

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 616

How to Reprogram Your Brain to Make Healthy Choices

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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. According to the CDC, prior to the pandemic, approximately 51.8% of United States adults had at least one pre-existing chronic disease. On top of that, nearly 30% of all United States adults had two or more chronic diseases. Now, this was before the pandemic times came in, up-leveling just about every chronic disease that you could name. Our healthcare system has become obsessed with treating the symptoms of these chronic diseases, generating hundreds of billions of dollars in revenue for pharmaceutical companies, and fueling a \$4 trillion per year healthcare system here in the United States. That by the way, even though we have the most expensive healthcare system, we have dozens of other developed nations that outperform the United States' healthcare system. And about 70% of our citizens are already on prescription medications to try to treat these symptoms, but something is not connecting, something is severely wrong.

And we know what the biggest causes are, of course, of these epidemics: Heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's, the list goes on and on and on. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, one of our most prestigious journals, this was published in 2018, the number one cause of our epidemics of chronic diseases is poor diet. It's the leading factor in their meta-analysis. But this isn't just a United States issue alone. A massive meta-analysis published in The Lancet in 2019, titled Health Effects of Dietary Risk in 195 Countries, examine 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 single year. The researcher stated, "Our findings show that sub-optimal diet is responsible for more deaths than any other risk globally, highlighting the urgent need for improving human diet across nations."

Poor diet is responsible for more deaths than any other issue in the world. How is this not front-page news every day? How is this not breaking news, headlines everywhere that we go? It's the number one killer, and yet it is continuously overlooked. Now, even though we have these multiple epidemics of chronic diseases, there are people all around the world every day who are reversing these chronic diseases, who no longer are dealing with the ramifications of type 2 diabetes, who are no longer dealing with the ramifications of heart disease. They've reversed these issues. Now, what makes the difference? That's the question. Obviously, making the decision to engage in healthy lifestyle factors is going to be hugely important in this equation, but I'm here today to tell you that it's not the tactics, it's the mindset behind the tactics.

Hippocrates, who's often referred to as the father of modern medicine said, "It's more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has." Knowing what type of person has a disease is more important than the disease diagnosis itself. Who's showing up, who's dealing with what that person is facing? That's what it's all about. Again, the father of modern medicine made this statement, and yet again, we're so focused on diagnosis, on treating symptoms and not looking at the mindset behind the actions necessary to transform our health and to transform our outcomes. Good health and fitness is truly a side effect of our decisions. Now, our decisions themselves are deeply rooted in our identity. We're not going to do things typically that are outside of our paradigm, outside of who we believe ourselves to be. The number one driving force of the human psyche is to stay congruent with who we believe ourselves to be, is to stay congruent with the ideas that we carry about ourselves and about the world around us. That is the driving force in everything that we do.

And when we go outside of that, when we do something that's not typical of ourselves, it feels radically uncomfortable, and we tend to recoil, we tend to curl up like one of those roly-polies when things get a little bit uncomfortable, or often times a lot uncomfortable, if we're doing things that we don't believe ourselves to be capable of and/or not consistent with who we identify as. We do things based on who we believe ourselves to be. Now, if we're going to talk about transformation and truly taking control of our health and reversing these multiple epidemics of chronic diseases, we've done master classes on the tactics. So many, whether it's autoimmune conditions, gastrointestinal diseases, heart disease, the list goes on and on and on. You know our archives, we've got the best people in the world also teaching these subjects, and at the end of the day, that is a critical component of reversing these issues.

But most importantly, we have to address the person who has the disease. We have to address the mindset, the identity, so that we can start to make healthy choices automatically. We have to stop fighting within our own psyche and start to stack conducts in our favor so that we can turn this stuff around. So, that's what this episode is dedicated to, how to reprogram our mind, reprogram our thinking, so that we can make healthy choices become normalized. And so, we already talked about the outward actions, right? So, the results that we're seeing right now in our society, again, multiple epidemics of chronic disease, that result is coming from our actions, but our actions are preceded by our ideas, our thoughts. We cannot take an action without first thinking about it. Now, you might not consciously think about it, but in order for you to get your butt out of a chair, there's a thought sequence that takes place in order to mobilize you, there's always a thought that precedes the action, even if we're unaware. A lot of times, these thoughts become automated, but even preceding that, preceding our thoughts, our thoughts are springing up from our beliefs, and that's the core place for us to address, to get down into these deeply rooted beliefs about ourselves and about our life, so that we can start to make shifts and make our thoughts become automated towards health,

our actions become automated towards health, and our outcomes become automated towards health.

So today, we're going to talk about how to think like a healthy person. There's a Steve Harvey book, Think Like a Man, giving the insights to the ladies on how to get inside of our psyche, how to think like us so that you can outsmart us, basically. That was also turned into a movie, shoutout to the success of Steve Harvey and Think Like a Man. Today, we're going to be talking about how to think like a healthy person, we're going to go through eight specific ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. Let's kick things off with number one. Number one is to use the power of self-assessment. We must know who we are, what our beliefs are right now, what our thoughts are, what our predominant thoughts are right now, so that we can actually start to shift them around. So often, we're trying to attack the behaviors, we're trying to attack the actions, trying to force ourselves to do things that we believe to be... Superficially believe to be healthy for us, but we have a struggle being able to change those behaviors because our real beliefs, our core beliefs about ourselves and about our potential is often in direct conflict with what we're telling ourselves we want to believe. So, we have to know who we are right now, know where we are and get really honest, use the power of self-assessment inscribed on the Temple of Delphi, "Know thyself."

This ancient mantra, "Know thyself." Know thy self. Why would this be so important to our ancestors, know thyself? It's because our association with us is going to determine our entire reality. But today more than ever, we can be so externally focused that we're not listening to that internal biochemical feedback, that thought cascade that's happening within our system, and also just being aware of the things that we believe and being able to analyze and even question those beliefs, especially if they're not leading to the outcomes that we want. So, for this self-assessment, I'm going to give you a couple of general personality types, just a general framework, just to get a beat on what our tendencies likely are and how we're showing up in the world. So, one of these personality types tends to go all out. Alright? Whenever they're presented with a new opportunity, maybe it's a new diet, maybe it's a new exercise program, they're really attracted to the new flashy thing, and they're just ready to take action, all right? And also, they go charging into things with a lot of passion, with a lot of excitement, which is a huge benefit in their favor.

Now, with that said, there can be a tendency to take on too much at once or try to change too much at once because of that excitement, because of that passion, and they can have a tendency to get burned out. Do you start to see yourself in this personality type? Are you swinging for the fences each and every time and end up not getting the on-base percentage that you really want? Alright, the swing-for-the-fences personality type has pros and cons, just like any personality type, and it's all in how we frame it. Even as I'm saying cons here, it doesn't mean it has to be bad. I'm going to talk a little bit about that later. But just understanding

ourselves. Do we have a tendency to rush into things without being properly prepared, whether it's mentally or whether it's even structurally, so that we can stack conditions in our favor? Do we have a tendency to go rushing into things and to not really understand the obstacles that might come up along the way, and start to put some things in place to address those things? Or maybe we're taking on too much at one... Trying to change too much at once and something's got to give?

