

THE MODEL HEALTH **SHOW**

EPISODE 604

How Culture Controls What We Eat & Secrets To Smarter Grocery Shopping

With Guest Kevin Curry

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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 breaking down some of the systems around the food choices that we're making. We tend to think that our food choices are happening on our free will, but in reality, our environment is deeply determining the foods that we're eating. So, we're going to look at some of the social constructs, some of the cultural constructs that are driving our food choices. And we're also going to be talking about how to buy healthier food on a budget, how to reduce our food waste, which food waste in the United States is crazy. The amount of food that we're throwing out can feed another 5 to 10 moderate-sized countries. We're just throwing away so much food, and so you might be going through the grocery store and like, "I'll go ahead and pick up another box of spring mix that I'm going to end up throwing in the garbage," right? Because that's what tends to happen.

We have healthy ambitions about making certain things and then we end up wasting a lot of food. So, we're going to talk about how we can utilize more of the food that we're buying and preserve our foods and all kinds of good stuff like that. And we're talking with somebody that not only can my man cook and is he incredible with education and empowerment? But some of these things just align, the stars align. Because even and his name speaks food, his name is Kevin Curry. Come on. He's really... That's like my guy, Jim Kwik. He's an accelerating learning expert, K-W-I-K. Did the universe dub this to happen in the first place? You know it's so interesting, but man, such a great person and somebody who's really doing something about these social structures, providing education and empowerment and teaching people how to prepare delicious foods, to make food fun, and again, emphasis on delicious. And if you need a reminder on why this matters so much right now, a massive meta-analysis published in The Lancet in 2019, this is very recent, titled Health Effects of Dietary Risk in 195 Countries examined the links between poor diet and the skyrocketing rates of chronic diseases in our world today.

The scientists determined that poor diet kills 11 million human beings around the world every year. The researchers stated, quote, "Our findings show that suboptimal diet is responsible for more deaths than any other risk globally." We're at this very interesting place right now, as a civilization, we want to call it that to where more people are dying from the over-consumption of disease-affirming foods than from lack of food, more people are dying from over-consumption than from a lack of consumption. This is what we're seeing now, the pendulum has swung, and again, this is why we need to look at the social structures that enable something like that to even take place. Because now having this accessibility to food, what if the food is actually harming me? What if the food is causing deficiencies where I'm

experiencing a state of obesity while simultaneously, I am starving, right? So, I'm consuming all these calories yet starving at the same time, starving for nutrition and leading to all of these metabolic dysfunctions.

So really, really important for us to have that in our back pocket and understand why this conversation is important and can't wait to dive into this subject matter with our special guest. Now, our guest, being a renowned food expert and chef, knows a thing or 20 about food quality. And one of our missions or collective missions is to make healthy food more affordable. And so, if you care about things like regenerative agriculture, regenerative farming, then you need to know about wild pastures. If meat is on your family's menu, you can source it from ethically raised sustainable sources, USA-delivered. You're not getting this shipped in from overseas somewhere, delivered to your doorstep monthly for 25% to 40% less than what you would be getting at the highest end retailers. Plus, by going to wildpastures.com/model, you get 20% off of every one of their food boxes for life, alright? Plus, on top of that, you get an additional \$15 off that will be applied at checkout. Go to wildpastures.com/model.

That's W-I-L-D-P-A-S-T-U-R-E-S.com/model for 20% off every box for life, plus an additional \$15 off at check out. Take advantage of this. It's investing in regenerative agriculture; it's investing in making things cost-effective for families to eat the highest quality food possible. Go to wildpastures.com/model. And now, let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled 'New Listener and Already a Fan,' by Mrs. A7712. "Episode 445 was my first episode, and I am officially a fan. I loved the basic Biology lesson, and Dr. Lipton was great. Thank you for presenting the scientific facts and trying to inform people on how much power they have. Please keep spreading the good word."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing, thank you so much for leaving me that review over on Apple Podcasts, I appreciate it so very much. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is the best-selling author, fitness expert, and social media sensation with millions of followers of his incredible food tutorials and empowering education that he's putting forth via social media on food and on wellness. We're talking about the man behind Fit Men Cook. Alright, now this isn't just for the fellows, this is for everybody, for sure. So, let's dive into this incredible conversation with the amazing Kevin Curry. My Guy, Kevin Curry, welcome to The Model Health Show again, so good to see you, man.

KEVIN CURRY: What's going on man? I think the last time we saw each other in person was 2018. It had to be.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's long by. It's long by.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And we went out to eat afterwards. Do you remember that?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, you did... Yes, I remember that. It was a nice spot too, in STL.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Prasinós. Shout out to Pastino's.

KEVIN CURRY: Pastino's. I remember...

SHAWN STEVENSON: And also, you were the first person that I know that ordered chilaquiles. I didn't know what it was. I would look past it. It was just like, Chihuahua? I don't know, I kept it moving. But yeah, you put me on to it, man.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, it was pretty good, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It was pretty good.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, I know, I know. Good times, man. It's good to see how you're growing and expanding the brand out here in LA.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, man. It's been bananas, to say the least.

KEVIN CURRY: That's good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But man, it's so good to see you. And also, just pointing back to that moment, you have an eye for that, you have an eye for food. And you have an eye for style, also just taste and flavor. And we'll talk about all those things today, it's really special what you're doing, man. But I want to talk to you, first and foremost, about some of the bigger issues in our society, like food scarcity, for example, and this term food desert, so can you kind of articulate what that is in a situation that we're dealing with right now?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. And first off, just to go ahead and put this out there, I don't think... When people think about this problem, they always talk about having a food shortage. Right now, there is no food shortage in America. It's just that the delivery time to try to get to some of the grocery stores and whatnot is... That has been interrupted, but there's no food shortage, and that's separate from food scarcity. A lot of people think... And I'm like, "No, you're not in that... You aren't in that bucket. Okay, bro?" So, when you think about it, it's a complex issue. So, I want to just first off, go with some definitions maybe. So, people always talk about food hunger versus food insecurity, and then a food desert. So, they're actually pretty separate, but

there is a little bit of overlap. When you talk about the food hunger thing, food hunger is much more of like a physical, personal to the individual, like you're hungry, whereas food insecurity, that's something that actually is defined by the USDA. And there are a couple of words in there that are just... That are pretty important, I think, in their... In their definition. It's basically a person or an individual who doesn't have consistent access to foods that would allow them to carry on a healthy and active lifestyle. So, when you look at it in that perspective, it's completely different from food hunger.

And then you have the food deserts. Now, food insecurity can be caused by food deserts, and food deserts can be caused by food insecurity. And a food desert are these places around... These pockets around the US that don't readily have access to a grocery store, to a supermarket where there's not one around. They are traditionally, and mainly in lower-income areas. And when you get down to that granular level, there is not a huge separation between race and income there. So, you do see them in a lot more of the marginalized Black and Brown communities. And what you'll see, instead of grocery stores you'll see like corner market stores, convenience stores...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Liquor stores.

KEVIN CURRY: Liquor stores too. Yeah, liquor stores. And when you... And you're not really thinking about... Or I think most people kind of miss what that actually means, the implications of it, from a health perspective. Because in those places, if you can just think about the last time you went into a convenience store and maybe they had some bananas or some apples at the register and they were like \$2, Like, "Who is paying for this?" But when you think about, those are the only options available. So, the healthy food is really expensive. So, there is actually some validity to that, when people say it's too expensive to eat healthy, especially with the... When you're in a food desert.

