

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 621

How Your Brain Health Controls Your Mental Health

With Guest Dr. Daniel Amen

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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 your tuning into me today. According to the CDC, more than 50% of Americans will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime. To say that this is an epidemic is an understatement. Right now, in recent decades, we've seen the explosion in rates of anxiety, of depression, bipolar disorder, ADHD, schizophrenia, the list truly does go on and on and on, so much so that the CDC has now stated that over 50% of our citizens will be diagnosed with a mental health disorder at some point in their lifetime. We have these multiple epidemics and yet we have very few solutions.

Now, as you know, we've talked about this on many episodes of The Model Health Show, some of the underlying components and understanding, the outcomes, what we see with mental health issues being related to our diet, being related to our lifestyle practices, but really not being able to navigate our own internal psychology and oftentimes treating these symptoms of mental health issues rather than addressing the root causes. And so, I wanted to put together a true masterclass with a leading authority in this field to help us to truly make a breakthrough in these mental health epidemics, because I believe that we have the capacity for so much more. We have the capacity to turn the situation around and to provide our citizens with real world tangible, viable, effective solutions to navigate our mental health, moving forward. This has never been needed more, and I'm so grateful to be able to share this powerful compilation with you today.

Today, you're going to be hearing from Dr. Daniel Amen, and he's a double board-certified psychiatrist and 12-time, New York Times best-selling author. And he's also the founder of Amen clinics, that is the world's largest database of brain scans for psychiatry, totaling more than 200,000 SPECT imaging scans on patients from over 155 countries. Now, one of the most remarkable things about Dr. Amen's work is that he's actually looking at the organ that he's treating. Whereas the field of psychiatry is often diagnosing "chemical imbalances based on a conversation." And so, he's going to share his valuable insights into the field itself and what he's really doing to get his patients well. So again, this is really powerful and he's one of my absolute favorite people. He's been a mentor of mine for many, many years. So, I'm really grateful to be able to share this compilation, of really important conversations that I've had with Dr. Daniel Amen.

Now, one of our collective loves Dr. Amen and I, as far as brain supportive nutrition, is green tea. And it's because green tea contains an amino acid called L-theanine, and it has one of the rare nutrients that has the ability to gracefully waltz its way across the blood brain barrier and to increase the activity of the neurotransmitter GABA in the brain, which helps us to reduce

anxiety and make us feel more centered and more relaxed. And it's definitely helpful when we want to be more productive, feeling more centered, relaxed, and focused. Now, one of the other ways that L-theanine works to improve our focus was featured in the peer-reviewed journal Brain Topography. And the researchers observed that L-theanine intake increases the frequency of our alpha brain waves indicating reduced stress, enhanced focus, and even increasing levels of creativity. The researchers noted that sipping on 2-4 cups per day, was known to have carried the greatest brain benefits.

Now, green tea in and of itself is remarkable, but for me, the absolute pinnacle of green tea is Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea from Pique teas. It's shaded 35% longer for extra L-theanine content, and it's also crafted by a Japanese tea master. There are less than 15 of these folks in the entire world and Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea is one of these very special teas crafted again by a Japanese tea master. And here's one of the most important elements is that it's quadruple toxin-screened for purity. Teas can be one of the most contaminated entities. Unfortunately, there's so many great benefits to extract from a variety teas out there, but the industry is just not very well regulated, and there's a lot of toxicants coming through in teas and even microplastics and heavy metals, obviously pesticides and herbicides. You can circumvent that by going organic, but you're still going to run into the potential with heavy metal contaminants and also microplastics, but Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea, again is quadruple toxin-screened for purity, no added sugar, preservatives, nothing artificial.

Go to pikelife.com/model, that's P-I-Q-U-E-L-I-F-E.com/model. You get 10% off the Sun Goddess Matcha green tea, and also there are other incredible varieties, award-winning teas and tea flavors over at Pique life. Again, go to pikelife.com/model for 10% off storewide, and now let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled, “This is a fun podcast” by Conscious marketing and PR. “This is a fun podcast. I love the diversity of topics. Each episode is an opportunity to learn and explore a new thing that helps transform your health and wellness to the better.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Awesome. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple podcast, truly does mean a lot. And if you have to do so, pop over to Apple podcast, leave a review for the Model Health Show. On that note, let's get into this powerful conversation, compilation of conversations with Dr. Daniel Amen. Now in this first segment, you're going to hear a conversation that I had with Dr. Amen, and he's going to share the fundamental flaw in the field of psychiatry and mental health. And you're also going to discover the critical connection between mental health and brain health. You'll also learn about the importance of blood flow to the brain and essential ways to improve it, plus a whole lot more. So, without further ado, let's get into this first segment from this powerful conversation that I had with Dr. Daniel Amen.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: When I decided to become a psychiatrist, I hated the term mental illness, because I thought it's so bad that nobody would want it. It's like you lose your mind and it completely ignores the organ of behavior, which is the brain. And when I started looking at the brain, I'm like, "Oh, these aren't mental." They're brain. And when you get your brain right, your mind follows. And then I had this great case early on when I started imaging. He called himself the anger broker of the Sacramento Valley. And I saw him after he got out of a psychiatric hospital for a suicide attempt. His wife left him because he was abusive, and he was mean to me, he was mean to my staff, and I'd just started scanning people. And I told him on my third visit, I'm like, "You need to go get scanned, and you have to pay for it, because I'm not going to treat you unless I understand what's going on, because I need to get you better quickly 'cause you're mean. And I don't like people being mean to my staff. It's like these people are my family." And he went and he had damage to the left side of his brain. And I'm like, "Did you ever have a brain injury?" And he said, "No."

And I learned quickly, "Are you sure?" And so, I asked him 10 times. And riding a bicycle down the Rocky Mountains, he crashed and broke his helmet on the left side. And I'm like, "Oh." And I put him on a combination of medicines targeted to his brain. And within three months, he's the nicest person. I mean, he brings flowers to my staff, he's bringing candy before I knew that was really a weapon of mass destruction. But get your brain right and you're kinder. You're more loving, you're more thoughtful. So, his wife had no idea. She just thought she was dealing with a jerk when he was brain damaged. And when I got his brain better, he was more loving, more thoughtful. And so, I'm opposed to the whole, "You have a mental illness." What the hell does that mean? It's like you have a brain illness. And if I get your brain better, you're better.

Your brain is the most oxygen-hungry organ in the body. It's 2% of your body's weight for most people. But it uses 20-30 percent of the calories you consume of the blood flow of the oxygen. And any deprivation state can give you learning problems, can give you ADHD, can give you emotional problems. And people aren't thinking about it because they don't look, they look at your behavior. So, I'm also a child psychiatrist and during my training, no one ever talked to us about the brain. That's insane.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's insane. Totally insane. And so, I just want to plant that seed for people, for parents, for other family members, for yourself, that... And adult ADHD is a big growing thing today as well, and your behavior doesn't necessarily mean that there's something wrong with you as a person, because we look at it as a character defect, versus there might be something wrong with your brain. And if you could talk about, how do you get in there and take a peek with the SPECT imaging, what does that tell us?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, when I was in the Army, so I was in the Army twice, once as an enlisted soldier, and then as an officer. I ended up being the chief psychiatrist at Fort Irwin. It's in the middle of the Mojave Desert. And there, I learned biofeedback, which is I can use instruments to measure your body and then teach you how to change them, like I can teach you how to warm your hands or relax your muscles or breathe with your diaphragm, all very helpful. But I learned about quantitative EEG, where I could look at the electrical activity in your brain, and then once I knew your signature, I could change it.

So, I got really excited about imaging around 1987, 1988. But in 1991, I went to a lecture on brain SPECT imaging. SPECT looks at blood flow and activity. It looks at how your brain works. And it gives you these beautiful 3D images of brain function. And so, I just got obsessed with it, and I really literally started scanning everybody I knew because I came to realize, "How the heck do I know what's going on in your brain unless I look at it?" And SPECT basically tells you three things. Good activity, too little or too much. And then my job becomes balancing your brain, because if it's working too hard, we want to calm it down. If it works too hard, you can be anxious, you can be irritable, you can be rigid and inflexible and when things don't go your way, you get upset. Or if it's not working hard enough, you have brain fog, you're impulsive, you don't make good decisions, you can't focus. And so, I'm always working to balance someone's brain. But I want that image.

I'm treating this one woman, and I just adore her, and her brain was a disaster when I met her, because she grew up around a toxic chemical plant. And, yes, she had emotional trauma. And, yes, there was psychological work to do but imagine it like hardware and software, if the hardware doesn't work right in a computer, you can't program it. And so, she had been going to therapy forever, but it wasn't taking because she didn't have the hardware, the brain function to take care of it. So, using things like hyperbaric oxygen and supplements and really working on getting the organ healthy. Then gave her the opportunity that psychotherapy would have a lasting positive impact for her. So, I'm never opposed to psychotherapy. I'm not opposed to psychiatric drugs. I'm just opposed to doing all of that in the dark and calling it a mental illness that shames people.