So, do you see any similarities with yourself and being someone who swings for the fences? Alright, another personality type... And by the way, we're using a baseball analogy here. This is America's pastime. We're talking primarily about the health epidemics here in the United States, we're going to talk about United States pastime, la baseball. Alright, now, swing for the fences, personality type number one. Personality type number two are people who have the tendency to want to wait till everything is perfect, to wait till the conditions are right to take action. This is the personality type who's waiting for that perfect pitch before taking a swing. Alright, got to make sure that they've got their entire calendar planned out, they got to make sure that the child care is right, they got to make sure they have the right shoes, they got to make sure they have the right leggings, they got to make sure they have the right headband or racket or whatever it is, everything has to be right so that I can take action. Now, this personality type has a wonderful gift because they're about preparation. Alright, there's this wise moniker attributed to Benjamin Franklin, "If you fail to prepare, then you're preparing to fail."

So, they're getting prepared. However, by waiting for that perfect pitch, waiting for the conditions to be right, by continuously focusing on things being right, we can often be very slow to take action, if you end up taking action at all. You can fall into the paradox of choice where you've got so many different options you've accumulated, but you choose nothing because... Just of a psychological fatigue of having all these things to do, right? So, waiting for that perfect pitch and waiting for conditions to be right. Now, here's the truth, conditions are rarely ever, if ever perfect, to do anything. We could tell ourselves that conditions are perfect or not perfect, but it's usually, again, based on our own perceptions. That perfect condition is when you say it is, is when you decide to take that action. Now, of course, there are going to be conditions, external conditions that are more favorable to certain outcomes. Absolutely, we're not ignoring that, but in general, being able to just put one foot in front of the other and to start moving towards the life that we want, the character traits that we want, the habits that we want is going to have a lot more weight than simply waiting to have everything mapped out perfectly.

So, do you identify a little bit more with somebody who sees himself as waiting for that perfect pitch? Now, another personality type, so we went for swinging for the fences, we went, those who are waiting for that perfect pitch. Another personality type is the easy out, all right?

They're coming up to the plate, they might have some enthusiasm, but as soon as things don't go their way, they're out, they're out of the game, "I'm out of here." When things become too tough or too inconvenient, or maybe even too good, maybe the outcomes... Stuff has started happening and they decide to self-sabotage because they're just not used to that. "I'm out. I'm not comfortable with that life. I'm not comfortable with that situation."

Do you see this personality type within you? And by the way, we all tend to have all of these personality types within us to some degree, but we tend to have one that stands out a little bit more than others. All right? So, people who are faced with an obstacle, generally, this is going to be more likely for the easy out, is, when reality hits or when something inconvenient comes up, they throw in the towel. They're an easy out. Now, this is not to say they don't have the capacity or the skillset or the heart or any of those things. It's just the pattern that we can pick up to revert to what's comfortable, right? And this is, again, this can happen with any of us. So, do you see yourself in this personality type, as somebody who's easily out, as an easy out of the plate?

So that's number three. The fourth and final one, and this is just a general framework again, just to start to do a little bit of self-assessment, to look within, to start to see myself, like, what are my patterns? What do I usually do? When I say I want to have this new result, when I say I want to change my life, when I say I want to take on these new habits, what do I really do? How do I really show up? That's what we're doing. We're doing some inner digging, some inner investigation. Number four is the all-around player. All right, this is somebody who's not necessarily super skilled in one thing, they're not showing up in one particular place way more than others, or maybe they do carry more skill in one particular area, but they have some other balance and work in the other areas to bring those areas up so that they are an all-around player, alright? So, really good at spotting their opportunities, not waiting for things to be perfect, but putting a good swing on the ball, not always swinging for the fences, but swinging for the fences when they need to. And listen, sometimes, you got to get out. Sometimes, you are an easy out, and they're able to adjust from that.

So, an all-around player, when I think about an all -round player, specifically, even in this baseball context, I think about Ozzie Smith, all right? Ozzie Smith, multi, multi, multi time, all-star. I believe he has 13 Gold Glove Awards as the best defensive shortstop for the St. Louis Cardinals, my home team. Shoutout to the Redbirds, alright? So, Ozzie Smith really also known as the Wizard of Oz for the magic he would really create on the baseball diamond, was an icon. Growing up, he's somebody that really, really inspired me. It was like Ozzie Smith was the definition of a superhero in my mind, like a real-life superhero. And also, just this celebrity around him. And our city is huge. He's just... He's the biggest thing... He's the hottest thing on the streets. All right? So, having this in my makeup, even in my DNA, this association with Ozzie

just being an inspiration, it's really crazy how the mind works and how your predominant thoughts or things that you really feel strongly acclimated towards show up in your life.

Because one day, I was at the gym working out, and guess who I see? Ozzie Smith. And at this point, I believe he was just turning 60, if I remember correctly, but he was in there working on getting stronger. He's still... He's in there working to get better, to stay strong, to stay ready. And of course, I'm not like running up to him, "Oh my God, Ozzie!" It wasn't like that. It's just like a little, subtle what's up, you know? Game recognize game. And before you knew it, he came in over and was talking to me one day. We were at the gym, and he came and talked to me! Icon alert. My guy, Ozzie Smith came and was talking with me, and we struck up a friendship. And he was actually on an episode of The Model Health Show. So, this was a few years back. I'm already... I'm so excited. This was a few years back. So, we'll put it for you in the show notes if you happen to have missed this episode. I was just like, truly like a kid all over again, being able to share that time with one of my heroes. And so, it was really special. And just to hear his insights and his experience and what got him into the position that he was in.

But one of the things that people don't realize is that he wasn't considered to be an all-around player, which he eventually won the Silver Slugger Award as the best hitting player at his position as well. Not just defensively, being absolutely electric on the bases and the whole thing, just all-around great player. Early on in his career, he was considered to be very one-sided had this one skill set, defensive greatness. Other things are more of a liability. But he worked on himself to become an all-around player. And that's what I'm trying to tell you, is that we can work on ourselves to become an all-around player. We can lean into our tendency and start to use it with intelligence and start to lift those other areas of our lives up. But we have to be aware of who we are. He had to get honest about who he was and what, you know, what the external environment, that feedback that he was getting, but also just looking within himself and deciding the person he wanted to be, the player that he wanted to be. So, he worked to lift himself up.

Now here's the thing. In order for us to get to our destination, in order for us to create the habits and the life that we want, we have to get clear on who we are right now and who we want to be. It's just like a GPS system. This Global Positioning System, being able to take this meta perspective to know where you are and where you're going. In order to know where you're going, we can't get the directions there if we don't know where we're starting from. And so often we ignore or even lie to ourselves about who we are right now and how we tend to show up. This is why we get faulty directions, or we get a lot of randomness. We get a lot of struggles. We down back alleys where Batman's parents got taken out. We didn't even try to be there. And we got to be mindful of who we are right now and get honest.

It's that inner work necessary to make the process more graceful. You don't have to make the process graceful. You can have it be super bumpy alright? Pumps in the bumps. You can have bumps on bumps. However, to make the process more graceful we do the inner work to understand who we are right now. What our tendencies are. It's going to make clarity happen in getting from where we are to that destination. But again, we also need to get clear on the person that we want to become. Start to identify: What are those behavior traits? What are the beliefs that are required in order for you to be that person? Right? How does that person think? What are that person's habits? What does that person have to believe about themselves in order to do those things?

This is where the real work is, that other stuff, that's window shopping if we're just trying to change those external things. Do the inner work to really get in touch with, what do I have to believe about myself in order for me to make healthy choices about the food I'm putting in my body every day? What do I have to believe about myself? Do I have to believe that I'm worthy? And right now, I don't believe that I am, and getting honest about that. Do I have to believe that I deserve happiness? That I deserve health? When right now that belief might be distant from me right now. And I don't believe that I deserve it. And doing the inner work necessary to clear that up because it's ridiculous to think that you don't, but it is. For so many of us, we carry that belief subconsciously, we're carrying around that belief and it's fueling the choices that we make in our lives. It's handicapping us. It's putting us in bondage and wondering why we can't do the thing, or we make up excuses as to why we can't do the thing.

