

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

EPISODE 585

The Limits Of Using A Scale To Track Weight Loss & The Truth About Cellulite

With Guest Noelle Tarr

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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. On this episode, we're going to be talking about a fitness-related tool that often treats us like a tool. We're going to be talking about the scale. Is this the end-all-be-all biometric feedback for us to establish whether or not we're in a good position with our health and fitness? So, we're going to break down some of the science around that, but also understanding that the scale is one of the most viable and accessible tools in our culture to keep an eye on where we are with our body weight, specifically. Because that's the only thing that it can really tell us is our body weight; how much mass are we carrying around here on planet Earth? This does not speak to the health of our endocrine system, the health of our nervous system and their integration. Our hormone production: are we in a position where we're producing robust anabolic hormones that are building up our body, that are helping to contribute to energy and healthy metabolic function, or are we producing an abnormal amount of catabolic hormones, like cortisol and other catecholamines that are breaking our system down too rapidly and creating an imbalance? Contributing to inflammation and things of the like that are then leading to more issues with our body composition.

A scale cannot tell us what's happening inside of our bodies, it's just kind of an outside mass issue. Now, we have a mass issue with body weight in our country, for sure. And BMI, our body mass index is one of the other metrics that's used. It's not perfect, but it adds another layer of understanding to where we are as a society. And if we're just looking at this metric by itself, looking at body mass index, well then that would tell us that almost 250 million United States citizens are now overweight or obese, based on that metric. That number should be startling, but it's not full proof. That's the thing, it doesn't tell us what our metabolic health is. But, sidebar, our metabolic health is not very good here in the United States. In fact, a recent study published in the peer review journal Metabolic Syndrome and Related Disorders determined that only 12% of United States adults are metabolically healthy. That means 88% of United States citizens are metabolically unwell, metabolically unhealthy, and the scale does not tell the whole story.

So, it's what's happening, again, in our internal regions, what's creating the out-picturing of what we might see on the scale or body fat measurement; these are the hallmark things for us to focus on. Not to say that the scale is the ultimate enemy, but there's new data that's now demonstrating that it can create a psychological turmoil, where people are trying to battle their bodies and battle this number, and also this number creating this psychological sense of self-worth, and that's another issue that we need to deal with and to address.

And so, we're going to talk about that today, as well. And what are some of the things that the scale might not necessarily tell us that can be improving our health and thus greatly increase our likelihood of changing that number on the scale without all the psychological distress and turmoil. We're also going to talk about one of the common body image concerns today that's known as cellulite. We're going to talk about cellulite. We're also going to talk about changing your training protocol, what you're doing as far as exercise and movement, based on the time of the month, based on what time of month it is. So being able to cycle sync. And so much more. This is a really, really rich conversation that all of us can extract some value from, but this is ultimately about, again, empowering us, empowering our citizens, and providing real, valid, clinically proven tools so we can get from where we are to where we wanna be. And, again, really, really excited about this episode.

Now, in our conversation about metabolism, we always have to look at what are the foundational principles. What are the foundational tenets that drive metabolic performance within our bodies? It often revolves around things that are so simple that they're usually looked past. We're looking for this new fancy pants supplement or this brand-new discovered nutrient, and missing out on what are the things that actually allow human cells to communicate? What allows human cells to invoke the process of "burning fat"?

How does it all work? Well, one of those foundational pieces is a word that often comes wrapped in controversy, and that is the word sodium. When we hear the word sodium we often think of salt, but salt isn't just sodium and sodium isn't the only type of salt. There's potassium salt, there's magnesium salt. But sodium salt is the one that is the most controversial in our society, because it's often tied to issues revolving around blood pressure, for example. But what isn't often discussed, and what is little known by the public at large, is the fact that researchers at Harvard Medical School published a study in the peer review journal *Metabolism*, finding that low salt intake directly increases insulin resistance in healthy people. In healthy people. Not having enough salt, specifically sodium salt, can create insulin resistance. You want to know one of the classic signs of insulin resistance, is carrying around more belly fat. So, this is a problem that starts to feed into itself.

So, we want to have healthy metabolic function, we want to make sure that we are having adequate amounts of sodium intake. But we can find sodium abundantly in many foods. However, it's utilized for so many different processes that we have a new need for it today that we didn't really see. Even the soil that our food is grown in is often deficient in these key nutrients. So, the end product that we're getting, we're missing some of these things. And when I say that sodium is used for so many different processes, not just for metabolic function, but the sodium potassium pump itself enables our mitochondria to be able to literally make the energy that's required for all the things that the human body does. It's a sodium potassium

pump that is required for every single cellular function really in our bodies. But specifically, we're just talking about energy production, being able to oxidize fuels.

If we don't have these electrolytes present, our body is severely handicapped in being able to do the jobs that bring about healthy human performance. So, when I say every cellular process requires the sodium potassium pump, I'm talking about even your cognition, your cognitive performance, your brain health, sodium is a key component in this domain, as well. Researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as a literal on-off switch, they call it a "on-off switch in your brain for specific neurotransmitters that support your cognitive function and protect your brain against numerous diseases". So, again, from your brain to your heart, to your energy production in your body, sodium is a critical nutrient. And also, it's not the only one of these electrolytes that matters. Sodium, potassium, magnesium.

This triad, this trinity, are exceptionally important. And just to lean into magnesium really quickly, a fascinating study published in the journal Neuron found that magnesium is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve our cognitive function. And so, the list goes on and on in the different ways that these electrolytes, these minerals that carry electric charge, play an impact on our health outcomes. And for me, this is one of those places we really need to target today more than ever. I'm a huge fan of electrolytes but making sure it's not coming along with unnecessary sugars, and additives and artificial colors and all this nonsense. Just the electrolytes we need, in the right ratios. And this is why I'm such a huge fan of LMNT. That's L-M-N-T. I actually just had some before this episode started today. Go to Drink L-M-N-T dot com/model, and you get to try LMNT for free. They're going to send you a free sample pack right to your door, all you do is pay a little bit in shipping, but they're going to send this to you to try for free. Take advantage. This is a limited time offer, as it stands today. Go to Drink lmnt.com/model, get your hands on some LMNT today. And on that note, let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled, "Just what I was looking for", by Stony. "I love this show. The health and fitness tips are so informational and understandable. I also am glad for the recommendations provided."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple Podcast. I appreciate it so much. If you've yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for the Model Health Show. Also, if you're listening on Spotify, please leave a rating for The Model Health Show, it means so much. On that note, get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Nutritional Therapy Practitioner, Noelle Tarr. She's also a best-selling author, personal trainer, and host of the Well Fed Women podcast. In addition, she shares so much incredible information over at her health and fitness site, Coconuts and Kettle Bells dot com. She's one of my favorite people, she's just an incredible voice of reason

and of empowerment. She's helped so many people, and I wanted to bring her on today to talk about this new transition as people are coming out of these pandemic times and they're wanting to get in shape. A lot of folks' kind of took a big-time chutes and ladders spiral right downward with their health and fitness, and they're kind of coming out of this and looking at, What can I do to turn the situation around? And I want to make sure that people aren't leaning into the typical misinformation that tends to have people getting further and further away from their health goals. So, I was really excited to connect with Noelle and to bring her on to this episode today.

So, let's jump into this conversation with the one and only Noelle Tarr. First of all, just thank you so much for being a voice of reason throughout all of this madness and just continuing to empower people. There's been so much disempowerment, obviously, and kind of a dial turn to victimization here, and you always kept turning things back to just what you are capable of doing. And also, that we're not missing anything. That's another big thing that's kind of been driven into our psyche. "You're not enough, your immune system is not enough, your body is not enough." And so, it's just always been great to be able to tune into you, listen to your voice, read what you're writing, your posts. I love it, you have no idea. I have so many of your posts that are saved...