But what is accessible and what are... Are these packaged products that are high in sugar, a lot of preservatives, a lot of things in... A lot of additives, things that aren't... That don't have a lot of nutritional value. So being in a food desert also has a direct correlation to the health and wellness of that surrounding community too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Man, you just said it. It's amazing that you are so on top of this. So, I knew we were going to talk about this today, so I went and looked up... This is from the CDC. They say that food deserts are, "Areas that lack access to affordable foods that make up the full range of a healthy diet."

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. So that's really what you already articulated. Because even this concept, when I think of a desert, I'm thinking of like sand, maybe like a Jodeci video, you know what I mean? Or seeing a mirage. But in reality, we're talking about a situation that's desolate. Right?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: A situation where, in this case, when we're saying food scarcity, we're saying there's a lack of health-affirming foods, but there is an absence... We're flooded with disease-causing foods. It's kind of like the sand, in that desert situation.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. One is those disease-causing foods are a lot more lucrative. Health and wellness has kind of been made into a business. And so, they're going to put those products and those offerings in places where the people can afford them. So that's why you see also... You don't see a lot of investment in those areas because they... It's justified. Maybe the dollars aren't there, but the convenience packages stuff, the people can go and buy, of course, they're going to be flooded in those areas. So yeah, it's an issue that I think is growing in terms of acknowledgement. I was reading... There was an article I was reading a couple of weeks ago, and they talked about food apartheid. And when you look at that word "Apartheid", it's a segregation, it's a systematic segregation. And when you think of food apartheid, it's that as well. And so, one thing that people are now beginning to look at are, why are there these shortages in marginalized Black and Brown communities, low-income communities where these non-Hispanic White communities don't have that?

So, when you look at food apartheid, then you can't just look at it singularly in terms of, "Alright, we've got to put a store over here." You also have to look at some of the systemic reasons behind that. And I think that is a much more fruitful conversation because I think that's where change begins to happen. When you look at the policies, you look at the housing, you look at affordability in these areas. And we don't link those together, but there's a strong correlation.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely. We get down to, for example, I was trying to figure out is there actually a connection between our... Essentially being... These communities being flooded with processed foods and this connection to poor outcomes with health. Right? But here's the thing, I was looking at, so why is this situation occurring? So, we've got economics involved, but also one of the big reasons is government subsidies, right?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, this was published in JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association. They were looking at who is consuming the most government-subsidized food and are they having higher rates of disease? Right?

KEVIN CURRY: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so, in this instance, if we're talking about government subsidies, this could be on the surface, something that seems altruistic. We're trying to feed Americans, so we're making cost-effective foods which are going to be these large kind of commodity cash crops, so lots of things with wheat and corn and sugarcane and soy and all this stuff. And you can make a lot of different foods with that stuff. Like you can make thousands of different foods. So, you go to a grocery store, it looks like there's all these options, but it's like the same five things packaged up differently.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so, what they found was that people who had the highest consumption of these government-subsidized foods, that largely end up in processed foods and coming through the drive through window, they had the highest rate of obesity. There's about a 40% increased risk of obesity and the greatest implications were happening to Black and Brown communities. Specifically, Black women were hardest hit by this scenario. And so having this, this is the one I want to ask you about is accessibility, because these foods... This is what I grew up in. I'm from Ferguson. When I got turned my health around, I lived in Ferguson, but also, from East Saint Louis, South Saint Louis. I grew up having a corner store, but I'm just... This is all that I knew. I had access to these foods. I didn't really know that other stuff existed.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. Yeah, and that's the part that I'm actually trying to work on that myself and in being like an advocate, 'cause I think that there are a couple of things. First off, we need just access to the foods, period. And then the second thing, variety also matters, the different types of products. It's not surprising that in those areas with the government-subsidized foods, that you're still going to see those high rates just because what people are doing with those subsidies is turning them into financial profit. And so, it's easier... Science, gets involved a lot more and it's cheaper to do that. There's less overhead in a sense, and they can churn that out. And then also just the marketing of health and wellness is different, too. So, you'll get things, "Oh, okay, well, this is sugar-free," but they got other hidden stuff in there. "Oh, this is fat-free." They got something else in there. They're just putting in science to kind of create something to taste like what it would naturally.

So that's the... That part is not surprising. This is... And it kind of reminds me too of tangentially of what happened a long time ago now, excuse the phrase, but there is this thing called, "The Fat Kid Lawsuit". You remember that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mmm.

KEVIN CURRY: They called it that because it was his class action lawsuit against McDonald's. And McDonald's was at... They had accused McDonald's of basically marketing to parents and kids heavily, and they would... A long time ago on the Internet, people would go on TV live, when I go on TV live, but they would watch TV live before TiVo and whatnot. And Saturday was like the biggest day. You had the cartoons, you had the cool shows, and McDonald's was just dominating those time periods because they knew that kids were watching.

And so, the kids are asking for more of this, yadda and yadda, and so the parents are like, "Alright, well, this is the healthy lifestyle." Plus, you're talking about people that maybe don't have a lot of money, and so they just began to buy their kids that because they can be satisfied, I've got to work two jobs, et cetera, et cetera and what happened in a couple of years, these kids were becoming larger like obese. And so, I think that is what... So, they got sued by that, and that's why you see a lot of the nutritional value of food in restaurants too, just beginning to become like disclosed, it changed things. I think that same concept applies here and that they can easily market these things, "Hey, this is a quick fix. This is really easy to do. Hey, you know what? It's nourishing."

It's really not nourishing, but nourishment can mean different things. It may not be nourishment from a health perspective, but it's nourishing in the fact that, "Hey, my family is fed." So, I've struggled with that, too. Like, how do you really define nourishment on one hand? Like, okay, great, I'm glad people aren't hungry. On the other hand, it's like, they're not getting the same access to be able to live a healthy and happy lifestyle just because of their choices and what they're putting into their body. So, before we even talk about government subsidies, they don't even have to go that far. They can just do small things like expand SNAP, food stamps. They can invest in that; the government can do that. They can think about...

The tax credits for lower income families. So, there are things that we can do besides just given the government subsidies, that would give people more access. The last thing I'll say here is that Amazon... And I was really happy to see this, Amazon started to open up access to SNAP. So now when you go on to the food section there, there is EBT eligible, and there's a smart... There's a slight discount there, but it'll tell you. So now people can use food stamps to shop on Amazon Fresh, in Whole Foods online, get that delivered so that way if you are in a food desert, and you don't even have to sign up for Amazon Prime, it's free delivery for you, if you're on like that. So that's a step in the right direction, I'd like to also see them subsidize the prices a little

bit more, if I'm being completely honest, if you on EBT, but the access is there, it's getting there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that, man. And also, we can create structures that incentivize healthy choices, we've seen... Just in the last couple of years, how quickly things can be galvanized towards a certain goal and accord under the guise of being for our health. And we can do that same thing because what's really killing us is right now, we're knocking on the door about 40-ish percent obesity rate here in the United States, it's unheard of. The obesity rates in children have tripled in the last 30 years, tripled, and you just mentioned something, it's a nostalgic vibe, man. We grew up to Saturday morning cartoons.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What's that one with Michael Jordan and Wayne Gretzky? Was that called All Stars?

KEVIN CURRY: Oh, my gosh, yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, All Stars...

KEVIN CURRY: People don't know about that one, and Bo Jackson was also in there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, Bo Jackson, Bo knows man. So that would come on, Ninja Turtles...