So, when I told my dad in 1979, I wanted to be a psychiatrist he asked me why I didn't want to be a real doctor. Why I wanted to be a nut doctor hanging out with nuts all day long. And my dad would never get father of the year award, but 40 years later, I sort of get why he said that, because we don't act like real doctors. And do you know of any medical specialist that never looks at the organ they treat, and they end up putting you on powerful medications in the dark. So, I'm in a new docu-series with Justin Bieber. So, he has a new series on YouTube called Seasons.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Seasons, yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And I'm in episode five as his brain health doctor. So, I've been his psychiatrist for five years. And when he first came to me, another doctor had diagnosed him with bipolar disorder and put him on Lithium. And when I looked at him, I'm like, "He doesn't have bipolar disorder." His brain's sleepy. He has terrible ADD, and he has a left temporal lobe problem. And it came out that he also had an infection like Lyme, that was attacking his brain. And so, if you don't really see the big picture, easy, especially for someone like Justin, to call him bad, to call him spoiled, and you do that with rock stars. But he's not bad, he was damaged. And through the program, he's just better than he's ever been.

SHAWN STEVENSON: True story, I was watching Seasons last night for the first time, and I didn't know that there was this connection. And you can see also the change in his demeanor, in his communication, in his behavior. And we just attributed it to, "Oh, he's just maturing." But he was actually getting his brain healthy. That's amazing.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Oh, no, the darkness that that poor boy went through. And often the issues we have, they are not ours, they are our parents or our grandparents. He... Mother was a single mother when she got pregnant with him. And she went to live at the Salvation Army because the grandparents were pretty unhappy with her. And she was a child when she had him and she was in a conflicted relationship with the dad. So, he's basically bathed, born in stress hormones. And then he played hockey, there were concussions, there was early drug use... From a brain health perspective, it's a disaster. And fame wears out, the pleasure centers in the brain, which puts people at risk for substance abuse and high-risk behaviors. So yes, it's taken a while to get him back. But it's possible. And how exciting is that? That you're not stuck with the brain you have. And I have five of his scans and you could just see them progressively get better.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're getting close to 200,000 scans... Incredible. It's by far the biggest database, but it's really, again, shifting the conversation. You're in a position where you can shift the conversation and say, mental illness, and the stigma attached to that psychiatric disorders, the stigma attached to that... It's brain health. That's where we need to move the conversation to... That's what we need to talk about. And one of the things that you highlight in the book are personality types. Like, what is your brain's personality type. Can you talk a little bit about that?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, you know one of the things... One of the first things I learned is everybody's brain is different. And my first book on types was on ADD. It's like ADD is not one thing, it's seven things. Stop calling it one thing because stimulants help two of the seven types, and they make five of the seven types worse.

And then I wrote a book called *Change Your Brain, Change Your Body*, which was a big best-seller. And I'm like, obesity is not one thing. There are impulsive over-eaters, compulsive over-eaters, sad over-eaters, anxious over-eaters. Know their brain type, and you can help them get their bodies right. And then I realized, "Well, all of us have our own type." And in the book, I talked about this. The balanced brain type, the spontaneous brain types, my ADD group, my persistent brain types, my OCD group, there's cautious... 'Cause with me when I was growing up, we were in the anxious group or the sensitive type, the sad group. And there are really 16 different types. Knowing your type can lead you to the right strategies.

Talk to my... Your life and know if you're spontaneous, but your boss is persistent, there's certain things to balance out. Or what's common is the husband's spontaneous and the wife is persistent, and it causes no end of trouble at home.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh my gosh. And we don't even know it's happening though. That's the crazy part.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Nobody thinks about their brain. Why? 'Cause you can't see it. You can see the wrinkles in your skin or the fat around your belly, and you can do something when you're unhappy with it. But because nobody looks at their brain, it's just not part of the conversation and it needs to be because your brain runs everything. It controls how you think, how you feel, how you act, how you get along in your marriage, what kind of father you are, or what kind of businessperson you are. And if you don't take care of it, you begin to make poor decisions 'cause your brain is the organ of every decision you make. And you know this, if you don't sleep right, well, your brain doesn't work right, and then your decisions the next day, including how you talk to your spouse are not as good as they could be, which then has a snowball effect of negativity.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You've put together this protocol, the BRIGHT MINDS, and are targeting these specific things that you know are proven to work again. Tens of thousands of patients, hundreds of thousands of scans almost. I think you're getting close to 200,000. And this, for me, was really eye-opening, because it's so simple, but I think we overlook so many pieces of this. So, I want to go through some of these... And this is a acronym, BRIGHT MINDS. And the first one, the B, is blood flow. And that's something that you can actually take a peek at and see where the circulation is happening in the brain.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Yeah, And SPECT is a study that looks at blood flow and activity. And so why is blood important? It brings nutrients, but equally important, it takes away toxins. So, if you don't have healthy blood flow to your brain or any organ, really, it prematurely ages that organ, because it can't get rid of the toxins. And so how do you know if you have low blood flow to your brain if you don't get a scan? You have hypertension, high blood pressure, and 60% of

Americans are either hypertensive or pre-hypertensive. If you have any form of heart disease, if you're sedentary, if you have erectile dysfunction, and it's like 40% of 40-year-old men have erectile dysfunction, 70% of 70-year-old men have erectile dysfunction, which means 40% of 40-year-old men have brain dysfunction, and 70% of 70-year-old men have brain dysfunction, 'cause if you have blood flow problems anywhere, it likely means they're everywhere. And in the book, I have these checklists. Well, how do you know if you have blood flow issues? And then, well, what do you do? You exercise. Walk like you're late, 45 minutes, four or five times a week. Lift weights twice a week. Keep it simple.

And then I talk about racket sports because people who play racket sports live longer than everybody else. People who play football and soccer live less long than anybody else, but... 'cause of the head trauma, but racket sports because they activate the cerebellum. So, the cerebellum is this cool... Cerebellum is Latin for little brain. It's about 10% of the brain's volume in the back bottom part of the brain, but it has 50% of the brain's neurons. And it's like the CPU, the Central Processing Unit of the brain. And when it's not right, the rest of your brain doesn't work right. So, coordination exercises, my favorite is table tennis, can really help. And then there are foods. Foods like beets increase blood flow. Cayenne pepper increases blood flow. Oregano, rosemary, cinnamon, all have been shown to increase blood flow. Supplements like ginkgo and vinpocetine can increase blood flow. So, none of this is hard. Know which of the risk factors you have, and then just choose to do one thing for them, because you love yourself. Getting well is never about I should do this; I shouldn't do that. It's a sign of how much you love yourself.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I love that. I love that so much. Simple things. We can all add in one or two of those things. And I definitely, and I think you'd agree, the biggest thing here is the movement. Our genes expect us to walk. And it's... I get into this conversation. We can do some amazing things with the human body. We can do all these different flips and we can squat hundreds of pounds. But what are we really designed to do? We're designed to walk. And walking elicits so many benefits. And one of those is helping to normalize blood pressure, blood sugar, because that's another one of these that we talk about here. So, with BRIGHT minds, you've got blood flow, retirement aging, which I want to talk about in a second, but inflammation is the next one, the I. So, we'll come back to the R. But let's talk a little bit about inflammation. Because, again, that's one of those things, it seems to be invisible, but we do have some markers we can look at. And inflammation can just terrorize our brains.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: It's a major cause of dementia and depression. Autism. It's also been associated with ADHD and PTSD. Inflammation is a disaster. It comes from the Latin word to set a fire. When you have chronic inflammation, it's like you have a low-level fire in your body destroying your organs. We can measure it with some blood tests like C-reactive protein, or the Omega-3 index. And I actually did a study of 50 consecutive patients who came to our clinic

who were not taking fish oil, 49 of them had sub-optimal levels of Omega-3 fatty acids. A study from the CDC came out and said 97% of Americans were low in Omega-3 fatty acids, which you got from fish. Now, you can get plant sources, but the plant sources, like nuts and seeds and avocados, they don't have EPA and DHA, which are the two Omega-3s that really work in your brain. And so, I'm a huge fan of sustainable fish, but also high-quality fish oil, because it can help put out the fire of inflammation.

If your gut's not right, you'll likely have inflammation, because you end up with this thing called leaky gut, where things get inside your body that your gut should have protected you from, and that can cause inflammation. You also know if you have inflammation if you have rosacea, so if you have this redness around your face, or if you have joint pain. And curcumins is... Which come from the spice turmeric, help decrease inflammation. So, Omega-3 fatty acids help, curcumins help. Another major cause of inflammation is gum disease.

