

# **EPISODE 624**

# Transform Fitness Setbacks Into Unstoppable Comebacks

With Guest Shaun T

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert Shawn Stevenson and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today. What do we do when we're faced with adversity? When life presents its inevitable challenges, how are we going to show up? That's what this episode is about today, and we have one of the foremost experts in the world in fitness and health and transformation. And he's going to be sharing a glimpse into his own personal experience of dealing with life's inevitable challenges. Now, I'm talking about the one and only Shaun T. He has some of the most watched, best-selling fitness programs ever devised in the history of humanity, and he's continuing to evolve and to challenge himself and also to learn along the way. And as you're going to discover today, and this is very important, to have this open, honest perspective and this glimpse inside the mind of somebody who is so well received in the public's eye, and also somebody who is very real, and who loves his family deeply, and as a friend to somebody who's always showing up whenever you need them.

But today he's specifically going to be talking about a few subject matters that are taboo in our culture, and things that many of us face in our own lives. And he's going to be talking about the process of aging, because when he got into the game, he's fresh out of college, and now him being in his mid-40s, he's found ways to evolve and to deal with injuries. And this is something, again, that a lot of us face over the years, and how do you face these things mentally? Because often times when we're inhibited physically, the mental component makes all the difference in the world. So again, really, really excited about this episode.

Now, we cannot talk about fitness without talking about my most favorite fitness company in the world, and they're the ones who are providing elite, specialized kettlebells, steel clubs, maces, battle ropes, their new equipment, like their HydroCore bag and, of course, things that have been used for hundreds of, sometimes thousands of years like the steel clubs and maces, but also sand bags and things like that, being able to tap in and to utilize these tools. No matter where we are in the world, we can access simple fitness equipment that we can do dozens if not, in some instances, even do 100 plus exercises with one piece of equipment. I'm talking about Onnit. Go to onnit.com/model. That's O-N-N-I-T.com/model. You get 10% off all of their fitness equipment. This is exclusive with The Model Health Show. But when we're talking about training, what do we also bringing to the table nutritionally? They're also leading the charge with earth-grown nutrient-based, pre-workouts, post-work out nutrition, specialized foods and so much more.

In fact, they are one of the few companies in the world that put their products up to the test in peer-reviewed clinical trials. Their pre-workout Shroom Tech Sport was a subject of a double-



blind, placebo-controlled 12-week clinical trial performed at Florida State University analyzing the exercise performance of collegiate-aged men. The results of the trial showed statistically significant increases in performance. For example, their bench press reps increased by 12% versus the placebo group over the course of the 12-week study. Their combined bench press and back squat reps increased by 7%. And their increase in cardiovascular performance went up by 8.8%. This is incredible. It's based on cordyceps medicinal mushroom. Again, thousands of years of documented history, but now we have all of these wonderful peer-reviewed studies denoting its efficacy. So that's the basis of the formula, again, all earth-grown nutrients, nothing synthetic. Head over there. Check 'em out, onnit.com/model. That's O-N-N-I-T.com/model, 10% off. Now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

**ITUNES REVIEW:** Another five-star review titled "Health and Pandemic" by an Objective Listener "I'm a big fan of your show. Thank you for using this platform to bring awareness of the consequences and aftermath of the pandemic. I'm in the health and fitness industry and it is sad to see how this pandemic episode has affected our younger generations, but some of us have taken it personal to help out. Thank you again for keeping it real and giving us tools to get back to health."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wonderful, that's so powerful. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple podcast. That hit my heart. I really, really do appreciate it. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Shaun T is a world-renowned health and fitness expert and creator of some of the best-selling fitness programs ever put together, including Insanity, Hip Hop ABs, Focus, T25, Insanity Max, Size, and several other programs. Shaun carries a Bachelor of Science in Sports Science and also a minor in Dance as well which you would never know by watching him perform. He's also been featured in every major media outlet that you can name, and he's also one of the experts that the experts turn to when they want to up-level their own health and fitness mindset.

We're just talking about when he... When we wrapped up this interview, his experience with Serena Williams and being able to play tennis with the GOAT. But also, he's a part of her life because she looks to him for inspiration, and that's just to say a lot, and that's just one of the many individuals who are at the very top of their game who are looking to and admiring the motivation and also the insights of Shaun T. And right now, we have him back here on The Model Health Show. Let's jump into this conversation with the amazing Shaun T. I've got my brother here in the studio.

# SHAUN T: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: My studio, right? Last time you were in the studio with me was in St. Louis.



SHAUN T: That's right. That's wild.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Crazy, crazy. You came to see us at Shock City, shot out to my guys at Shock City, but now we're here, Model Health studios.

SHAUN T: Look at that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We have a living legend here, Shaun T. What's up, man?

**SHAUN T:** What's up. Thanks for having me. I am... It's so cool and chill is like you introduced me as your brother. I really feel like I'm hanging out with my brother. And the crazy thing is, I don't see you all the time, we have our interactions, but I definitely feel like... Yeah, it was weird to tell people I'm going to record a podcast with Shawn, I was just like, well, I should say Shawn 'cause I'm Shaun. Well, you got the "W". You know what I'm saying? I got to... No, but I'm just like... It was weird to be like I'm going to record a podcast. The first time it was like, I want to record a podcast with Shawn Stevenson. Now I'm like, I want to record a podcast, but it feels a little bit different than that, you know?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. It's more home.

SHAUN T: Exactly, especially, you know, with Anne, I'm your fan.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right. My wife never comes up here, but she came up here to see you, and actually she was like don't say that because other people... Her friends they might come on, she doesn't come to see everybody, but she came to see you.

SHAUN T: Well, like I said to her, when there's two Shawn's in the room, you got to show up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go. It's going to be some fireworks.