So again, getting clear on our beliefs right now about who we are, what we're capable of, what we deserve, what we desire, and also getting clear on the person that we want to be. What does that person believe about themselves? What does that person believe about the world around them? That is going to make the habits automatic. And by the way, I want to give you this really important insight here. We might not like the person that we are right now and the habits that we have, but we are very comfortable with the person that we are and the habits that we have. You might think, you know, "No, I'm not comfortable with this. I'm not comfortable with fill in the blank." I'm telling you, if you're experiencing it right now, it's because you are. And we have to get honest about it.

It doesn't mean that we like it. It doesn't mean that it actually feels comfortable, but psychologically we are aware of what it is. We are aware. We know this. And so, it's creating a psychological certainty. Which, certainty is a human need. It's a deep psychological human need. And so having this degree of certainty, like, "Hey, I might not like the way that my body feels right now or the actions that I'm taking, but I know them. I'm familiar with them. I have certainty. It gives me some sense of control in my life, in a world that can often seem where I lack control." Right? This is another struggle point for so many of us because we don't realize the comfort vacuum that we've been sucked into. Alright?

So again, to do the inner work, to understand who we are, what we're about right now, what our beliefs are, and also getting clear on the person that we want to be. What do I have to believe in order to be that person, and the actions that that person is taking? So, number one here again is, use the power of self-assessment. Now we're going to move on to number two, on a list of eight ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. And number two is to alter your environment. Our inner world is a representation of our outer world. And our outer world is a representation of our inner world because we see this outer world around us as based on our perception. No two people see things the same. Never ever in the history of humanity have two people seen the exact same thing. It is impossible. It's based on our perception, which our perception is based on our unique ingredients that make up our own psychology, our own life experiences, our own pains, our own pleasures, our own choices that we've made, our own state of health, our own state of psychological wellbeing. So many other things go into this unique recipe that makes up our perception. Alright?

It's really a patchwork quilt of experiences and internal ingredients, whether it's cellular, whether it's genetic, whether it's experiential, that makeup who we are. And so, understanding that we are a representation of the outer world is a direct reflection of our inner world, and our inner world is a direct reflection of our outer world, we can consciously move things around to create more harmony with these things. Because it's always happening whether you understand it or not. So, altering our environment. Why does this matter? And how does this help to reprogram our brain to automatically make healthy choices? This is because many of our habits are environment-driven. We tend to do certain things in certain places. We tend to do certain things with certain people, and we tend to do certain things with other people, right? We tend to do certain things in other places. So much of our behavior is environment-driven. What if we take control of where we're placing ourselves? What if we take control of the environments that we're putting ourselves in? This is the way to, from the external world in, start to shift around and reprogram our mind, because the human brain is always looking for patterns, for ease, and for creating flow and wiring, automation, alright?

And so, let's give an example here. This is much more of a socially understood example. If problematic drinking behavior tends to occur while you're out at bars and you want to change that behavior, it would be advantageous not to put yourself in a bar. It will be advantageous not to go to that environment, right? That's kind of like a logical step one. But as we're talking about here, this is still driven by our internal psychology, right? Our identity is still going to be driven here, but we can do both. We can manipulate the external environment also to stack conditions in our favor. Also, if problematic drinking behavior tends to occur while you're with certain friends, you might have to adjust your relationship with those particular friends. I'm not talking about ghosting somebody. I'm talking about you taking responsibility for your own life, for your own decisions, for your own purpose, and saying, "You know what? When I'm with

these particular folks, I tend to do these things that I no longer want to do." This doesn't mean that you have to love them any less. This doesn't mean that you have to, "Forget where you came from." This means you're deciding to take control of your own destiny, and you owe it to no one to be your best self. And the people that truly love you will understand that.

If you're doing things in association with them that are hurting you and they don't understand when you say, "I have to remove myself from this environment," that is probably a red flag that that relationship was not conducive or reciprocated in the way that you thought it was, alright? The good ones, the people who really have your best interest at heart, they're going to support you in your decision to stop harming yourself or to stop debilitating yourself, or to stop putting yourself in bondage to become free and to become your best self. Even if they don't like it because they might feel like they're losing you or losing a part of you. They're still going to support you. Now, it's not just about avoiding certain relationships or certain environments. It's consciously, purposefully putting yourself into new ones. The universe abhors a vacuum. And when there is space, it's going to get filled with something. It's going to get filled with something. When you create that space by not participating in that environment or that relationship, it's going to get filled with something.

Decide, consciously choose to fill it with what you want or it's going to get filled with what might seem random and what might seem to mirror what you've already been experiencing historically. Because our brains are still acclimated towards those type of relationships and those type of environments. We have to proactively choose and put ourselves into new ones. That's the key. We're not just going to sit around and twiddle our thumbs when we're no longer putting ourselves in that environment. We've got to put ourselves in an environment that is rewarding as well. That is filling some needs, that is helping our brains to create new rewards and new reward systems. New patterns that make the disintegration of those old patterns that fire and wire together more graceful and create more ease in that breakdown because you're experiencing growth and joy and variety, or whatever the case might be, whatever need you're getting filled by putting yourself in an environment that is more conducive to your health. And again, I'm using that interchangeably, environment with places and people, alright?

Now, again, proactively choose. I want to give you a little tip here, because when we decided to take on a new habit and we've been operating... We have a home. In our society, we generally have a home, the vast majority of people here, where we're operating from, where we're living from, where we're sleeping, where we're doing a lot of life stuff, and so there's a strong neuro-association that's taking place between your environment and your habits. And so, when you decide to take on a new habit, one of the little interesting things is it tends to increase the effectiveness or duration of the new habit, is to simply change your own environment around. Even changing your own home environment around can offer a feeling of a clean slate, can offer a feeling of a new perspective, and this is one of the things that, again, we have much

more control over than trying to go outside and to get McDonalds to leave your block, right? We have much more control within our own household or even within our own room. Maybe you're living with somebody, right? Or maybe you're in a context where you can't just change stuff around all willy-nilly, but you have the ability to shift your environment around, your little slice of the world to whatever degree that might be. And again, I know many people have experienced this...

Even this kind of spring-cleaning phenomenon where you're cleaning up, creating new space. It seems like you can breathe better. It's like there's less stuff just kind of sitting on a dusty bookshelf in the back of your mind. It's creating a space for a clean slate and a new perspective. So, I just want to throw it out there, a little tip, a little tidbit. When we decide, "Hey, you know what, I'm going to start a new exercise program, I'm going to start going to the gym. Going from zero days a week and just being sporadic here or there to, I'm going to go to the gym three days a week," I would couple that with a shift in your environment itself. Even your home environment. That maybe, again, maybe you change the position of something in your house, but also maybe put up a frame of a certain quote that motivates you. There's so many different ways that we could play with this. But it's helping to reprogram our brain to make healthy choices. Now, speaking of new environments, me being from St. Louis, born and raised, and spent so many decades of my life there, and I really didn't even... I never even thought about leaving St. Louis. Literally. I'm not just saying moving somewhere. I'm talking about getting on a plane and going to another city.