KEVIN CURRY: Saved by the Bell.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And we're just having a cereal, that morning cereal, man, and whether it was the expensive stuff, the Fruity Pebbles and the Trix, or the... I had the cheap stuff, a lot of time we have the Fruit Dots and...

KEVIN CURRY: Oh, and getting vitamins.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. He was supposed to be, I guess, sort of like Captain Crunch, but anyways. And even with this Captain Crunch, by the way, it's "Cap'n."

KEVIN CURRY: Oh, sure it is. It's "Cap'n."

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that, he didn't get no actually distinguish honorable discharge from the military, and nothing like that, like he's not a real captain. But anyways, man, but having that experience is creating this neuro association, that was our access, and you just say, "I don't

want to stay on this point because what can we do about this?" But I want to say one more point about the subsidies, just to clarify what that is, we're talking about in about a 20-year recent timespan, the US government gave almost \$200 billion in subsidies to farmers who are growing these commodity crops. And again, are largely coming through the process... I mean, processed foods in the drive-through window. So, it's just our government, when I say that, that's us, that's our tax dollars are paying to contribute to disease essentially. And that's the system that we're in, but once you become aware of this, you can politely say no, and step out of it, and you just mentioned, for example, expanding programs that help to provide income, provide resources. I could have definitely used that as a kid, because we were unaware and it's still common today, man, 'cause I got to talk to you about this, on SNAP type of thing, purchase of soda.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright. So...

KEVIN CURRY: Of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what we were buying, I didn't really know that it mattered, and that's the point. So, if we're wanting to get healthy, once we become aware that food can make a difference, what are some of the things that we can do if we're on a budget or we're living in one of these food deserts, to get access to better food? What are some of the things we can do?

KEVIN CURRY: Well, education definitely matters, here. So let me take a step back first and say, and addressing that, I just think that overall, we need to do a much better job of how we talk about the language of wellness and the language of health in America. It has become a business, period, so we have to sift through quite a bit in there, and if it doesn't align with the business part, sometimes we don't get the right messaging out there for people. But even with that, just think about doctors, they're that first line there, a lot of doctors don't even have the background in nutrition, we think that they should be a one-stop shop, we need to teach the medical professionals too, to even just to be aware of some of the symptoms of hunger and food scarcity. So that way we can maybe connect our medical professionals to the resources available in those different communities, so that way the people that they're treating can get the help that they need. There have been a couple of things that people are doing in some of these food deserts that I think are pretty great. A lot of people are starting up these community gardens, and it's not just to beautify the areas, but it's just to grow their own produce and to teach people about this. And one of them... And one is in Dallas, and it's called Bonton Farms, and its top notch.

Not only are they hiring people from the local community, but they're harvesting vegetables and they've created now a storefront where they are making salads and sandwiches and other products, they have got goats out there that they're raising, and you have it all run by the surrounding community, which I think is a great thing, and I went by there, and it's the first time I even seen a purple bell pepper. And I had a brother from the hood tell me, "Yeah, man, this is good," and I was like, "I ain't even have one yet, let me go ahead and tell you what that is." And so, I thought that was a really great thing, just because even still today, there's no grocery store around there, but there is this farm where people can go and get some produce and learn about this. So, I think that there are different things that we can do from an education standpoint and investing that way, that can mitigate that.

Structurally though, it's going to come with that. When you... The way that we look at investment in communities has been skewed and jaded for quite some time. It's been battered and deep-fried in racism and bigotry. And so, when you look at the different areas on the map where people look at investing. They're not investing in these, in impoverished areas, they're actually kind of running away from them, but they know that they can make a quick buck at these convenience stores, and so I think addressing that also is a thing. And because the consequence of that, Shawn, is I feel that there is this narrative out there. Because like what you said, somebody is going to take that quote about, "Oh, people are just buying sodas on SNAP." That speaks to this idea that, lower-income people don't care about their health and wellness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: That's not true. It's just fundamentally not true. Lower-income people may not have access to the education, to about what's good for them, but also, they are competing against a larger narrative that they're seeing in the news, like on TV, when they walk in the grocery stores. "Oh, you can get this." I was showing... I was doing a video one time just showing a budget recipe. And I said, "Alright, let me grab some spinach." Spinach was \$3 and it wasn't even organic. I was like, "Dang, let me go over here and try to see if I can get it cheaper in the frozen section."

I found it. Pop-Tarts, a box of sugary Pop-Tarts was \$2. And I was like, where are we now in a society where just spinach, not even a big bucket, I'm talking about just one bundle of spinach costs more than a box of Pop-Tarts. But what's marketed to people is like, we're marketing, stop your hunger. That's what's coming first. So, people are going to gravitate toward that, let me just go ahead and do this, let me just go and nourish my family that way. Whereas the conversation should be, how do we make you healthier and happier? How do we practice healthful habits? And so, I don't blame people for getting that because they don't really know. I deal with that now in my new neighborhood, I live down the street in... It's an older

neighborhood and largely Hispanic, Spanish speaking, and so we have a grocery store there and I go in there at times, and I'm just thinking like, "Man, they don't have... I have to go across town to another grocery store to get some of the options that I would normally buy." And it's just the education thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I could reiterate this point. Working, doing clinical work, I've never met one person who didn't want to be healthy.

KEVIN CURRY: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Not a single person. Again, we might have cognitive biases and barriers and reasons why we believe it's not possible for us, so we don't have access, so we don't understand it, it's too hard. All these things. Well, like you said, it really boils down to education. Even that is an issue with accessibility. Because being in Ferguson, I didn't know, there was... I didn't know what yoga was. I didn't... There's no Yoga Studio. There's no Whole Foods. I didn't know what those things were. It didn't exist to me. I knew... There were two McDonald's within literally within three-fourth of a mile. McDonald's, Papa John's, Domino's, Taco Bell, Dairy Queen, if you want to get that premium cheap ice-cream. Multiple... The Chinese restaurants, but you can't call it that. That's not what we called it. But this is also the fried rice, super cheap. I can get a whole order of per fried rice for like \$2 and something. What do you think I'm going to do if I've only got \$10 in my account? It's cheap, it's accessible, and I'm just talking about literally just is when I walk out my door, just within a block of me those ones that I just listed. So, I'm inundated with this, I don't know any different, but I want to feel good. I don't want to be unhealthy; I just don't know that food matters.

KEVIN CURRY: No, you don't until it's too late. Until later on in life when you're sitting in front of your doctor. And it makes perfect sense if health is a business. We know that people are going to pay a premium for that. So why am I going to build a market in a place where people aren't going to spend five bucks for some spinach? Why build it over there? I know that they will, and I can make a quinoa salad and charge them \$11 for it. For basic stuff, just basic things. So, they're going to put that where the money is flowing, but over here, oh yeah, there's incredible spending power for \$5 for a meal, \$2 for a meal, X, Y, Z.

SHAWN STEVENSON: How the hell you're going to get a Happy Meal for like \$3.

KEVIN CURRY: Full meal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: A full meal, burger fries, soda, and a toy.