When you have periodontal disease, it makes it more likely you have systemic inflammation, heart disease, and brain disease. So, before I read the research, I didn't really care that much about my teeth. Now, I'm a flossing fool because if my gums aren't right, my heart's not right, my brain's not right. So, taking care of inflammation. So how do you know if you have it C-reactive protein, omega-3 index. Do you have joint pain or rosacea? What can I do? I can take omega-3 fatty acids. I can floss. I can, take probiotics to help my gut heal and be healthy. Yeah. Simple. Not hard. Yeah. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I definitely want to talk about retirement aging. This is a big one. And I didn't think about this one until I read it, in the book. So, let's talk about that one. So why is this included in the BRIGHT MIND strategy? We all need to pay attention to this.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, I hate this, and I published a study last year on 62,000 scans. It's the largest imaging study ever on how the brain ages. And it's just bad news I mean, as we age, our brain gets less and less active, but it doesn't have to. And what we discovered is when you stop learning, your brain starts dying. And so now think about kids who have ADHD or learning problems. They don't like school. And the reason they don't like school is 'cause they're not good at it. And so, they're like no, I don't want to do that anymore. So lifelong learning doesn't become part of who they are, which then increases their risk of dementia. As we age, we need to be more serious about our health, not less serious. And one of the things I discovered is the scans can actually tell 20 years before you have Alzheimer's disease. If you're headed for the dark place. So, Lisa Gibbons is a friend of mine. She's a radio, television personality. I was on her show a long time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Was the entertainment tonight? She was on that too?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: She was on entertainment tonight. And then she had her own show and her mother and grandmother died with Alzheimer's disease. And I start going, you need to come and see me. And I love her. I mean just love her as a friend. And she's like no, no. And then about 12 years ago, she went through a divorce and got depressed and she came to see me, and her brain was terrible. And I'm like, your brain is headed to where your grandmother and mother's brains went. I said, but it doesn't have to. And she did everything I asked her to. And last year we did a program together and we re-scanned her and it's so much better. So would you want a better brain, 10 years from now, who wouldn't right. I mean, I want mine to be better tomorrow, but I'm 65 now, do I want a better brain at 75? You bet. 'Cause I know what most 75-year-old brains look like, and it's not good news, but you just have to be serious. And the older you get, the more serious you need to be.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, we talked about a couple of the pieces of BRIGHT MIND. We talked about blood flow, retirement aging, inflammation. We're not going to go through all of these. You got to pick up the book to go through all of these. But you mentioned, of course we briefly touched on this earlier. Trauma, head trauma can be a big causative agent here. But also, it's not just physical trauma, but emotional trauma. You talk about Mindstorms. So, we have the acronym BRIGHT and then we have MINDS. The M is for mind storms. Let's talk about that one.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, it's an abnormal electrical activity in the brain, especially in an area called the temporal lobes. And most people don't know about it, but what I discovered early on, if your temporal lobes aren't right, you have mood instability, irritability, temporal problems, dark thoughts come out of the blue for no reason. And actually, anti-seizure medications or the ketogenic diet, which is not good for everyone. It's terrible for people who have OCD. They become more OCD on it. But for people who have these Mindstorms, it really helps settle them to be healthier, more normal, happier. And I discovered them from looking, but there was actually a book written in 1980 by Jack Dreyfus the founder of the famous Dreyfus Mutual Fund. That when he went on an anticonvulsant, his depression went away, his anxiety went away. He said he'd had suicidal thoughts for decades.

And three days on this medicine, he didn't need his shrink anymore. And I've just... I've had some miraculous cases when I'm like oh, this is a temporal lobe issue. And Justin who we talked about, it's one of his risk factors that he had it, whether you know it was from the infection he had or the three concussions he had that, when we stabilized that part of his brain, he just did so much better. And it's just something people don't know about is that it's a psychiatric illness? Absolutely not. It's a brain illness. And so, understanding the difference is important.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. I don't think that we equate, and I know that just on a normal day to day basis, we don't think about all the electrical activity happening upstairs and that's what's creating all of this. Like even the thoughts that we're having, my ability to speak to you

right now is just this electric mind storm taking place. But we can also have severe storms if we are in a state of stress, if we're in a state of... Even a lower activity because we're not being stimulated, and so what I want to ask you about is... Again, we've touched on this, but I really want to get more of a definitive answer. When we are subjected to being in a stressful environment or growing up in a traumatic environment, how can that actually damage our brain?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: That changes your brain. Children who grow up in violent homes have the same brain patterns as soldiers in a war. Think about that. And when you grow up in an unpredictable environment, so when I was a child psychiatrist, I studied children and grandchildren of alcoholics. My first wife grew up in a very violent alcoholic home, and I'm like, "Why doesn't she like me?" She's the reason I became a psychiatrist. When I got married when I was a second-year medical student, and then a couple of months later, just a couple of months later, she'd tried to kill herself, and I brought her to see a wonderful psychiatrist, and I came to realize if he helped her, he wouldn't just help her, he'd help me, he'd help our kids. And then I found out... And I dated her, I talked to this girl every day for three years when we were teenagers, and I had no idea her dad was beating her mom, that the police were being called because the secrecy in alcoholic homes is so high, and then I learned that when you grow up in that chronically stressful environment, you learn not to talk, not to trust, and not to feel, and it can have a big negative impact on your relationships.

But when I started scanning people who had post-traumatic stress disorder from these dysfunctional childhoods, their emotional brain was just lit up and so, as opposed to traumatic brain injury where we see decreases on the scan, in PTSD, we see increases in their emotional centers, so their amygdala becomes larger and more sensitized, their hippocampus, their cingulate gyrus. So, it's a pattern, I call the diamond pattern, and I will show some scans in the brain of this, and so they end up always watching for the shoe to drop, and my wife, Tana says when she first met me that she didn't trust me, 'cause she didn't trust I was nice. I mean, it really took her 18 months. She comes, she goes, she comes, she goes, she was like, nobody is that nice, 'cause it didn't fit her experience growing up with people that were unpredictable, and so it changes your brain, but it also changes your mindset.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So powerful. So powerful. So just jumping forward a little bit here in the acronym MIND, so BRIGHT MINDS. So, we talked a little bit about Mindstorms, I want to talk about the D, diabetes. This one is huge.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Yes, huge in any way that you say it So why is it important? Why would a psychiatrist want to talk about blood sugar and weight, so diabetes is you're either diabetic or pre-diabetic, means your fasting blood sugar's high or and/or you're overweight or obese. According to a new study from the Journal of the American Medical Association, 50% of the

American population is diabetic or pre-diabetic. Think about that. That means or... And why do you not want a high blood sugar? Because as blood sugar levels go up, it actually begins to erode your blood vessels, making them more brittle and likely to break, which impairs healing.

And anybody who's loved someone who died with diabetes, you just know the disaster that it causes. My father-in-law got it when he was 55, and he told me he was going to kill himself if he had to take insulin. Well, he ended up at 60 having to take insulin. He didn't kill himself, but the diabetes killed him. He ended up losing his legs, losing his eyesight, losing his heart, and then losing his mind. You need healthy blood sugar and healthy blood flow, and it's just rampant because of our diets, but what people also don't know, we didn't talk much about the T, the toxins.

Our toxic load is damaging, not only our brain, but also our pancreas that produces insulin to help us, and so putting toxic products on your body, eating foods with pesticides, breathing toxic air, drinking toxic water, and we know that the water in this country is toxic in many, many areas, not just Flint, although Flint was a bad, bad example of it. So, if we have diabetes escalating at epidemic rates, what's happened to obesity? Since 1982, obesity in children was 4%, now it's 32%, it's gone up 800%. And when we were growing up, we just don't remember it, but now 72% of American adults are overweight, 40% of us are obese, and I published two studies that showed as your weight goes up, the actual physical size and function of your brain goes down.

And just over the weekend, looking at 20,000 patients, I mapped each area of the brain by, are you underweight, normal weight, overweight, obese, morbidly obese? And there's a linear correlation between weight and blood flow to every region of the brain. Every region of the brain, as your weight went up, the blood flow and activity of your brain went down, and that should just scare us to begin to do the right thing and the right thing is not Nutrisystems or Jenny Craig and all of that, because a lot of that is fake food. It's to really focus on loving food that loves you back.

And people go, but I love doughnuts, but there's not one healthy thing about doughnuts. They hurt you. Being in love with doughnuts is being in an abusive relationship. and I don't know if we ever talked about the Daniel plan, in this program I did with Mark Hyman and pastor Rick Warren, where we got Saddleback church healthy, one of the largest churches in the world. The first week, 15,000 people signed up the first year, they lost a quarter of a million pounds, but we then wrote a bestselling book and thousands of churches did that. But right after we started the Daniel plan, one of the pastor's wives came to my office and she said, you know, I heard you talk. And I told my husband that night, I'd rather get Alzheimer's disease than give up sugar. I'm like, wow, did you date the bad boys in high school?

Because that's like a bad relationship to be in love with something that damages you. I mean, its abuse, but we don't think about it. And in the end of mental illness, I love this writing device I put in the book where I wrote, if I was an evil ruler and I wanted to increase the incidence of mental illness in America, what would I do? And there's 62 evil ruler strategies, but one of them is I'd serve doughnuts at church, go to church to get your soul fed. These people are trying to kill you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, my goodness. And I literally remember growing up and then having doughnuts at church and we talked about, I'm a very visual person. Do you... Did you like the bad boys? I pictured a circle doughnut pulling up on a motorcycle with two long John legs and a doughnut whole head and, and she is hopping on the bike and, you know, he's got the ripped off sleeves anyways.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: I love that. That's a great image...