NOELLE TARR: Oh, Shawn, I love that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And every now and then I'll share it. Yeah, so just thank you.

NOELLE TARR: Thank you. I appreciate that. Sometimes it feels like you're speaking into the void, so I really do appreciate that, because especially when you're going against the grain. And especially with today's like, what we are doing; we're podcasting, we're on social media and all those things, and sometimes you put all your effort into like, this is going to change people, and, you know, it's... I'm not selling you an easy button; I'm not selling you quick and fast tips. And so, sometimes it feels like you're just... You're not... It's not hitting. But then you get messages like that, that's so helpful. Or you get DMs from people that are like, you changed my life; I was able to get out of the negative space that I am in. Which I don't take credit for that, I just take credit for telling people a different way of doing things, and then they are able to take that and change their own life. But hearing about people getting their health back and their fertility back and all these things because they decided to not listen to the narrative that is so popular in our culture. So that's really rewarding, but I appreciate it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. You just said it, though, it's like speaking into the void. Like, I'm in here in my studio, it's just me and my guys, and I don't see the people right in front of me. And so I just got back from speaking at this event a couple of weeks ago in Mexico, and so this was my first event in the last couple of years to actually be live and be on stage and to see people,

and so literally every turn that I made, every time I went to go to a restaurant there at the resort, someone was coming up to me and sharing just how much the show has impacted them the last two years.

NOELLE TARR: I love that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The thing that I was hearing the most was like, you really helped me to maintain my sanity; you helped me to feel like I wasn't crazy, and to maintain my sense of sovereignty. And so, speaking into the void, once we get into these communications and have these connections, you get that feedback, it is important. Because now I just feel like taking things to another level, and so... But being on that, I know that a lot of people there were like, they were hitting the gym to get ready for their Mexico swimsuit, they were doing the dieting, the whole thing. Right now, a lot of people seem to be really energized to lose their "COVID weight" or their "quarantine 15".

NOELLE TARR: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But with that comes the typical ineffective means that people tend to turn to, to get healthier. And so, this is the reason I wanted to have you on, because, again, you're somebody who brings perspective and a voice of reason, and you're not like, "Here, take this Skinny Tea and all your magical dreams will come true". And so, one of the things that I love that you talk about, because what we're doing is we're looking to stack conditions for our health and weight loss, or changes in our body composition, can be an outcome. But let's start with this. Let's talk about mental health. Because one of the things you've been talking about recently, and just... Not just recently, but it's been a continued thing you put attention on, is that our mental health matters more than the number on the scale. So, let's dissect that a little bit.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, I want to be clear too. I don't think wanting to change your body is wrong. I think a lot of people when they hear, "Oh, you don't think weight loss is the ticket", they assume that you somehow, you think it's wrong for wanting to change your body. It's not wrong, it's not wrong to want to get healthier. What I think the problem is in our society at large, and really the diet and the fitness industry, is we as a society has really waited losing weight with health improvements. And your health is in your weight. And for women in particular, it's become... And for men in a different way, but for women it's always, "Your worth is in your weight." So, your worth is in your ability to control your food and control your exercise and get down to a smaller size. And I just think this is... For far too long, the fitness industry as a whole, even, has really defined health by, can you get rid of your love handles? It's all about aesthetics, and it's all about, can we move the number on the scale? And for that reason, we have so many women who spend an enormous amount of time thinking about, how

can I get the number on the scale to go down? And you know this, I know this, there are many things that you can do that do not improve your health that will move the number on the scale. Just like there are many things that you can do that will improve your health that doesn't move the number on the scale.

So, it really isn't about, when we're so hyper-focused on the scale, it's about, how can I get that number to move? And a lot of women, as a result, I was this person, this is what I did all throughout my high school and college and even early 20s, I prioritized things that would get that number on the scale to move, because I believe that I needed to be a certain size or a certain weight. And I thought to myself, If I could just get to this weight, then I would finally be healthy and I would finally be happy. We put so much weight, pun intended, on goal weights, and I really think... I saw my own health deteriorate, and I've seen this for so many clients and so many women. So many women, we've seen their health deteriorate because they are so focused on this number on the scale. So, what's the alternative is to really put your focus into, what are the things that are important to you that are going to improve your health? And I know we'll talk about that in a second, but the other problem is so many women... It's not just about weight loss.

It's like this idea that you need to be on a specific weight. So, I know a lot of... Women can probably relate to this, and I've talked a lot about this on Instagram, which is like, we all have this number in our head, a lot of women do; they think that, If I could just like... I used to be that weight, and if I could just get there again, I would be healthy, I would be happy. And so, every day women wake up, they get on the scale... Which, by the way, your body fluctuates, that's normal, that's supposed to happen, like nobody is static, your life changes from day-to-day, your hunger changes from day-to-day, your stress changes from day-to-day. So, life has seasons, all these things. But for some reason, we believe that our bodies should be the exact same weight down to a pound every single day. And if we gain a pound or we aren't losing weight, like what we're doing is not working. I can't tell you how many times clients have come to me and said, well, I feel better and I'm doing the things, but I'm not losing weight, so it's just, it's not working.

And that couldn't be further from the truth. But a lot of women have this number in their head, and it's typically a number that they were in high school or college, which by the way, when you're in high school, you were like a child.

And they don't recognize, we've completely removed this... Like actual our life circumstances from how we evaluate our health. So back in the day when you were a high schooler or even a young adult, like think about what your life was then and what you're going through now. Now, let's take me as an example, like I've had children, I have a stressful job. A lot of people have trauma they're dealing with. Our parents are getting older, they're... We're dealing with death;

we're dealing with children who have disability... Like we're dealing with all these things. So, to think that your body needs to be this exact same static weight or somehow that it should be the way weight that you were when you were a high schooler or in college is just false, it's not an accurate assessment of health. And so, moving forward, I always want people to be able to have...

When you're able to set aside and let go of this mental head space of getting on the scale every day, thinking... Beating yourself up, feeling shame because you are... You're not where you think you "should be", which that's another issue altogether. Your kind of giving real estate away, really valuable real estate by the way, to something that is arbitrary, that's something that doesn't necessarily matter, that doesn't necessarily define your health. So, when we can drop that, "I've got to really get my... I've got to lose weight, and what's my weight today? And did I lose weight, or did I gain weight?" When that defines your day and you're giving your mental... Your brain, that's your mental and emotional, that space, that free space again, you get to make decisions about what are right for your health based on what your body needs. So, if you had a really crappy night, you didn't sleep well, instead of getting up and saying, "I got to get up and run because the number on the scale still is the same, or the number might... I gained a pound." You don't have to do that anymore, you can get up and say, "Instead, I'm going to make some different decisions for my body because I didn't sleep well, so what's going to serve me today? Maybe it's going for a short walk, maybe it's sleeping in."

And so, we get to make decisions for our health based on what's going to serve my body in the present, today, based on not just the season of life I'm in, but what... What's going on this week? What's my stress level? As opposed to, what's going to move the number on the scale?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that so much. And I don't think there's a device that has caused so much mental turmoil and suffering than a scale and tying our identity to that thing. And I love how you're tying it back to our ideals getting planted when we were in early education, for example, when we were in high school or college, or whatever the case might be. And typically, what creates suffering is this schism between our life conditions and our blueprint for what things are supposed to be. We all have this cognitive blueprint like, my weight should be this. And when your life conditions don't match that weight, it creates suffering, there's a tension there. And it could be, again, it could be a healthy tension, but odds are because of this arbitrary number or this number that doesn't actually tell the tale of, Are you healthy or not? Are you well or not? It can create depression or anxiety or obsessive behavior, obsessive-compulsive behaviors to try to get your life conditions to match up to your blueprint.