KEVIN CURRY: I know. Can I tell you something. So, I try to keep gift cards in my console when I'm driving, when people would ask for help. So, I'll do those, I'll have McDonald's and 7-Eleven, they're always \$5. And I tell them, "Hey, you can go in there and you can actually eat for the entire day. I've done the math." And they're like, "Oh yeah, thanks." And I always feel kind of complicated conflicted.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, yeah, yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: But I'm like, but if you're hungry, go in there... This is the dilemma, but it's also the opportunity. Hey, five bucks, this person ate for the entire day, and they're not hungry.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You can keep somebody alive, but just kill them a little slower. You know what I'm saying?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You kill them a little slower. But also, we're not necessarily thriving. That's really what we're trying to move towards. You know what I mean? But I love that actually, because it's finding a way to make it cost-effective in that moment and... But again, it just boils down to how in the world is just this so inexpensive. That's the question, because again, like you mentioned, spinach... You know what, the other day, I was walking with my family, and this is something, again, I never walked with my family, that wasn't a thing, my mom was not about to walk with me. We go outside and play, but me and my brother... Mainly me and my brother. But yeah, man, we were walking, and I saw this yard, and it was perfectly manicured, every blade of grass was like the same, the color was on point. And compared to the neighbor's yard, it just looked like... I don't know, it looked like the neighbor's yard... I don't... Somebody set fire to it, or something compared to this yard.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, they have a family.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But now I'm seeing this and what's going in to making this yard so perfectly manicured with grass, and it just hit me like, "What if this was all food? There's so much space here to grow food." You have this cute grass set up, for nothing. For what? For what? It has no value except I guess comparing yourself to the neighbor's yard, "My stuff looks cleaner." Whatever the case might be. But we have space, we have opportunity. We just don't have the wherewithal to know that we can even do stuff like that.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. It's also culturally too. Our culture is all about this, we want everything in an instant, we want our health in an instant, we want our food in an instant, we want the internet in an instant, we want results in an instant. So, I can understand, imagine you are a

lower income family and you're working 12 hours a day, the last thing that you want to do is come home, "Alright, let me see how I can deconstruct this spinach and X, Y, Z meal. But hey, I spent five bucks, the entire family's fed, I can rest for a minute, so I can go out another day." So, it's complex, it's much more of a complex issue, we've got to show people how to cut those corners, but also in a way, providing that same style of fast food, but that's actually nourishing for people, and I think there's an opportunity for that. I've seen a couple of pop-ups, but I think this... We've got to have a cultural change first, that like, "Hey, it takes time, you have to invest in this." And giving people opportunities to invest in it, so we can't do that with a single mother who's working 12 hours a day. Give her more access, give her more income, give her tax credits, expand her food stamps so that way she can make some other options outside of what she sees on the corner.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And again, incentivize healthier choices, which we could do in a myriad of ways, but it would actually... This is the issue man; I'm just going to say it. These industries, these processed food companies, these fast-food industries that are making tens of billions of dollars a year just on automatic, they're not going to go quietly into the night, they're not just going to be like, "You're not... You're just going to cut into my profits by incentivizing healthier choices." So that's legislation, so that's lobbyists, so that's making sure that they are able to stay on that particular corner and to provide things at this inexpensive price, and to get the government to help them pay for it. Because if people are wondering, why is an avocado \$3 and a Happy Meal, which is not... Happy, they even put happy in the name, I want to be happy.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's not called happy avocado, maybe if... Anyways. So, if that can be \$3 and this entire meal that's very cost-intensive to make all of those different pieces, and the avocado comes in its own shell or skin, and this thing, all the marketing materials and the packaging, all this stuff, how's that \$3? It's because of government subsidies and the investment in this system. So, yeah. But again, it would have to... This is a big kind of meta question here.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, it's complex.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: It's complex because then one could also point out the fact that, yeah, that's happening, but also McDonald's is creating jobs, it's getting the economy going. These companies are going to argue that too, that they're contributing that way. But it's just not

profitable right now for them to collectively invest in everyone's wellness. It's not a part of the business model, which is the sad thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I am going to ask you about some happy things.

KEVIN CURRY: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: 'Cause our... We got to get a happy meal or something because this is big stuff, man. And this really shifts us to, again, you gave one solution, which is community gardens, for example, which they're popping up all over the place because more are getting access. Thank you so much for the work that you're doing, you make food fun, make it sexy, make it interactive, achievable, all the things, and you are the man that you are, as well, so you see that representation. And so, we're shifting culture in these really interesting ways, and so this is happening at the same time as the other stuff, so the community gardens. If we are on a restricted income, and we're just trying to get by, but we are wanting to be healthier, what are some of the other things that we can do as far as finding food at affordable prices or maybe... What are some different things we could do with our grocery shopping?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, a lot of people stay away from... People always go to the fresh ingredients, which I think is a great thing. But a lot of people stay away from the canned goods thinking that canned goods and frozen foods are loaded with a whole bunch of preservatives. Now, historically, yes, in some cases, there are some, but there are some canned goods that are just the actual ingredients. And those things are... You don't have to get them with the... With salt added, and that keeps your grocery store bill lower. Also, with getting the frozen foods, you don't... We don't have as much food waste, so it's a really good way to keep your grocery bill, but also to always have something on reserve that you can just go in there and whip up something pretty easily. One thing I've also found is, I used to do this quite often, is, I would wait for my local grocery store, I think it was Walmart market, maybe on like a Thursday or Friday is when they started to put out all the manager specials.

And the manager's special was that orange sticker, is basically the stuff is marked down about 30%, 40%, especially protein. I used to buy in bulk then, I'd go and buy some fish. I started eating tuna because of those, I was like, "Oh, I can get a tuna steak?" And had no idea what that was. But doing that, it helped me to keep my grocery store bill low, and I would just freeze that stuff right away. And the cool thing too about buying it fresh at that moment is that usually there's not a whole... Not a lot of water and stuff added to it. So, when you de-frost, it doesn't turn to mush. Well, some of that stuff does. But that's been a proven way that I've helped to keep the grocery store bill lower.

And I've seen this happen with some groups, but I've always wanted to explore this idea of a co-op for meal prep. And what that looks like, let's say that you've got some neighbors on the street, right? Roughly the same income. Instead of you trying to prep everything yourself, what if we assign different foods to the different neighbors, and then we get together one day of the week and we're swapping the foods and we're putting it into milk containers, and so we're feeding each other? But the only thing that you have to be responsible for is, maybe you're on grains this week, grains like legumes and something else, I don't know, somebody else is on protein. Well, we do this, collectively cook, and then we can come together, and we can divvy up the food that way. It keeps the grocery store a bill lower, it keeps your overall time in the kitchen lower too, because you're just focused on that one thing, so you're not having to do too much. And it's also a good way to share socially. And it's the sharing, socially, in this process of cooking, that you actually get to elevate other problems. You get to see, "Hey, this person is needing a little bit more help over here. Let's go ahead and let's show them some more love." And so, I've always been curious to see if that could work on a larger scale. I've seen it work in really small pockets, but I just wonder if we could roll out this idea of community co-op meal prep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's it. I love that, man. I love that, 'cause that's really how we evolved, this tribal construct. There are people who grew and did certain things, and it's their job. And everybody's kind of coming together for that tribal feast. That's really remarkable, man. It is like...

KEVIN CURRY: No, I like the idea. That'd be one...

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I want to ask you about this. This is a perfect segue too. By the way, if somebody's like, "Well, canned good isn't the best idea," we're missing the point here.

KEVIN CURRY: Correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We're talking about in a low-income context, we get some canned sardines packed in water or packed in olive oil, versus the Pop-Tarts, right? You know what I mean?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So just choosing the thing that has more nutrition, that's closer to its natural state versus this artificial thing that just has no resonance whatsoever with anything healthy.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, I love that, man. We got to be able to keep things in context and not dogmatic. I want to ask you about this, because something you said earlier alluded to this, which is, when we're doing the shopping, we want to actually take advantage of the food that we're buying. Food waste is a huge issue in our society at large, and there are certain things that we can do. For example, if we... One of the things that I would do when I was living in Ferguson and shopping at Whole Foods and I'd literally be at the register sometimes, like, "I don't know if it's going to go through, I don't know if this card is going to go through," but I was investing in my mind because I became aware of how important this was, I was investing in myself. I was investing in my health, so that I can be healthier, so that I can make more income and all the things. I could be a better father, all the things. And it worked out for me. But at the end of the day, if I'm going to Whole Foods and I'm buying said avocados we talked about earlier, and you know how avocados have... They're sometime-y. They can be like, not ripe, not ripe, not ripe, disgusting.

