract partners, they almost always mirror our wounds, and they're usually opposite to us in some way. Even... You know how you're talking about you and Anne, and of course, Ben and I are the same. It's like, I'm more emotional, he's more logical, so it's like he's more head, I'm more heart, but we have to come together and understand that, and ultimately, these are containers for growth.

But what happens is that we just play out these patterns where we see our partners as our enemies, and that sounds really extreme, and people will be like, "I don't think of that." But it's like, look back at your past relationships, how many of those ended catastrophically, and did you blame them for everything? Or how many relationships have we ended because we felt like there was just something wrong with that partner, and we were out looking for the one. 'Cause, "Oh, you're just not the one." And really, these are trauma patterns that are playing out, and again, too, a lot of the times, we can experience things like repeated rejection or abandonment, or everything will feel like abandonment because we're conditioned for that. And that was a big part of my story, the abandonment wound, and that awakening around it was what catalyzed this entire journey for me. And maybe later, I'll tell the story about that, 'cause you were a part of that actually, I called you when I was in that.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I remember it. Even that there was a connective tissue there for me to even receive that call, but yeah, even I know you but to actually know you in these pages was just like a really... I felt it, and I actually felt... I think a lot of people who have that similar thing and some kind of in it, so the emotion hit because it exists in me too, so can you share that? Just share where that abandonment the root of it was for you.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, for me it was... My story is long, so I'm going to summarize here, but when I was born, my mom, she was 22 and she was struggling with very complex PTSD, from childhood trauma and severe mental illness. I never met my father. Our first debut into the world was being snuck out of the back door of the hospital at 2 AM because we were on the run. And so I often say I'm a runner, but it's not a joke, it's like it's in my nervous system, is like I'm still working out that pattern in life. And so when I was three, my mom drops me off at a foster home in the middle of the night, she just kind of packed me up and then took me to this house and I didn't know where I was, and then she drove away, and I just remember screaming and yelling, and then other things happened in that environment that caused trauma for me, and then throughout my life, I know sometimes I'd be with my mom and then



sometimes I'd be back in foster homes for long periods of time. She would get sick, and I didn't know, and she would be in the hospital getting treatment for six months at a time, and I wouldn't see her, I just get dropped off at some stranger's house and she would be gone.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And you really loved her.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** I did, and I love her and I'm so grateful to her for this life and at the time, I didn't understand what was going on, and I just really knew I wanted my mom. And so, when I was around 12, I got into trouble. I was the AWOL kid, there was a police officer assigned to my case, I got a birthday card from my police officer, they knew me in that town that I lived in, and I was known by Social Services as the AWOL kid, 'cause it was like... I was never where I was supposed to be. I was always running away.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Wow. I wouldn't... People would never know that if they see you like, Wow.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** No, and that's the thing is that we don't really know people's stories until we really open our hearts to them, but yeah, it was a wild time. I was drinking and doing drugs and partying, and by the time I was 16, I was out on my own working two jobs and homeschooling myself, but yeah, that's like that story of abandonment, so you can see how I was destined to attract chaos in my relationships and I had no foundation for what healthy love look like, or no understanding that I could consciously choose a partner based on my values, because I was living in survival mode, like so many of us, and so we end up in these relationships that are just all we know. It's where our nervous system is vibing at, and so I remember when I was in my early 20s and I went through divorce and ended in betrayal and my cat disappeared.

And my ex at the time just took off with someone else, I lost everything, my business, my money, everything, and then to top it off, my abandonment mood was so triggered, I was so back in that state of being three years old that I gained 25 or 30 pounds in a matter of a month, and when I got my hormones tested, I had none left. All I had running in my body was cortisol. I broke out in a rash and acne all over my body, my face was swollen, I'd wake up in the morning and I couldn't open my eyes. I was sick and it was so much my wounding. I was like, I hadn't let myself feel all of the pain that I had buried so deeply, I had never felt pain in my life, I just bypassed it all until that moment, and then it all came, and my body couldn't handle it. And I remember calling you and I was like, I need help. What do I do? I need... Give me a diet plan or a workout plan, and you gave me some funny advice too at that time, and I was just about to meet Ben as well at that time, but yeah, I was really grateful to have friends that I could call to support me through that, but it was just really incredible to see how much the body can respond to our traumas and our pain, and those are patterns that will keep playing out until

we do something about them. We have to do the work so that we can enter into a healthier dynamic.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's so powerful. I love this. This is another thing that you talked about in the book that was just like, I stopped for a moment and just sat with it, is that during these times, it's actually... One of our greatest opportunities, it's like a great gift, because that the wound is so sensitive, you're willing to do something, it's like an opening for action, potential because you want to get better, it's very much like a physical problem, a health crisis, when we have a traumatic issue in our personal relationships, there's an opening there for us to take action, because when things are rolling along, this is not the time you're going to do the inner work necessary to heal your abandonment issues that are causing this repetition in pain and continuous problems, you're just kind of chugging along through life, but when something happens, when there's a break, it's like an opportunity. So same thing with the health crisis, oftentimes we're just skating through life until boom, you're never going to be out of pain again, that was my diagnosis. You're going to be in pain for the rest of your life. You'll never walk normally again, or you have cancer, whatever the diagnosis might be for somebody that oftentimes sparks the opportunity that's when people want to do something about it.

I'm saying this for folks that are listening that are dealing with heartbreak or that have heartbreak that is imminent coming up, that's an opportunity to opening for change, and that's really what happened with you.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, and you're so right, it really is the pivotal moment, whether it's the health crisis or the emotional crisis, where all of them all at once, I think as humans, there's something about crisis that really cracks us open and it's in those moments of shatter that we are ready. So, when I get women coming to me who are at their rock bottom, as much as I can hold that tenderness and be empathetic, I'm also excited because I'm like, you're ready, and you have no idea. You have to go through this dark tunnel right now, and it's going to be painful as hell, and it's going to suck, and on the other side of this, you're going to know yourself more deeply, you're going to have everything you need to create the life you actually want to create, because you haven't self-abandoned, because when we hit these moments of loss or break up, or we're just so tired of hitting that same wall in our patterns over and over again, we really do have a choice, there's always a choice, and a lot of us will choose to numb it out. We'll just go binge Netflix. We'll just eat everything in sight.

We'll use substances, shopping, all of those things, and I've done those things too, and we can also go into it, and we can kind of let it take us, and we can just surrender to it and just go into the abyss and let it transform us. And if we take the path of numbing, chances are, we'll find somebody new and for a time they're going to look really exciting to us and they're going to be the one, and then, maybe three months, maybe six months, maybe a year and a half later.

What do you know? We're right back where we started, and the illusion of the one is once again shattered, and that's what happens when we just don't want to take a look at how our patterns are showing up in our lives versus, we do it a little bit more consciously. And yes, you're still going to have the illusion shattered, no relationship is perfect, but chances are, you'll have called in a partner who's willing to ride those waves with you, 'cause you rode those waves first.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, ah men surfboard?