And so oftentimes today, especially, we need to make an alteration to our blueprint. Our life conditions, if we're taking care of ourselves, if we're eating real food, if we're moving our

bodies, if we're having healthy relationships, those life conditions are fruitful and they're going to bear out positive things for our health. But what if we just focus on that number, we're really missing the point. So yeah, just to kick it back to you on this, when that number isn't telling us, giving us the feedback that we want, what have you seen as far as the people that you work with, the people that you've talked to, and how much turmoil that creates for them psychologically?

NOELLE TARR: Yeah. It's so interesting actually, because I think people have a huge disconnect between what we think about mentally and how stress and mental and emotional stress actually impacts our physiology. So, I did a little poll recently, and I said, what is stress? Is it physical? Or is it mental? Now, I think you and I know, and a lot of your community knows, stress is anything that... It's very physical, it's our body responds. We have a very real physiological response to stress, it can be a lot of things, it can be under-eating, it can be inflammation, it can be poor diet, all those things, that's stress, right? But a lot of people still have this misconception that stress is mental, almost like 90% of people voted mental... It was a trick question, by the way. It's both, but almost everybody voted mental because they think, oh, stress is just what's... When what I'm thinking, it's in my head. They don't make this connection that the stress that you experience in your head changes your physiology, that is a stressor, that can actually cause inflammation, that can cause a chronic cortisol production, which therefore then can impact every other hormone in your system.

It can lower progesterone, it can reduce your fertility, like all those things. So, if you are spending most of your day... Maybe not even most, let's just say your morning, you start the day, getting up weighing yourself, you see a number again that you don't think you "should be" that you're not feeling it, you're just like, "Oh, I wish I could see that." You somehow, you only think that you're progressing if that number is going down, and that number is not going down, that's how you're starting the day. You're starting... And then you go in front of the mirror, and you beat yourself up in front of the mirror and you're kind of picking apart little things about yourself. That carries with you throughout the day. That mental and emotional stress is stress on your body, it's a little cortisol, it's a little bit of frustration, it's a little bit of depression, it's a little bit of anxiety and worry. And so, then those feelings about yourself carry into the rest of your day and what you're doing.

It impacts what choices you're making with food. For a lot of women, it's, "Okay, I'm not going to eat breakfast, maybe I'll just skip it." Or, "I'm going to have an extra coffee as opposed to... Like fueling my body." It's, "I'm at the gym, I'm going to do a little bit extra work."

And then you get to the gym, and you look at yourself and you're like, "Oh, I didn't lose weight today. Gosh, I still look bad." So, it's all these, it's not just, oh, getting on the scale and looking to scale and feel bad about yourself, it's laced throughout your entire day, which therefore

impacts your... Not just your life experience, how you're feeling about yourself, but also your physical health, and then the choices that you make thereafter. That's why when I get clients to remove the scale from their life... Look, I'm not... I don't think it's terrible. If you want to use the scale and it's like your comfort and you feel like, "Oh, if I don't use the scale like I'm going to lose control." That's a whole other issue of... In and of itself, right? It's... Sometimes people like to use that as a marker. That's fine. Ideally, you would get that out of your life so that the other biomarkers of health, the other things that we know are more concrete, or are more important to you, will be able to take shape and you'll be able to actually intuitively follow those and feel those.

Like for example, you'll be more aware of your sleep quality, that's an incredible biomarker of health that a lot of us don't track. When you have crappy sleep, something is probably going on. Whether it's your physiology, whether it's your health, whether it's your stress, so we get to tune in. That's one way that I tune into my health is How's my sleep? And if I were really... If I can't fall asleep or I'm waking up in the middle of the night, I know I need to change some things because my body is being exposed to stress. How's your energy levels? Are you feeling better? Like, do you have fatigue? Are you...? Do you... How's your blood sugar regulation? Do you have that 3:00 PM crash? If I'm feeling shaky, something's off, maybe I need to drink some electrolytes or maybe I haven't fueled properly today. So being able to remove the scale allows us to get in tune better with our bodies and say, okay, I'm trying to evaluate here, how do I feel... What does my body need? And you can actually do that as opposed to fight your body constantly, which is what happens when we put too much focus on the scale.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, you just said it too, our bodies are constantly giving us feedback. And we're often focused on the wrong thing instead of paying attention to all this innate feedback. And one of the things I want to make sure... I'm so glad you did this. I didn't ask you to do this, you pivoted right into the thing that I was going to get to, which is how stress... Because I'm talking about the scale causing mental anguish, but our mental anguish can cause disruption to what we've seen we're seeing on the scale. It can totally mess up our biology so much so this meta-analysis, this was published in JAMA, Journal of the American Medical Association. One of the most prestigious journals in the United States, it was a JAMA Internal Medicine. And they noted that upwards of 80% of all physician visits are for stress-related illnesses, stress-related diseases, which is essentially all manner of disease, but we put stress into this very strange box, like you said, it's a mental... We think it's mental, but it is physiological, it's a biological response. There's a mental and physical component.

Those stressful thoughts that you're having is changing the chemistry in your body instantaneously, it's changing the hormones you're producing, the neurotransmitters, is changing your digestion, is changing your entire cellular function. And this isn't to put us in a state of neurosis about it or fear, this is to be empowered because your thoughts matter and

you have the ability to choose your thinking. And so often again, we're steered towards thinking and being obsessed with stuff that matters very little, instead of the things that are the big movers in this situation. And so, to point this all back, and I want to ask you about this next, let's talk about some of the things that can improve our physical and mental health that don't necessarily translate to changes that we might see on that device.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah. Well, to take it back to what you love to talk about, the first is obviously sleep. So, improving your sleep quality and the amount that you sleep is, can significantly improve your health. I think somebody I know wrote a whole book on that, so I don't need to necessarily dive into all of that. But when we're thinking about, gosh, what am I doing before bed? That's one of the things that I've really had to look at and I really get clients to look at is, okay, how stimulated are you before bed? What... Are you stimulating your nervous system? Are you wearing blue blockers? Are you on your phone? Are you scrolling social media? Are you working? All of those things disrupt your circadian rhythms, so not just trying to get to bed early, but also really focusing on quality.

Second, I'm just trying to prioritize. I think the second would probably be getting outside more and getting some sunshine, as I'm looking outside at the beautiful weather right now. I think so many people talk about getting out into nature, and we're like Oh, nature. But we as humans were designed to engage with nature and the sunshine and plants and garden. And I can tell you like getting your hands in the dirt is... There's beneficial microbes in that dirt. And so, we're supposed to be outside, we're supposed to be getting good vitamin D. There's a reason that low vitamin D and vitamin D deficiencies are correlated with chronic disease.

The second thing... Or this, now we're going to third thing. I would say, probably managing your stress. Now, this is not sexy, people don't like talking about managing their stress because it usually means that they have to say No, which will be my fourth thing, saying no. But I think when we're... We have a society that is incapable of... We have a ton of stress being input into our lives, and people don't know how to manage it. And managing it really is a collective variety of things, it's being able to be in tune with our body and what it needs, which goes back to eliminating the scale as a biomarker of health and really focusing on other things. But being able to meditate, take time away... We're always connected now as a society, and I really think that it's just totally degrading our mental and emotional health and our ability to manage stress, because previously, when we'd feel stressed, maybe we'd go outside, we'd talk to a friend, we'd walk around like...

I was a kid in the 80s, we didn't have a whole lot to entertain us, and we had a lot of downtime, we had a lot of time to be bored. And nowadays it's like people are... We can't take a second of boredom, we're on our phones we're scrolling. Everywhere we go, everything we do, we're in the car, you see kids get off the bus nowadays, every kid's getting off the bus looking down at

their phone. And so, we've collectively as society just lost the ability, I think, to disconnect. And also do things like meditate and even exercise, prayer, whatever it is that you need to do to kind of have that moment away and process is really important, managing the stress.