KEVIN CURRY: And then all of a sudden, too ripe.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what I'm saying. And so, what are some of the things that we can do to actually keep our produce fresher longer?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. Storage is actually a really important thing. And so, I encourage people to kind of just to read up on the stuff that you're buying and how to preserve it better, because I didn't get that. But being in food now, and I have to always cook, I was like, "Man, this stuff is wilting so fast." So, couple things that I do. When I buy the fresh herbs, I put them in water. I started to clip off the ends of it and put it into a jar, put it in some water inside the fridge, and... I don't know why I haven't been doing that. These herbs, they'll last like weeks at a time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, basically like flowers? Freeze them like flowers?

KEVIN CURRY: Oh yeah, I guess so. I didn't even think about it like that. But yeah, some flowers, basically, inside your fridge, but it's like rosemary and thyme and other stuff. And that goes a really long way. Another thing that... It's going to blow your mind, y'all. But we don't realize too that when you buy some greens and you'll put them in the fridge, and then maybe two days later, they're just... Actually, the next day, they're really, really wilted. I don't want to say that vegetables sweat, but they do release water too. And so, one thing that you can do is you want to always wrap up your greens in a paper towel. There are things that you can buy called a veggie bag, and you put all your vegetables in there, like your leafy greens, your green onions, I wouldn't put cabbage and stuff. But anything leafy that has a tendency to wilt. I kid you not, that stuff is a... That's a game changer. So, you could do it yourself by wrapping them up inside

of paper towels, putting them inside a veggie bag. I've had lettuce for three weeks, and it's still crispy.

Whenever you're putting your berries and your fruits inside of a little bin, always line that with some paper towels. There's also this stuff that I buy, it's off of Amazon, it's a produce shelf saver. And it's these large green sheets that almost look like turf, but they're see-through, and you can cut them up so that you can line your drawers with them. And so, it does the same thing as a paper towel, but it's re-usable, and you can wash them out and put them back in there. And then I've wrapped a couple things too in some foil, foil inside the fridge, inside of some of the items, like an onion and whatnot, it helps to preserve it. Lastly, one thing that shocked me was I used to store all of the produce in one drawer and even...

Including the fruits. And for some reason, I'm just like, "Man, it just keeps going really bad." Storing fruits and vegetables separately will actually help to preserve their life. And I think maybe it's because... And someone who's watching this can probably break it down much better. Maybe it's because fruits are... I don't know, maybe they release a little bit more water or whatnot, or moisture, and it causes the wilting to take place. But separating those will actually preserve your veggies much longer.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, that's interesting.

KEVIN CURRY: So, I'll have a separate bin for those. I'll buy the little... I'll buy the Rubbermaid, their... It's the Triton, Triton plastic ones that look like glass and put all my fruits in there, line it with a paper towel, and you're good to go.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's amazing. These are some great tips, man. 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 pro-inflammatory 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 pro-inflammatory, very, very detrimental inflammatory bowel disease. And the researchers examined their large intestine and 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 a hundred pounds of sugar annually. Mostly in the form of added sugars, but what can we do to pivot from this. In fact, there's a sweetener that not only doesn't damage our gut health, it actually improves it. A recent study published in 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 antimicrobial impact, when we're talking about the external applications, but it has this 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 Beekeepersnaturals. 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 for 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 love that you started with the putting the herbs in water, clip the ends. Put them in a little water, just like flowers, basically. We get flowers, clip them, put them in water. And so that can keep them fresher longer. He was like, "I don't want to say the veggies sweat, but they do". This is the thing too, we tend to not look at food as life forms in a sense, you know what I mean?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: They're releasing their own gases, that could be another reason why.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Gases, their own microbiome. And when we eat a food, we're eating that food's microbiome. There's the microbial activity, there's so many reasons that these foods can be like, "Yeah, I'm not messing with your environment," like, "This isn't for me, I'm about to go bad." And one other thing, that... The tip with the berries... Man, we buy a lot of berries: Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries. Man, they go bad so fast, the next thing, I'm playing blueberry roulette.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, and you try to do that... Rinse them... I'm guessing you're buying them in a little plastic bin.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: The plastic... Something like that. I usually take mine out. First off, you can actually rinse them inside of it, that's why there are holes in there, people don't know that, but just run that up...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Smart.

KEVIN CURRY: Under cold water and do that, you don't have to have something else. But I've taken my berries out now and put them inside of another container with some paper towels on the very bottom of them, with a lid. And I'm telling you, my berries last for over a week. Like I have some blackberries still in my fridge today that I bought... Gosh, I want to say, the week before last, and they're still good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That sounds like... That sounds unreal to me right now.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, I know. But the... It's stuff that actually works. I don't think that people... We don't think about these types of things, right? We just, "Hey, it's food. It should be... It should do what it's supposed to do. Hey, get fresh again" You actually have to do some stuff to it to make it do that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: By the way, with the avocados, what tends to happen is... Again, they'll... You'll be waiting for them to be ripe, and then they'll go bad really quickly. Right before they're... You know like tomorrow that's going to be perfect, put it in the fridge.

KEVIN CURRY: Oh yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Put it in the fridge.

KEVIN CURRY: I store all my stuff in the fridge. I store a lot of stuff. I store my bread in the fridge too, just because... I mean, plus it's Texas, so it gets hot, and that stuff will ferment, and you got mold in two days. But doing that, it really does preserve the life of it. When I buy the hard avocados that are like a rock, I put them in a paper bag and put them on top of the fridge for about two days. And I'm telling you, right after that, just... It's good to go. So, they either go in the fridge, or they go in my mouth.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, man. So good. And by the way, another thing I just found out about is freezing avocados. So, once they're ripe, scooping out the meat, like if you want to use them for smoothies. Right?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, of course. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Put them in a freezer bag and then store it that way.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. Before people start going and throwing out all their veggies, because sometimes we'll... We can do the aspirational buys in the grocery store, we're like, "Oh, I'm going to eat all this, can't wait." It's like a science project by Friday, 'cause you're not really eating it. There are ways that you can preserve that stuff too so you can use it. So, make a frittata, make a casserole. But also blending those things together. If you've got some berries that you think are kind of, "Eh!" or whatnot, and some other fruit, blend that stuff together and make ice cubes out of that and then add those to your smoothies. Small things like that, it goes a really long way. You could even... In fact, I love this one, take those berries, roast them so they'll become almost like a little cobbler, a little bit of sugar in there, roast them. Put those into an ice cube mold, when you add those to your smoothies... Oh my God, roasted berries have so much more body to them. So, it's just things like that, you don't always have to throw out everything. Ugly fruit, ugly food is okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ugly food is okay, that's one of the big... Put that on a t-shirt, "Ugly food..."

KEVIN CURRY: No, if it's meat, you throw it away. You're on your own.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That brings me to asking you about some weird meat that you ate out there. Your eyes are like, "What is this dude talking about?"

KEVIN CURRY: Which one?