SHAUN T: But thanks so much for having me. I'm really happy to be here.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And she was surprised, as I could have been at your transformation recently because you're sitting up here filling that seat up.

SHAUN T: Yoked.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Alright. Swoledier. But man, you've had a revelation recently about your own health, about your own mental well-being, about your perspective, about longevity. Can



you talk a little about that? Because a lot of folks even folks listening went along with you on that journey of you having the shoulder surgery. So, let's talk about that experience, what you learned from it, and what you're working on right now.

**SHAUN T:** You know what's really interesting about that is... So, the last time we did a show together, I was on your show, I should say, 'cause you've been on my show a few times, but the last time I was on your show, I was talking about my book, my book had just released, it was like I guess right before I had my kids or something, I can't remember. I think I would have my kids. But what's really interesting is I had to use every superpower that's in my book from having shoulder surgery. So, make a long story short, I started to feel pain in my shoulder, I couldn't even reach for something on the counter, I couldn't... To reach my left arm into the refrigerator was extremely painful. I had to sleep on my right side, all of these things were slightly changing in my life. The way I did my fitness, the way I worked out, I couldn't dance. I had to change all of these things purely because of my shoulder.

So, I had to make the decision to have shoulder surgery. Obviously, prior to the surgery, I went to get an MRI. So, I'm thinking is going to be like something crazy, so I had a triple shoulder surgery all in one. I had a bone spur that was tearing my rotator cuff and I also had... My labrum was torn, so they had to shave the bone spur down, sew up the rotator cuff and the labrum all. It was insane. And so, part of me was a little relieved that it was something so crazy in there because I was definitely feeling pain, but it took me a while to make the decision that I should get surgery because you know me, like I'm wild. You know what I'm saying? I want to be out there. But I did, and I went into it a little bit like, I don't know, I was kind of like, "I'm going to get this surgery and I'm going to weather the storm," and I was just like, "I'm going to get better, I'm going to go to therapy."

But something completely different happened during this process. It literally made me slow down, it changed my relationship with fitness, it changed my relationship with food, it made me look internally all the way to which sounds really weird to some people, comes down to even my hormonal changes, I was able to finally look at, "Oh, I'm going to be 44." And so, all of these little changes started to happen over the first six weeks of physical therapy to the point where before surgery, I was 194-195 pounds, and six weeks later I'm 218 pounds, 220 pounds. I went from that to hiring a personal trainer, and so this big transformation. But to your point, one of the major things that happened during my recovery process is happiness. A lot of people go through shoulder surgery or go through any kind of surgery and it's a downer or it takes them in a dump 'cause they're not able to do everything that they want to do.

And I got extremely happy because it made me slow down, it eliminated stresses in my life. I was able to see clearly and be like, "Okay, this is stressing me out. I enjoy this, I don't enjoy this." And I got to such a happy place that I was like, "I'm going back to therapy." And initially, I



think Scott, who's my husband, I think Scott was like, "Is everything okay? Are you really stressed?" And I'm like, just like I say to people in fitness, when you get to a point in your fitness where you want to sustain your results, it's truly the hardest place to be 'cause most people equate sustaining their results with a number. I want to be 145 pounds or whatever the case may be. And so, I always tell them, how are you going to sustain the results? And you have to do that throughout the journey, accept where you are, accept every level of the process, break through every plateau, but make sure you find time to balance yourself on the plateau. And so, for me, I'm like, I'm super happy in this transition of healing, and I was like, I'm going to therapy because I want to sustain this. I was like, "I want to try to sustain this feeling."

And a lot of people are like, well, how do you find a therapist that wouldn't know Shaun T, this whole thing. And just like anyone else, I went on Google, and I literally researched 40's plus men, kind of new dad changing my business and my career, and I found this incredible therapist and I am now on a journey to... It's like sustaining my happiness, but I'm also, in addition to that, finding lots... Finding out lots of things about me and things that I need to change and things that I need do, but he's a sports psychologist therapist, so it really helps with that with me.

But anyway, so the reason I went to therapy is because I was so happy, I just wanted to try to figure out how to keep that and so many people... I've been in therapy for sexual trauma which we've talked about in your show before, and a lot of people don't go to therapy, until they're in a bad place and they're divorced in their marriage, a bad place in their life, something that they unknowingly suppress from a kid, and I like to tell people, if you are really happy right now in your life or if you've if you have... If you're in a place that is joyful, go to therapy now because you can build on the tools that you've already gained and you don't know that you've gained in this moment, so that when things... When sh\*t does hit the fan, you will have already set up some ammunition to continue to push forward in your life. So that's kind of the first part of what I did through recovery and the first revelation I had of just pure happiness.

And then the next thing I was able to do is dissect some of these things like my relationships with business partners, a lot of us out there, they get up, they go to work and because you're in place of kind of like what we were talking about, I think, before we really started recording, which is like, people just kind of go with there every day in and out, and they don't really understand the changes that need to happen because they're so comfortable. I just started to be like. Oh, I can evaluate if this is working for me, and evaluate this business relationship.

And so, go back to my original point, I was able to use the superpower of my book of being uncomfortable, and I was literally able to use it and say, this is an uncomfortable space, and I'm going to make myself comfortable in it, and another super power of my book which is being flexible, it's like. Well, I can't work out, I'm sitting in this hyperbaric chamber for a few hours a week which is really good for you, but it was also... Somebody like me that likes to twerk all day long. You know what I'm saying? I'm like this is crazy, and I'm taking all of these uncomfortable situations, and I'm being flexible, learning how to be creative within that and... Yeah, so you know, the therapy and this self-reflection and evaluation of things that were happening in my life prior to surgery, just really revealed themself, it was literally like a volcano erupted in such a great way.