Fourth thing, I will say is saying no. We live in a society that celebrates... Man, it celebrates productivity, it celebrates the hustle, it celebrates what are the things that you're producing that you're doing. And for women in particular, I've seen... I know you've probably seen the shift too, Shawn. But for women, in the last few years, I have just seen my community feel overwhelmed with the amount of pressure put on them. Women all of a sudden had to school their children from home, when they didn't... Trying to get them to look at a screen all day. They are supposed to have a really great side hustle, successful business, take care of the kids, make sure they're cooking healthy meals, make sure they're not killing the world and not participating in all these things that you've made, oh sustainability. And all...

These are all good things. Right. Be involved with the charity, keep up with social media and all the things that social media wants you to be posting about, getting a picture of your children, all coordinate... Now, look, I do that, so. But like... And coordinating clothes and post it on Easter, all these things. There is so much required now of the modern person, but especially of women. And women are much more sensitive to stress in general, because we have a circadian rhythm, an infradian rhythm where we... Our hormones are kind of constantly fluctuating and stress really impacts our hormones in a different way, and... So, you've got to learn to say no. We have got to learn to say no. You've got to look at what you value as a person... And this goes back again to the scale and weight. What's valuable to you, this is what really was my aha moment.

I had to take a step back and say, Noelle, what do you care about? 'Cause right now it seems like all you're trying to do is please all the other people in the world. You're trying to please your high school boyfriend who dumped you because you didn't have six-pack abs, so now you're trying to get six pack abs 'cause... Why? Do you even value those people that you're trying to please? 'Cause if not, you got to move on, you've got to do something else with your life, other than this. 'Cause this is all you're spending your time on is trying to get to a smaller size and get a six pack. So, I think we have to really as a society or just as individual people, take a step back and say, what do we value? What's important and valuable to me? And then pursue that.

The last thing, which I think a lot of women probably are struggling with, I know a lot in my community, is you've got to eat enough. And we've talked about this on another podcast, Shawn. But many women, because they get into this trap of, I've got to lose weight, I've got to reduce my size, I got to move that number on the scale, they end up not eating enough, which subsequently means they're not taking in enough nutrients. So, if you're going to have nutrient

deficiencies, I mean, we could name so many of them; magnesium and vitamin D and fat-soluble vitamins and protein. When you're deficient in these nutrients, your body is not going to function properly. You're especially not going to have your fertility, estrogen, progesterone, all that stuff. A lot of women lose their period, lose their cycle when they're not eating enough, that's not... It's not something to ignore, that is a vital sign. And a lot of women struggle with metabolic function, with their thyroid health because they're not eating enough, and it's really because our society has worshipped weight loss, controlling your food, making sure that you're not eating "too much" in quotations, and you're cutting your calories, we just obsessively track...

We think that we have to be in such control, so we obsessively track everything that comes into our bodies, and we think that our bodies need to eat the same amount of calories every single day. No. Like crazy to me. That's absolutely crazy, especially considering women in the second half of their cycle, you actually burn up to 400 calories more because of progesterone rising, and your body temperature rising. Women's... Your metabolism actually burns more calories in second half of your cycle, yet we fight it. And we think, Oh, we've... What's a special trick I need to do to make sure that I'm not eating more food or more carbohydrate in... Before my period? It's like just eat. You need those calories.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

NOELLE TARR: It's okay, you can eat. And so, yeah, I think eating enough would probably be the last one. The actual last one is exercise, but... Well, I know we'll get to that in a second.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely, yes, but even that, where do those cravings come from, you know, when you're on a certain part of your cycle that we've got these memes about, and we've got these societal jokes about. Your body is giving you feedback again, and we can make good choices in those moments, but if you already have this cognitive barrier where I'm supposed to be eating like I'm 5-years-old, or maybe seven, that's my caloric intake in order to get to my goals. What's going to happen is there's going to be some... There's going to be some disruption, your metabolism overall, it's going to suffer. And one of the biggest things that happens when we are deficient in these key nutrients, deficient in protein deficient and eating enough calories, but this is not to say not being in a caloric deficit is not going to help you to lose weight, but what are you doing to your biology overall, because one of the big things that happens is you lose muscle, your body will use your muscle tissue as fuel. This really interesting process. It's another one of those things it's a stress response as well, cortisol is very good at driving your body to break down your muscle tissue and turn it into glucose, gluconeogenesis, just as this kind of stress response because if you're not eating enough, your body is like, "Listen, this person..."

We've got to make sure that we survive. We've got to... Muscle is expensive, it's very energy active, let's shed off some of this, store more fat so that we can keep this person alive because there must be a famine", because this person is not eating enough, that's how we're biologically wired. Today it's different, we got... We're surrounded by food 24/7, but this is a new... This is a brand-new phenomenon, and if you look at the result societally, and you look around and see what are we doing as a result of having this access, now far more people are dying from overconsumption, than not eating enough. And it's a strange thing that just happened in the last couple of decades. And so, but we don't have to be victims of this and wait around for the data to come out conclusively, even though it is pretty conclusive at this point, we can start to participate. So that's one thing, and also, I wanted to mention this too, because you talked about this as like, Oh, nature it's so real it's so real... Because it seems like there's very... Kind of a "hippy" thing, you go outside, get grounded, put your feet, and this is how we evolve, even this concept of indoors and outdoors, this is some new sh*t...

We were a part of nature, and even when we're making things that are "indoors", it still... We're making stuff from the environment, like humans are making stuff from nature, but we cognitively disconnect ourselves, and so what... All of these things that you hit on, sleep quality, nature and exposure to sunlight and fresh air, managing stress, being able to say no and manage our own psychology in our own time and eat enough, these are all things that our genes expect from us at the end of the day, these are things that genes expect from us, and this is another thing, is exercise, so you know we were going to talk about this because one of the great things about like I love how you put stuff and you actually dictate it, and actually put into words things that I might talk about or things that've been kicking around in my mind, I've been telling people this for so long, but you said it in such a succinct way, but let's talk about the benefits of exercise in the real world, we tend to think of exercise that's the way to get that six pack, but what are the real benefits and this is the crazy thing, again, that you said, why sometimes skipping a workout is actually the best choice to make.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, yeah, so controversial. The never miss a Monday. It's like, I'm going to miss a Monday if I need to, thanks though. Interestingly enough, I came across this data maybe like five or six years ago, and I found it to be pretty compelling, I didn't realize how compelling it actually was for people to hear this, and it was essentially a study was out of Cambridge that said the conclusive result was exercise improves your health, whether you lose weight or not, and people were like, What... Like this is amazing, and essentially what the study was showing is that if you have a BMI that's in the overweight category, and you start exercising, you start moving your body, you start strength training, whatever, and you don't lose weight, you still have significant and profound health improvements. And the study also talked about how people in the normal BMI category, many of them who are sedentary I think it was like 30% of people in the normal BMI category are actually unhealthy. How do they know that they looked

at their other biomarkers, not just their weight, so they looked at things like their inflammatory markers and their blood pressure cholesterol, insulin sensitivity, all of that stuff?