SHAWN STEVENSON: When you were in Iceland.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? So, a big part of the reason that we eat the foods that we eat is culture. Whether we realize it or not, we are existing where our thoughts, our beliefs, our actions are a result of our culture. Our culture is kind of like a container that we're operating within. It's like a shoe box and we're kind of existing within this box, and it's going to determine, like I said, all the things that we do in the world. So culturally, there're certain foods that you just eat, there're certain things that you don't eat, there're certain things you have no idea exist. So, I want to talk about... Let's talk about, first of all, that food experience, because you've done something really remarkable, which is, you grew up in a certain culture and you found this amazing impact that food can have, and then you had the audacity to say, "Let me go to these different cultures around the world and see what is going on with food in these different

places." So, talk about that, talk about the most recent experience and why you're doing that anyways.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, this is my language too. I mean, like this is... I can talk at length on this one, but the one you're talking about was in Iceland. There is this typical food called Hakarl, I believe I'm saying it right, but it's rotten shark. And it smelled so bad that the bar owner made us eat it outside because it was just so fragrant, I say fragrant 'cause I don't want to say it was funky, it was terrible. And it was like little cubes, and I tasted it and it was just, immediately repulsive, it was bad. And then understanding why people are eating that is like, it's dated back. If you've ever been to Iceland, it's very, very, very cold up there, mostly cold than warm and so preservation of food was a big thing. And so, they would take the shark and so they had to preserve it over months because you can't go out and do anything else, it's frozen over. And so that's how they do that. I'm not sure why they're still doing that today.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Culture.

KEVIN CURRY: It's culture, it's culture. And a lot of people don't do that, but it's cool. I also had this thing called Svid up there. It's a sheep's head. And when I tell you they chop off the head, chop it in half, and they sear it, like just sear the head. And so, it comes to your plate literally, I'm not exaggerating, like that, the tongue hanging out the teeth.

SHAWN STEVENSON: People who listen to the audio, my mouth is hanging open too. This is crazy.

KEVIN CURRY: And the cheek and the tongue were actually pretty tasty. I'm not going to lie. But it was...

SHAWN STEVENSON: That dead tongue hanging out was like...

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, just like, arrgh. It was seared. And I was going to post it, but I'm like, "Yeah, I don't want to post that." 'cause I got people who are... I get it. I don't want to trigger anybody.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh man, they might have censored that.

KEVIN CURRY: Oh yeah, they definitely would have censored it, because it was pretty crazy. The worst part was biting into it and getting a little bit of a chip of the tooth, I was like, "Oh God..."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my God.

KEVIN CURRY: Oh my God, oh my God." Tasting something tasted me. But I think what's important about these experiences and going to travel, what I tell people is like, travel isn't just for that moment, travel is to soak up the culture, soak up the foods, soak up the experiences, and then find out, "You know what? This is pretty cool. How can this influence my own life? How can I bring this back?" So, for me, in terms of food, I'm tasting all these things, 'cause I'm like, "Wow, this is really good, I wouldn't have thought to put something together like this." How can I take these recipes, these flavor combos to influence my own diet? And that's what I want to show people to do, like taking things that you may not think about and finding out how you can deconstruct it, so that way it's much more helpful for you. I even tell people, especially the ones who struggle with orthorexia and just don't want to eat out, they can't do it. You should eat out, eating out too gives you perspective, it gives you ideas, and you can chase something. Now, when you try to recreate it, it's not going to taste the same, and it shouldn't taste the same, especially if you're trying to do this in a much more healthful way, but it should remind you of the essence.

And this is a topic that is really dear to me, just because growing up in the South with parents who were from Louisiana and South Carolina, soul food and whatnot, I'm always trying to... And heavy soul food, heavy Southern food, I'm always trying to get my family to re-imagine their diets, but also other people, especially the Black community. And so, I get this sometimes online, like, "Kev, I'm not sure about that." Like, hey, life is so much larger than what we have known. And it's not just the Black community, this is almost in every single ethnic community, like branching out and trying new things, it's important. People always say that life is short, and I've come to realize that life is actually not so short. Actually, life is pretty long. Now, dying is in an instant, but life is long, so we don't always have... So, get out there, experience life, experience new flavors, because you're going to be here for a while, and so it's to your benefit to find out other things that could contribute to your life. That's how I got into yoga. Well, when I say get into yoga, I mean, I actually tried some of the classes, but... 'cause growing up in church, you're like, "Oh, it's of the devil." It's not of the devil, it's a great practice, but being open enough to try something, and that helped to enrich my life.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it's that... When you hit that warrior...

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, oh yeah, "Oh, you can't tell me nothing."

SHAWN STEVENSON: The warrior pose, yeah, man, it's a vibe.

KEVIN CURRY: That and Savasana are my best.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, is that the one where you just lay there?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, you can tell man, I'm great at that one.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Yeah, I love that, and I love that conclusion as well. I think it was Seneca who said that "Life isn't short, it's that we waste a lot of it." And it's not that we don't have time, it's that we waste a lot of it. Because that's another thing today, it's just like, "I'm so busy, I'm so busy, I don't have time."

SHAWN STEVENSON: But you probably do.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Especially today, there's so much distraction, there's so many things that we can literally just outsource our thinking to, and just... Do you remember being a kid and just being bored?

KEVIN CURRY: Oh yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what I'm saying. Being bored is a rarity today. We got a whole casino in your pocket at all times. A casino plus a movie theater, plus a dating device, plus a food ordering mechanism, the list goes on and on, everything is there. So rarely do people actually have time to just be.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this is something I've talked about before, but just having time to think. Just to think about your thinking, think about your perceptions, think about maybe where... Question yourself, question your biases, question your beliefs. Our ancestors had a lot of time and contemplation. Today, it's just like a regurgitation of the same sh*t. It's just a recycling of the same ideas and somebody might... Original thought. Basically, for me, original thought is very rare because we don't have time to just be.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We're incredibly intelligent and limitless, but we're not going to access that if we keep on distracting our self.

KEVIN CURRY: Well, it's funny that technology was kind of invented, so that way, it would make things a lot more efficient, that way it could free up time to do certain tasks. And so, we actually had the capacity to go ahead and do that to create more time for ourselves, but the catch is,

whenever we create that more time, we're like, "Okay, great, now I got an extra hour. What can I do to fill this hour."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

KEVIN CURRY: So, it's just something else. And so, we actually can do that, but whenever we get that free time, we treat it as an opportunity to fill it with something else. But that's just... It's a cultural thing. It is culturally. That's what we want it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, going back to culture man.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, I want to ask you about... So, you mentioned your experience in Iceland and of course, there's so much more and it's expansive, and just to set your feet on that soil, but what were some of the other memorable places that you visited? Some place... Weren't you like harvesting rice somewhere?

KEVIN CURRY: Oh yeah, in Thailand. In Thailand. And that was a really good one. Thailand, and then in Madagascar, and I call those out just because I've got such an appreciation now for rice and grains in general, just because I'm like, "Wow, this is the world's food." I was in some of the poorest areas in both those places in it, but you would... In between some of the villages, you would see these rice patches, and I just had respect for something, it's like, "Okay, even here, that's all they may have is some rice?" No. Maybe eat it with tomatoes and whatnot, but when you look at how the world is nourishing itself, it changes your perspective about what's actually needed in order to live a happy life, to live a healthful life. So, it's helped me not to become such an absolutist when it comes to food to be completely honest with you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: I remember we were on the beach in Madagascar, and we were trying to fish, we didn't do a really a good job. The women caught a whole bunch of fish, so we were able to use theirs. And we're walking back to the village, and there was a lady there on the beach, their house is there on actually the beach, like a hut in a sense, and she was cooking. So, I stopped by, and I said, "Okay. What are you cooking out here?" And she just had... It was like some chickpeas, garbanzo beans that she had been stewing in this pot, and then rice and tomatoes, and there was just so much pride that went into that. And she wanted me to stay for dinner, we couldn't stay, we did come back though. And just how people just kind of open up their homes, the whole idea of nourishment changed for me. How do I define nourishment? How do I define what is healthy and well? That started creating things in my mind like, "Alright, Kev.