I didn't get on a plane till I was 25 years old. I was 25 years old, and my girlfriend at the time, who I married her, I put a ring on it. She got me on a plane, she was like, "No, no, no. What? You haven't been anywhere? You haven't been on a plane? I'm going to remedy this." Hopped on a plane, pretty sure it was Southwest headed to Miami. Alright, Miami. So, I got to see a new reality, I got to see the ocean. I saw the ocean on television. To me, it was still like, it was a concept. I didn't have any proof that it existed, like tangible proof. People could tell me, but it's a different thing when you see it for yourself, and I'm a very seeing-is-believing type of person. That's my tendency. And so, to see it, to see the bigness of it, man, it's game changing. Game-changing. And so having that experience, and then from there, things shifting in the universe and in my life to the degree that suddenly I'm on flights all the time. I'm going to speak at this event here in Nova Scotia, Canada, and in Portugal and in Jamaica, and in Utah, and in Arizona and in Seattle, the list goes on and on.

All of a sudden, my life shifted. I got that exposure of what was possible, and things began to change so rapidly in my life because I became attuned to it. That there was so much more in this little world that I put myself into. Now, that is one way to be, it's okay. I could have maintained that. And I wouldn't be here with you today. Because I remember looking up and I would see planes all the time, I'm just like I never thought about being on one of those planes.

To the degree that over time, as I was speaking at a lot of events, I kept finding myself in California. A lot of the events would be on the West Coast, a majority of them. So, I was just like every time we come out here, I go to the beach. Now, most of the time, I bring my wife along with me, and we just... Just kind of imaginary like, "Wouldn't it be crazy if we lived here, right? Crazy. Endless summers. What? Crazy."

And soon enough, I had people speaking this into existence outside of myself, friends. Friends I've had on the show. Cynthia Garcia. She would just say things... I'd come out to speak in an event and I would stay with her. And she would be like, "So when do you guys move here?" And I would just be like... I was literally brushing it off like, "You're crazy. You're tripping. Stop it. You're funny. You're funny, right?" But then all of a sudden, it started to ingrain itself and that little mind virus meme started to take hold, right? And then I had another friend, Jay Ferruggia, who's been on this show as well, one of my really good friends who would kind of affirm this and get people together. And invite me to stuff all the time even when I wasn't living here. He would always keep in touch and let me know if stuff's going on. And so, he had this community aspect. When I'm talking about friends and exposure, Jay Ferruggia has been a really great part of that. Because I have friends, that even when Jay's not around because he brought them into my life. People that I love.

And so that element is so powerful to open ourselves up to it but to proactively put ourselves in position. To have the friendships, the standards. That's another thing, it's like holding yourself to a higher standard. Because folks like I'm talking about. There tends to be as you raise your standards... Keep your standards high and your squats low. Standards high, squats low. As you raise your standards you start to repel that toxic sh*t. It just becomes like you're just emitting some kind of like hater kryptonite. It's just like beaming off of you. But to be real here, we start to put ourselves in a position where we become familiar with love, with appreciation, with reciprocity, with support. We become familiar with those things so much that we identify, and we see them constantly, versus seeing abuse, toxicity, the constant need to seek attention and to manipulate. Those things start to become foreign to you. You know what they are. Part of the process is learning what those things are. You learn what they are so that you're no longer a victim to them. Absolutely, but it's still what you are attuned to. What are you focused on?

And so, yeah, just huge thanks to Jay Ferruggia as well for creating those conditions. Another thing that Jay brought into my life, which is something that I do on a daily basis, is I went to his place to do an interview for him, and he gave me a handful of these little packets, these electrolytes. And I left there, I was just like, whatever. I didn't really think twice about it. And I put them in my pantry at my house, and they just sat there for months. And then my wife went to a hot yoga class, she was really feeling drained. And I was like, "You need some electrolytes."

And so I grab her some. She used the electrolytes that Jay gave me months earlier, and within 20 minutes, seeing is believing human being here, it was like she had an infusion of energy.

It's so remarkable to see that kind of turnaround so quickly. And so, I was like, "What's going on here?" So, I used them as well and noticed my behavior changed later in the day when I would just want to just kind of shut down, workday's over, I've exhausted everything, I've really left it on the field, that kind of mentality. But now it's like that point in the day where I'm just like... I'm doing more than I normally do and I'm just like, "What is going on here?" And it was LMNT, it was these incredible electrolysis formulation. Then I find out that one of my absolute heroes in this field, Robb Wolf, is one of the co-founders of LMNT. And I was just like, "Man, this is... How did I not know about this? And how did I ignore it, just stick it away in my pantry and just forgot about it?"

So, I looked into the research and I saw that they were working with some major league teams. Some teams in the NFL, list goes on and on. But part of the reason it was so effective was it had all of these data points from all these people that he had been working with. And so, finding that right ratio of electrolytes. So, electrolytes are minerals that carry an electric charge. How important is this? And the reason that is so many remarkable benefits can be seen from this. Essentially, every single process that your body does or undertakes requires electrolytes to be present. Specifically, this sodium-potassium pump is a catalyst for just about everything in your body to do what it does. It's no joke how important this is, but these things become easily ignored and become deficiencies in our society today because we're not getting viable sources of these electrolytes, especially from our food today.

It's ridiculous. And even the food itself, of course... Some of this data, just the soil degradation over time has led to this dramatic decrease in the number of electrolytes coming through in the food that we're eating. So, number one, of course, we want to eat higher quality food. That's number one, but this is a place for sure, especially when it's done correctly, and it's sourced correctly. There's no added sugar. So many electrolyte products, still even ones that are considered to be better quality, have sugar. We don't need that in the electrolytes. We need that right ratio, magnesium, potassium, sodium specifically, and also avoiding these artificial sweeteners and sugar and things like that, artificial colors. Oh, my goodness. So, this is what LMNT really brought to the market. And it's just so remarkable, huge fan of LMNT. Right now, they're also giving away a free sample pack. Which flavors have you tried of LMNT if you've already added that to your life? This is a great opportunity to try all of them, because they're going to send you a free sample pack with any purchase.

And by the way, the sodium here, specifically in LMNT... Listen to this. This was published by researchers at McGill University. They found that sodium functions as a quote "on-off switch

in the brain for specific neurotransmitters that support optimal cognitive function in your brain. Yes, it is that important. Go to drinkmnt.com/model. That's drinkmnt.com/model. Any purchase of electrolytes, you get a free sample pack gift that you can utilize yourself or I like to give these sample packs away to friends and family. I do that all the time. So which flavors have you tried? This is a great opportunity to try more, go to drinkmnt.com/model. That's drinkmnt.com/model. Alright, let's go ahead and move on to number three on a list here of how to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. Number three is to put a spotlight on blind optimism. Shine a big, bright light on blind optimism. What am I talking about here? Blind optimism is this perception that we have, for some strange reason, when we decide to take on a new habit, when we go after a new goal, for some strange reason, we think it's going to be smooth sailing. Psychologically, it's there.

It's under some layers. We tend to think that "Oh, this is going to go great. Yes. This new thing... I'm going to start working out every week, I'm going to start eating healthy. I'm going to start getting to bed." We think it's going to be smooth sailing, but it's not. Pretty much in no cases is it going to be smooth sailing. This is why we need to learn how to navigate different conditions, to navigate even the choppiest of waters. Because here's the truth, obstacles and slip-ups are bound to happen. When we're going from where we are to where we want to be, we're creating a new life, a new reality. You can't just get that. You have to qualify yourself. You have to grow yourself to being that person. You have to step into it. And to do that, sometimes you got to step over some stuff. Sometimes you got to step around, sometimes you got to dig your way under. Alright. Sometimes you got to use a lasso, shout out to Wonder Woman, and climb your way up over things, alright?