SHAWN STEVENSON: And again, we don't think about this. We don't think about the relationship and people would come into my office all the time when I was doing my clinical work. And the big thing people would say without even really talking to me is what they don't want to give up. Right. I don't have to give up my bread, do I? You know, it's just like all of these different stigmas and how... We don't realize how addicted we are as well; these things can be running our lives. But then for many of these things, there are healthier alternatives or things like you just said, love food that loves you back. There's so much to love that we don't really know about because I grew up in, same thing. We grew up in a paradigm where when we look at the store, it seems like there's all this different stuff, but it's really like the same 12 different food items packaged and processed differently.

It's like wheat, corn, soy, maybe like throw chicken and some oranges in there. But it's like this same stuff is most of the stuff that we grew up with, we don't know about. There are literally thousands, tens of thousands of different foods and conversations like this open us up to try new things. And I think it's super important because the diversity in our nutrition helps with the microbiome, helps with... And you also of course, have been talking about this over the years, but you mentioned the leaky gut, but now we're getting into this situation where I'm hearing this term more and more of leaky brain. Right?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Because it's the same thing. So, when you say, think of leaky gut, the lining of your intestinal track, so about 30 feet is just one single cell layer thick that is protecting you from whatever you eat, actually getting into your body and causing all sorts of havoc. But there's that single cell layer that protects your brain from anything that gets into your bloodstream from getting into your brain and it's there to protect you. But if you have leaky

gut, odds are, you also have leaky brain. Which means your brain's more likely to store toxins. It's more likely to be infected. It's more likely to have big problems.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so important. Thank you for sharing that because it's a distinction. Many people that listen to this show are aware or have taken action to improve situations with leaky gut. Now, you understand that this is affecting your brain too, and it's of the utmost importance. So BRIGHT MINDS, we'll hit one more here. With minds, we got the last piece of it is S in its sleep. This is, we were talking about this even before the show, and how important this is in creating and sustaining a healthy brain. So why was this part of the BRIGHT MINDS?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, teenagers who sleep on average just one hour less than their peers have higher incidence of depression and suicide. When you sleep, your brain cleans and washes itself. And there's this great study soldiers who got seven hours of sleep at night were 98% accurate on the range. Those same soldiers who got just six hours of sleep at night were 50% accurate on the range. Think about that difference. Five hours, 38% accurate, four hours. They were dangerous. Only 15% accurate. Being sleep deprived kills more people than alcohol related accidents. We need to make sleep a priority. And in 1900 on average, Americans got nine hours of sleep at night. Now in 2020, on average, they get about six hours and 40 minutes of sleep, but you can't go through that kind of change in such a short evolutionary period without the expectation, there are serious problems being created.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And evolution takes time.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: It takes time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And we have changed so much in the last 120 years with technology and lights, where we're being bombarded with lights. And if you just think about, for all of these risk factors and basically for the brain, it's three strategies. Love it. So, love your brain, love your blood flow, love your sleep, love your blood sugar, avoid things that hurt it, do things that help it. And so, if we think of well, what's hurting our sleep, it's our gadgets. It's the negative news. Do not watch that before bed. That's not going to give you good dreams. It's actually going to give you nightmares.

So, it's the gadgets. It's the electro-magnetic fields. It's people thinking of alcohol as a health food. Well, it's not a health food. It messes up your microbiome and it decreases the quality of sleep that you have, noise, caffeine. And if I was an evil ruler, I would create a culture where you have to have caffeine in the morning to wake up and alcohol at night to go to sleep, and that's the culture we have, that's just damaging our sleep, which then damages our brain. Plus,

as your weight goes up, you're more likely to have sleep apnea, and we saw sleep apnea actually triples the risk of Alzheimer's disease. And we can actually see it on scans, your parietal lobes, top back part of your brain are decreased in our patients who have sleep apnea. So, I can often go, "Oh, I bet you have sleep apnea, you need to get a sleep study and you need to take care of that."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Wow. That is scary stuff. Addressing BRIGHT MINDS and expanding the conversation. You also talk about you got a section looking at mind meds versus nutraceuticals. And again, I love your approach, this was my thinking as well, which is everything is an option. We have to find the right stuff for you, you know? Some medications can be life-changing and saving for people, whereas a lot of times, simply addressing nutrition, lifestyle factors, these nutraceuticals can make miraculous changes, seemingly miraculous changes as well. So, let's talk a little bit about that, mind meds versus nutraceuticals.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, I'm a well-trained psychiatrist. I'm board-certified in general psychiatry, child, and adolescent psychiatry, and I'm not opposed to medication. I'm completely opposed to how it's prescribed in the United States now, 85% of psychiatric medications are prescribed by non-psychiatric physicians in seven-minute office visits, by family practice doctors, pediatricians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, internists, gynecologists. And once you start these medications, they're insidious and that they change your chemistry to need them in order for you to feel normal. So, in the book, I go, okay, if you have ADHD, what are the 10 things you should do before you go on a stimulant medication? If you have anxiety disorder, what are the 10 things you should do before you start taking a benzo, which will be very hard for you to stop? If you have depression or an addiction or you have insomnia, what are the things to do before you go on medication?

So, for example, with anxiety disorders, people don't know that things like Klonopin and Xanax, they actually increase the risk of dementia later in life. Not only that, they're addictive, that once you start them, you're going to have trouble stopping them and you're going to have to take more and more to get the same result. So well, how about... We first have to check your thyroid 'cause if you're hyperthyroid, you're going to be anxious. We need to check your blood sugar, 'cause if you have low blood sugar, hypoglycemia, you're more likely to have panic attacks. With Justin, I actually caught him with a very low blood sugar level, and I'm like, "Buddy, you got to eat four or five times a day, healthy food." I mean, it was a big discussion for us. I'm going to teach you to breath diaphragmatically. I'm going to teach you to meditate. I'm going to teach you to exercise. I'm going to give you GABA, magnesium, thiamine, all never hurt you, scientific evidence, they may help you in that one chapter alone. So, the whole book has 1084 scientific references.

So, if you think I just sort of pulled this out of the air, it is the best referenced work of my life. And in that one chapter alone is 286 references. And I go, so what has A-level scientific evidence? 'Cause so often the physician knee-jerk reaction is, there's no science behind supplements. And of course, my response is, do you read? Because there's all sorts of science, you just haven't bothered to look at it. And so, there are 286 references, so what has A-level scientific evidence for depression, saffron. The world's most expensive spice has anti-depressant qualities. There's 20 studies randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trials, saffron, SAME, Omega-3 fatty acids, St. John's wort. What has A-level scientific evidence for anxiety? Magnesium. I mean, how simple is that, plus 80% of us are low...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, deficient.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: In magnesium.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So simple. So simple and important. Okay, I want to ask you so many different things, but I want to make sure that I talk about the four circles of the BRIGHT MINDS program. Because it's an encompassing thing, and these four circles are really important to pay attention to, so let's go through those.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So BRIGHT MINDS really fits in the First Circle, which is the biology. When I was a medical student, our Dean, the first week of medical school, he goes, "I never want you to think of your patients as their diagnosis. Always think of people in these four big circles." and he went to the blackboard, and he drew the first one and he put biology, which for me is, what does your brain look like? The actual physical functioning of your brain and your body. And then he drew the second circle and said, "Psychology. Everybody's got a mind. What's their mind?" And over time, I realized that's your development, so what did you grow up in? Like my first wife, did you grow up in an alcoholic home or like a dad with... Like mine. And that matters, your development really does matter. And I also put your moment-by-moment thoughts and the quality of your thoughts, and I call the negative ones, ANTs, automatic negative thoughts. The thoughts that come into your mind automatically and ruin your day. And we live in an undisciplined thinking society, that's so we're loaded with the ANTs. So, I teach people how to develop an internal ANT-eater, to get rid of the bad thoughts.

The next circle is the social circle. It's who do you hang out with? And what are your current stresses? But you become, and you know this, like the people you spend time with. If you want to do anything great in life, find somebody who's doing it and make them your friend. Find a way to be of service to that person, because you become like the people you spend time with. And then the last circle, he wrote "Spiritual". Now, I went to a Christian medical school, I went to Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. So, I love that. I learned medicine in the context of my faith. But all of us have a spiritual circle, whether we admit it or not, and the spiritual

circle is, "Why are you on the planet? What is your deepest sense of meaning and purpose?" and I do it and organize it like a cross. So, it's my relationship with the past, so for me, it's my grandfather, that was so important to me, the future, my grandbabies, my relationship with God, and my relationship with the planet. And it's basically I ask all of my patients the same question, "Why are you here? And what does your life mean?" Because if you're purposeful, you live longer, your brain is sharper, you recover from things like depression, faster.