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This reminds me of another thing that you talked about, which is essentially in our relationships for the average person is on the job training, we are showing up already, seemingly fractured, we don't realize the wholeness that we are, and we're just kind of... We're kind of crash Test Dummies for ourselves and running into this person, running into that person, and figuring stuff out along the way, but ultimately, when you finally achieve lasting happiness is when you realize that you literally don't need someone to say or to do something for you to be okay.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Exactly.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Often in the world right now, we want the other person, we want the person to just say what we want, do what we want, we might lie to ourselves and say that's not the case, and we really... And I've done this as well, which is like, we just want them to say the thin. And I also feel like I shouldn't have to tell you what I want you to say and it's because of this very romanticized programming that we get. Let's talk about that.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Well, it's seeing relationship as something to give to us versus a container in which we are growing together, like I give the example of a power grid versus a vacuum. In a vacuum relationship, we're just taking it all and then where does it go? Nothing comes back, and so the vacuum is broken and then you want throw it out, you don't want a vacuum spitting all of its crap back out, or you have a power grid where you're both creating this abundance of energy and that it's giving to the community. And I see a relationship that is on purpose as something that is fueling us both to be more of service, 'cause that's really ultimately why we're here is to be of service to our fellow humans.

And so, I think relationship really has to be about truth and about honoring ourselves and seeing love as a container for growth rather than validate me, give me what I want, tell me what I want to hear, loose yourself in me essentially, and let me loose myself in you so that we can become this little globe moving through the world, which isn't really that healthy. In a

healthy relationship, you're inevitably going to have conflict, you're inevitably going to have difference, because if you're being true to yourself, you're not always going to agree, you're not going to be the same, and there's medicine in that. We can balance each other out, we can learn things from each other, we can expand our perspectives, we can heal, and the media doesn't really demonstrate that very well, and most of us didn't grow up in environments where that was the case, there's often these unconscious contracts in family systems where everybody agrees to play a certain role, and if you try to step out of that role you're not welcome, or you're put back into your place.

You've got the quiet one, the scapegoat, the loud one, the bad one, all of these roles. And then in the media, it's like, what do you see? You see this intense, hot passion that's also totally disturbed, it's like chaotic rollercoaster, and so we're kind of conditioned to think that healthy love is boring, when actually, I think boring can be really nice, what we think of boring love for me, just the day-to-day, being with a partner that you love, enjoying life and being able to celebrate the small little moments, to me, that's higher success in relationship, it's about remembering that it's not about these big extravagant rushes, it's about allowing yourself to experience happiness and contentment day-to-day.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's what actual life is like a successful relationship. That's what it is, but we don't see that glorified. When you mentioned media and our examples, I thought about, it just came rushing into my head, all of these Disney movies where we have the person who needs to be rescued and the rescuer. The rescuee and the rescuer relationship, and how we're programming our children, if you want this relationship, you're going to have to rescue her, you're her rescuer, you're her savior, and for the other side, it's just like you have to find that person who's going to save you from your demons, from whatever you've been through, and man, that is crazy, like it's freaking me out. It's in so many movies.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** I know, and I love all of those old Disney movies when I was a kid, I love them all. And I also see how the conditioning there is really rough. I'm like, I don't think I'm going to put that on for my kids because just the patterns that we're learning from those movies. We see it in our reality now, and that's another part of self-abandonment that we don't really talk about very often is how so many people are conditioned to save and to rescue and to leave their center to make somebody else feel better, but ultimately that can be a really selfish act as well, because we're just trying to get rid of our own anxiety of like, What's it going to feel like if I have to say no to this person and they're going to be upset with me, or what will I have to feel inside of myself if I don't focus all of my energy on trying to fix or caretake this person and instead I have to focus on what's going on right here now, and I can really identify with that because from the moment I was like two years old, I was caretaking my mother and she'd come home and she would be drunk and I would make a bed for her on the bathroom

floor and bring a cookie sheet with tooth paste and a tooth brush and want to brush her teeth for her and...

So, all my life, all I knew was caretaking, so of course, I attracted partners who played the helpless role, and I played this, I've got it all together, I'll take care of everything. But ultimately, those types of dynamics, they usually end in betrayal because if we're in this helpless rescuer dynamic, the person who's playing that helpless role, they have no choice but to eventually try to individuate from you, and how does that usually end up, they have to go and find themselves and oftentimes it ends in a really painful way, and then you're like, but I gave everything to you, I took care of you. How could you do this to me? But the highest thing would have been just to say, you know what, I see you're struggling right now, and I know you're going to figure it out, I trust you, I love you, I'm here, but I'm not going to save you. I think we got to learn how to do that more in relationship, we really want to empower each other instead of enable each other.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** There isn't a Disney movie for this yet, but and by the way, I don't want folks to be like, we can't watch Cinderella now, Shawn. Absolutely. You can watch Cinderella, but now it can spark a conversation, you can have context, So just don't put the thing on your kid to have that go deep into their psyche and without any context, but it's wonderful to see how things are evolving right now, and like I said, I really do believe that this is the most important subject matter for us to be talking about, even though currently worldwide we're experiencing what appears to be on the surface of health issue, but this is... All of the dissonance is really the under-guarding aspect is disrupted relationships with people, people who are hurting themselves, and people who are... They're operating in relationships where they're creating inclusion of certain people, but the exclusion of others, and all these other principles, they are really based on fear, and until we get healthier relationships help to generate healthier humans, we're going to keep falling into the same patterns.

And because of your book, it sparked a whole... For hours, I went into this rabbit hole of research and I've kind of flirted with it years ago, it's there in my mental Rolodex, where I'm just like, I've got to check out where we get... Where are we with the science on this now. This was published in neuropsychopharmacology, and then we're looking at the environmental influence of our past trauma that is getting passed along to our offspring, and the data is thick on it now. Literally, the stuff you're going through and not addressing, it's getting passed on, not to just to your offspring, but to their offspring, and this particular study, they also were uncovering that positive experiences help to nullify those things and helps you to pass on healthier genetic imprints for your kids as well.

So, it's not like you went through stuff in your life, and it's been a lot of bad stuff, I'm going to pass this on to my kid, there's nothing I can do about it. You can do something about it right

now by focusing on healing, so I'll throw a screenshot of this study up for everybody, but there's so much on it. And this is just one of the many things that you covered in the book, and I want to ask you about this, you said in the book, you were talking about how our bodies and minds need to integrate the truth that we are capable of creating healthy relationships regardless of what we've experienced or witnessed in our lives, so we have to have that integrated into our body. What do you mean by that?