You got to pull yourself up. But Wonder Woman, Low-key, she, her lasso makes people tell the truth. Alright. When she put it around them, they start keeping it real. Alright. But sometimes keeping it real goes wrong, shout out to Dave Chappelle. Now, not that Dave Chappelle keeping it real went wrong, but that was from a skid from the Chappelle show. Oh, my goodness. That was a little... Shout out to the Chappelle Show. Incredible, incredible stuff. But here's the thing. Right now, if we take this on, shine a spotlight on blind optimism, it's going to change everything for us. When we can start to accept that we're going to have obstacles, we're going to have problems, we're going to have slip ups and that's okay. Do that first, get comfortable with that, be aware of it. It's not to look for obstacles, it's not to expect bad things to happen. It's just to become aware that obstacles, challenges, slip ups are going to happen and that's okay. Getting to a place of, "That's okay." It's part of the process.

Most people because of this blind optimism, they think that everything is going to be smooth sailing. And once they fall off the wagon, then their ass is off the wagon. And that's it. Being aware of this blind optimism, we know that we're going to fall off the wagon, we can get up,

we can get our ass up off the ground and get back in the wagon. But if we don't become aware of this, the wagon's going to come rolling around 10 days later or a month later.

Six months later, and we're still going to be laying our ass there on the ground. We gave up, because we expected things to be smooth sailing. We didn't expect to hit that bump and to go flying our ass, right out to that wagon. All right. Shout out too Little House in the Prairie. Now here's the thing. We become aware that this is part of the process. We're better able psychologically to know, okay, yeah this slips up happened, dust myself up, get back on the wagon. If we don't have that built-in, we think we're supposed to be perfect. We think everything's going to go in our favor. And the thing happens, and it gives us that easy out mentality, or even if we're swinging for the fences and we're doing so much and we're going so hard and the thing happens and we're not acclimated to a real problem showing up. It gives us permission.

We've tried so hard. We've worked so hard. Taken on so much. It gives us permission to just lay down and give up until the next thing gets us excited to go running into that, to go run onto the other wagon. We get the wagon with the Ds on it instead of just understanding that problems are bound to happen, slip ups are bound to happen. Use them as an opportunity to learn. It's not a failure if you learn from it. Shine a spotlight on blind optimism. Failure is part of the process, but that label is not true in our common lexicon, our common perception of it. It's not a failure if you learn from it. Michael Jordan said, "I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games, 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

One of the people that we attribute to iconic... We're talking about iconic status. Many people right now have him on your feet. He's on your feet. Creating, transcending the game of basketball to becoming integrated into a culture so big, so grand. But if you listen to him in the words that he shared, it is his failure that made him successful, but we don't want any parts of that. We don't want to hear that. We don't want to hear the failing part. We don't want to associate with that. We don't want to be aware that that's coming. But if we can create a relationship with that and to reframe even our perception of failure, to know that it's a part of the process. If I had stopped at my first book, the first book that I wrote... And man, I put so much into it, but at the time I was much more of a perfect pitch person, looking for that perfect pitch for the conditions to be right, I kept on changing the book and shifting things around every time I go through it before turning it in to get it published.

And it just kept delaying and delaying and delaying my growth where I stayed comfortable in this little shell of writing. And so that book I self-published, and I found a great company to help with the design and all the things. And, of course, a lot of authors feel that their book is going to change the world. That's why we do it, right? To help to make a shift, become this

massive best seller. If I would've just stayed with that book that shall remain nameless. I'm not going to tell you about... If you don't know what it is, I'm not going to bring it up. This is from a long time ago. All right? But that book didn't go platinum, it didn't go gold. It went wood. I had a big ass palette of these books in my house when I moved. But that experience helped me to understand what it takes.

And so, when I wrote Sleep Smarter, oh, mm, I had such a wealth of understanding. This perceived failure from the past was a catalyst. It was a launching pad to understand what it takes to write a truly exceptional book. The structure the ability to have this self-discovery, where people can just turn to a page, boom, got something. Found it, got something. To create these wonderful analogies, to take a subject that on the surface for our society at large is not sexy. Sleep isn't this seductive sexy, beautiful thing. Well, that's changed in recent years. I'm not going to say I have anything to do with it, but... But just understanding, truly, taking something that seems very boring, elusive, complicated, misunderstood, and turning it into something beautiful, attractive, even dare I say, delicious. Making sleep sexy. Right? That was the thrust. Behold, I said sexy and thrust. Yeah, that was the thrust behind creating that book.

And it changed everything. There had never been an international best seller on sleep wellness, ever. And so of course there's a lot of hesitancy out there in the publishing streets with all these publishers. But when I came into it, because I self-published it first, but now even then I understood the process more, but that book took off like a rocket. And so now the numbers that we were doing by focusing on service and transformation and education, now all these publishers are like, "Hey, what's up Shawn. Can we talk?" They're trying to get their Tevin Campbell on. Can we talk for a minute? I'm coming to the table with so much more power and position, to the degree had 11, 11 publishers, the big ones, including the big five, trying to get connected. And so, if I would've seen that first experience as a failure and stayed there, never would that have happened. And don't even get me started on Eat Smarter, literally selling out in five days. One of the biggest books of 2021. USA today, national best seller, all the things. It's well into the six figures already in copies sold. It's been phenomenal to watch. But I was coming to that with another level of understanding and empowerment and I'm just...

I'm just getting warmed up. Each and every one of these things is a launching pad to another reality. And so, we all have opportunities and we've all done it, we've all thrown in the towel and different things that we knew were right for us. For some stuff we need to throw the towel in. We need to let that thing die so that we could focus on the thing that really resonates with us, that really feels good, that really lights our fire. So again, put a spotlight on blind optimism, reframe this definition of failure. Understand, be okay with the fact that obstacles are going to come on your road from here to there. Get yourself strong and resilient. Be ready for it. Let's move on to number four here, on our list of eight ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices, number four is to increase the space between stimulus and response. In

between every single event, every action, every thought, everything that we're presented with in our reality, there's a space, and within that space exists our freedom. That's where we have the ability to choose how we're going to respond to that occasion, to that experience, to that stimulus.

Most of us, myself included for many years of my life, we're living in reaction. To stimulus, react. Constantly in reaction to what's happening in the world around me. Now, of course, you can work to have healthier reactions to things, but there's a difference between unconsciously, even more of a primitive response, primitive parts of our brain reacting to things, there's a difference between that and responding. Right? Our ability to respond, responsibility is our ability to respond, and there is a space between stimulus and response where we have the ability to choose. So rather than being a creature who is purely reactive, we have the ability to decide how we show up in any given moment. When we're presented with this office party and there's a stimulus, it's a birthday, it's a birthday. And you're eating clean, maybe it's been a week. You're on your new thing, you're like, "I'm not eating any processed foods," and they're passing around the birthday cake. Stimulus. What are you going to do? What are you going to do?

You have a space there. When that plate is getting handed to you and you reach your hand out, you can slow down time. It can slow down, and the matrix can pop up in all the different potentials of what you can say, what you can do, the choices you can make, the forethought of what your response is going to be as far as if you participate in this behavior. Not to make the cake good or bad, it's not about the cake. It's about who you're choosing to be and being able to be congruent with that because again, we're working on shifting our identity. But if we don't have that space between the stimulus and response filled up, we're going to tend to be more reactive, right? And so, for us to increase this space where we are able to see in that moment, "You know what, this isn't really... It's not worth it. I'm not really into this. I don't even like chocolate cake, I'm a vanilla for..." Whatever it might be. Just like, you're just doing the thing because you're reactive and maybe peer pressure or whatever the case might be. You could realize, "I don't give a damn what Charlie thinks about me. Why am I worried about him passing me the cake, and I'm like, 'Oh no, thanks.'" We get to be able to analyze our thoughts and our beliefs in that moment to make a choice that is congruent with who we choose to be.