So, we know that if you just actually... You know, and I will say this, I don't want this to turn people away, but exercise is actually kind of a crappy way, if you're just going to lose weight, you're like, I'm going to start exercising, not the best idea. You really want to move that number on the scale, exercise actually improves your body composition, it improves your health, it gets you stronger, but for a lot of people, when you start growing muscle mass, that's not going to positively influence the number on the scale, but it does positively influence your health, your metabolic function, all of those things, and yes, it obviously can if you... If I think of weight more as a side effect, not necessarily the thing that is causing the problem, if that makes sense, so yeah, if your body is getting healthier and you're naturally kind of... Your body will naturally be where it needs to be weight-wise, and exercise can play a part in that, but overall, it's not the best weight loss strategy, just because you're building muscle, you're getting stronger, which is a good thing, so exercise... Where do we even start? Let's talk about death. So, exercise...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Transition alert.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, no, let's just talk about the number one thing that we're all thinking about, dying... Exercise improves your mortality, I think it reduced mortality by 27%, was like the latest research that I saw, and even when you do exercise in very low activity levels, it's been shown to improve your life expectancy, so... Do we need to say more than that? Yes, we do. But that's huge. Every time I look at the data on exercise, I'm always even more excited about it because it's just like you want... You want something that's going to positively improve everything in your life, it's exercise and strength training centrally, so let's talk about respiratory function, this has been pretty popular in the last... I don't know, two years.

When we're talking about anaerobic and aerobic function, essentially that is your lung capacity, your heart, the strength of that, your endurance and essentially your speed. So of course, exercise positively impacts all of those, and lung function and heart function separate from cardiovascular... Like fighting it. Absolutely. Exercise does, there's positive, there's a lot of data about how exercise positively impacts your heart and it reduces your risk of cardiovascular disease of stroke and all of those things, but I mean, you were the biggest proponent of this, a lot of literature came out pretty quickly after COVID was a thing, covid-19 was a thing found that I think the word they used was exercise substantially impacts your ability to...

It improves your rate of complications and it pretty much people who exercise, it greatly reduced their risk of hospitalization, so why is that? It's because you've got all of these things

that we're talking about, but improved lung function and improved her function, especially when we're talking about respiratory illness or even if you just google exercise and Covid-19, you'll see quite a few. There's a lot of literature, there's a lot of information, and it all shows that exercise keeps you out of the hospital, exercise gives you improved outcomes, exercise improves your risk of getting complications from Covid-19, so it's just like, it's just... We have so much data about that and that to me, should be super compelling, but I don't really hear much about it except from you, Shawn, anxiety, and depression. I think that this is another big one that a lot of people... Therapy is great, and everybody should be in therapy, but some of the best therapy that you can do is having a daily exercise routine, and I think that we need to see exercise as...

I think this is two-part, a lot of times exercises, our time, we're not... That's what it is for me. It's my time in the morning. It's my time, I think about a lot of stuff, and I process through a lot of stuff, and I'm thinking about how I want to set up my day, and I'm getting those endorphins. It's an incredible way, like exercise from a scientific perspective, greatly reduces depression and anxiety, that's awesome, but it sets your day up for success, think about what you could do if you weren't as anxious or weren't as worried throughout the day, and so that's like a real-life application, that's I think so many women in particular. We deal with, I think a lot of women deal with worrying, depression, and anxiety, and just by exercising, you're not only just kind of processing through the things, doing distress management things, taking a little bit of time for yourself, you're also impacting the rest of your day. Insulin sensitivity, I know a lot of... You probably talk about insulin and insulin sensitivity and cortisol and all of that stuff. One of the things that I find really interesting is exercise positively improves our ability to manage our blood sugar, so it makes us more insulin-sensitive, and there is some research that...

A lot of research shows that our insulin sensitivity or insulin sensitivity is improved up to 16 hours after we work out. So again, a lot of people think about exercise in terms of what is it doing for me right now, but a lot of times exercise... And this is why strength training is one of my favorite things, and why I always prioritize it, strength training has this profound impact where it really impacts you after the work up to like a day after the workout is complete, there's something called EPOC, which is excess post-exercise, oxygen consumption, it's essentially the rate at which your body is consuming oxygen after you work out, and because you have this elevated need for oxygen, your body, therefore has... Your metabolism is working faster and harder, your heart rates up a little bit, your body temperature is up a little bit. And so, your body is trying to bring you back down to homeostasis, and so your insulin, you're more insulin-sensitive, your metabolism is still go on, you're still burning energy and calories and all of that is while you're not working out as like the day after, which is amazing.

Perhaps my favorite thing, because I've been seeing this a lot more, and this is where I'll try to stop, so you can... So I'm not talking the whole time, but bone density, osteoporosis and

osteopenia is becoming much more of an issue for women, and it's something my grandma, she had weak bone she fell and broke her hip, and that's ultimately how she died, even though she was healthy and strong and lived on a farm and was in her community, all the things, and so it's actually a cause of death for a lot of people...

And we see a lot of women now, young women in their 30s dealing with osteopenia which is the progression right before you get to osteoporosis, bone density strength training does amazing things for bone density. You have... Essentially what you're doing and how you want to remineralized bone a lot of people think you just take calcium supplementation or you pop a calcium pill, that would be like saying, "I'm going to eat protein and my muscles are going to get bigger", because you actually have to provide some sort of load for your body to actually use the calcium and then deposit it into bone, so what you're doing with exercise and strength training is you're providing that load, just like you are with your muscles, you're providing that load to your bone, and then your body says, Okay, I'm going to start given the minerals are there, the nutrients are there, your body then starts to remineralized your bone, so there's a lot of research that shows exercise improves bone density.

It reduces the amount of bone loss, which I think is really significant, considering we put a lot... Yeah, a lot of people die from cardiovascular disease and a lot of people have chronic illnesses, but osteoporosis and osteopenia, I think is going to get progressively worse for our society, specifically for our generation, if we're not actually taking into account things like We need to be strength-training in order to maintain our bones and our bone density, when I work out, I'm not thinking, What am I doing for myself today, I'm working out for my aging body, what do I want to be when I'm 50 and 60 and 70, how do I want my body to function, that's what I'm thinking about when I'm exercising and moving today, because ultimately like I want to have longevity, that's the real world application for me is not just, how is it making my cellulitis look today or whatever, is my love handle still there, is my body going to be able to function and move and I'm going to be able to sit up, squat down and stand up when I'm 70, so...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah, there's this movement taking place right now to get joint conditions kind of re-classify like what happened with Alzheimer's being labeled as type 3 diabetes is kind of insulin resistance taking place in the brain, but there's insulin resistance in the joints, for example... And one of the big, key drivers... You just said it, exercise one of the primary tenants, this is far above changing your body composition, it improves assimilation dramatically, it increases cellular assimilation. Assimilation into your bones, for example, and this is one of the things that really helped me to change my health 20 years ago, was this study that was done on resources, which... This is like a billion-dollar industry. I'm watching Yellowstone right now. Have you seen Yellowstone by the way?

NOELLE TARR: Yes. I started watching it. Because everybody's talking about it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I was doubling in horses. I'm checking out all this stuff and I thought about this study again, because if a horse breaks a bone, that can be hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions of dollars of loss, and so they were trying to experiment and find ways to increase their bone density, and so they had a control group that they did nothing with the horses, and then they had the Study Group that they gave the horses supplements like some of these nutrients that are known to increase bone density, and it did help. Some to increase their bone density, but then they had another group of horses that they gave them this supplementation and walked the horses regularly, and they had an even higher increase in their bone density than the other groups...

So that's the key there is a simulation. So, you might be spending all this money on these fancy pants supplements, and eating this organic food, are you actually getting the nutrition from it if you're not exercising? And so, thank you so much for going through all these things. These are all these really remarkable benefits from exercise that if you're just looking at the scale as a result of your exercise, you could be like, Damn you scale, just be pissed off and miss the fact that you're radically improving your health in so many different ways, but also again, I love the fact that you said multiple times, it's not about the scale not being a metric that we can utilize, but it's in our culture, it's become something that's been obsessive in taking a priority in our perception of are we healthy or not...