And I really like to tell people, not all bad things are bad things, a lot of bad things, if you... Once you get you through the stress of it all because you should be allowed to feel the emotion that you're going through, but once you get through the stress of it all, all of that lava that's coming out of that volcano is actually incredibly great and we all know what happens with lava, it turns into rock like it makes you harder, it makes you stronger, but only really if you pay attention can you mold it to what it is that you can benefit from in your life.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. So now I understand why those people would be taking pictures when the volcano is erupting right by, you're one of those people.

SHAUN T: Well, they're kind of reckless, but...

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're one of those people. You're one of them.

SHAUN T: I mean mine was just an analogy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yours is psychologically.

# SHAUN T: Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But also, this speaks to your wisdom to understand that this is an opportunity to foster growth, so often, of course, when things that are inconvenient happen, it takes a lot for us to get to find the silver lining, but I think that real enlightenment is just that speed of the process of how quickly you realize. Oh, this is for me, this is presenting an opportunity for growth, for understanding, for letting things go, you mentioned that too when you were... When you were sharing your experience of just being able to identify some things you need to remove from your life, how important is that?

**SHAUN T:** I think people are afraid to remove things from their life out of fear of judgment maybe they have their own abandonment issues, but mostly fear of what people are going to think about them, and actually it's really fear of change. I've said before, perfection is temporary, change is constant. And you can't continue to reach 100% unless you're constantly changing because no one flies at 30,000 feet in every flight and never experiences turbulence.



There are bumps in the road that you have to kind of go through. And so, I just want people to embrace that and... Yeah, I definitely understand, I'm coming from a place, like you said, of wisdom, I've been through a lot, I definitely understand how it could be fearful or it can be scary, but just embracing that turbulence in your life just, I don't know, it just really makes you better. I'm not sure if I answered your question or not, but.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely, yeah, facts, facts, and I want to ask you about this as well because your focus now, it's so crazy, if you really think about this in order to sometimes go to a higher level or even to sustain your travel, you got to let stuff go, you got to lighten the load, but so often I think we'll be trying to take everything with us, pile on as much sh\*t as we can, and it prevents us from really growing or for us to keep moving forward. It's a natural process of life to make room for other things, but another one of your focus is I started talking about is longevity. Right, so it gave you a new perspective on the process of aging, you mentioned you're 44. The double four is out here, and can you share just what your shift has been mentally, because you are still... You're like one of the highest performing people as of this recorder right now, you just taught... You just did two today?

SHAUN T: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Two workouts today.

**SHAUN T:** Two back-to-back.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Live streaming workouts. Yesterday, you filmed in a Saturday, you were tearing it down at Chalene Johnson's son, Brock, his wedding. There was shirts coming off. There was a lot... It was craziness. And here you are sitting with me, and this is just a day, a week of work for you. So, how's your mindset shifted, and what are you doing now to really look at longevity?

**SHAUN T:** Oh man, I'm going to probably ask you to ask that question again 'cause there's so much in there, but I first want to talk about what you said about lightening the load, and this is very interesting. So, I pack my bags when I travel, and I try not to over-pack. I really try really hard not to over-pack. And so, this time I said to myself, and I learned this from Scott. I'm going to wear the same clothes every day, except for my underwear. Unless I have to be at a dinner, unless I have to be at the wedding, unless I have to be on set, I'm wearing the same clothes. And I used to be like, "I'm never doing that." Being from the hood, you want the new sneakers and the new outfit, whatever, and I took pictures every day of me in that outfit. And Scott's like, "See it's not so bad." 'Cause I used to tease him.



And what I realized as I'm looking in my suitcase, and some people might be like, "Oh my gosh, that's gross," but I did this as my own social experiment, and I'm looking in my suitcase, I'm like, "My suitcase is 48 pounds, and I literally could have got rid of 15 pounds by just... Because I'm going to wear this every day." I don't smell. I work out in something else. I shower. So just lightening the load in your life... I really invite people unless you go to an office every day and people think you're crazy. Try that, just try to say, "Alright, I'm going to minimize this." And you'll still have really great quality... You'll still have a really great quality of life if you don't over-pack stuff in your mind. And I think that's what the message is. We do that in our minds. We pack so much stuff in our minds, stuff that we don't need, stuff that's not going to benefit us, stuff that spikes our cortisol. We just... 'Cause at the end of the day, when we over-pack, we're packing in stress. And so, people don't understand, and we can say it. You can't see stress. You can't see it.

# SHAWN STEVENSON: It's calorie free.

**SHAUN T:** It's calorie free, and you're not sneezing. You're not coughing. You don't have a fever, and people outside don't know you're stressed. It's easy to hide, but that is obviously, as we know, one of the biggest killers in the existence of humankind. So anyway, that's why I wanted to say, try not to over-pack your life or over-pack your mind. But let's talk about longevity. So I'mma be really real here. I'm about to go really, really, real so I just want everyone to kind of go with me here. So, in the process of recovering from surgery, I was just like, I got my blood work done, and I'm like, "But I want a hormone panel done." And my doctor said, "I'm giving you a full hormone panel. We're going to do everything. We're going to just kind of see what's going on with your body." 'Cause I'm walking around here like, "You know, I'm Shaun T. I'm fit. I can do push-ups. I can run 10 miles." I really can't do that, but I can fitness, I could do HIIT training like the best of them.

And then I realized when I got my blood work done, some of the things that I saw in my blood work correlated with some of the things that I was experiencing. And one of the things that I was experiencing was my erections weren't like they could be. I was just like... And I used to say to my husband, I'm like, "No, something's not right." And he's like, "You know, it's fine. You know what I'm saying?" I'm like, "No, no, no, something's not right." And then I saw my blood work, testosterone was low, estrogen was high. And I think it was really because I was super, super stressed. So, I was like, "How can I combat this?" And I went on a deep dive into accepting the fact that I'm 40-plus years old, and things like this happen, and I'm not perfect. I don't feel like I'm perfect, but when it comes to fitness and health, I'm like, "Yeah, I eat good. It's that in the third." And so, I was like, "Okay, the first thing I'm going to do is hire a personal trainer."