But so many people these days, they're really living for themselves, and not... They don't have any idea where they fit in the context of this world. So, I was invited to the White House to talk about mental illness in America, the opioid epidemic. And they knew... I've been on public television a lot, my shows have run over 110,000 times across North America, and I love when you got to see one of my shows, and they said, "So what's the big idea?" The end of mental illness begins with a revolution in brain health. That if you want to get on top of the opioid epidemic, you have to teach people to love their brains, so they make better decisions. If you want to get on top of homelessness, it's brain health, that get their brains right, and they can keep their jobs, and they can find a place to live that's not on the street. Did you know that 50% of homeless people had a significant brain injury before they were homeless? It's... If we're going to solve these epidemic challenges of incarceration at levels that are just insane, and addiction, it starts by falling in love, and optimizing the physical functioning of the brain. The end of mental illness begins with a revolution in brain health.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright, I hope that you're enjoying this conversation so far. Truly, truly powerful stuff. And we're just scratching the surface. Now I want to emphasize a really important point that our lifestyle factors, again, have such an impact on our mental well-being, our practices of movement, our sleep hygiene, and of course our nutrition. And there are certain nutrients and nutrient sources that just have remarkable benefits that are beyond any of the kind of ordinary foods that we see out there. Now, not to say that they don't have their place, but there are foods in the category of "super foods" that truly have cognitive benefits that are just unmatched. One of those foods comes from bees and is known as royal jelly.

A study that was published in *Advanced Biomedical Research* found that royal jelly has a potential to improve spatial learning, improve attention, and to improve our memory. In addition, royal jelly has been found to facilitate the differentiation of all types of our brain cells, and to top it off, researchers in Japan discovered that royal jelly has a potential to stimulate neurogenesis in the hippocampus, this is the memory center of our brain, to be able to stimulate the creation of new brain cells. Very few foods have been uncovered that have this direct capacity to do something like that. Now, before this show today, and before most shows, I actually have royal jelly combined with one of my other favorite cognitive boosters called Bacopa.

Now, a randomized, double-blind placebo-controlled human trial, this was published in 2016, found that after just six weeks of use, Bacopa significantly improved speed of visual information processing, learning rate, memory consolidation, and even decreased anxiety in study participants. This combination is coming from Beekeeper's Naturals. Go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model and get 25% off of this incredible formula. It's called, "B.Smart". Alright, that's beekeepersnaturals.com/model. That's B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-Snaturals.com/model, and get 25% off, automatically taken off at checkout. And the reason that Beekeeper's is so far, in a way, the best place to get... Even their Superfood Honey is out of this world, is because they do third party testing for over 70 pesticide residues that are commonly found in bee products, specifically making sure that there's no pervasive offenders like DET, like heavy metals like E. Coli, they're making sure that you have the highest quality honey and royal jelly possible. So, head over there and check them out, that's beekeepersnaturals.com/model, and also have a look at their Propolis spray as well, that's one of my other favorite things 25% off.

And now, let's get back to this second segment with Dr. Daniel Amen. So, this is from another conversation, and it's highlighting a sobering overview of our society's current state of mental health. Plus, we're going to be talking about specific brain activity associated with happiness. There's so much focused on disease and degradation and functionality of the brain associated with disease and mental illness, but what does a healthy happy brain look like? And what are some of the things that we can do to help to support this functionality and get our brain happy? And also, we're going to be talking about things that reduce activity, or even damaged areas of the brain associated with happiness. You'll also find out about specific brain types, and which brain type you likely have. Also, he's going to share his very important insights about the pandemic and how it was handled, so that we can be more empowered moving forward. So let's jump into this next segment with the amazing Dr. Daniel Amen.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, before the pandemic, we were at epidemic levels of anxiety, depression, ADHD, addictions, the opioid epidemic, for example, depression was at eight and a half percent of the population and then the pandemic hit. And by August of 2020, it was at 28% of the population. It had more than tripled. So not since the great depression has there been this level of unhappiness. And as I saw that, I'm like, but you can learn to be happy whatever situation you are in, you just have to know that neuroscience of it, 'cause happiness is ultimately a brain function. And as I was tackling this, I came across a video that I just loved by Dennis Praeger called "Why be happy?" And in it, he says, happiness is a moral obligation. And I'm like, What? So, I grew up Roman Catholic and I went to Catholic school and Catholic high school and I guarantee you that idea, that happiness is a moral obligation, was nowhere to be found, that it was about guilt and control and shame. And then it's like, so why is it a moral obligation? Because of how you impact other people and I guarantee you, and you know about

this. If you're raised by an unhappy parent or married to an unhappy spouse and you ask somebody, is happiness an ethical issue? I guarantee you; they're going to say yes.

And so, what we're talking about is not fluff. It's critical and central and ultimately, it's what everybody wants, but they don't know how to do it. And in the book, in the opening, I started with the lies of happiness. Like more of something will make you happier, and I have a number one New York times bestselling book. Another one's not going to make me happier, that ultimately happiness is in the little things that happen day in and day out. That hedonism is the enemy of happiness because it wears out your pleasure centers.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So that's hedonic adaptation. So, the brain is... Like you just said, you already hit number one New York times. There isn't like a number above one, unless you're just like, I want all of them. I want all the spots. And some people think like that. And you've seen this, and I know that I've seen this as well. When folks, they win the championship or they achieve that highest level in whatever it is that they're doing, and then they sink, they kind of lose themselves. And it's because the brain gets acclimated to that high. Even the things that, the pleasure things that we seek today, I would imagine like if we're... Whether people are utilizing technology or porn or whatever the case might be, you constantly need more and more and more to have that same level of normalcy in a sense. Is that accurate?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, there's an area in your brain... So, there's a neuroscience in happiness, and the area in your brain that feels pleasure is called the nucleus accumbens. And it responds to a number of neurotransmitters, but primarily dopamine. And when dopamine hits it, you go, "Oh, I like that." But if it hits it too strong, cocaine, or too often, addiction, it wears it out. And then you need to engage in that behavior not to feel high, but to feel okay. And this is why fame is a disaster for the brain. And I've been blessed, I mean, Justin Bieber's docu-series seasons to be his doctor, and Miley Cyrus, and I adore these kids. But what happened to them is just a disaster for brain function that they get so much cool stuff, right from money and drugs and...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Notoriety.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Fame and notoriety and anything they want, but it doesn't make them happy. In fact, it makes them sad, and they don't know that we have to protect them rather than... Justin was on tour, and he had to end it early because everything around the fame was then making it worse. So not sleeping, overworking, video games, bad food, drugs, all the girl... It's like everything to wear out that part of your brain, and you just end up feeling awful and people go, but you have everything, but not a healthy brain.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's powerful. So, the neuroscience, so what would a healthy brain look like from a neuroscience perspective?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, I did a study for this book, where I gave 500 consecutive patients, The Amen Clinics, the Oxford happiness questionnaire. And then I scanned them 'cause that's what we do at The Amen Clinics. I now have 10 clinics around the country, and we looked at people at high happiness scores versus low happiness scores, and you had better frontal lobe function if you were in the high happiness group, and you had low frontal lobe function in the low happiness group, which means don't let children hit soccer balls with their foreheads, that's a really bad idea. Marijuana is not a health food because it drops blood flow to the brain. Alcohol's not a health food 'cause it drops blood flow. And if you have low blood flow to your front part of your brain, you end up making impulsive decisions that damage your relationship, less happiness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man. So, these exposures, so the prefrontal cortex is going to be more correlated with happiness. Is that what I'm hearing?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Good activity in the prefrontal cortex is associated with happiness and low activity is associated with depression.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is there such thing as a cohesive brain versus a brain that's going to be have a tendency towards lack of focus or unhappiness? Or can you see these states when you look at somebody's brain?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, you can clearly see the state of the brain. You can clearly see how healthy or not it is. So, when I first started doing imaging, I scanned everybody I knew and I scanned my mom when she was 60, and she had a stunningly beautiful brain, full, even, symmetrical, and it reflected her life. She has seven children, 54 grandchildren and great grandchildren. She knows everybody's birthday. She's everybody's best friend. She knows about their lives. I mean, she's... And she's 90 now. I mean, it's just stunning. And then I scanned myself and it wasn't healthy because I played football like you. I played football in high school, and I had a lot of bad habits. I was overweight, I was eating a lot of fast food, I wasn't sleeping. And here I am, a double board-certified psychiatrist. This is 1991. I'm board certified in general psychiatry, child, and adolescent psychiatry. I don't care about my own brain at all because I'd never seen it. And when I looked at it, I became horrified, and I developed a concept I call brain envy.

Freud was wrong. Penis envy is not the cause of anybody's problem, not seen it once. When you really... I wanted her brain. I had brain envy, and we have a foundation, Change Your Brain, Change Your Life foundation, and it makes T-shirts. And on the back, it says "Freud was wrong."