Are we fit or not? And I thought about this while you were talking. Our weight might have a range, maybe a 20-pound range or 30-pound range where we are still remarkably healthy and functional, our libido, our heart health, our cognitive perform, all of those things are firing on all cylinders, and maybe if we are even dipping too low in that range, we're not as... Our memory isn't as good or are reaction time or whatever the case might be. But having that grace where we have the spectrum of health when it comes to the weight versus like, I need to have this number on the scale or I'm not worthy that's really the problem. And so, man, thank you so much for sharing this.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, and I'll just say all is one thing because I feel like this will be really powerful for women and a lot of... There's a lot of women are like, "Well, how do I stop? If I'm using the scale as a marker and I'm... So how do I become unobsessed? How do I let it go? If I'm obsessed with it, like I can't, I can't just let it go". And to summarize what you just said is, you can be healthy at a variety of weights, period, so what you have to do is basically, I always think of a DNA. You have to unravel some of those lies and myths about health and weight and all those things, you've got to unravel them first, which is with conversations like this, and then you actually have to take... You have to put on new truths, you have to put... And these are things that are proven in the literature, it's not just mumbo jumbo, it's, you can be healthy in a variety of weights, your health is not a weight, nor is your happiness, you don't all of a sudden become

healthy and happy at a specific size, I can tell you that because I spent my life trying to get to a certain size and when I got there, it wasn't good enough, so that's one of those really powerful things that you can just keep repeating to yourself until you believe it, 'cause you will eventually believe it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love it. Unravel, and then you sew up your own new thing. This is awesome. We've got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. If you want a sure-fire way to damage your microbiome, then look no further than that dirty s word, sugar. Data published in advances in nutrition uncovered that excess sugar creates a clear proinflammatory environment in our gut. There's even recent data published by scientists at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center showing that mice who were fed diets high in sugar developed worse colitis, this proinflammatory, very, very detrimental inflammatory bowel disease, and the researchers examined their large intestine they found that more of the bacteria that can damage the gut's protective mucus layer was driven by the increase in sugar consumption.

Another study cited in Science Translational Medicine describes how sugar is likely making negative alterations to our gut bacteria. Again, having healthy robust amounts of probiotic-friendly flora controlling our system, and keeping in check the opportunistic pathogenic bacteria is key for all manner of health and wellness from helping to reduce our risk of diabetes and obesity, to reducing our risk of autoimmune conditions. As it stands right now, the average American consumes about 100 pounds of sugar annually, mostly in the form of added sugars, but what can we do to pivot from this?

In fact, there is a sweetener that not only doesn't damage our gut health, it actually improves it. A recent study publishing food quality and safety found that in addition to having natural antibacterial effects against pathogenic bacteria, raw honey is able to improve overall gut microbial balance. How sweet it is when we're talking about the benefits of honey long renowned for its anti-microbial impact, we're talking about the external applications, but it has these internal applications as well, but the key here is making sure that your honey is not coming along with pesticides and heavy metals and all these other things that are common in bee products today, we want to make sure that we're dedicated to sustainable beekeeping as well, and this is why my honey that I utilize, it's in my cabinet right now is bee powered superfood honey from Beekeepers Naturals. Go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model, you get 25% off taken off automatically at checkout. That's B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-Snaturals.com/model for 25% off, they do third party testing for over 70 plus pesticide residues or heavy metals and negative bacteria like E-Coli and salmonella to make sure that you're not getting any nefarious things along with your healing delicious superfood honey. Again, go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model for 25% off. Now, back to the show.

I want to pivot to this controversial statement that sometimes the best form of health practice or self-care is skipping a workout. Why is that?

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, so I think in our culture, we have... Fitness is really interesting, they like to be super intense, and there was a Fitspo going around when Pinterest came online, and still to this day, you know it's the same thing, there's still Fitspo, there's still... We still have influencers, you still got all this garbage in your News Feed, which is essentially like, never miss a Monday. And if you have this plan, you need to do that plan, sometimes you may have a really crappy night of sleep, maybe you... Your kid is sick, maybe you just are really tired and your body is telling you, "Wow, I'm feeling extra fatigued today," or gosh, mentally and cognitively like, I'm not there, something's off, or maybe you just had a really sucky day at work, or you're struggling with something with your kids or life, life right, this is every day, the healthiest way that you can support your body is sometimes to take off skip that workout, that workout may not...

Exercise is stress. Okay, so we have to really, again, rethink about or reshape our thoughts around what is exercise? Exercise has these profound health benefits... Awesome, right? But you are exposing your body to stress, and if you are under chronic stress, it's only going to add fuel to the flames when... Having this intuition and having a healthy relationship with your body and with exercise is being able to say, "Okay, I'm off, I'm not sleeping, I'm not feeling good. I need to take that workout, out of the picture, I need to skip tomorrow," and doing whatever it is that you need to do to bring your body health, whether that's sleeping in, whether that's getting up and just going for a walk outside in nature and getting the sun, whether that's meditating, taking some extra time for prayer so that you can have balance with your body and not just be thinking, "Oh, but I got to do that workout, I got to expose my body to that..." What I'm thinking is, I've got expose my body to that stress, that's really what you're saying.

And so, you've got to be able to say, my body can't handle the stress today and take it off, and subsequently then you can come back the next day and be stronger. And a lot of times I get the question, "Well, how do I know what to prioritize?" Prioritize your strength training. Okay, that's all I'm going to say, if you have to skip a day and it's a strength day and your plan is to do his and I are the next day, do your strength training that day, the next day that you have the opportunity, if you got to take two days off, take two days off, make it so that when it's time to come, when you're ready to work out, you're able to apply yourself in that work out and feel really good and energized from it.

If you do a workout and you feel totally gassed and you're exhausted and you can't really get up from the floor, and then you got a twinge in your knee later that day, that's a good sign that you've pushed it too much, you don't need to force fitness adaptations, 'cause the truth is you can't really stop it, if you're doing slow progressions and you're slowly building, your body will

respond appropriately, but when you expose your body to too much, that's when we start to see this rocky relationship of I'm injured or my elbow's hurting or I'm not sleeping good, or my motivation is taking that, and that's what I want to prevent people from getting into, which was my life for so long is, don't let yourself get into that. You have this healthy relationship where you can explode your body the appropriate amount of stress so that you can actually see the health benefits from exercise.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, yes, if you're implementing the right stimulus, we're just talking about strength training here, and you're pushing the right buttons, the adaptation, the full adaptation can take several weeks, not just even days, so I'm not soar anymore. So, if you decide to take a day off for additional recovery and think that you're missing out because you got this moniker of no days off, your body is still adapting if you're again, leveraging those... Right, points. And that's part of the issue, because being able to pivot, so because I was one of those guys where, again, no days off, I got to travel, I'm speaking at this place... I'm a little embarrassed to say is, I was working out in the airport, I'd find a little corner somewhere, and I'm over there doing lunges and push-ups and handstand push-ups, all the things, and I'm like, I got to get this workout in, I got to get this work, rather than like, you know what, this is even a stressor for me going up in this damn plane and the radiation and all the things, and I'm walking, but now I'm like, I'm going to walk... I'm walking through the airport, doing this whole thing with his luggage, when I get to the location, I'll go for a walk, I'll get grounded, get some fresh air, get some sun light, if at all possible, make sure that I'm hydrated.

I started stacking conditions to do other things and just think that exercise is the end-all, be-all, and I don't want to miss a day of this stimulation, and so even coming back from that trip I mentioned earlier, in that day, the travel day, I'm not trying to find a place that I could fit in and work out, I'm just going to come in reset and make sure that I can get back... You know, I'm changing time zones, let me try to optimize my sleep here, and then I can go the next day and maybe I can do some strength training and push it a little bit, or I might just go for a long walk the next day or hike, now, I'm paying more attention to my body's feedback and understanding where should I position things instead of getting a sh*tty workout and then driving a deeper hole because that's kind of what happens is it's like stress is like you're digging a hole, but you also need to fill that hole back up. So that's really the balance. And over time, you start to really create a very powerful foundation or you're just going to keep continuing to dig a hole that you could just jump in and bury yourself.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, I've definitely been buried before, Shawn. Definitely been buried.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And speaking of this, because you mentioned this a little bit, I'll just throw this, we'll put this study up for people that are watching the video version, but we're pretty close to Kaiser Permanente Day here in LA, and there are so many studies on this. Now it's

absurd, it's like it's kind of disrespectful to me at this point, because I've been talking about it since the very beginning, but Kaiser Permanente, and they're using such huge data sets, tens of thousands of people, not like 60 people in a drug trial. So, this was almost 50,000 people, and they looked at their data of their exercise habits prior to contracting SARS COV-2, and they found that people who...