And I know people are going to be like, "Why does Shaun T need a personal trainer?" And in hiring a personal trainer, I'm going to hire a woman, because I don't want somebody who's



training me to think like, "Oh, I'm working out with Shaun T." I don't want the male dynamic. I really just... I didn't want it, so I hired... I walk into my physical therapy place, and it just happened to be one of women that was working on my shoulder, and the second time I was in there, I was just like, "Can you be my trainer?" And she didn't even really personal train like that anymore, she was like, "Yes." She was super happy. Come to find out, long story short, which is really cool, is my Insanity Workout was the first work she did as a teenager, and that's why she went and ended up becoming a doctor in physical therapy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Incredible. Yes.

**SHAUN T:** So, it was just this kind of divine intervention that happened. So, I was like, "Okay, I'm going to get a personal trainer. This is so dope." The second thing that I did, my friend told me about peptides, and she was like, 'There's a couple of peptides out there, and there's a vitality center that I go to." She's like, "I really want you to try." And I spoke to them, and I went out to Dallas, and I got these peptides. One was for recovery, and the other was to release your human growth hormone naturally from your pituitary gland, because I was wanting to build muscle. And then a third thing, which was kind of like the most humbling thing, is testosterone therapy. And so, for me, I've always looked at, as a younger person, I was like, "I don't need testosterone, I'm this, that and everything. I'm happy and I feel good," but when I saw my blood work, and I related it to what I talked about with my erections, and then started being like, oh, my stress level is really, really high. And I feel like because I'm a naturally energetic, happy person, motivator, it's easy for me to funnel that energy into life, but I realize that... And I'mma be very honest, at the end of the day, I was popping gummies.

Was on THC, not every day, but I was just like, I was so... Had such anxiety, I was like, "I need something. I need something." So, a couple of times a week, we're just really crazy people like, "Yo, Shaun T, you taking that?" Yes, I was, I was like, I need... I was just so out there, just kind of trying to reel everything in. Anyway, so I was like, you know what, I'm going to try the testosterone therapy. So, I actually got the one where they put the pellets in your body, so I didn't have to take a shot, and two weeks later, my entire mood started to change, like everything else started to change if you know what I mean.

SHAWN STEVENSON: More robust.

**SHAUN T:** Ooh. Alright, keep it real, Scott was like, "Is... " And I was like, "Yeah, it is." So, it was like all these things happening, and then what it did was it made me accept the aging process. I was like, "Oh, this is cool." It made me accept the aging process, it also made me become even more honest with myself, and your wife Anne says, she was like, "Yeah, really." She's like a lot of people say, I give zero f\*cks, and I've really stopped giving zero f\*cks. But you want to know, it was the driving force for me to really showcase who I am beyond the testosterone, beyond

getting a personal trainer, beyond getting a therapist was, one day I was driving in my car, and I was just... I hadn't experienced that natural overwhelming happiness where someone didn't call and tell you something, or you didn't hit the lottery, or you didn't get the deal, or you didn't get this amazing deal, it was just like... I felt this overwhelming feeling of happiness. And so that's when I was just like, "Wow," all of these decisions and all of these like... Well, the struggles were good, they called me to make these decisions that helped me, getting help.

And I think that at the end of the day, that is one of the things that I think a lot of people are afraid to do or... Especially if it's medical, especially if it's hormonal, especially if it has to do with your spouse and intimacy, and as a man, not wanting to feel weak or talk about stress. It just revealed all that where it helped me, I was just like, "I have to accept this, and I have to dive into literally changing my life." And then it just made me accept who I am even more. From the time I was 21, me being gay was never an issue, for my family or me, I was just like... That was never the issue, but society-wise, being a fitness professional or fitness guru, and being in the public eye, and people... Because I was such a motivator, people say "you know, Shaun T is such a stand-up guy." I'm like, "I am, but I'm also ratchet as hell." I also love to dance; I also love to party... I also... There's so many different sides of my personality, and I just was like, I need to showcase all of this, so now being where I am at this moment, in this very space, I'm just living... People say, live your best life, and I'm truly grateful that I can live my best life through the struggles that I've had even as an adult.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, man. This is one of the reasons that I love you and appreciate you, is just being able to share, because so many of these things are so taboo, we just don't talk about them, and yet just about everybody experiences them in some different flavor of it. And because of the person that you are, like you said, when we were talking before the show, squats, lunges, push-ups, this stuff is pretty much the same. But it's not the thing, it's the energy behind it, it's the dynamics, it's how the person puts it together, it's how the person makes you feel. And right before you came in here, and that this episode would have come out prior to this one coming out, but we had sitting in the same chair, somebody who discovered pluripotent stem cells, and one of the most brilliant thinkers in the world and his team is going on. I was like, "Shaun T is going to be coming here in a few." They're just like, "Oh my God, he's had such an impact." You know, he's talking about the original program that they did back in the day and how it got them into health, and now the guy... One of the guys has done... Climbed, summited Mount Everest and all these different mountains, whatever. But you're a catalyst in the life of so many people. Number one, how invaluable is that to be a trigger. You even mentioned your personal trainer that you end up hiring.

SHAUN T: Yeah.