And the front says, "It's the brain." So, we love that. And when you see it and then you correlate happiness to brain function, it's you want a better brain and if you want to be happy, the foundation will see, 'cause there's a lot of books on happiness, but none of them talk about the foundational secret to happiness, is your brain. With a healthy brain, you're much more likely to be happy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You started the book right off with this and talking about these lies of happiness and just that part in and of itself, because that's where I saw also the hedonic adaptation, but I think this is important because even though we want to be happy as an individual. I don't think we often think about what that means for us. And it's individual, that's one of the things that jumped out at me immediately, because my brain, what the ingredient for happiness is, is different for me than what it's going to be for you or anyone else. So let's talk a little bit about that, that everybody's brain is going to be looking for the same ingredients for happiness, because for us, it's going to be unique.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: So, the book is based on the seven neuroscience secrets of happiness that very few people talk about or know. And like brain health is foundational, and each of these secrets has a question. So, every day I want you to just ask yourself what you're doing. Is it good for my brain or bad for it? Is it good for my brain or bad for it? If you can answer that with information and love, love of yourself, love of your kids, love of your wife, you just start making better decisions.

The next one is, well, happiness is different for everybody based on how their brain works. There's the balanced brain type, mostly anything will make them happy. There's the spontaneous brain type. They need novelty. They need excitement. They need stimulation. They like jumping out of airplanes. They like helicopter skiing. They like scary movies because it gives them a dopamine rush.

Take a cautious brain type. They hate the idea of jumping out of an airplane. That'll just make them miserable. They don't like scary movies. I don't like scary movies. I went and saw an Amityville Horror, and it gave me nightmares for weeks. I'm like, "No. No, life is... Just watch the news, that's horrible enough." There's the persistent brain type. They hold on to things. They loop on things. They love ritual.

So, for example, even choosing your religion, which I find this really interesting. The spontaneous type is not going to choose becoming Catholic or Lutheran, because it's boring for them. It's like the same thing over and over again. They're going to like go to a Pentecostal church or to a non-denominational church with great music and great sermons. It keeps their attention. But if you're the persistent brain type, you become Catholic or you become something that has ritual where you just know what to expect. The spontaneous person loves

surprises. The persistent person hates surprises because they like it when things go as they expect. And when things don't go as they expect, they'll often can have tantrums.

And then there is the sensitive type. And the pandemic was the worst for that group because they need connection. They're deeply empathic and the isolation just drove drinking and drug abuse and depression for that type. And then the cautious type. And you can always tell what their brain type is by how early they are for their appointments. The person that's balanced, they're on time. The person that's spontaneous is five or 10 minutes late. The persistent person is on time. The cautious person's 10 minutes early.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is so fascinating. And then to get a peek at people's brain to affirm these things is just really remarkable. So, I got a question just specifically about the persistence type. Would there be more activity in a certain part of the brain that you would, see? Where would that be?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: In the anterior cingulate gyrus. So, in the front... Deep in the frontal lobe, is the brain's gear shifter. It allows you to go from thought to thought, move from idea to idea, be flexible, go with the flow. But when it works too hard, in my studies, they tend to be argumentative, oppositional, and if things don't go their way, they get upset.

And so, I had this one guy, I tell the story in the book, who's head of the Alzheimer's Association here in Orange County where I live. And he wanted to learn more about my work. And so, he came and got scanned. And as I sat down with him, I said, "Tell me about yourself." And he said, "No, I don't want to say anything about myself. I want you to tell me about myself from my scan." And I'm like, "No, that's not how it works. We always take your scan and put it in the context of your life." And he's like, "No."

So right away, I knew he was the persistent brain type. But when you saw his scan, his frontal lobes worked way too hard. And so, in front of his wife, I go, "You're persistent. You're like a dog with a bone. And when you say you're going to do something, you do it. And you are on time." And he's like, "Yes, yes, yes." "And you're worried and you're rigid, and if things don't go your way, you get upset. And you tend to be argumentative and oppositional, and you hold grudges." And his wife went, "Yes, yes, yes, yes."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, this is like...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Which is why when I met Tana, you know Tana, my wife. I really liked her. She's beautiful and she's smart, and three weeks later I'm like, "You haven't seen the clinic. Don't you want to see the clinic?" 'Cause I needed to scan her. 'Cause I'm not going to fall in love with her unless I knew what her brain looked like.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got to see that brain. This is smart. What if that was a pre-requisite? When you go to get your marriage license, you get a brain scan, so you know what's actually happening behind the curtain. Because oftentimes in relationships you meet somebody's representative. You don't really meet them.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: I like that. I like how you've phrase that. You meet someone's representative.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this is thing too, whether... Even with a job interview, you're meeting a representative of the person and not necessarily who they really are. Humans we're very creative at making a facade or an appearance of something. Social media highlights that perfectly. But what if we can actually get more educated, not just for learning about the other person, but learning about ourselves? And this is why I was so grateful for the experience today because, for me, it's not that I'm necessarily trying to fix something, which a lot of people are. They want to fix different things that they're struggling with. I want to be as good as I possibly can be.

And we lie to ourselves even with that and how good we're doing. So, this leads to another lie, which we're outsourcing our emotions to people who are profiting from us. And one of those is like fast food restaurants, for example. It hit me like a ton of bricks reading the book. It's called a Happy Meal. It's literally called a Happy Meal. Damn, if that's not marketing... Powerful marketing that I definitely fell into.

Because for me, I had a birthday... I shared with you, when we were doing the brain scan that I lived with my grandmother. It was one of the happiest times in my life. That was my first time having a Happy Meal, by the way. There was a McDonald's... There was only one fast food restaurant that was close to us. It was a McDonalds. And they had a... They had a playground inside. I had a birthday party there. I'll never forget that. It was like... Of course, you got the ball pit where without a doubt you're going to lose a kid or somebody's going to throw up or whatever in there.

But just thinking about the characters of McDonalds, they're all... They've got the Happy Meal, but the rest of them are really dark. I don't know if you've ever thought about this. Ronald McDonald. First of all, Dr. Amen, it's a clown. I don't know. No disrespect to clowns, but I'm pretty sure most people are a little freaked out by clowns. And then you've got Grimace. His name literally denotes pain. He's this big, overweight purple guy. We don't even know what he is. And then you got the Ham burglar, he's a convicted criminal.

All these sketchy characters. But they're telling you, "This is the way to happiness." It's a smile, and this happy meal. So, is it true? Is it a happy meal or should we be calling it something else?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: It's a lie. It's a sad meal because of the low-quality food that increases inflammation and vulnerability to depression. And Coca-Cola is the same way. Their slogan is Open Happiness, and it should be open illness, open diabetes, open obesity, open depression, open heart disease, open cancer.

But that wouldn't sell. And without real thought behind what you put in your body; you are making other people rich based on your early death. And that's not happiness. And secret number four is love food that loves you back. And too often people go, "But I love sugar."

I did this big program with Pastor Rick Warren at Saddleback Church called the Daniel Plan. And after I gave a lecture there, one of the pastors' wives came into my office and I was drinking tea just like I'm drinking now. And she said, "Would you put the tea down." And I thought, "That's really weird," but I'm generally a cooperative person. And she said, "I didn't want you to spit it at me." I'm like, "Okay. I've never spit tea at anybody." She said, after your lecture, I told my husband, I'd rather get Alzheimer's Disease than give up sugar. And I'm like...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, that's...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: "Did you date the bad boys in high school? Because you are in an abusive relationship. You love something that hurts you." And too many people, they're attached to alcohol, they're attached to pizza, they're attached to ice cream, but it hurts them.

And... I was in a marriage for 20 years that was awful. It was just awful. It's why I became a psychiatrist. And I'm not doing it anymore. I'm not doing bad. I'm married to my best friend. We're respectful to each other, affectionate. And I'm damn sure not doing it with food, that I can control what I put in my body, and I only want it to love me, not hurt me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Why do we allow McDonald's to do it to us then?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Because we don't know. We are blind. In my book, The End of Mental Illness, I have a writing device that if I was an evil ruler and I wanted to create mental illness, what would I do? I'd create American society with fast food restaurants everywhere, with food deserts, with this notion that alcohol is a health food, or marijuana is innocuous, or the news is in fact the news. 'Cause the news is not the news. The news is a marketing device for advertisers to make money. And they scare you. Where millions of amazing things happened yesterday, but you never hear about them, because they don't get eyeballs. Fear is a primitive response. The brain pays attention to fear first. And so, they scare you. And in that way, they can sell you the medications that have this laundry list of side-effects.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it's such a twisted system. I was just talking about this recently, but the United States and New Zealand are the only high-income nations that allow television marketing or just period, direct-to-consumer marketing drugs. It's a very abnormal thing, and coincidentally, of course, we're the most drugged nation in the history of the world, really.

And I want to ask you about this too, because you mentioned things were already trending upward at a shocking rate. We're almost at about one out of 10... Essentially one out of 10 of our citizens having depression prior to the pandemic hitting the scene, and then things doubling, tripling. This was already a big issue.

And the ingredients here... Because I think this is so important, because I sent you this study... Let's talk about this. I sent you this study yesterday, and it was a big study done by the CDC, and they were looking at what the biggest risk factors for death from COVID was?