So, increase the space between stimulus and response. This is going on even how we react, how we respond and associate with people in our lives, this happens all the time. Somebody could say something, somebody that you love, that irritates you, rubs you the wrong way, but highly likely that they didn't mean to offend you, maybe you're just hangry, maybe it's... Whatever, fill in the blank. There's a space between that stimulus and our response and how we respond to things. We tend to throw more fuel on the fire when we're presented with something that we don't agree with or that doesn't resonate with us in that moment, right?

So, we have the ability to choose how we respond and not be so reactive. How do we do this? Meditation is an incredible gift, an incredible tool to be able to increase this space between stimulus and response. In particular, utilizing meditations that have space themselves. The space between, right. The space between. A popular song out there. Popular vibes.

But tapping into that where we have an inhale, for example, we're doing box breathing where we inhale for four seconds, then we hold it for four seconds. This is the space. Just hold it for those four seconds and then breathe out for four seconds. Then we hold the air out for four seconds, then we repeat it, breathe in for four seconds. Hold for four. And out. Hold for four. You're going to find peace in that space, it's not the breathing alone, it's the space between. And as you do that, you're going to be able to increase the space between the stimulants and response in your life. So powerful. Our ancestors... It's been thousands of years this practice, this internal technology has existed. And now today for whatever reason, not an accident though, there's such a movement towards seeking within our inner world in meditation, yoga, and these different practices. I don't believe it's an accident, I believe that it is one of those situations where there's nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come. It's one of those situations where there cannot be a problem without a solution.

The universe is matching our epidemic levels of externally motivated behavior and attention to a practice becoming popularized for us to go within. It's not an accident, but the thing is, are you using it? Are you going to be in that movement. Are you going to be in that number? Because this will help to shift our society, our health and wellness, our physical health, and our mental health. So that's number four. Moving on. Number five on our list of eight ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. Number five is, use questions to find the answers. Use questions to find the answers. We have a neurological, psychological reflex. It's called instinctive elaboration. It's a reflex that the brain undertakes when it's presented with a question. Our minds are really hardwired and have evolved to find the answer to questions, to find the answer to problems, to find the answer to things that we pose ourselves, because it helps to create clarity in what's important to us. The more we ask a question, the more our brain becomes acclimated to seeking the answers for that question. The more emotional the question is, the more our brains become acclimated to seeking the answers to that question.

Think about popular TV today. We are in the golden age of these series, right? And there's so many great writers who are just competing, doing great work. There's so much. And they're very versed at creating these open loops in our mind by making you question like, "What happened? Who did it? What happened to her? What's going to happen?" We got to know the answer, boom, go to the next episode, got to find out what happened. Questions. Questions drive us and motivate our behaviors, but we can use this psychological interjection or psychological tool ourselves, within ourselves by posing ourselves valuable questions. Here's a statement for you. Curiosity killed the victimhood. You probably thought I was going to say

the cat. We're not killing the cats around here. Whoever did that, shame on you. All right, shame on you. Curiosity killed the cat. I have no idea where that came from. But curiosity killed the victimhood. By having some introspection, it puts power back into our hands. And so, a couple of things. Number one, we have a dominant question that we're generally asking subconsciously, unconsciously, that's motivating so much of our lives. And we've talked about this on the show before, specifically with accelerated learning expert Jim Kwik.

And he said the ability to survey and talk with all of these great people, these great thinkers, and dig and investigate what is their dominant question, right? So, the dominant question for one of the biggest movie stars in the world that he spent time with was, how can I make this moment magical? Dominant question, always asking that thing. For me, when I was dealing with my health issues, chronic disease diagnosis, that was so-called incurable, was why me? Why me? Why won't somebody help me? It kept me imprisoned, it kept me feeling like a victim, because this was not about anything that I'm capable of. This is about the external world, getting some kind of help from someone else. Not to say that people, externally, can't be great supporters and teachers and coaches and provide services, but ultimately, we are the ones who make the choices that control our destiny.

And so that question shifted when I transformed my health, it shifted almost instantly. Two years of suffering, but the change... Change doesn't take long. Change happens instantaneously. But what usually takes time is getting ourselves to the place where we actually make that change or make that decision. And instantly, two years of suffering, I asked, "What can I do to get healthier? What can I do to feel better?" And it changed my entire world, and it allowed me to be here with you today. So, curiosity killed the victimhood. Now, what is your dominant question? Be aware of that. What are you constantly asking? This could be something that is detracting or something that is affirmative. This could be things along the lines of like, "How can I get people to like me? How am I going to f*ck up today? How are things going to go against me? How are things not going to go my way today?"

There's a different variation of these things and many other questions that can become our dominant question. But if it's similar to myself... Again, it could be just something in the vein of why me? Or it could be affirmative. "How can I make this day truly special? How can I serve today?" That's the first question that I ask when I wake up in the morning. I've chosen to put that top of mind. The first thing that I ask. When I become aware that I am aware that I'm awake, "How can I serve today?" But you don't have to just have one question by the way, because I can get so caught up in service that I can lose myself. So, I started to add on. So how can I serve today? Take a breath. How can I be more vibrant, healthy, and energetic today? Second set of questions. Take a breath. Let's go. Let's get after it. So, I'm programming myself to ask these questions.

First thing, I'm still in this kind of alpha-theta transitionary to the waking state of beta, just when I become aware, how can I serve today? How can I be more vibrant, healthy, and energetic today? I invite you to choose your dominant question, to reprogram your mind so that this begins to become automatic. And you start to look for things in the world, look for opportunities in the world. I look, I'm unconscious of it. I'm constantly looking for places that I can be of service, and today, which took me years to get to this place, looking for ways that I can be more vibrant myself, more healthy myself, instead of sacrificing my own health in order to serve. We can have both. It's a both-end world. All right? Also using questions as the answer, we can also use questions to grow our awareness and our mindfulness. For example, when we are working to change our behaviors, to change our habits, doing that inner work, when we have a craving, right? Maybe we've been eating really well, been eating real food, whole foods that we can actually recognize where they come from, minimally processed for a few weeks. But now we got a craving, a strange craving for Captain Crunch.

Suddenly... And by the way, it's not Captain Crunch. It's Cap'n, Cap'n, Cap'n Crunch. He's not certified in anything. He hasn't been through any training, alright? He's one of those... He's one of those catfishers, alright? That's probably what he's the Cap'n of, catfishing, a catfishing boat, alright, getting us to take action towards eating something that is so far removed from anything natural. Most of you have no idea where the origin of this substance comes from. Where... What stuff on earth could have created this abomination, right? Not to say that it's not delicious, not to say that I haven't had my fair share of bowls, especially the Crunch Berries, by the way, right? Do you know also they went from not just Cap'n Crunch to Crunch Berries? They have all berries. All but Crunch Berries. It's another variety, right?

And so, when I have... We'll just say again, we've been eating clean three weeks, strange sensation for Cap'n Crunch comes up, we can use questions to gain an awareness and mindfulness by asking questions of ourselves and of our psyche. We can question these temporary sensations or cravings. We can ask, just take a moment and ask, "Where is this sensation coming from in my body? Where is this sensation actually coming from within my body?" And once we identify that maybe the sensation is coming from our throat, maybe the sensation is coming from our heart region, maybe the sensation is coming from that root chakra, feeling a little activity, right, where is this sensation, this craving coming from, and then we can ask, "Oh," can identify and say, "Oh, that's interesting," right? No judgment, "That's interesting."