**SHAWN STEVENSON:** You put her in that position despite your influence. It wasn't the workout, it was you. And so, to be able to dig through those layers, to take time and to open yourself up even more and to share and to express, and so... But just to circle back for a moment, we're talking about the level that we're at today, to be able to find out what's going on with our biology, right? This is a great gift that we have, but we're still talking about... If you're talking about different treatment, peptides, testosterone, you're just still in the 1%, 2%, whatever. It's who you are, you're doing all these other great things and stacking conditions in your favor to experience this vitality, why not add these things to the mix? You're not trying to focus on one thing, is this going to save your life?

You're doing so much, and this is what I'm a huge proponent of, it's just like, let's stack conditions in your favor. But what often doesn't get talked about, which you've brought up several times is the fact that this is more about letting go than anything and making room because... And we'll put the study up for everybody who's watching on YouTube. So, there was this meta-analysis done, they found that upwards of 80% of all physician visits today are of a stress-related diseases. Stress is f\*cking us up. And so being able to... It's not just proactively creating a stress resilience, its processing, which you mentioned therapy, and it's also having the audacity to feel good. And so, you've done things to help yourself to do that.

**SHAUN T:** Yeah, oh men. You say so many things that my brain is like firing all around. So, first thing I want to say is the human experience. I know some people are super religious, they think they're going to heaven... Hopefully, they're not going to hell. They have... People believe in after life, there's all of these religions that keep people on a path of believing, but not but... And what's really important is for all of us to know that the only life you're really going to remember is the one you're living right now, 'cause if you do believe in an afterlife or if you do believe in reincarnation, if you come back as a dog, you're still not going to remember the fact that you were Susie... You know what I'm saying? So why not make Susie really great and create an incredible human experience for Susie, how do you do that? You become a decathlete of life, or for females, you become a heptathlete of life.

I always said if I went, even I was really good at the hurdles, 400 hurdles, but I always said if I would have taken my track scholarship, I would have wanted to be a decathlete because I don't really want to be good at one thing. I want to be good at a lot of things. I don't want to be great at one thing, I want to be good at a lot of things. And because I'd learned that at such a young age with athletics, I do that in my life, which is we talk about therapy, hormonal therapy, help, relationships, and I just want people to sit in that for a second, if you really dissect your life... If you go to work eight hours a day, you know you spend eight hours doing this one thing, that's not the only thing you're great at, or good at it, it's not. It's just not, and so I want people to create a human experience by becoming a decathlete in your life, pick those 10 things that you



really love to do or that you really want to learn how to do to elevate your life, because believe it or not, sometimes the things that we're really good at, and for me, it's fitness.

Actually, I'm not really good at fitness, I'm just really good at motivating the hell out of people to never give up. But most of the time, what you're really good at is the thing that causes you the most stress, so if you don't allow yourself to...

# SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. Yes.

**SHAUN T:** So, if you don't allow yourself to like... I can ask these amazing guys here who are filming and I'm like, "But what else?" You got these cameras. Right, you make Shawn look good, hopefully you're making me look good. But I know when you leave here, like some people play the guitar, some people sing, they love karaoke, some people swim in the morning, they probably could swim a bomb-ass 100-meter freestyle, but you would never know, they don't spread that to the world, they don't share any of that. Because you spend so much time doing that one thing and that one thing that you're really great at, can cause you a lot of stress. You can ask any professional athlete, right, look at... I think her name is Sha'Carri.

# SHAWN STEVENSON: Sha'Carri Richardson.

**SHAUN T:** Richardson, like, incredibly talented person, and then you see, I don't know, whatever going on in her life, and she wasn't hitting her top spots probably like she wanted to. But I'm sure it has something to do with something that she was spending a lot of time doing, that she was really good at, a lot of time, even if it was just running. So, I say that to say, branch out, and that's why I'm not afraid to be who I am in all facets of my life. I know for a fact that my personality is really what gets me in rooms, on stage, and it's what gets people to show up, because there are people who do more push-ups than me, there are people whose biceps are bigger than mine and abs are better. You're not going to be the tallest person or the shortest or the prettiest, so you already know, but what I have to offer people is like I offer them pieces of my personal life's decathlete, I'm like, "This is what I can do." And you can use those other things that you're good at to enhance what you do for eight hours a day, in a way, if you think about it.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, yeah. Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. It's no secret that processed food manufacturers have a team of scientists chemically constructing Frankenfoods that are incredibly addictive, but also causative agents of degeneration and disease. It's one thing to tell yourself to stop eating these processed foods, it's another thing to our biology that can actually become addicted to some of these chemical and sweet elements. Well, researchers have recently discovered that there is a natural food element that's able to help our brains and our biology resist the urge to eat hyperpalatable, fake

processed foods. A study published in the peer-review journal, Appetite found that chlorophyll can actually aid in weight loss and reduce the urge to eat hyper-palatable foods.

And what's really interesting is that it was also found to increase the release of glucagon-like peptide 1, which according to research published in the Journal of endocrinology as a potential to trigger body fat redistribution, this means that is sparking the release of this visceral, aka belly fat and increasing the ratio of subcutaneous fat, which appears to be more protective against metabolic diseases. Pretty cool stuff found in chlorophyll, one of the most chlorophyll dense foods that you can find, well, if anything green is going to have chlorophyll is an indicator of the chlorophyll content, but specific foods like Chlorella, getting its name from chlorophyll is really taken things to another level. Chlorella is actually 50% protein by weight, it's a complete protein, one of the most protein-dense nutrient sources ever discovered, it also contains carotenoids, like lutein and zeaxanthin that have been found to protect our vision from things like macular degeneration. And to top it off a double-blind placebo-controlled study published in Clinical and Experimental hypertension found that Chlorella was able to significantly reduce blood pressure of test subjects with hypertension by the end of the 12-week study period.