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, well, it's interesting that you brought up that study because that's something that I've gone deep into as well, because anyone who has had a family trauma or past trauma, and I'm sure you can relate to this, having kids can be scary because you want to protect them from everything, you want them to have such a better life than you had, and ultimately, the best thing that we can do is heal ourselves, so many of us, we are afraid that deep down we're broken and that there's nothing that we can do or that we can't heal or that we're the exception. And so, a lot of times that's because we're focused so much on mindset and positivity and empowerment work, and I'm not saying that there's no place for that. Of course, there is. There's a place for that in my life, in my early days, 10 years ago when I got started, that's where I started out, my patterns weren't changing because in the body and in the deep depths of my psyche, I still believed that I was broken and unworthy in some way. And so, we have to go slow, we can't just overwhelm ourselves with all of this positivity, we can't bypass by just telling ourselves that we're going to manifest what we want, we actually also have to nurture our bodies to accept that it's okay to move forward.

And so in somatic work, we know that the tissues and the nervous system actually store memory and store information, and so simple things, even noticing how you feel when something happens in a traumatizing situation and actually moving the way that your body wants to move, or air punching and kicking or going for a run, if all of a sudden your body feels like moving, these are the things that we do to move through our experiences rather than just holding on to them in the body, you see it like an animal they shake a lot. I notice my dog, Brody whenever he has any type of stressful situation, he shakes right away and we were always like, Yeah, shake it off, just get rid of that stress, but we have learned to freeze and self-protect, and of course that's a valid survival instinct as well, though, eventually we need to find a way to move that trauma out of the body, so I often talk about somatic experiencing work for that, where you work with a practitioner and they actually help you hands-on, like holding your kidneys and holding your organs and letting your body release, and I've had crazy experiences doing that, like laying on a table and someone's holding my kidneys, and I'm actually feeling cramping and pulsing and releasing, and then all of a sudden I'm actually hearing and seeing what pattern is being released from that organ.



Not everybody's going to have that kind of experience. A lot of people go, and they don't really feel anything on the table, but after they notice changes, there's no right way to experience it. But it's very important to remember that our bodies are intelligent and to keep moving. So, I often say, go for walks, be in nature and really let yourself feel safety again. Re-learn what it means to feel safe, and instead of trying to trick yourself into feeling safe.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, that's obviously a big... That's super easy to fall into today, because there's so much positivity messaging, obviously it's trying to counter all the negative messaging...

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, the intention is of a higher frequency, but the truth is, it can be very superficial. We've got to be able to embody the fact that we can be ourselves. That can be... That can take some serious integration and serious work because we've been essentially indoctrinated that you have to put on a performance, and you got to be somebody else that you're not. Especially in the context of a relationship, like I said at the very beginning, you have a representative that you're presenting, and that's the person that you're wanting to hook up with, they're meeting your representative...

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** They're not ever meeting you. Because you've read some articles like you got to play these little... Do this little thing or whatever, or of course, just hiding out from the world because of whatever you might have been through in life, so giving yourself the grace to know that integrating this into your body where you really know, you know that you matter, that you are significant, and you don't need someone else to affirm it. So, I want to ask you about... You mentioned that somewhere along the way, a lot of people learn that they have to sacrifice themselves in order to be loved, and this kind of goes hand-in-hand with what I was just talking about.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, yeah, so many of us have learned that, like I said, in our family systems, in the culture that we live in, in workplaces, it's like we're always... We're doing the thing that we think we need to do to get paid or to get approval or to get validated in some way. And especially for those of us who grew up in tumultuous family environments, usually there were parts of ourselves that we were not allowed to show or share in order to stay safe. And a lot of times that's our emotional side or our anger, which is our boundaries. So how many of us learned that we can't set boundaries because it's too dangerous, we've just internalized that. And so, we're literally self-abandoning every time we're in relationship, because we don't have that tether to, "It's okay to say no." And "I'm allowed to ask for what I

want, and my needs are also important." And so, we see a lot of people in relationship where they're saying, "Well, my relationships don't get past three months, or I keep getting cheated on, or they keep getting bored and then just ghosting." And of course, there's lots going on with the person who's on the other end of that, no doubt, this isn't a blame game.

But my question is always, "Were you showing up fully expressed? Were you showing them your truth, your anger? Were you being boundaried?" 'Cause in my experience, when a person shows up fully authentic and they know who they are and they have boundaries, and they have things that they love and that they're passionate about, we're just drawn to those people. We're just magnetically drawn in. Versus when you can feel that a person isn't being truthful or that they're holding back, or that they don't feel like they belong, then you can feel that too. And so we really have to look at the ways that we are not honoring ourselves in order to try to get love, 'cause the kind of love that we're going to get when we're selling out like that, it's not real. If you have to change who you are, if you have to put on a mask, if you have to dim your light in order to be accepted, that's not the kind of relationship you want. And I'll tell you, the kind of partner that you do want, is the kind of partner that's going to get turned on by your no and by your fire and by your edges.

I think we all like a little challenge, and a good, healthy relationship should challenge you. It shouldn't be easy all the time, it shouldn't always be, yes. And there should be some negotiation. And I think that's part of what keeps the spark going is both of us showing up truthful, even when that means that there might be conflict.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's beautiful. That's another thing that we don't see modeled, is the fact that real people in the real-world conflict is a natural part of, especially a relationship where you're in close context and content with each other all the time, you're going to have moments of dissonance. And that's actually good, because what we would expect, based on our programming is that this relationship, if it's good, it just stays that way, happily ever after, that's what we're taught. Instead of understanding that a really great relationship requires growth.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yes.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** You've got to get better. And using those opportunities, you just tripped me out when you said that anger, being that... The expression of boundaries. In my childhood, in my atmosphere was all anger, it was all anger all the time. So that led to the opposite position where I'm not letting people in because of my boundaries.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Why are you doing this? You got... This is tripping me out. And so, when I finally met, after all of the not letting people in and all of the people along the way, when I finally met Anne, I was just in a position where I realized something, and I realized I had a triggering event when I was a kid. My first "girlfriend" official girlfriend, I was a football player, she's a cheerleader. We had the whole story book type then going, but a lot of drama happened in our lives, like personal lives outside of the context of ourselves, it was kind of like a safe haven. But she even like... Her house blew up, it's such a crazy thing for me to even say this, but she lived pretty close to the school that we went to. She wasn't there, she wasn't there that day and she lost... She had three brothers, she lost two of her brothers, and the other one was badly burned. And so going through that as a kid, I'm like 15 years old, 14, dealing with that and how do you support. And other things were going on too, but eventually her mom was wanting a clean slate, she moved, she moved them to another state and kind of fractured our thing, and so it was just like... But even through that, we had turbulence and I just felt like I can't love somebody again and have me so broken, but I didn't realize it at the time. And I was just like... Honestly, I was like, "I'm done with love, I'm not going to put myself in this position again."