What does the sensation feel like, right? Start to give it some personification, an anthropomorphic transmutation. Now, that's a lot of big stuff there. But basically, giving it personality, creating this persona out of this experience, so it's a disassociation, it's no longer just you with some uncontrollable urge, right? We've given it an identity. "Mm, where is this sensation coming from? That's interesting. What does the sensation feel like?" We can start to

practice more mindfulness, more awareness within our own bodies by asking questions. Do some internal investigation, get your Inspector Gadget on, go within.

Alright, moving on, number six. It's our list of eight ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. Number six is leverage the reward pathways within your brain, alright? We have very primal thrusts towards... There I go thrusting again. We have very primal drives towards moving towards pleasure and away from pain. We have a hard wiring. Our brain and every cell in our bodies is driven to move towards pleasure and away from pain. It's just the state of affairs. Now, with that said, there are very powerful ways to engage and consciously utilizing those pathways of reward and/or pain avoidance. Some of us have a tendency... This is the whole carrot versus the stick concept, right, to get the donkey to move, move that ass. By the way, I'm talking about a donkey. So there's no need to bleep, okay? And I don't know where that whole connotation came from, where a donkey is an ass, and then we've got... Who knows? Interesting thing to look into one day, but that's the nature too. Google like, "Let me go look where this name came from with that ass."

So, the carrot is putting the carrot, dangling the carrot in front of the donkey to get it to move forward, or slapping that ass with a stick to get it to move forward, alright? Pain or reward motivation, right? We all tend to have a little bit more of a motivation through one of those means. Some of us are more reward-based, and some of us like to get smacked on, or some of us like to have pain, or have a tendency towards pain motivating us towards taking action, okay, or avoiding things. And so being aware. This goes back to the self-assessment, but ultimately, we can still... Because we're all driven by both of them. We can intentionally leverage the reward pathways. Remember the statement that neurons that fire together wire together. It's very important. Neurons that fire together, wire together. If we are working to shift our habits, we're essentially wanting to replace a "bad habit" or what we might consider a non-habit to dissolve that pathway by not engaging in it, not allowing it to keep firing and to create a new one, alright? They don't just get replaced, alright? It is a practice that can be built through repetition that's going to lay down more myelin on the new practice of the new habit, or, and/or through emotion.

An emotional investment helps to solidify connection even more. This is why we tend to really remember traumatic experiences from our childhood, right? They could be very real to us even today, or maybe great moments of pleasure and happiness and joy. That thing might have happened just once, but it's eternally with us because of that emotional element. Emotion is real. It's so powerful and it literally creates substance. And so, we can leverage all of these things, but most importantly, in this context that we're talking about now, it's to leverage the reward pathways. So how do we do this? We want to intentionally create rewards that are connected to the habit that we want to create. So, neurons that fire together, wire together.

So, we want to do the action and have another outcome or reward coming along with that action.

So, for example, maybe we wanted to create a new exercise habit. We just say we're going from zero days to three days a week and we give ourselves the reward of at the end of the week, "By doing my three days, I have a spa day waiting for me." Or "When I do my exercise, maybe it's just getting onto a recumbent, stationary bike. This is when I get to watch my favorite show that no one else... My family wants to watch with me, I get to watch my favorite show." So it's creating another reward. Neurons that fire together, wire together, that's driving and purposefully creating that reward-based learning. Maybe this is an opportunity to listen to your favorite album or your favorite playlist. Or this could be... Now, this comes with a caveat because in, general, when we're talking about rewarding healthy behaviors, food is generally not an ideal motivation if you don't have a healthy relationship with food.

That's the important caveat. We don't want to use food as a motivation and particularly if you don't have a healthy relationship with food. Not to say that food can't be a motivation because I'm going to be 100 with you, it absolutely can, because it's one of the joys. It's one of the experiences of life. Is so joyful. It's one of the great things about being alive is food. So this whole concept of eating to live and not living to eat, eat to live, eat to live, it's just food is just fuel. I'd like to see their track record on how many people have subscribed to that model and found success because it's denying the fact that food tastes good so that you eat it. So it tastes good. Now, I'm not talking about the food scientists manipulating our taste today. I'm talking about through our evolution, we're driven towards certain things because we want to experience the joys of engaging with our external environment. Part of that is tasting things. And so with that said, there's a great example of this with The Rock. The Rock does this cheat meal, which the word cheat, again, depending on our relationship with food, it can have some negative connotations because psychologically, if you're cheating on your diet, this could mean if cheating is associated cognitively to misbehaving to bad behavior, this could be associating yourself with bad behavior.

Bad behavior could mean you're a bad person. The list goes on and on. It could be a little bit of a whirlwind, a mess. And so be aware of these things. But for him, it works for him, cheat meal. He does these crazy stack of pancakes with peanut butter and all this stuff. That's his reward for dedicating himself and giving everything that he's got. The investment in his body, in his mind, in his performance, in his relationship. This is the reward. And that's cool if it's working for him. So with that said, this could be your pancakes on the weekend for a great week of clean eating and taking care of yourself. But again, if you don't have a healthy relationship with food, you don't necessarily want to use food as a motivation. This could be on the other side; you engage in and execute on your new fitness routine and you give yourself permission or a reward of getting yourself some new gear. Getting some new workout tights or tennis shoes

or shorts. Whatever it is. Giving yourself some kind of reward to affirm or, again, a reward-based learning. Neurons that fire together, wire together. Use that to your advantage. All right, we're going to move on to number seven on a list of eight ways to reprogram your brain and to make healthy choices.

Number seven is to protect your brain from insidious dysfunction. Protect your brain, the very organ that we're talking about reprogramming. Protect your brain from insidious dysfunction that makes all this stuff that we've been talking about much more challenging. Let's give an example. It's a societal norm, today more than ever. It's a societal norm to make things harder than they have to be. We make things so much harder for ourselves because we stack conditions against ourselves, and we often don't realize it because it's socially acceptable, it's normalized. Let me give you an example. A randomized crossover study published in *The Annals of Internal Medicine*, had healthy adult test subjects go just two days with restricted sleep, where they took a couple of hours away from their normal amount of sleep. And they had them do two other days where they were allowed to get adequate sleep. After compiling the data, when the participants were sleep deprived, their levels of Leptin, our body's primary satiety hormone, helping us to feel satisfied, that hormone decreased by an average of 18% in just two days.

Their levels of the hormone Ghrelin, this hunger-related hormone that drives us to eat, to seek food, to increase our appetite, their hormone Ghrelin increased by 28% in just two days. Feelings of hunger as a result, because those were objective measurements. Subjectively, their feelings of hunger increased by 24% and their appetite increased by 23%, in particular their appetite for calorie-dense, high-carbohydrate, higher-sugar foods. Their desire for those foods because the researchers gave them an option, they give them an opportunity to choose the foods that they want to eat. Their desire for high-carbohydrate, high-sugar foods increased by upwards of 45% in just two days.

We're saying we want to make healthier choices with our diet, yet, if we're sleep deprived, we're making it ridiculously harder on ourselves to achieve the result, achieve the actions associated with that result because our biology is getting screwed up. We're stacking conditions against ourselves, and we don't even realize it. How often is this taking place? Well, here in the United States, about 115 million of our citizens are regularly sleep-deprived. This is an epidemic, it's another... We got epidemics on epidemics. Alright, now here's the thing, when you become aware of this, you can use this to your advantage. Understanding that my poor sleep quality is leading me to have this psychological turmoil where I feel like I'm not following through on what I said, my willpower isn't strong, I'm giving up on myself and getting into the cycle of guilt, all those things, but you're a human, you're a human. If you're sleep-deprived, you're going to have this proclivity towards wanting to eat higher-calorie, higher-

carbohydrate, sweet foods. Sweet, salty, tasty, snacky things because your brain is actually losing blood flow.