So being an actual source of treatment for people experiencing hypertension, something remarkable about it. Chlorella, combine that with spirulina, another nutrient-dense super algae, which is 71% protein by weight, and spirulina of course is also another remarkable source of chlorophyll, along with being rich in B vitamins and copper and iron, list goes on and on with the micronutrient ratios. I get them combined together with other powerful superfoods in the Organifi Green Juice formula. Go to organifi.com/model, that's O-R-G-A-N-I-F-I.com/model, you get 20% off their incredible Green Juice blend. Their Red Juice blend is amazing as well, my kids love it. Their Gold is remarkable, just everything that they carry, they're doing things the right way, organic, low temperature processed to help to retain the nutrients and they taste fantastic. Go to organifi.com/model for 20% off. Now, back to the show.

Man, I love this, this perspective of the decathlete, that's a game changer, actually just taking time, do some introspection like what are the 10 things that bring you joy? What are the 10 things that if you could, you would do these things? Oftentimes, probably nine or eight of those things you rarely ever do because you got this story and just focused on this one thing, right, so that's so powerful. And the fact that you mentioned the thing that you're really great at giving you the most stress, I know that very intimately for sure. And we can frame it in a certain way as good stress, it helps us grow all the things, but it's still a stressor.

SHAUN T: It's a stressor.

#### SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

**SHAUN T:** You are so great at hosting up a show, you're so great at bringing like... I get emotional when I talk about you to people because you're so great at bringing facts and some people just talk to be talking, you know what I'm saying? You're really great at letting them understand why you're saying something, but you have to do research, and you stayed up all night to do it. And even when we were talking before the show started, you're writing your book, and that's why your show was jacked up, which created you to sleep on one side, which created you to have the back pain, what you're doing and what you're really great at is creating some kind of stress, not to say that you can avoid it 100%, but like you said, what are those 10 things that bring you joy that you can bring and add to your life? So, for me, almost 12 years ago, I started playing tennis, and I remember my husband, Scott saying like, "You'll never hit like a pro." He's like, "It's just really hard," and first of all I was like, "Do you know the f\*ck I am? What?"

So that made me a... Sorry, I curse on my show, but that made me say, "Oh okay," to the point where I was playing with Serena Williams, I would be at pro tournaments and pro tennis players would be like, "Hey Shaun T, you want to come hit?" And I would... I remember one day I was in Indian Wells, the tennis tournament, and there was a tennis player... Professional tennis players staying two rooms down from us in our hotel, and he saw me, he's like, "Hey, you want to hit in the morning?" I remember walking out a hotel room, in the room in the morning, I looked at Scott and in my head, I was like, "Yeah, motherf\*cker, I'm going to go hit out here with him." And I'm really, really good friends with one of the best tennis coaches in the world, my name was on the center court at his academy. Now I love Scott, maybe he did it on purpose. But my whole point is I've started playing tennis late in life and I realized I was really good at it, and so when I would then... When I announce that like...

"Oh, I'm a tennis player," no one would even care. They'd be like, "Oh, that's nice." They don't understand tennis. But let me tell you what I got from tennis. Not only did I get speed, power, agility, strength, all these physical things, but you know what else I got? Not specifically, but I learned how to play chess. I learned how to play chess, the chess of life. So, in tennis, everyone thinks that you're just trying to win a point, essentially you are, but you're trying to build a point, you're trying to wear your opponent down, you're trying to take 'em or her deep, short angle, drop shot. And so, tennis, I was able to apply that to my life.

I remember creating my programming for my fitness workouts, I'm like, "Oh, I'm going to push these people, I'm going to make their brain work a little harder, I'm going to make them dig deep." Mostly all of my tattoos have something to do with what I put people through physically and the mental motivation that needs to come with the action that you're taking to be successful or yet to be accessible at that moment, and I use tennis a lot, man, it's just so good, but now I'm 220 pounds and I'm like whoo, I was playing this 18-year old, I say, "All right, you got to use his legs and his booty to shorten the point. You can't wear him down 'cause he's going to wear you down," but it's just things that you do in your life, you can really use in other areas of your life, and it's so profound if you do it."

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, this is a great analogy, bringing chess into the tennis court and to be able to understand, this isn't just about the thing, it isn't just about hitting a ball with a racket, there's so much more, and this is I think why... One of the big reasons why we're such fans of sports in general. It's the stories, and it's the growth, it's the evolution, it's the responding to adversity and all these things that have been consistent in our evolution as a species, and also there's just this natural thing within us to want to play, to want to compete, but of course, it's gotten crazy to the point where technically you're putting a ball into a basket and yet you can make \$500 million doing that, what might be considered to be a child's game.

# SHAUN T: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what I'm saying. But it's just like how would we get to a place where that's a thing is I think we're also a fan of excellence, but then this comes too with that excellence and also our nature to want to compete whether you're on the court or you're just rooting for a team, this can also put you in a position where you're also receiving vitriol as well and how do you handle that. So, this brings a good segue to my guy here, with you being authentic to yourself and you expressing yourself and you, again just sharing your gift and impacting the life of so many people, but you're also... And you're also a diverse person with so many different things that you're passionate about. Obviously, you faced a lot of, I mean in comparison to the love it's minuscule.

# SHAUN T: Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But that can jump out to you when people are throwing hate your way. And I know there are a lot of people listening who feel compelled to share their voice and to share their personality but they're in fear of getting that push back, or that hatred, or that criticism. How would you recommend people, or first of all, how do you deal with that back a few years ago versus who you are now?

**SHAUN T:** Oh, how do I deal with it? Well, a few years ago, because I was just kind of dubbed like the fitness guy and a fitness guru, and I would go on shows, and I would do motivational talks. I think that the world of the social media niche, kind of just made people funnel me and or you or whomever, funnel people into like, this is who they are fully. And so, I always thought that was really odd because it's like, now people make you a TV show or it's like they're tuning into a channel. I mean, and sometimes it really works, you know with products and stuff that

really works it's like, what am I going to get? But when it comes to me as a human, I don't want to be funneled into that, and so before, I just remember even when I... First of all, even when people found out I was gay, 'cause the tabloids went crazy when I got married, they're like, "Shaun T comes out via Twitter." I'm like, "I've been out since I was 21 years old."