They looked at people who regularly exercise versus people who were sedentary, and the people who regularly exercise versus the people who were sedentary, the sedentary folks had a two and a half times higher risk of dying from this particular virus. Not just one time and a half, two and a half times. This is very significant, and since then, more data's come out looking at specific forms of exercise, what were people doing... Is it aerobic exercise is it strength training, and come to find out, it's both, both, doing both having both implements creates the best outcomes, dramatically reducing your risk of infection, reducing your risk of hospitalization and dramatically reducing your risk of death, when you have a protocol that includes both of those inputs that again, our genes expect us to do...

Our genes expect us to have load-bearing movement and our genes expect us to have cardiovascular movements, which is really just getting our blood pumping and getting our heart doing some work and just moving in the world. One of the best forms of cardio that's not talked about enough is simply just going for a walk and getting that biological feedback, so I just wanted to point that out, and also I want to ask you about this because you said this word, you said the c-word Noelle when you were talking, you said cellulite, there is a big stigma behind cellulite, we got to talk about this.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, yeah, it's really... It's one of those things that is so normal about the female body, and men get it too, it's so normal about our bodies, it's the way our skin looks, and women in particular are more prone to it for a variety of reasons, which I'll get into in a second, but really what's happened is the diet and the fitness industry has made it a marketing tactic. That's what it is. Everybody's got it. If they can make you feel shame or having it... You're going to want to do anything you can do to get rid of it. Buy a cream, do a 12-week cellulite reducing program, which by the way, you can't spot reduce cellulite that's not actually a thing. Whatever, there's lymphatic massage. All the lymphatic flow, improving lymphatic flow. Improving collagen in your skin. All of those things, those are good things if you want to do that, great, but your cellular is not a problem, it's not a problem you need to solve, it's not a problem that you need to feel shame about if you have it.

Women have it in particular because of how our connective tissue is formed, so if you were to look at our skin, our connective tissue is vertical, whereas with men, it's more of like an X, also women have actually thinner, more sensitive skin than men, men tend to have thicker skin and their skin is actually more oily, which is why men don't get wrinkles as much as women, fun

fact, but because men have thicker skin and women have thinner skin and because of estrogen and our hormones, we tend to hold weight more at our thighs and our hips, you're just going to see it more on the female body, that's not a bad thing, again, it's not a problem, you don't need to feel shame about it, you can of course, do things that you want to do, supplement with collagen or improve lymphatic flow.

There's a lot of recommendations, but what I have seen so much in the last, I would say, probably 5-10 years, I really do blame social media on a lot of things, but really in social media, it's become this thing... Everybody refers to it as unsightly cellulite, and so we've kind of created this stigma that if you have cellulite somehow you're doing something wrong, or you've got to be too much fat on your body, and it's just a load of bullsh*t to be quite honest, there is nothing wrong with it, it's not associated with any higher risks, it's not like you have a higher risk of any health condition, anything like that, it's just purely cosmetic, and if it's not a problem to you, then it's not a problem.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, wow. Thank you so much for talking about this because again, you just said that's throwing this marketing term on the front of it unsightly, and instead of it being natural, like this is not some kind of abnormality with the female body or with bodies in general. This is just one of those things. And also, you mentioned with women tend to carry significantly more subcutaneous fat, which is one of the reasons, ironically, the women tend to live longer than men is the subcutaneous fat versus visceral fat that men have more of a tendency towards it, so it's this protective mechanism and it's also a part of our nervous system, our skin is like that outside association with the world, and also it's sending data... There's so much data transport taking place and information transferring throughout the body, and as you mentioned also, women tend to be more sensitive to stress, we can go on and on, there are biological amazing reasons for this, but then we see the dimples and we're like...

You're broken. No, it's just not like that. And with this conversation, but also the same thing with stretch marks, like these natural things that we're talking about, the vast majority of people have these issues, even incredibly fit people, you might see a woman on social media who's got 18% body fat, incredibly low body fat for a woman, and she's got stretch marks and she's trying to hide it with the positioning, with the lighting, the whole thing, she's like, got the tiger stripes and she's just like, I don't want people to see this and think that I'm not fit, when in reality, you know, I think about the comedian Katt Williams was like, if you got stretch marks, all that means is you were big and got little, are you were little and got big, that's it.

It's just the body adapting and it's beautiful, it's wonderful, that's part of the problem is being led to believe that our bodies are supposed to be one way, there's this movement taking place, and so I want to ask you about this towards body acceptance. Which is wonderful, it has a wonderful foundational tenet to it and a wonderful premise, however, I think that what can

get lost is our bodies don't have to be some prototypical, superficial, cookie-cutter way, however, we do need to strive for help and to support health, because your acceptance of your body, and maybe you're in a state now where you're... If you're using a scale, your 100 pounds overweight and you're insulin resistant and you are expressing early symptoms of Alzheimer's and, and, and we have to have both. Is my belief, so I just want to hear your perspective.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, I think that's important. I'm at the position right now where whatever you want to do with your body is your business, so if you...

SHAWN STEVENSON: We got to pause. I got to clap. We got to pause. Alright, okay, continue.

NOELLE TARR: If you want to get healthier, awesome, you do that, if you don't, and you're okay with... And that's what you want to do with your life right now great, you do that too. I think body acceptance is a really important piece for women in particular, because we've been told for so long to hate our bodies and to make changes from a place of hate, from a place of shame, and so now we're able to kind of reverse that narrative and say, "Okay, I accept my body, I don't have to hate it, I don't have to think, I can see my body outside of a size or a shape or what it looks like, let's just change the conversation away from... Looks for a second," there are so many other things that you can use to evaluate yourself, even with my daughter, I'm really practicing with her... Oh, you're so cute. You've got a little... Unnamed people to come in and say, "Look at her little waist and oh, she's already got abs, and I'm like, "Cut it," because I don't want her to think that her body is just about what she looks like. I want her to think about it, and her as a whole being, how she moves and what she's able to do and what her body does, and that she's a kind of person, and she takes care of others and that she serves others.

I want her to see herself... That's not how I want her to define herself, and so I think that a lot of this body acceptance movement is, Let's stop focusing so much on the number on the scale and our pant size, embrace where we're at right now and start taking care of ourselves, if that's what you want to do, taking care of ourselves and our health from a place of, I really appreciate that my body is on my side and that it's fighting for me, because it is. Even if you don't feel like it is, it is. And so I'm going to work with myself, I'm going to stop beating myself up and hating my body just because it doesn't look like what society says it should look like, and start approaching health from that place, which is a much more mentally, emotionally, physically healthier place as opposed to, I can't accept myself, I hate myself, I need to make changes, I don't fit the mold. So yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you. I love that. Thank you, thank you, thank you. So, another thing that you mentioned, just throughout our conversation, but I want to circle back to it because it's so powerful, so important, you mentioned how during a certain phase of the cycle of a period, that the metabolism changes and the caloric expenditure even can change based on

what time of the month it is for women. So, let's talk about not just our... Possibly are some dietary changes that might take place, but what about exercise, could our exercise implemented certain times of the month be kind of supportive or even detracting depending on where people are in their cycle?