Already, my boundaries were there, but I let this person in. And so, for the next, whatever, five, 7, 8 years or whatever it was, that's... I was all boundaries. And then I realized... And this is when I was working on myself, getting myself healthier and getting myself healthier in my thinking as well, because my physical transformation that took place, it was also a big result of my mental transformation.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Oh, really.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And I realized that if I'm going to have... I had great model where a snippet of my life, was with my grandparents, that imprint was there, and if I was going to have a love like that, I had to let somebody in. And so, I just happened to meet her at that time because she jokes about it like if I would have met her a year earlier, you wouldn't be here today. [laughter] But I was just like, "I'm in." And willing to do the work necessary, and so she had to deal with also that boundary thing that I still had, of course. And for her, and her culture it's the opposite, you don't express anger. So, guess what's going to happen if I'm just being a little fiery? It's just like, it's a big deal, where I'm just like, "I'm just talking. This is just how we talk." And now it's melded, we've evolved to where I'm less of that, and I have it though, I have it on tap if I need it.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** I bet you do.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But not in the context with her, and she's become more, she's opened her... And even invited her mom into the... Her mom talking sh\*t... Which is just amazing to see, it's beautiful? But to see that all of our emotions have value and they're healthy and they're

helpful, guiding us to where we're want to be. So, thank you for bringing that out because I never really thought about it in that context.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** And I love that you shared that story too, because that's such a good example of how we heal together in relationship and how we also attract people who have the opposite wounding. For you, anger was like, that's the thing. And for her, it was no anger. And so, what you expressed there, was that you guys really taught each other something as you alchemized those lessons, and now she's probably got a little bit more fire and you have a little more water. This is when you're bring in those elements in. And that there's a difference between boundaries and walls, we want to have boundaries, but not keep people out. We don't need an electric fence around our heart, even though I get why we would have those.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** A nice moat, [laughter] get a nice moat going. You need a draw bridge to get in. And just as a little caveat too, because... And I want folks to realize that if you've had difficult circumstances in your childhood or even in adulthood, you are the norm, you are normal. Because folks who have healthy modeling as a child growing up, and you talk about this as well, that's the exception, not the rule. And for those folks that's beautiful, embrace that, there's no need to be like, "Well, I'm not a part of this conversation because I had a great childhood and a great modeling for my parents." What we want to do is encourage more of that, take what you know, express more, keep that healthy modeling going and understand what you're giving to your offspring and it's just, it's a beautiful thing. So, I just wanted to share that tidbit. But I want to talk about... Because you get very granular in things, and a healthy relationship or a healthy inner relationship, and you outline what some of these ingredients are in building that healthy inner relationship, and I want to go through a few of these. One of them is building confidence and self-trust. Let's talk about that.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, when we don't believe in ourselves, when we don't trust our inner instincts and our red flag that messages where something feels off or something doesn't feel right, then we're more likely to allow situations that are not serving our highest good. When we aren't confident, when we think that we're less than, we're more likely to draw in people who will take advantage of us, or who will belittle us and not see us in our highest light. And again, it's tough with this sometimes because people might hear that and think that "Oh, it's my fault that I was victimized?" But that's never the case, that's never what we're talking about. But what I am saying is that the energy that we're carrying and the beliefs that we're carrying about ourselves are going to show up in the people that we let into our lives. And we have to be able to trust our bodies, to trust our guts, and to really be connected to ourselves so that we can say no, when we need to say no. Really, a classic example is somebody who really wants to be in a relationship, you really want to be in a relationship, but you don't think you're worthy or you don't think you're good enough, or you don't have confidence to listen to your body, then you might just say yes to anyone who walks through the door.

'Cause maybe you don't think anyone else is going to choose you. Versus knowing who you are and having the confidence and the clarity to qualify a person. So, it's like going from the... Being in the seat of waiting to be chosen, versus, I'm the chooser here. So, I'm going to choose whether or not this is a relationship that I want to engage in, versus going to a date and saying, "Oh, I hope they think I'm pretty, and I hope they like me, and I hope I don't say the wrong things so that they'll want to be with me." How do you even know if you want to be with this person? You haven't asked any questions. You haven't qualified them. Do they align? And so, I really invite people to tune into their bodies and to really listen. How do your... How does your body feel right now when you're with this person? Do you feel relaxed? Do you feel constricted? Is it easy for you to laugh together? How in yourself are you right now, or if you just left the building? And so that's really one of the first things that we want to take a look at, if we're in that process of looking for partnership.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I feel that there is... Life finds a way, and there's always going to be conditions that help to bring out the qualities necessary, literally down to the very essence of what life is on this planet. And right now, we're experiencing a massive issue where there's so much disruption, and people have a gut feeling about what's happening in the world. And outside forces are saying, "Don't listen to that, suppress that." We've had multiple examples, of course, through our experience here on planet earth, but the example is happening now, because I think that in recent decades, our... The greatest capacity that we have, or one of the greatest capacities that we have as humans is to be able to listen to that inner guidance system, which is the most important thing. It's like your truth, your internal navigation. And we see that in other species where like, oh, those birds know how to do a great trail. Everything else knows what to do except us, and nothing could be further from the truth. We got to this point because we're able to listen to our intuition, our instincts, and so now we're getting a chance to rise up and to really listen to our inner guidance system and stop negating it and also stop when that is coming up, when our... When we're getting that gut feedback, to try to logically ignore it or logically talk yourself out of it.

So, I think it's just... It's a necessary thing. So, I believe that all that's happening in the world right now is just because... It's a balancing act. It's some crazy stuff going on. Did you see that explosion? Underwater explosion, volcano erupting, they could see it from space. Did you see that thing?

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** No.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** A few people that I've talked to, I haven't seen it. It was like, here today, gone today news. Literally, they can see the explosion from space, and it was massive, it sent ripples around the globe.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Wow.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And so maybe that's something to be concerned about versus our little problem just this little, tiny thing that's happening in our life, but it seems like it's gripping and it's so important and it's like, "My life is falling apart." And it's minuscule compared to the grander scheme of things and the beauty and the balance that life has. So, I'm saying all that to say that I think that... Man, your book is so important right now, and I'm not just saying this, truly because it's directing us to the most important work, it makes all the rest of this stuff outside of us work. So being able to listen to our gut is your next point here. Which is how do we do that; how do we build a healthy inner relationship? Take time for yourself. Talk about that.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, well, just on your last point, which leads to this so beautifully, is how domesticated we've become. We're so domesticated, we're so conditioned to be in our comfy little boxes with our... All of our technology and constant distractions and anything to sort of take us out of our bodies and to disconnect from ourselves. So, we're connecting, but we're disconnected all the time. And so reconnecting is really stepping outside of that domestication. You were talking about animals, they're such a beautiful example. There's a reason why I live in the forest because most of my time is spent outside walking in the forest, that's where I feel the most alive and connected. And if we all took more time to be in nature, to be just with ourselves, to just be quiet and let our body speak to us, we would feel more human again. And so much of our world is just constructed around distraction now, and we're losing our way, we're losing our way because we're living in our heads, we're talking about putting chips in our heads now and whatever.