This meal may not be something like a nutritionist." Back in the states we'd say, "Oh, this is a healthy meal." But how do you define health and wellness when this is feeding our family for days? How do you define that they're well? First off, I didn't see a whole lot of obese people over there. I'll just say that. So, there's that thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: There's that.

KEVIN CURRY: But I just think that the concept of wellness changes whenever you look how other people are defining it around the world.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's powerful. That's one of those things where, again, you had to have that accessibility, like you got there, you saw it, you experienced it, because it isn't just food that nourishes us, and if people... Rice is one of those things that could set off a red flag alert and it's like, "This plant defense chemicals is going to kill you." People in Okinawa, centenarians who were... They're dancing, they're 100 years old.

KEVIN CURRY: There we go.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Doing their... They eat.

KEVIN CURRY: Talk about their rice.

SHAWN STEVENSON: My wife is from Kenya, and they eat rice, much longer lifespan with health span, let me be specific. Health span.

KEVIN CURRY: Correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, it's like, again, having some context for all these things and understanding. Somebody just asked me the other day... The guy who got, you're here today, shoutout to David from Black Love, and he asked me a question. He was asking me about all these different diet camps out here because he's dabbled in them as I have over the years, but I've been doing these 20 years, so I've had a longer time to partake, to dabble. And so, he asked me, "This camp is saying this, this camp is saying that." And I was just, "It's a very simple thing. They're all right and wrong." Because each of these kind of the poster child for each of these dire frameworks, whether it's veganism, whether it's Paleo, whether it's carnivore, they have seen great effects in their life and with the patients that they work with and they're not doing this to try to be controversial, oftentimes. There are some people that might be on their vibe, but they sincerely want to help people because they've seen to be effective and they have data, there's peer-reviewed data to back up all of them.

KEVIN CURRY: Correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: By the way, you cannot ignore just because something fits into your paradigm, you can't say the rest is nonsense. With that said, all of these different diets work for some people. And I was pointing him back to like, "What have humans been doing the longest?" And the truth is all kinds of stuff. What did people eat? Whatever was around. It depends on where you live.

KEVIN CURRY: Right. And what a great way to come right back around to your first question, "What do people eat?" It depends on where you live. So, we've got to do a much better job here in America to make sure that if we're going to have those experiences with food that it's an equal access to those foods, because your diet is shaped by what's around you and what's available. So yeah, I think that's well said.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Man, that was a full circle moment right there. Man, I want to make one more point, I got to ask you this question as well, I can't have you here and not ask you about this. But I mentioned that my wife, her being from Kenya, she really opened my eyes and my mother-in-law as well, so much to the diversity within just that one space. Because again, it depends on where you live. There are so many tribes in Kenya. What we tend to do is again... Somebody's in a particular... They're African or they're Kenyan, they're Ethiopian. But within there, there are so many different tribes.

And so, my wife's tribe they're more with Ndengu, Mchele, Chapati. And there's tribes like the Maasai who... They're drinking blood and milk. Milk is a big part of their diet, right?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And they have this robust health and their rates of chronic disease it's just like it's almost non-existent. And then she shared, there's this other tribe that is closer to... Closer to the water, to the beach, and they eat a lot of fish. But each tribe thinks that they're the best. No disrespect. And so, they're like, "Oh, those people they smell like fish." The Maasai they're out here with the husbandry, with the animals, whatever. But it's just understanding that it depends on where you are, and your culture.

And what I want to encourage people to do if they're wondering what to eat is think about where you come from if you can. I would do that with people coming into my office after a set amount of time, I finally started asking people like, "What is your heritage?" Like if you're struggling, what did your grandmother eat when she was in Sicily or in Ethiopia or whatever the case might be. And another thing, just because you mentioned the stank shark, the fermented shark. When I worked at a university, I would ask everybody that I worked with, "Did

you guys have some kind of fermented dish in your culture?" Everybody across the board always had a fermented food. Cultured food in their culture.

KEVIN CURRY: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? And so, it's just... Again, it just depends on where you live. That's a full circle thing. But I got to ask you about this. It's a vibe right now. It's summertime. People are out here, the suns are out, the suns out, buns out, alright? What are some of your favorite summer dishes, summer foods that we could be thinking about?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, I love watermelon. And I know that... Yeah, I love watermelon a lot in the summertime because it is so hot. It's very hydrating. So, anything with watermelon, like salads... Pairing that... In fact, let me give you a really good salad. Watermelon, arugula, it's really pungent and a little bit of feta, it's really great. I'm not a fan of balsamic, but if you want to put some balsamic glaze on that you won't be disappointed.

And you also... People don't know this, but there are different varieties of watermelon. So, in Texas, we'll see different colors of it. So, we'll have the yellow meat and the orange and the pink... Yeah, variations of it, so there's room to explore there. I love, for some reason, I'm not sure why, but grilled vegetables during the summertime, I just like them just because it's one of those things that I can throw on the grill and the smokiness of them and getting them crisp tender. Those are some of the foods that I like to eat.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, you like what kind of vegetables?

KEVIN CURRY: Oh. Squash. So, squash, zucchini, onion, bell peppers, but just having them charred on the grill. I don't know, there's just something about it that really gets me excited about it. And even though it's kind of like it's a warmer food, I love chili during the summertime, putting that on the grill. Everything's basically, on the grill on the summertime. You hear me talk about this. But making a good pot of chili too. The cool thing about chili... And I talk about this a lot. You may see 10 different recipes on my website for chili. Chili was one of the first things that I began to make for myself when I was trying to eat better. Because you can swap out some of the ingredients, you can swap out the leanness of the meat and not really compromise on that flavor. So, it was a really nourishing meal too. And if you put some beans in it... Texas chili does not have beans, but we will allow for the conversation. If you put beans in there too, it boosts the protein and the hardness of that... Like that dish. And then I feel like... This is probably going to get some people, ooh. But grain salad bowls are really hot. They're hot all year long, but I really feel that they're great during the summertime.

The only... And this is my little venting session, I'll go and say this. That's the one thing that I dislike about sometimes of the seasonal eating, is that we associate, "Oh my God, we can't eat carbs during the spring and the summertime." Those things are actually really good and they're helpful for us. So just finding ways to incorporate grains. Like one of my favourite things to do is I'll roast a whole bunch of vegetables, select a grain... It could be brown rice. You probably don't want to select that one if you don't really like grains that much. Jasmine, bulgur... Just something... Quinoa. Mixing that together with that. And then throughout the week, you can add a different, like... If it's a different sauce, if it's a different salad dressing. You can add in some other elements, you can add in some Choquette avocado to it. Those things kind of help to trick your taste buds into thinking that you're eating something different and it's really nourishing. But nothing is off the table for me, like you know, during the summertime, but those are the things that just make it special.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. What about... Oh, man, you just made those popsicles...