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, this is another really big piece, I think, when you're talking about taking care of yourself and your own body. For women, our cycle is a vital sign and what we're feeling and how we're responding and how our body is responding to our cycle, so, are you getting a ton of symptoms, do you have cramps or are you... Do you have low energy at certain points? We've got to take that into account. How long is your cycle? Is it arriving on time? Is it short? Is it irregular? All of those things we get to learn more about and pay more attention to when we're not just focused on the scale, because when we're focused on the scale, a lot of times that results in irregular periods, loss of period, more stress, all that stuff. So, really fascinating stuff, the women... Women, we all have something called an infradian rhythm. Men typically go by a circadian rhythm, a 24-hour clock. Women, we have... Let's just say a four... It varies, but it's about a four-week cycle, and our hormones are changing every month, and our physiology changes every single month. I became more aware of this about 10 years ago when I was training for a marathon, when I thought I had to run to be fit, now I don't.

But I was training for a marathon, and I was noticing that my tempo runs, when I... I had them scheduled at very specific point, and any time I would do that, harder tempo run that was longer... Sorry, it was a longer tempo run, is what it was. And I would get these horrible cramps during those runs, and I would sit and look at my calendar and I was like, oh, I keep scheduling these right before I'm about to start my period. So, it became aware to me, I kind of need to like... Maybe I need to plan my workouts around my cycle and see how that works out. And it turns out we don't have a ton, but we do have some literature that talks about how a woman's body changes and her physiology changes and how exercise relates to that. So, two main phases, follicular, you ovulate, then your luteal phase. In the big... First half of your cycle, and this is now what I do, your body... Is your estrogen is increasing, it peaks right when you ovulate, and ovulation, I think a lot of women will know, your libido increases, you tend to have more energy, you just have a little bit more zest for life.

And that's thanks to estrogen. Also, during that time, that is a prime time to do high intensity workouts and to do your hardest efforts. You want a PR, that's when you do it. Your core temperature is a little bit reduced, you're actually also more insulin-sensitive, so you're able to use glucose better. After you ovulate, something happens where your estrogen goes down, progesterone goes up. Interestingly enough, progesterone increases our core body temperature, so some research actually shows, again, very small amount of research, so it's not like anything super conclusive, but it's there, that women's time to fatigue is reduced during the second half of the cycle in exercise efforts, because of progesterone, because of

that raised core body temperature. And another thing that happens, the second thing which we mentioned before, is your metabolism actually increases because your core body temperature increases, so does your metabolism and the rate at which your brain calories, so you could burn anywhere from... I think it was like 300 to 400 calories, the average woman, based on the average woman's calorie intake, you can burn up to 400 calories more per day in those few days before your cycle begins when progesterone is at its highest. So, we've got to be... Understanding the science of this is saying, "Okay, if I feel a little hungrier, that's okay".

I can support my body. And if I'm feeling like I can't push it right now and I need to schedule a few days of extra rest, or even better, already have pre-planned a down week, three weeks of, you build, you peak, maybe you do some aerobic efforts, and then the fourth week, you're chilling, you're doing more rest, you're walking, you're doing whatever you want, pilates or bar, whatever it is, lower intensity stuff, you can do that in that fourth week as you... Right before you start your period, in maybe that first day or two, and go with your flow as opposed to constantly trying to fight it and fighting your physiology. So personally, I love it. I do keep it in mind. Is it something that you have to be super rigid about and stress about? No, that would defeat the purpose. But it's something to add to your toolbox. It's something to be a little bit more intuitive with and just say, I'm not feeling it today. There's a reason why, and that's okay. You don't have to fight it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is some of the best information right here, because it's getting us back to listening to our bodies, paying attention to the things that are real and really timeless about us, about humanity, versus these very strange kind of logical fallacies, that calorie intake should be a certain thing for example. This completely ignores the fact that your body adjusts to different times of even the... Different times of the month to its caloric expenditure. So, these are epicaloric controllers, so these are things that control what calories do in your body, versus calories controlling your life. Life is controlling calories and how your body associates with them, and one of those primary controllers is what's happening with your brain, because your brain is even helping to regulate those releases with the different hormones, and a lot of that is taking place in that master gland, the hypothalamus.

So, integration of your endocrine system and your nervous system together. And it's also like that internal thermostat, adjusting your core body temperature is happening there. You know, one of the biggest issues today that's just skyrocketing, an incidence that's not really being talked about, is hypothalamic inflammation. One of the biggest drivers of that is obesity, venturing into a place where you're carrying an excessive amount of body fat and it contributing to inflammation in our brain. Again, if we're looking at actually getting ourselves healthy, we need to talk about getting our brains healthy. What are some of the things that do that? Movement, not for the purpose of changing the scale, but just getting your brain

healthier, getting access to natural sunlight, natural light exposure, and fresh air, and also managing stress, oh my God.

The hypothalamus, that's another... That's the master gland that's associating with the stress in your life, that's where all your stress load is going, and so if we're not properly associating and honoring the stress in our lives, guess what's going to happen? It's going to throw off the whole system, and yet here we are trying to manage our calories like we're a damn robot, and we are not. We're anything but that. So, this is... Again, you're so amazing, this information is so empowering and just so logical, and I just think that now enough people have access to it, so thank you so much for taking the time to share your wisdom. And you have an amazing podcast, can you let everybody know about your podcast and also where they can follow you on Instagram, because you're one of the people that I follow.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah, I appreciate that. So, my podcast is called The Well Fed Women Podcast, and we've been doing it for maybe seven years. I have a co-host, but... She attends occasionally, and I do interviews. I've had Shawn. I've had you on twice and it was some of my best episodes. Not going to lie, I get the best feedback about my episodes when you're on. People are... "You and Shawn, man, you're just too... You guys are awesome." So, I always appreciate when I get to have you on mine too. And my Instagram is @coconutsandkettlebells, all spelled out. It's a lot of letters, so I'll let you go search it. And my website is coconutsandkettlebells.com.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Which is also parlaying into your amazing cookbook, by the way.

NOELLE TARR: Yes, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, so people can pick that up...

NOELLE TARR: I do love some recipes, so... Yeah, I love food.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, yes, and that's another thing too, with your IG, get to see all this delicious-ness. So, that's another place that we connect, because man, if... People that are out there telling you to eat to live, don't live to eat, I'm coming with a stiff arm, I'm...that sentiment, because that's just not for me. Like, food is something... Food tastes good, real food. It tastes good, because it's one of those biological associations that's driving us to eat those foods. And it's a part of life, it's a part of this enjoyment, it's a part of human connection, it's a part of our human experience to enjoy food. Now, what we are exposed to today is a lot of crazy stuff. 10,000 years ago, we couldn't have seen a ding-dong coming. We had no idea that that was coming down the pike, Pop-Tart was not something that even made sense at the time. But even today, it still doesn't really make sense, like where the hell does this Pop-Tart come from? There's no origin story from it, it's just like dropped here by some evil alien, into your toaster.

It's such a crazy experience. But anyway, so make sure to check out Well Fed Women and also follow you on Instagram. And again, I appreciate you so much for hanging out with me, and...

NOELLE TARR: Thank you, Shawn.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I can't wait to do this again.

NOELLE TARR: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Noelle Tarr, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today, I hope you got a lot of value out of this episode, please share this one out with your friends and family. You could take a screenshot and share this on social media and tag me, I'm @Shawnmodel, and tag Noelle @coconutsandkettlebells, alright, and let her know what you thought about this episode as well, show her some love. And of course, you could send this directly from the podcast app that you are listening on, whether it's Apple Podcast, Spotify, SoundCloud, you name it. We're here, we're out here in these podcast streets, and I appreciate you so much. We've got some epic shows coming your way very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, I'll talk with you soon.

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