Some people think that's a great idea, I'm not going to be doing that. I don't need a virtual world to live in, I have a real world to live in, there's real animals and plants to tend to. I don't need to live in some crazy metaverse, and whatever. There's multiple sides to this, but I just think it's interesting how we're always looking for escape, instead of just being with ourselves, like we don't have the capacity to be in our bodies anymore. And so how can we really be with another person? How can we have the capacity to hear each other's stories like what you and I are doing now? Imagine people who don't take the time to be quiet with themselves or they haven't taken the time to feel their past and their traumas, you wouldn't be able to listen to my stories and to empathize and to ask the questions that you're asking, unless you had gone into those things for yourself. And so, it's like deepening our capacity to be with ourselves, deepens our capacity to be with others, it's just a given. So, if we want to have, like you're talking about, a healthier world, where we can have conversations again and be curious instead of defensive and ask big questions. Then we have to be able to do that within ourselves too.



**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, facts. Again, it seems so simple, we know that this requires work, but right now, we are existing in a time where we're not... For most people, they're never by themselves, there's always... In the moments that you're alone to just be, to just be, you got a device. You don't just sit there anymore; we pick up our phones. And the crazy thing is... Again, life imitating art, or art, imitating life. But some things are kind of foreshadowed and it's becoming more a parent. I mentioned, Neo earlier, as just a little joke, but seriously, we're in a way, jacked into the matrix. When you pick up that phone, you were leaving reality and you're going into this false reality that is in every sense of the word, it is false, it's not... It's like a fraction of the truth, the big-ness of things. And you get a version of reality that is out pictured to you, and this is a huge issue, especially for our children because they're growing up in this.

And it's not an accident that we are in the state that we're in where we're so disconnected, we have epidemics of depression, we have epidemics of every chronic disease you can name. These things just didn't exist decades ago, and so it's all hand in hand. We can't target one specific thing, but this is definitely a big part. So, taking time for yourself.

How can we do that though? You mentioned, for example, living forest. So, you can go and get... Shout out to Shinrin-yoku, which is forest bathing. We've got great some peer reviewed evidence on how healing and supportive of healthy genetic expression being in nature is, forest bathing. So, what if we don't have that, that's not a part of our life, what can we start to do to be with ourselves?

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, I have this meditation that I created, it's called the Healing your inner child meditation, and it was a meditation that I took myself through for a year when I was learning how to self-soothe and feel more secure in myself. No, it's free. You just get it on my website. That's actually one way to practice, if it's really foreign for you to slow down and be in your body or you feel panic at the idea, then listen to a guided audio or go on YouTube and find a guided audio and put on your headphones and just actually practice that way. That's okay to do. I always suggest finding ways to date yourself, like go for a meal on your own or prepare a meal for yourself if you're on your own, if you only cook nice meals when you have guests, what would it be like to just cook a nice meal for yourself or bring home a flower for yourself and to really romance yourself again, really provide that nurturing base within your own heart. And another thing is actually bringing in plants into your space.

Obviously, we know that that's really good for air quality and all of that. But plants really do resonate at a pretty high frequency, they respond to loving energy or to negative energy, and they thrive in a space of love, and I invite people to bring nature into your home, if you live in a city and you don't have nature around you, bring in some plants and bring that around you, so at least you can have that connection, it's just like the little things that we can do to reconnect and to be okay with sometimes being on our own and not distracting from it, really

learning how to enjoy it, and it's hard to do that when we're suppressing a lot of pain, and so there's also this process of taking it very slow, like if you're in the process of going to therapy and going through some of your deepest wounds for a time, it might be hard for you to be alone, maybe you need to be with people all the time in order to feel okay, maybe you just need to try going for a walk on your own, and that's as far as you can get, which is fine, you build your capacity as you go.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. Very often is the small things that can make the greatest impact. Archimedes said, if you give me a lever and a place to stand, I can move the world. It's all about leverage, it's all about positionality. And the same thing holds true when it comes to human health and performance. It is truly honoring the things that give us the greatest leverage, no process can happen in the human body without this remarkable sodium potassium pump, this exchange helps our mitochondria to create fuel. This exchange helps our heart to beat. This exchange helps all of our brain cells to communicate, nothing is taking place without electrolytes. Electrolytes are minerals that carry an electric charge, and also, we've got mountains peer reviewed evidence as to their efficacy with every single area of human health. For example, our cognitive ability depends mightily on the function of electrolytes. Take sodium, for example, not only is sodium required to help to maintain fluid balance in your brain itself.

A study conducted by researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as a literal on-off switch in the brain for specific neurotransmitters that support optimal function and protect the brain against numerous diseases like epilepsy, like neuropathic pain, how simple, how foundational, how much leverage we can get from making sure that we're getting adequate amounts of the right type of sodium. Fascinating new study published in the journal Neuron found that another remarkable electrolyte, essential electrolyte, magnesium is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve cognitive function. Truly, we can fight so hard, so mightily to find nutrients, specific foods that can help to bolster our cognitive performance, but it really boils down, first and foremost, to leverage and our electrolytes are that leverage. Now, what about the immune system? This is something that is on a lot of people's minds today. The meta-analysis publishing the annals of clinical biochemistry titled Electrolyte Imbalances in Patients with Severe Coronavirus Disease, COVID-19.

It analyzed five studies with nearly 1500 patients with COVID-19 and found that both sodium and potassium, another critical electrolyte were significantly lower in patients with severe COVID-19. Now, this should raise a lot of flags, this should raise up our antennas to understand, Hey, what's going on here with our electrolytes, is electrolyte deficiency leading to worse health outcomes, severity COVID-19 or is COVID-19 and any infectious disease requiring electrolytes for the healing process for an appropriate immune response to be mounted, the answer is pretty simple, and the answer is we've got to ensure that we're getting high quality

electrolytes in the right ratios. This is why myself; my family utilizes LMNT, go to [drinklmnt.com/model](http://drinklmnt.com/model), and you're going to get to try LMNT for free. They're going to send it right to your door. You just pay a little bit in shipping; you get to try a variety pack of LMNT.

This remarkable electrolyte is not coming along with any binders and fillers, and artificial colors and flavors, no sugar, any of that stuff, just the high-quality electrolytes that you need to thrive. So, check them out, again, it's getting shipped right to your door. Go to [drinklmnt.com/model](http://drinklmnt.com/model) and get your electrolytes optimized today. Now, back to the show.

Before we go any further, I also want to mention that we have a furry friend here, just in case anybody hears any tip-toeing along, you have Boddie here with us. So just share a little bit of Boddie.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** I could talk all day about Boddie. Boddie is my eight-pound Maltese, he's a Shih Tzu Maltese. And he is a nervous system healer, and I say, I think it was Tim Ferris who said getting a dog was the best thing he ever did for his mental health, he's talked about it on his podcast too, and I have not experienced anything like the bond that I have with this little guy, he's very connected, very aware, and he's such a mirror of energy.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This is nuts, literally, Boddie's been laying here with his head down for the past 20 minutes as soon as we started this conversation, just stared right into my soul, he just looked up at me, so that's bananas.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** I really, I know this sounds so funny, but I think he's a reincarnated Monk, and the funny thing is that, apparently, Shih Tzus were temple dogs in Tibet. And it's interesting, 'cause the moment I picked him up, he was four weeks old, and I held him, the moment I held him, his name came, it was Boddie, right away. And I just knew there was something special about him. All of his siblings are bonkers, it's really interesting, and he doesn't bark, he's just in the Zen space most of the time, except for if we're playing ball or stick. I had to say that quietly. And he's just such a good friend to me. And having animals that we can connect with and bond with is such a beautiful relationship, and it's such a natural thing for us humans to be in relationship with animals, and one thing that I've noticed in having a dog is when you have a dog and you're walking down the street, everybody wants to talk to you, and I always think, isn't it strange that when we're walking down the street without one, nobody talks to us, but when we have an animal with us, everybody... And they're just like an opener.