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Man, that's crazy. Can you talk about those?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, nice cream is a really good thing to do with your fruit that you're not eating up. And what I mean by nice cream y'all is just taking some fruit and I'd say to freeze it first. And then blending it up with some almond milk or some regular milk. And then it becomes like this thick, almost like Sherbert like, like consistency. And it tastes so good. You can add in other elements. So, I made some popsicles with some... What did I make those with? Was it blackberries?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It was something that like...

KEVIN CURRY: I think I made them with blackberries.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It might have had some... Yeah, yes.

KEVIN CURRY: They were blackberries.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: And then I got some of those grain free cookies to that. And, oh my Gosh. It was... Those bad boys were so good. Everyone loved it too on the internet. But things like that, I think are really good ideas that we don't think about doing more often. And if you are going to make nice cream, here are my tips: You want to freeze the elements that are going to give you the

thickest texture. So, bananas work very well. Avocado works very well too. And just pro tip avocado with a little bit of cacao and some agave or some maple, you got your own fudge, and it's really good. And mango. And sometimes coconut but those are my go to's in terms of making something really good and thick like. 'Cause you need that fat content. And even though banana doesn't have that it's got the gooeyness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Man, that's so good. And also, this is something when making popsicles, it sounds like fun to do, interactive. You could do with your family.

KEVIN CURRY: Something for the kids... Yeah, kids love that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: You're saving too on buying that kind of stuff. And the best thing, some people may be put off and like, "Oh, man, I got to buy this and that." But I'm telling you, it just takes one time for you to make this stuff and you realize just how easy it is. But the benefit of doing this kind of stuff is that you know exactly what you're putting into your body.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: And that's great. And if you... You can make it as healthful as you want it to be, or not. That's what I think.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my God, man, I appreciate you so much. You know, one of the things about our culture where we come from, seasoning is very important.

KEVIN CURRY: Oh, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright. It's about that seasoning. We grew up with the Lawry's. Alright.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That was just the staple. And like you can get drove by your whole family and your community if you don't season your food properly.

KEVIN CURRY: I know.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you decided to like step up and to upgrade seasonings.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's one of the things you have going on right now. Talk about that.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah. We've had the spice line since 2019. And it's still... It's one of my favourite things, just because seasoning is very important. And when I first started out people were telling me to go by the Mrs. Dash stuff. And with the zero sodium and the oldness of some of those spices it tastes kind of like cardboard. So, what I wanted to do was we can put some sodium in there but very small amount so that way people can be heavy handed with it if they needed to be. 'Cause you know, I really love seasoning. I like to be able to taste the food. Like you make me food and my breath don't stink afterwards you ain't cook enough. My breath got to stink with the food.

So, I made this system to show people how easy it is to season up your foods. So, there's one called the land seasoning, which is for anything that grows on the land, also in the air too, 'cause birds... And then there's one like a citrus blend for the sea, and that's one of the top sellers that people really like that because it's really fragrant and got that sour, salty, like... What is it umami type of almost effect to it. And then there's one called the everyday blend, which is... It's like a base blend. And that one, I really wanted to do that because culturally we always reach for the Lawry's and stuff. And Lawry's while it tastes good, man, that stuff is high in sodium.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

KEVIN CURRY: So, I made this... This spice system so that way to show people how to season food without putting in so much sodium.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and also, of course, Lawry's... They're not sourcing, like high quality ingredients. You know what I mean? So... But again, it's just... It's a cultural thing.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And now we can take what we're doing and just upgrade those things. And that's what I really love about what you do.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is those upgrades, man. So yeah, it's pretty dope.

KEVIN CURRY: It's a process, man. It's definitely a process. 'Cause I understand you want to do stuff for the culture, and honor the ancestors. Like, for instance, I got... People just came for

my neck. I had so many messages about this, I was showing how to cook up some chicken breast, so it wasn't going to be dry. And one of the first step was taking it out of the package. Now, don't wash the chicken just because it spreads germs around.

It's been proven. Microscopic stuff. And so, "Oh my God, I can't believe you're doing that. It's got so many germs in it." Well, hopefully you're cooking off those things. Like it's going to cook...

SHAWN STEVENSON: You don't wash your...

KEVIN CURRY: Chicken. But things like that we'll just keep on doing. But we need to begin to ask questions. This the last thing I'll say, 'cause this is a funny story that my pastor once shared. Just to show you what we do sometimes without even questioning it. He was making Thanksgiving dinner, and his mom was there. And so, he was doing everything, he had the turkey ready, and he was about to put it into the oven. And then he split it down the middle and then put it on two trays and put it in there. And his mama said, "Baby what are you doing with that?" And he's like, "Mama, I'm doing the same way that you did it." And she started laughing.

He said, "What's so funny?" "Baby, I did that because it wouldn't fit inside of the oven." But he was just recreating it blindly. Just doing that just because it's something that his mama showed him. But we don't have to always do the things that our ancestors did. We can evolve and grow. And still honor the heritage, but in new ways that are much more healthful for us.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that, man. Bro, you are amazing. Can you let everybody know where they can follow you, find your cookbook, all the things?

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah, you can get my cookbook off of Amazon, Fit Men Cook. It's 100 Plus recipes for meal prep, and people really like it just because it shows you how to go about devising a meal plan. I'm not an absolutist, so there are foods in there for everybody, for all kinds of diets. And then if they want to follow me on social, Fit Men Cook everywhere, and then you can also find my products too up under The Fit Cook.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Boom! That's your thing.

KEVIN CURRY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's your thing, man. After every video, your tutorials for your recipes, now you're even bringing in the younger generation. You already got your nephews in there, man. It's so amazing to see because you know what it takes and just that influence and the

access, and I know that the work that you're doing is not always easy, the production quality, how you put something together.

KEVIN CURRY: Thank you, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Man, I just appreciate what you do and how you invest into your work. It's just, it's really special, man.

KEVIN CURRY: Man, I appreciate that, seriously. Same with you, I'm glad to see the way that your business is growing and then your brand is growing. You've got a lot of good things cooking. I can't wait for people to lose their mind when everything kind of drops, what you got going on. If there's one thing that I would like to just say as a parting thought, going back to the first part, because I am really passionate about access to food, is that one other thing that people can do to help out in their local communities is to donate to the food banks and to get involved at that level, at the community level. It actually does matter, so not just giving away some of the old foods that you're not going to eat, but also the monetary donations, they need those things, they need... Because I work with one in downtown Dallas, and it's not just the food, but helping out with job placement and clothes. And then once we get them into a house, they're given kitchen stuff so they can begin to cook for themselves. So, there are ways that we can tackle this issue of food insecurity while hoping that we elect politicians and people in government that can address these structural things.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, man, thank you for that, man. Again, just... You're a real one man. Thank you. I appreciate you so much. Thanks for coming through. And can't wait to do this again.

KEVIN CURRY: Appreciate you, bro.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, my guy, Kevin Curry, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. When it really boils down to it, it's about eating delicious food, it's about sharing experiences, it's about empowering others and finding creative ways to find a way, because there's a statement that if there's a will, there's a way. I believe that when there's a will, there's 10,000 ways, there's 10 million ways. We just have to have the audacity to think differently to experiment, to try new things. So, I hope that you got a thing or two to take action on today to try something new, to expand your horizons. And caring is sharing. If you love this episode, please share it out with your friends and family, take a picture, tag me on social media. I'm @shawnmodel on Instagram, and tag Kevin, he's @fitmencook. Let him know what you thought about this episode, and of course, you can send this directly from the podcast app that you're listening on somebody that you care about.

I appreciate you so much for tuning into the show today. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you could find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you've 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.