It was over 800 US hospitals, over 540,000 COVID-19 patients. And they found that obesity was the number one risk factor for death from COVID, which we knew already. We aren't doing anything about it, but we knew that. The second leading risk factor, which was the most shocking for me, that it was published, not that it's a thing, because I could see it coming from a mile away, as I know you could. The second leading risk factor was anxiety and fear-related disorders.

And for me, that jumped right out, because it really spoke to our tragic state of mental health here in the United States, specifically. Right now, anxiety, depression, ADHD, these things have all been trending out, but it's been heightened. And I don't think people make that connection with the news, for example. They're very well-versed at manipulating human psychology to get eyeballs. And it's not necessarily... The first thing I want to ask you about is, why are we tuned into them? I think it's this concept of we need to be informed.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But there's a difference between being informed and being inundated or being informed and being controlled or manipulated, you know? There's many ways to be informed, but when you start to feel that... They're speaking right to a primitive part of our brain, isn't that right? Can you talk a little bit about that?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Yeah, I call it global amygdala hijacking. So, the amygdala is this almond-shaped structure in your brain that responds to fear, and especially, with the pandemic. And I think a lot of it we were manipulated purposefully, so that we would act like sheep. And in my book, *The Brain Warrior's Way*, I'm like... I basically ask the question, "Are you a sheep or are you sheep dog or are you a wolf?"

And the wolves were out for the pandemic, frightening us, isolating us, separating us from each other. We're a connected species, we have to be connected in order to feel okay in order to feel happy. And they separated us and then stressed us. Businesses went out of business, people lost their job, there was this chronic anxiety. And I think the decisions they made killed way more people than COVID did and will continue to kill people for a generation. Because children's development wasn't normal during that period of time.

Now, not for everybody, but as a rule... I was horrified. And there's not been a time in the 40 years I've been a psychiatrist where governments have told me what I could prescribe and not prescribe based on my education and training. I was furious. I am furious at the reaction so that they could vaccinate everybody. And I'm not an anti-vaxxer, but I'm like, "Don't tell me I can't prescribe hydroxychloroquine. I read the studies. I'm educated. And if that's a choice, my patient and I choose that's between us, you need to stay out of it."

They did it for hydroxychloroquine, for ivermectin, for fluvoxamine, an antidepressant that actually happened to work to decrease death from COVID. It was actually pretty effective.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That was shocking to me when I saw that study...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: It's so interesting.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That this anti-depressing... Yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And when you are sad, your immune system doesn't work, and you're more... And we've known that for a long time that there's association between depression and cancer and depression and autoimmune disorders. Yeah, no, it's a shocking study. And we can do better, but only if we have a voice, and that's the thing that people... This politicalization of science it's... They shut down doctors who had a different opinion. And I'm like, "What about this is not denial of freedom of speech," where you demonize someone who goes, "No, I don't like this."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. At this point in human evolution... That's the thing.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: In American society...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. We...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: At this point...

SHAWN STEVENSON: We think we're so evolved, and we've got that stuff figured out. Throw in a little bit of fear, which again, it's justifiable fear. And it's just like we devolved. We went backwards so quickly and so much...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: I like that term. And right in the beginning of the pandemic... 'Cause I was online on Instagram, like almost every day. And the favorite thing I would tell people is I would read an essay from CS Lewis from 1948 that he actually wrote about the atomic bomb. And I'm like, "Let's just replace COVID-19, where he writes about the atomic bomb." And he said, "In many ways, we think a great deal too much about the atomic bomb COVID-19. When you could have lived in the 16th century when the plague visited London almost every year. Or you could have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia could land and slit your throat any night. Or as you're already living in an age of car accidents and cancer and... "

He's like, "Let's not make more of this than it is. If the virus comes, let it find you doing sensible and human things." He would have been furious about the lockdowns, the kids wearing masks in school, all the stuff. And what I saw as a psychiatrist, families got divided, and that was the worst thing for mental health. They wouldn't see each other at holidays. They would belittle each other if you didn't believe the way I believed. Either side, they would cut you off.

And I just saw the media do the same thing, left, right, red, blue. They were demonizing people. And this is the way to create mental illness. So, who's the big winner when we create mental illness? The drug companies. Again, it's the drug companies that are the big winners because anti-depressant use skyrocketed. Benzodiazepines, which you and I both know are bad for the brain, skyrocketed. It's insanity.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Then we had some shortages as well with the anti-depressants. Isn't that, right?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: We did for a short period of time, but then they ramped it up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yep, yep.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And I'm not opposed to it. I prescribe them when I need to, but it's never the first thing I think about. It's like, "Well, how's your thyroid?" And "How is your testosterone?" And "How is your diet?" And "Are you exercising?" And do you believe every stupid thing you think? It's like, let's get that right. And then if you need medicine, great as a supportive tool rather than as the tool.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The tool. Yeah. That's one of the biggest mistakes. And again, I just hope that we learn from this. As we are right now, I don't think that we are. We're just...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, I think a lot of people are really unhappy. And even the people that were hiding in their house, I think they're beginning to see... The study from Johns Hopkins came out that said, all of these measures, the mass lockdowns, shutting down businesses saved 0.2% of COVID deaths. I'm like... And you know that's not considering suicide and job loss and drug abuse... It's... Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and all the other things...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: We made mistakes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All the other things that come from that even when somebody is unemployed, they have a 40% increase in their incidents of having a cardiovascular event. It's just like all of those other things were suddenly not considered. It was this one size fits all.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And they said that. They said that. You know, Dr. Fauci said that. He's like, "I'm only thinking of COVID deaths." That... That's outside of my expertise. Which is pretty insane, when you think about it. A physician should be thinking about everything, not just will I decrease the spread of the virus. And they didn't decrease the spread of the virus at all.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Do you remember the two weeks that flatten the curve, that was like... That was literally two years ago. And again, it's this one-size-fits-all approach to things which nothing... Even with COVID, even if that is your goal to stop the spread of COVID, nothing happens in a vacuum. Everything else is going to be influenced in a very dynamic, complex society that we exist in. And to even have one-size-fits-all treatments when you... You're not their face to face with that patient, for example. And like you having that... Somebody trying to control what you're doing to, to serve the person in front of you.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Oh, people got their licenses taken away from them. They got investigated by the medical board, and they scared us. And there were even editorials like on WebMD that if you do this, these bad things are going to happen. And "Oh, by the way you deserve it." There was a lot of control. And the dumbest thing the government did, the number one stupid thing they did is they talked about everybody has to be vaccinated and they never talked about, you need to lose weight. You need to eat better. We need to be exercising. Instead, we huddled people in their home afraid and gave them bad food.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And that's freakin insane and I'm a Psychiatrist, so I've diagnosed insanity a lot.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You kind of know.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: This is insane that we know having low vitamin D levels is associated with higher mortality. We know being overweight, being hypertensive, having diabetes. But did we talk at all about let's fix the health problems we have in this country? No, we just created more and...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Just stepping back, it's like the messaging is just backwards.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But this is the thing. And I'm so... Again, I love talking with you because it's been like this, Dr. Amen. We've been ignoring the underlying cause of issues. We've just been allowing it. You've had your universe. You've been making a huge impact of course, but it's still a certain version of reality that most of our healthcare system is not invested in. We've been allowing our society to become sicker and sicker. We are literally the sickest nation in the history of recorded human civilization right now.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: As sophisticated as we appear to be on paper. And we look around at the skyscrapers, but we are just...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: But we're not the happiest.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Falling apart. Exactly.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: I think we're 28th or something among developed countries, we're the happiest, but you're right. We are the sickest in a large part because the politicians are funded by Big Pharma, Big Food, Big Agriculture, and Big Energy. And you got to go, "how does this make sense?" Where there are fast food restaurants everywhere. And the messaging is... In fact, when Bloomberg in New York actually tried to get a health message out, he got shamed by it. He's like, "Let's not sell sodas over 16 ounces." I mean, who needs more than 16 ounces of sugar water? And it was like big nanny is coming for you. And they would shame him. I used to love being on the subway in New York when Bloomberg was the mayor, because they would have these great posters about drink water, not soda. And they would actually have soda turning into a glass of fat. I mean, it was really creative, the messaging. But no, we want our freedom to be as sick as we want to be. The problem is everybody's paying for it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And in an awful way. And I don't want to be big nanny. I want to be big teacher.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: I want to go, do you want to be happy? You need to be healthy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: 'Cause happiness and brain function are connected.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. As you said, we're paying for it. Even if we don't realize it. We have a \$4 trillion a year healthcare system, \$4 trillion... We're so far ahead of any other country. And yet we're the sickest.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: But we're not.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: But we're not.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. That's again...