And so, it's like if you're feeling lonely and you can have a pet, like a little dog or something, that's a really great way to actually get to know the community. It's a great way to make friends. And even just going, little dog meetups and stuff, which I do.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Oh, my goodness. I never thought about that before. That is so true. I see people walking along, I'm an observer for sure, and I see folks, and there's a dog temperament, there's a certain state that our pets can have as well, and you see two people walking opposite directions with their pets and they're about to meet, and the dogs, they're going for each other, to check each other out, but then sure enough, the dog parents start talking to each other as well, which would not have happened had they not had their dogs along with them. That's really remarkable. That's really remarkable.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** They slow us down.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I don't know if it's like a signal like, I have the capacity to love, or whatever it might be, I have the capacity to be open and friendly. It's kind of like you said, it's like a sign, but this point of being able to take time for yourself, another little insight I want to add is that if we can just remove the seducer a little bit more, which is our phone, find a strategy, for me it's in the morning, which I've seen myself, I know about this stuff, but if I happen for... So let me just knock this thing out real quick, first thing in the morning, it pulls me into the portal versus literally, I leave my phone somewhere else, I don't touch it, because once I even touch it, it's just like the neuro chemistry there, that neuro association is there.

So maybe it's first thing in the morning, you just don't pick up your phone for 30 minutes, or some folks literally just leave it in their car. One of my friends, when he would get home in the evening, he would just leave his phone in the car.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** That's smart.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Because he knew, and he was getting pulled away, he had a growing family, he had like four kids now, and he saw the disruption that it created. So, if you want healthier relationship with yourself and others, we can put this device like... Find a creative way to give yourself some time without it.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally, yeah, Ben and I talked about... When we are... Like we're traveling right now, so he just needed the phone all the time, and I don't want to leave without a phone, I'll get lost. But when we're home, just having that one day a week on Sundays, where Saturday night you put your phone in a drawer and you lock it and you don't see it again until Monday, and just having those intentional times where you detox from social, because it can be a lot, and I'm the same, I know all of the stuff, and yet it's so easy to get pulled in.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Our brains, as awesome as they might be, this technology is so great at looping us in, it's just so seductive to our chemistry. So, I want to ask you about this one. So,

another ingredient here, a healthy relationship, in a relationship, we talked about building confidence and self-trust, taking time for yourself, I got several others, but I want to hit on a couple more, one of them is giving your emotions a voice.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, well, they've shown in studies that if we just name our emotions, we feel more empowered, like in raising children, if you can teach your child just to say, I'm feeling sad or I'm feeling angry, they feel more confident as a human being. So just naming our emotions gives us more empowerment, and I think it's kind of important to focus on that as adults, because most of us didn't get that education, that emotional intelligence training, and so most of us are still growing up our inner child, like we're learning as we go here, for those of us who are parenting, we're creating a whole new story for new generations, we're also learning as we go. And being able to feel the difference between a sensation in the body and an emotion, 'cause again, it's another more self-aware empowering tool for being present, right? Because we can go, Okay, so I'm feeling some tightness in my chest, I'm feeling like a little bit of heat in my stomach or in my face, and what I'm feeling is fear or anger or shame, and just being able to name that and then being able to breathe through that and ask, Okay, well, what does my body need right now in order to feel safe or really tuning in deeper, 'cause so often when we're activated or when we're feeling big emotions, we do everything we can to offload them right away.

A great example of this is driving, you look at a lot of people driving, there's a lot of tension and anger and projection going on on the road, people are honking at each other and swearing at each other and yelling, and it's just chaos, and you're just like, whoa, what's going on out here, what's happening? And that's this offloading of energy rather than taking responsibility for what we're feeling internally, 'cause we're so used to especially in conflict, just blaming or making it the other person's fault, or just like, take this energy, I'm just going to throw it at you so that I don't have to feel it versus being centered and feeling like, Okay, I'm actually feeling angry or frustrated because I want to be heard and here's what I'm actually trying to say, or, Here's what I actually need from you right now. And that takes maturity to be able to do that and so none of us get it right all of the time, of course, but it's a practice.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Facts. And by the way, maturity is not denoted by age, that is an important realization for us to have, because we think, for example, once a child reaches a certain age, then they're legally able to do, fill in the blank, that doesn't mean that they're mature enough to do something effectively or safely or intelligently, but that carries off deep into adulthood. We could be 60 years old, still doing the same patterns as we had when we were 12, our same responses or our same lack of being able to self-assess whatever the case might be. So maturity is, again, not denoted by age, we can all get a little bit more mature and still have playfulness and still have the child-like energy, but I think even maturity can have a

negative connotation because of that, like I want to be mature, just like maturity is being able to self-regulate.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And to be empowered, and another one of these ingredients, and this one right here, another ingredient for a healthy inner relationship with yourself is forgiving your past selves.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, so many of us are still punishing ourselves for the things that we've done in the past, we're not letting ourselves off the hook or we're making ourselves too responsible, and this can happen more on the healing journey too, we're like, I'm going to take responsibility for my healing and therefore, I am at fault for everything that happened to me, I can go into these different degrees of extremism, and what we have to remember is that every single version of you brought you to where you are now, and that's such a blessing. What a gift to be in this time and have the capacity and the privilege to heal, not everybody gets that opportunity. And so, it's really an invitation to make the most of it, make the most of this life. If you're in being invited to deepen in love and connection, that's a blessing. And we have to remember that every single experience that we've had or a failure that we've endured, there was a lesson there, and so the best thing that we can do is to really have our eyes open and be awake and... What was the lesson there? What was the medicine there? Is there somebody that I need to repair with? Do I just need to repair within myself and really honor those versions?

We were doing the best that we could. If I look at my history like, oh my goodness, the person that I was 20 years ago, or 15 years ago when I'm just coming out of this street kid life or being in an abusive relationship where I'm just fighting to survive, that person said and did a lot of things that I feel guilt for if I don't give myself permission to grow. If we can't see other people growing for holding onto a stagnant version of themselves, that's really limiting. We have to do that in relationship too, it's like, how many people do you know who are married, who think they know everything about their spouse or their partner? A good example would be one time Ben and I; we're waiting outside of a sushi restaurant to pick up, take out, and then they gave her our order and there was something on the menu that she didn't recognize, and she said, There's no way this is my order, my husband didn't order that, he always orders this. And I get it, we're used to our partners patterns, of course, and so I could have easily been that person, but what it taught me in that moment is how fixed we are on knowing a person and not expecting them to change.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right.