I don't know what you're talking about. So, I thought that was really odd, so once that happened, I was called the fag, I was called all kinds of stuff. People who did my workouts and they would say, "Oh my gosh, you changed my life." They would also call me those words, and I just thought that was... It was super hurtful because like you said, there's all this love, but those things where you literally live your life to help people and because you're just different than them, they want to ridicule you and make you trash. Because they haven't experienced that, or maybe they're hiding that, or maybe they haven't had a relationship with somebody that's like you, and it doesn't define who I am. It was crazy. I used to just get really mad.

So, the next transition was, I stopped really caring and then I realized that most of the people, like you say, are showing so much love, and some people would write messages of, "Thank you for your bravery, thank you for you being you." And then I took the role of protector, 'cause I'm like, it's less about me, 'cause some people say, "Oh, you know don't respond to the haters. Don't respond to that." I'm like, "Well, first of all, I'm not one to not take up for myself, and secondly, I'm definitely not one to watch somebody else get bullied." So, when you're saying it to me, there are people who literally come to my page, or to my event, or whatever it is because they want to be in a safe space, in a free space. So then taking on a role of protector really helped me graduate to, yeah, I'm really going to show all of who I am. I'm really going to be messy today, post my podcast, give you motivation tomorrow, help you lose weight the next day, help you gain weight today after that, and just be really open about who I am knowing...

I thought one of the biggest most interesting things was, I remember I had over the course of the pandemic-ish, I really quickly got 1.3 million followers on TikTok, or one million followers, and it was just like, just got all these followers, it was so crazy, I thought the algorithm was so interesting. And on Instagram, I lost 70,000 followers because I started showing more of who I am. I stopped making people feel comfortable, I stopped living in this... This is only who I am, but it was just so interesting because on another platform, I'm gaining. Like you said, you lose 70, but you gain 1.3 million a year, there's crossover, but not a lot, and so I just thought that was really interesting. So that was just kind of the social mental thing, and I was like, "Why would I not be who I am?" I'm really... I don't wake up to hurt anybody, I literally wake up being like, "How can I make people feel good today, how can I make people feel sexy today, how can I make that person that messaged me yesterday." You know how many men message me that they're in the closet? It's unreal, it's unreal.



95% of them are married with kids, and so while these people are hating me for being who I am, I'm like a lifeline for so many other people. Or women will message me about my love for my husband like they're taking... They're in a heterosexual relationship, but they're saying, "Wow, this is, oh my gosh, he's giving me ideas to talk to my husband or to talk to my wife." So, I just keep doing what I'm doing, and I keep evolving into what I'm going to evolve in, and I love it, and it's just really great. And it just, I think that what everyone out there needs to understand this is, you are going to be more impactful to people by being yourself, than conforming yourself to people who are just going to stay complacent. If you make people only feel comfortable all the time, they're not going to learn from that, but the minute you step outside of your comfort zone of who you are, you're going to relate to people and you're changing lives. Just like your show, you push the envelope, you go against the envelope, I'm sure people would be mad as sh\*t. You know what I mean? But you're like, "No." But there's another way to think, there's education to be had. And so that's just what I do and I'm just not afraid to do it.

# SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

**SHAUN T:** I used to be... I was bullied. I was a gay kid in third grade. I remember getting bullied in third grade and then I'm just like, "Well I'm just going to fight." I'm like, "I might be gay, but I can whoop that ass." You know what I'm saying? I'm not going to just sit back and be like, Oh no. We going to Rock you know what I mean. And I only got bullied in third grade. That was the last time 'cause I'm like... And first of all, I didn't even know I was gay. You know what I'm saying? So, I'm like, Alright. So, I mean, I just kind of... I guess I just kind of take that now too, but now I just take on the role of protector. I just don't think people should have to feel bad for who they really are.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, yeah. Well, today is... Well, we have so much exposure to other people's perspective which in some ways is beautiful and in some ways it's a problem because you're exposed to everybody's perspective. And it's great because everybody has a voice but it's also potentially problematic because everybody has a voice.

# SHAUN T: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And with that said, you've got to be able to go within to maintain your sense of sovereignty and awareness that for somebody to take the time. If you were genuinely doing something to be of service or just to share your heart, and somebody has the time to take their own time and write something negative or to say something evil to you or just spew hatred at you. To take the time to do that. You've got to be able to put that in its proper perspective because it truly does... I don't have time for that. I've never left a negative YouTube comment or said something negative about somebody. I don't agree with everything.



Of course, I don't agree with what everybody's saying and doing. But I don't have time to sit up here and construct a negative thing to say. I wish them the best. Like if it is a seriously deranged perspective, it's just like, I really hope that they find their way. I peace out. I'm moving on. You know what I mean?

#### SHAUN T: Yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But to take the time to say something negative, it really does say... Because people say that. It says so much about them and it sounds like a good quotable. But for real you've got to be able to reign in your mind and understand like this is who I am. And if I'm going to be... I know friends and I know we've probably both done this, but we'll go down a hole with some people trying to find like, "No, no, you're misunderstanding." Because I really am about that life. I love people. I've got whatever amount of experience. I'm here to serve. That's not my intention whatever you're saying. And you can waste time and energy trying to appease somebody who really in the grand scheme of things does not really care.