DR. DANIEL AMEN: We can do great a brain surgery, but we're not making any progress in chronic... 75% of that \$4 trillion is spent on chronic preventable illnesses and that should horrify people. And we have to start teaching little children. We have a brand new... Amen university, my education arm. We have a brand-new preschool through grade one course where we teach kids to love their brain, and it's called brain thrive and it's done with puppets and it's super fun and cute. I know McDonald's is going after your children.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And Coca-Cola is going after your children. Well, I want to go after them too, but in a way that sustains their health rather than in a way that hurts their health.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. If they're as intelligent, which they are at doing their job, they're going to be looking for lifetime customers, you know, get 'em while they're young is kind of

the tenet. And especially getting into a developing brain is going to be so much more susceptible. I would imagine to their marketing.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And that's why God gave you parents. But if you're, you know, children do what parents do. You're modeling health or you're modeling illness, and if you want to be healthy and happy, you have to model health and happiness.

So secret number six is notice what you like about other people more than what you don't. I've loved that one so much because to be happy, you have to give away happiness. And you do it like you totally can shape your wife by what you notice. If you only notice what she does wrong, she's going to be unhappy and you're going to shape her to be miserable. But if you really focus on paying attention to what you like... I know exactly how to get my wife to yell at me she has red hair, she's pretty intense, and I know how to make her smile and want to hold me. And so, if I focus on giving away happiness, I'm so much more likely to be happy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It just sounds intelligent, but I think again, we don't know that we have that power, and we are... I don't know what it is, and I've got you here, so I'm going to ask you. Why, when we know what makes the other person happy, would we pick on or choose to focus on the things that irritate us?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, the spontaneous person plays this game, none of it is conscious, but they play this game called let's have a problem because it stimulates them. I often think of ADD as adrenaline deficit disorder, so they're often adrenaline seeking. And you can actually tell when a girl has ADD, a teenage girl, by her dating patterns 'cause they get adrenaline from falling in love and dopamine, and so what you see with them is they fall in love and then they fight, 'cause they got adrenaline from fighting, and then they break up and there's all that drama, adrenaline, with breaking up, and then they fall in love, and then they cycle through that. So, if you see a girl that's doing that, get her scanned because she very well may have ADD that nobody knows. And in my book, Healing ADD, I talk about the games ADD people play, and its let's have a problem.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's bananas, but I've seen it before. Let's spice things up unconsciously.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Unconsciously.

SHAWN STEVENSON: 'Cause there's no reason that the person would even consciously want to have a problem.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: No unless they grew up in it. 'cause the brain doesn't do what's good for it, the brain does what it has done, which is why you have to be very careful with what you allow your brain to do, because once you allow it to do it and it gets dopamine, it's going to go seek it again. Even if it's bad for you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Another one of these lies you kind of dissect is focused on technology today. And I didn't even know that there was a thing as... Well of course, I know that people can be addicted to gaming. But now it's like a classified disorder because it could so dominate and take control of somebody's life and their livelihood, but again, we seem so evolved because we've got technology. We've got all these incredible tools that we can use and create these entirely different universes. But most of it right now has confiscated a significant percentage of our focus, I would say, and you put one little statistic that a nice chunk of teenagers, they spend more time on social media than they do even sleeping. That's insane.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: And these devices were created to be addictive. I mean, there's actually a process that they go through, they hire neuroscientists, and many in Silicon Valley will take a dopamine detox because they know they created these things to hook your attention, just like slot machines in Vegas. And you have to be just very mindful and careful, there's a reason Vegas makes a lot of money, is they understand human psychology. So, give someone free alcohol with a cute waitress with a low-cut dress, and people are not going to be making the best poker decisions. And it's the same way with Instagram and Facebook and TikTok, and... Now I have 1.2 million followers on TikTok. I figured out what people are really interested in, but you have to be very careful because it's with a whole bunch of stuff, you really don't want your children seeing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: A couple of other lies... I really want to focus on these because I think that, again, we are wanting real sustainable happiness, and we have an idea of what that might look like, but I think we often go for short-term pleasures, not necessarily happiness. Is there a distinction with the two?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Hedonism is the enemy of happiness because it wears out your pleasure centers. So, I want you to do things that help you feel good now and later, versus now, but not later, and that's long-term happiness. And they're habits. So secret number five is master your mind and gain psychological distance from the noise in your head. There's nowhere in school that they teach you to manage your mind, how insane is that? Brain health and mental health should be like English. Remember when we were in school, we had to take English every year. It's like, what about brain health? It's more important. What about mental health? It's more important. And so, I have all these little, tiny habits. Have you ever interviewed BJ Fogg?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I have not. I was at an event with him.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: You would love him. He's great. Well, I hired him for six months so that we could come up with tiny habits for brain health. And every day I start the day with today is going to be a great day. It's on the top of my to-do list. And that way I'm like, well, what am I looking forward to today rather than I have to get through this day. When I go to bed every night, I say a prayer, and then I go, "What went well today? And that's my favorite happiness strategy because it's like a treasure hunt where I start at the beginning of the day. And I just look for what went well. And the bad things will pop up, and I'm like, "That's not the point, right now what went well? And I even look for the micro moments of happiness. What's the smallest thing that happened today that made me happy. And I just, I love that so much. And I remember, and I think you and I talked about this last time I was on. About two years ago, my dad died, and he died of COVID and it was terrible. And it was an awful day.

And when I went to bed that night, I went, what went well today? 'Cause it's my habit, right? Your brain does what you've done. And you know, initially I'm like "Really today?", but it's my habit. And I thought about an interaction between the police officer and my mother. And it was so funny. And then I thought about all the texts I'd gotten from my friends and how much... How loved I felt. And then I thought about holding my father's hand before they took him away and it was so soft. And then I went to sleep, and you have to build these habits because even though I grieved for him, still do, still miss him. I went to sleep. And if you want to get over grief, you have to sleep, right. I mean, you would agree with me on that. And it's these little, tiny exercises looking for the micro moments of happiness.

I have another fun exercise where you write down the 20 happiest moments of your life... I actually had one happen last May, the Canadian association of nuclear medicine. So, my work has been very controversial. I've gotten no end of grief from my colleagues, but last May, the Canadian association of nuclear medicine wrote new procedure guidelines for SPECT as if I wrote them. And of 10... The 10 authors, five of them were my students, I was so happy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow.

DR. DANIEL AMEN: But I take those 20 happiest moments of my life and I plant them around my house. So, I make an association in my mind, like my front door is my wedding day and I'm carrying Tana over the threshold, and I almost drop her, but that's... because the night before, when we were practicing our wedding dance, I almost dropped her, but it was funny and nobody got a head injury. That, every time I walk through the door, plus that reminds me how much I love her.

So, I'm going to notice what I like more than what I don't like. And when I go into the living room now, it's where I was... Got an award from Discover magazine. One of my research papers

was listed as the top science story, neuroscience story for 2015. That was pretty cool. And then I put the Canadian paper there as well. So, every time I see my living room, I see happiness. Whenever I go to the kitchen, my grandfathers at the stove, I'm named after him. He was my best friend when I was growing up. He was a candy maker and we're making brain healthy, hot chocolate. So, we used to make fudge together, but I'm like, "No, I want you to live longer." It was sad when he died. And so, wherever I go in my house, I find happiness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. I love this so much. So, just to wrap things up, these... We're talking about real sustainable strategies for happiness, which is coming at a premium right now. But I think that all that's taking place is a big opportunity for us to do some of the things that we should have done prior to the pandemic. And it's bringing those things right into a spotlight for us. What do you believe we should all right now... This is a one-size-fits-all question by the way. But what do you feel for the majority of us... What should we be focused on right now to learn from what we've experienced as a society so that we're better moving forward?

DR. DANIEL AMEN: Well, the brain has memory for a reason, so that we can be better, and we can know what's dangerous. That being controlled as population is bad for us. That freedom of speech is foundational to a democratic society, to our democratic society. And whenever you see someone being shamed for their position, that's bullying and that's not okay that you have to stand up. Even if they don't agree with you, shutting down speech is wrong. And you saw that with the social media platforms. We should have just been furious with that. But let me close with happiness, which is so many good things happened out of the pandemic. I'm a child Psychiatrist... I have seen.

A lack of vulnerability and bonding between parents and children because we've had two parent working families now for three generations. And parents are tired and 'cause they're... And they're guilty 'cause they don't spend as much time for their kids. With the pandemic, people were at home, there was historic positive levels of bonding going on in families and that will change the next generation. I adopted our two nieces and right before the pandemic, they came to live with me, and we had like two-hour dinners and we made dinner together. We cleaned the kitchen together. We talked about abortion. We talked about the death penalty. We talked about everything under the sun, and we will be closer for a generation because of that. So, if we can look for the blessings, not just be focused on the curse of it, that will help us be happier.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so very much for tuning into this show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. It's such an important part of our own health equation because our mental health does in fact impact our physical health and our physical health, does in fact impact our mental health and both of these areas need some serious attention right now in our culture. And being able to learn from one of the very best teachers in the world is such a

gift. I'm so grateful to be able to share this message with you today and this incredible insights from Dr. Daniel Amen. Please share this episode up with the people that you care about. Of course, you could share this on social media, take a screenshot of the episode and tag me. I'm @shawnmodel and you could tag Dr. Amen as well and let him know what you thought about this powerful compilation.

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