**SHELEANA AIYANA:** So sometimes people change and then we don't even see it, and they've grown, and they've transformed, and we're still holding on to that past version of them, and we do that to ourselves sometimes too, internally, so we've really got to practice that allowance and that being a witness to the transformation that's possible.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, this is so good, so good. This one is especially powerful because we imprison ourselves really, we imprison ourselves, and especially if you start... There's a trap door when you start working on yourself and you start pointing out and seeing all of those things from your past, and like you said, you can have guilt and shame around those things, that process of forgiveness, just like with, if you're forgiving someone else, it's... Let's actually... Let's talk about that too. Let's talk about that right after this, but it is lifting a weight off of you, we don't realize we're carrying around like an anchor when we are judging ourselves so harshly and not understanding, this again extends other people, that we did the best we could with the knowledge that we had at the time, and with updated knowledge that we have now looking back on past situations that will create all kinds of negative emotions, and so just understanding that and being at peace with that, and also looking at the opportunity we have now like, Okay, because truly a lot of this stuff, it ends up being a really good story, all the crazy stuff that we might have done or been through in this connective tissue for other people, but I want to ask you about this because some people can't even fathom forgiving someone who hurt them. Let's talk about that, forgiveness of others as being something necessary for ourself.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, yeah, forgiveness is such a loaded topic, and what I like to remind people is that forgiveness is for you, not for them. If we're holding on to resentment and to anger, it is physically destroying us, it's actually hurting our health, and it's hurting our psyche, and when we're holding on to anger and resentment and to the pain that we endured from the past, we can't open our hearts to the future, we can't trust love, we can't trust ourselves, because deep down, we believe there's something that we did to deserve that, or it's our fault. So, we have to forgive ourselves and others, and there are times where acceptance is more of an accurate term. There are some things that are hard to forgive. I wrote about this in my book, actually, because we talk about forgiveness a lot, but when I look at my grandmother, who I barely know, but I know what she's done, when I see her as someone who basically took away my mother's life with the abuse, it's hard for me to forgive that, I can accept it, I can accept that that happened but it's really, really hard for me to forgive.

And so, there are some of these moments where maybe we're going to be working on that pattern, maybe there's something in our lineage where we're going to be undoing that for a while, and we have to accept our reality in order to create something new, alright. So, for in resistance to reality, the story is not changing, and that's why it's so liberating to move through the anger, let ourselves feel it, let ourselves really unleash. I have a letter ritual in my book,

where you just write a letter and you say all the angry stuff and you can burn it or bury it, you have to move through the anger and let yourself feel that righteousness before you're ready to soften. We can't just bypass to softening, but eventually we need to get to this place where we're willing to reopen ourselves to love and to trust again, and that's ultimately why forgiveness is so important. We don't want to be stuck in not purgatory of our own hatred and our own pain forever, it's not a nice place to be. And the truth is, we're giving those people more power, 'cause I see everything is energy, so the more time and energy I spend thinking about that person or sending them hate or anger, the more I'm feeding them versus, you know what? You don't deserve any more of my energy, and I'm going to move through this and I'm going to take my energy back. To me, that's just so much more empowering.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I'm mad right now, just saying. So, I'm just wanting to pull back that energy that would go to whatever, obviously, a lot of people are angry right now as well, it's a energy that's going out, and it's not that that's wrong, it's understanding that this is energy and to maybe recalibrate that, invest the energy into something that you do want. More of that. And I think that that's really left out of the conversation. We've done several shows and point people in this direction, one of the great ones will put it for folks in the show notes with Michael Beckwith and having this conversation about create... Okay, you're upset about how the world is right now, what do you want it to look like? If you had the opportunity to create the world in the way that you see fit that serves all of us, what would that look like? Start to create that vision, invest some of your time and energy in creating the vision of what your family would look like, what do you want your family life to look like. And having the opportunity to do that, we have that capacity, and we're so powerful too. Once we get clarity on something, it's almost miraculous how stuff starts to happen in that direction, so this is so powerful, this...

And I love that you brought in acceptance as well, because I think we can get caught up even in the label of the word forgiveness. It might be too much.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Totally. Sometimes it is.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** A lot of words, have a lot of energy behind them. And so, it doesn't have to be one flavor of the thing. I'm going to ask you about one more of these, which again, the book is just wonderful, and just bringing all these... Just page after page, it's just like hitting things, experiences that I've had and being able to give a voice to them. And another one of these for creating a healthy inner relationship is staying true to your values. Let's talk about that one.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Yeah, core values is a really fundamental piece of who we are. If we know what we value, then we know what to say yes and what to say no to, and that reflects our

environment, how we treat ourselves, how we treat other people, how our relationships to our bodies and to the planet look, it's everything. And so many of us don't ask ourselves, what do we value? We don't know. And so, a lot of times in relationship, we're actually just behaving like animals, really get turned on by somebody and then we pursue it because we feel turned on and we find somebody attractive, and they turn a light on for us. And so, we pursue that as if that's the end all be all. And entering into conscious relationship space, that might just be one piece. Of course, attraction and chemistry is important, we want to feel attraction and chemistry with our partner, but that's just one value, sensuality or chemistry is one value. What about genuine authenticity? What about being integral and being kind? What about being disciplined or generous? These are things that I know are important to me, they're probably important to you, and we all have different values, some of us have high scientific value, some of us have high spirituality values, religious values, and so if we're going to get clear on who we are as a person, then we can say, "Okay, well, here's what I value."

What do you value and do these values align? Can we walk a path together, or is it not a match, and when we're doing more than just listening to our bodies get turned on, we're dating or in a relationship, we're following more than just that rollercoaster rush of emotions or that honeymoon phase, then we're slowing down to enter the space of, like I said before, negotiation, where you can really get to know each other and negotiate a relationship and how that relationship's going to look. Instead of just falling into it and hoping that it turns out the way you're imagining. Maybe you guys both have completely different realities of how relationships should look, but you didn't talk about that, so it's important that we take that time, and so when we've gone through a cycle of break-ups or relationship patterns that are exhausting for us, we want to return to the values and say, "Okay, well, what values was I prioritizing in that relationship?" And for a lot of us, it's something physical, or there's affection, we value affection, and so maybe that was the only thing that was there, but there was all these other things in the way that made it an unhealthy relationship to be in.