And so, eating these very simple foods is a quick way to get that blood sugar up, to provide little spurts of energy. Because our brain is such an energy vacuum, such an energy siphon, that as we go on with sleep deprivation, it becomes more and more difficult for us, for our brains to actually manage and keep the lights on in a sense. So that brain power is dropping as time goes on. So, this is drawing us to, and we don't even realize it. What if we can put our attention on, "Okay, let me stack conditions in my favor. I know that my appetite increases, and my cravings increase when I'm sleep-deprived." Now I become aware of it, now I see it happen, versus just being a victim, like what the? And having guilt next...

The average person, would you say you don't know about The Model Health Show, you're one of the six people out there that don't know about it. And you have a sh*tty night of sleep, you get up the next day, you've been eating clean for a couple of weeks. You're just, "I'm taking on this new diet and lifestyle, I'm going to get myself healthy, avoid these chronic diseases that have riddled my family." You get up and by lunchtime, you've got your hand in a bag of whatever, in the bag of Doritos, bag of Flamin' Hot Cheetos, got the orange, red fingertips. You're just like, "What the? Man, I was really doing good." Not understanding, your appetite, your cravings, your drive towards those things has gone up, this is your biology. Your biology will inevitably trump your willpower, it's just how we're wired up. Stack conditions in our favor. Our willpower can be enormous, but our biology is going to eventually overtake everything because of our drive to stay alive.

Protect your brain from insidious dysfunctions, stack conditions in your favor. Obviously, improving our sleep quality and also, there are some nutritional components, and this is one of my favorite things. And this was from a randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled human trial, this was published in 2016. They found that after just six weeks of use, Bacopa, Bacopa, the long storied Bacopa significantly improved speed of visual information processing, learning rate, memory consolidation, and even decreased anxiety in study participants. You combine Bacopa with Royal Jelly, one of my other favorite brain-nourishing nutrient sources. This study was published in advanced, biomedical research found that Royal Jelly has a potential to improve spatial learning, attention, and memory. Plus, researchers in Japan found that Royal Jelly has been found to facilitate the differentiation of all types of brain cells and found that Royal Jelly has the power to stimulate neurogenesis, the creation of new brain cells in the memory center of the brain and the hippocampus. Come on, Cap'n Crunch can't do that. This is real, this is powerful, this is storied, but also today we have real published data on this with scientists asking these questions and analyzing these nutrients to see just how affirmative, the knowledge coming from our ancestors, how it really is remarkable for the human organism.

I get these combined together in B.Smart. This is coming from Beekeeper's Naturals. Go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model, you get 25% off automatically from each and every order. Go to B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-S Naturals dot com, forward slash model. Again, you get 25% off your entire purchase, automatically taken off at checkout. Why Beekeeper's Naturals is in a league of their own? Number one, they're dedicated to sustainable beekeeping, but number two, they do third-party testing for over 70 plus pesticide residues commonly found in other bee products. Also, they go beyond that, testing for pervasive offenders like DDT, heavy metals like arsenic and lead, and even things like E. Coli and Salmonella. They do stuff the right way. B.Smart. That's my favorite thing from Beekeeper's, well one of my favorite things. I love the Superfood Honey as well, the Propolis. I love them all but in particular, if we're talking about cognitive function, B.Smart is really in a league of its own. Head over there, check them out. Beekeepersnaturals.com/model for 25% off.

Now, let's go ahead and move on to our final one. This is number eight on our eight ways to reprogram your brain to make healthy choices. This should be mandatory when we're looking at changing our beliefs and reprogramming our mind. Remember its beliefs control our thoughts, our thoughts control our actions, and our actions control our results. This process is going to break down when we're trying to work towards creating new habits. Our conscious control is generally going to fail at some point due to stress. So, what we can do to insulate ourselves against that stress is to, number eight, increase our resilience to stress. Proactively, intentionally increase your resilience to stress. The prefrontal cortex is a large part of what makes us human, really is the more human part of our brain. It makes us so much more different from the rest of the animal kingdom. And it's responsible for social control for distinguishing between right and wrong, for forethought, the ability to map things out and see like, "If I make this choice then this thing's going to happen." To problem solve in so many different ways, it's really, really remarkable.

But that part of the brain is especially subject to shutting down or having reduced activity, and the limbic part of the brain and specifically the amygdala, which is much more emotionally driven takes over when we are overrun with excess stress. Essentially, it's an amygdala hijack that takes place. So, what if we can proactively build up our resilience to stress because stress is going to happen by implementing very purposeful practices so that when stress happens, our brains are more resilient to be able to continue operating at a high level. Again, having that space between stimulus and response. So how can we build our resilience to stress? Meditation is one of those mediums. You can also combine meditation with cold immersion. That's another thing that's become very popular in recent years, because it's a way to proactively expose your body to a stressor that has all of these beneficial side effects, including improvements with our immune system, immunomodulation, improvements with our

metabolism, brown fat ratio, the list goes on and on. But in particular, it's helping to improve this dance between our parasympathetic and our sympathetic nervous systems.

Helping our bodies to be more acclimated during stress. So, when that stress is happening, we can use meditation to help to calm ourselves under this environmental stressor, or... That's just one way. Or you can just even bite down and white knuckle your way through it. And just even that increases your capacity to white knuckle through stressful situations. There are many different ways to use this implement, also so we got extreme cold over here then we've got the extreme heat, but not extreme, extreme like we are out here freezing our root chakra off or like getting to a place where we're burning ourselves but using saunas. That's another practice becoming widely popular today, but it's been used for thousands of years. Sweat lodge gang it's been out there for a long time. Heat shock proteins, improvements in metabolic function, detoxification, the list goes on and on and on. Utilizing that exposure is another tool to help to increase our resilience to stress.

Exercise, specifically strength training, exposing ourselves to a stressor. We just think about in our culture, the outer manifestation of changes with our body composition. Not looking at the dynamic changes that happen with our brain to operate under conditions of stress and to proactively put ourselves into a place of challenge. These are just a few ways to increase our resilience to stress. Putting ourselves in stressful conditions, safe stresses though. So maybe having a fear of public speaking is a big thing. So proactively putting yourself in a position where you're doing that thing to increase your resilience to it. So, joining like a Toastmasters or some form of speaking unit and developing a skill set there. So, there's so many things we can do proactively. Trying new things is stressful, trying a new sport, trying a new brain activity. Engaging in new relationships, all these things are psychological stressors that we can proactively utilize to increase our resilience to stress.

I hope that you got a lot of value out of this episode. If you did, please share this out with your friends and family. You can tag me. I'm @shawnmodel on Instagram. Just take a screenshot of this episode, share it up. All right, sharing is caring. I truly, truly do appreciate that. And of course, you can send this directly from the podcast app that you're listening on to a friend or family who's going to really extract a lot of value from this insight. Because again, we're often trying to treat the symptom, trying to change our actions without really addressing our identity. And these key insights can help us to address that belief system so that we can help to shift and reprogram our brain so that we can make healthy choices more automatic. We got some epic shows coming your way very, very soon. So, make sure to stay tuned, take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode.

And if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much. And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.