So, what are the values that we prioritize, what are the... We have to have these in order to have a relationship with someone versus these are the nice-to-haves, or this is part of what makes me and I'm open to somebody who maybe doesn't share that value, it's really getting clear.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This one is probably the most practical of help you to avoid drama in your life, but again, we tend to suppress that, our gut is just like, they're not aligned with your values, which first of all, getting clear on what your values are. For me, if I value honesty and integrity, authenticity, honor, honor, is just that word itself, just really resonates with me, and I see maybe there's another couple that don't have those same values, like red flag alert. If we're still going to move forward in having them in our lives and they don't operate by the same value code, it's just a matter of time before some drama is going to happen. Versus you

see that the value is interlined, maybe it's honesty. Maybe it's honesty, you see some dishonesty behavior between them too, maybe not even with you directly, you're like, "You know what, that's... Let me step away," instead of, again, acting like it doesn't happen. Stay true to your values, it's going to save you a lot of heartache and drama and dissonance, unnecessary dissonance later on. So, this one is super important and super practical.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** And noticing when our values can get out of balance too. I'll give you an example, one of my top core values is generosity. I live by the rule of abundance, I love to give, I love to give to other people, I love to give money, I love to give a gift, I just want to give energy. And in my history, that core value went out of balance has turned into over giving and care-taking, we also... Knowing our core values, we can sometimes if we're like, "I don't know what my core value is", we can look at some of the ways that we get out of balance, and we say, "Oh, maybe I've been out of balance in that way, because this is something that really matters to me, and how can I bring this value into balance so that it's more self-loving for me and the person on the other end can receive it in a healthier way." It's looking at our relationship histories and our patterns and where we may have fallen into a pattern that didn't feel quite aligned, where we can actually see, oh, these are the things that actually matter to me.

This is what drew me in because I care about that, and I know that I want that, and I want it to be also paired with respect. Admiration. Trust, you can't just have one.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This is so awesome. This is so good because our values can... You can... For example, if my value is honesty, and I take that to an unhealthy extreme where I'm just out here honest with everybody, your feet are big. You're a girl. How do you wear a size 13 or whatever? I'm just being honest. That can go to an unhealthy place where I start to have harsh judgment for others, or maybe I'm being hyper-critical of myself and all of these things. Again, it's just having a healthy balance, that is my value, but I don't want to live it to the extent that I'm alienating myself and other people constantly. That's just ridiculous. And I've seen it happen before, and of course, there are folks who do that, they just say the thing and they feel it's like an entitlement kind of like I could just say whatever I want, do whatever I want, but... Especially on the internet, by the way, because in the real world, you can get... You can face repercussions for that very quickly, especially where I'm from, and so there's a natural weeding out of behavior like that, but on the internet, it's kind of activated some people's darkest sentiments of entitlement to where they can just say and do...

And the crazy thing, and I know you've dealt with this, but the sweetest, most incredible people, people just say the most wild sh\*t to them, and it's just like... And also, here's the thing too, it exists in all of us. We are capable of the most heinous thing. We might think I would never take a life, for example. What if someone was trying to take the life of the person you

cherish most in this world, and it was a choice. We start to create a context where, hey, yeah. The thing that I feel I would never do, there's a context where it's possible. And for us to understand that and also understand... For me, I like to point people to wear capable of the most beautiful, wonderful things as well, even people who have these qualities that you might not agree with, they have so much beauty and potential in them as well. And it starts to create this unity but for that to even happen, we've got to be more mature, we've got to become the one. And this is your book right here, *Becoming the One*. Everybody pick up a copy like yesterday, and it's a wonderful... It's an experience to read, I feel like I know you so much better, and it's just exciting because I know that this is a book that we need right now to work on ourselves, to be happy within ourselves.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Before I let you go, what drove you because I know it's a compelling thing when you want to write a book, what compelled you to write this book right now?

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Well, I've wanted to write a book since I could write. I've been writing since I was three years old. But there was just something in me, and it happened, I think I started writing about a year and how now, there was just something in me that felt it was time. And what I didn't realize was that when I said yes to the book deal, it wasn't going to feel the way that I thought it was going to feel. It was such an initiation; I was so confronted because it means so much to me. Writing is my art, it's how I connect with spirit, and it's how I tell stories, and it's healing for me too.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** It was a really intense process, I spent about six months just in the liminal space, getting ready, and the reason that I wanted to write this is because I know what it's like to live with a closed heart, I know what it's like to be terrified, to be vulnerable. I know what it's like to not trust love. I was afraid of men until I was 17 years old because of my history, and I also know the beauty on the other side. I am living this life with this amazing partner, and his wonderful, family members, pet family member and feeling so connected to my community and to the land that feeds me, and I want that experience for everyone because I think we don't realize how short life is or that it's really the only thing that matters in the end is love. I genuinely pray that every single person who has the desire will experience love and family in some form in this life. I think that's really what we need to get back to and I wanted this book to be an opening for that and to have other people see themselves in my stories, to feel like they're not alone. Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Can you tell people where they can find the book and also get more of you in your amazing community.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** So [risingwoman.com/btobook](http://risingwoman.com/btobook) is the book page, and [risingwoman.com](http://risingwoman.com), and [sheleanaaiyana.com](http://sheleanaaiyana.com) are my websites, and a lot of my writing is on Instagram too, so it's

@risingwoman and @sheleanaaiyana. And I have a YouTube channel as well, where I'm putting up some video content and things like that from time to time, that's where you can find me, and the book will be available everywhere, it will be available in all the bookstores, major bookstores and of course, online and Amazon.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. Well, I appreciate you so much, you're just... You're a magical person and you're even on adventure right now, even coming here, and I'm grateful to be significant in your life for you to be here with me today, and I want everybody pick up *Becoming the One* right now, again, everywhere books are sold, and thank you for coming to hang out with me.

**SHELEANA AIYANA:** Thanks so much for having me on, it's such a pleasure to be back with you, and I love you and Anne so much, I admire both of you and I admire you for your story and everything that you have been through, and yeah. I see a lot of myself in you as well, and I'm just so happy that you have a wonderful family and that you're creating this life. It's really beautiful.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome. They say real, recognize real. Awesome, Sheleana Aiyana everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today, I hope you got a lot of value out of this. As always, this is about application, not just whimsical, hypotheses and theories, but practical application of the things that we learn to really create a healthy inner relationship, because as it's said, your outer world is a direct reflection of your inner world, so working on adding in some of these pieces of cultivating this healthy interrelationship and utilizing resources that we have access to today. And she goes through a tremendous amount of insights and exercises in the book, but most importantly, even just what you picked up today, having some time to yourself today is probably one of the most valuable things that we can do, because we're constantly getting pulled in all these different directions and being pulled into this virtual world and this literally this has never existed before in our evolution as a species, this is a brand new thing, our brains have not sorted out this relationship yet.

And we can see that to the degree that we are often... For most folks, if we're going to admit it, we are addicted to our devices, it's very difficult for us to go any length of time without them, so helping to break free of that to get more in touch with not just the "Real world" on the outside, but the real world inside of ourselves, which is truly, this is the most important universe that we could ever access.

I hope you got a lot of value out of this. Again, if you did, please share this out with your friends and family on social media, you can tag me on @shawnmodel and tag @risingwoman. What an incredible community, definitely follow that page. And we've got some amazing epic guests and special master classes coming your way very soon. So, make sure to stay tuned. Take care,



have an amazing day. I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to [themodelhealthshow.com](http://themodelhealthshow.com), that's where you can find all of the show notes, you could find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much, and take care. I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.