#### **SHAUN T:** They don't.

#### SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

**SHAUN T:** And to that point and this is... I really want to say this. Here's what's really... Kind of a crazy revelation that I had. When people leave negativity on your doorstep. Let's say people gossip about you. They leave that whatever environment that they gossiped about you and they're happy. And they don't think about you for one more second. But they put all this negativity on you and now you're thinking for the next 20, 30, 40 minutes of a comment that this person just said about you when they've moved on to the next post or they moved on to the next gossip circle. They literally don't... They fall asleep, they're not even thinking about the fact that they made your day horrible. But you take on all this energy for the rest of the day and quite possibly not being able to sleep at night. Right? So that's when I started to be like...

Alright one, I do respond to some negative comments only because like I said, I have people in there that really need me and they need my voice to continue to move forward, but I just want you to think about that for a second. That person that tried to make you feel like crap. They are not thinking about you later but you're thinking about them. So, you try to take it with a grain of salt or whatever it is. And the opposite of that believe it or not, the people who talk really great about you? They're thinking about you. Those people who leave those really great comments on your post or the people who actually send you a text message or leave some sort of great review about you they are thinking about you way. They're not thinking about you five

seconds later so put that into perspective when you've got something bother you for an extended period of time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow that's powerful. I never thought about that particular thing, that's... Yeah.

**SHAUN T:** But think about it. I really love you. If I'm here and I have time, I'm coming back to you. If I don't like you, I'm not thinking about you, nor do I want to be around you. So, it's like I'm not going to give the negative people my energy especially if I didn't do anything to hurt you.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, yeah. Well, like I said man, we live at a very interesting time where we have all of this access, we have the ability to share. To share our perspective. It's really remarkable to hear all of the absolutely brilliant people in their respective fields who come in here and they're talking good behind my back. So, these are people who are thinking about me and who are extending that out in the work that they do versus would I want to get caught up in somebody who might not like a certain thing that I say or some perspective whatever the case might be. But this brings us to the point of like, I'm a huge advocate today more than ever of us being able to cultivate more of a societal norm of being able to perspective take.

You know why I don't take the time to leave a negative comment is because I care about how you feel. Even if you don't care about me, I care about how you feel. And I want to create a space for you to grow and to evolve. And now some people might see that... Well, they're going to take this heat right now, and that can help them to evolve. Which sometimes that is the right method. But in general, I just don't have time for that because I'm so focused on How can I serve. The thing that you just said. Like you waking up with that. Like, here's what I'm going to do. Always thinking about growing, being better, helping people to up-level their game, that is such an honorable way to live you know.

And you inspire that in other people too. So that is for the people listening, that is your duty. If you're about that life that is your duty and your greatest gift. And as you said earlier this is your opp... This is what you're going to remember. It's in between the dashes. When you're born and when you die it's in between the dashes. Like this is where it all's happening, and you have the opportunity to choose.

**SHAUN T:** I think one of the things that, this is probably going away out there for a second, but one of the things that have really changed my perspective on life is, so one of my sons at two and a half, three years old, I showed him one outer space video. Like we were just talking about space stuff, and he started watching videos with me on YouTube and then we just kept watching and kept watching. And this young kid is soaking it all in. It is insane. Like I was just

like, what? The like at almost at less than three, he knows every planet and he know about black holes, and he has all this stuff. And so, as I'm going down this rabbit hole literally of our universe and I realize when I learned, I was like, the sun is going to die. The one thing that keeps us alive is also going to die. Like think about that for a second. The one thing that keeps us alive is going to die. Which means I say this in like, I think people will understand.

I'll be like we ain't sh\*t, you know what I'm saying? Like we are, we are everything. But it's like it takes eight minutes for the sun's light to even reach us. You know what I mean? This massive thing that's given us life is going to die. So, while I'm here on this blip of time 'cause in a couple billion years, like this planet is not going to be here, I'm like I have to make the most of it right now. I literally have to make the most of this right now. This is too amazing to let pass us by. And as a person who struggle with anxiety, took depression medication before, went through again sexual trauma, been in abusive relationships, like I'm in a place where I'm just like, no. I literally have to live my best life and I do this like this, I do this, which is like really bad. I always assume I'm just going to live to a hundred. I'm like, I'm going to give myself to a hundred. And I'm like, okay, I got 56 years left. That's amazing. Which means I haven't even lived 56 years left and I went through all this mess. I'm like, Yo, I'm about to thrive my life away. Literally. I'm going all the way to the end, and I just want people to try and do the same.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Man, you know you... Certain people man, you just can't help it man. Being around you and picking this up and so grateful for you. So, you were here filming, doing some live streams of some workouts. So, you tell people where they get access to that kind of experience with you and also just what else you got going on where people can come and hang out with you.

**SHAUN T:** Yeah, so I am on BeachBody on Demand Interactive. It's called BODi. All you have to do is follow me on social media. Usually when I post like a twerking video, it's just, I'm about to teach or something. But yeah, I teach, I come here and teach to LA and teach twice a month. I come once a month, but I teach four classes. So, you can do a day pass with me. You can just follow me on Instagram or go to shauntlife.com for that. But the other thing that I'm doing that's really, really interesting, I'm really excited about is I'm diving into doing more retreats rather than super huge events. 'Cause I realize that I get really overwhelmed when I do events like what we did. But when I do retreats that are tailored toward different things, I think I walk away one, learning more about people.

It's a little more intimate. So, I'm doing like three types of retreats. I'm doing a Dig Deeper retreat, which is where you come for six days, and you have to complete a certain amount of workouts in those six days and you fellowship with people. And it's fun. I'm doing like an all-men's retreat because man, I'll get stopped in the elevator by just random guys and they'll be like, What do you do? You know. And they're like, how old are you? And I think they see like the



white in my face, so they know I'm not super young. And then I end up having these incredible conversations with guys they just open up about really incredible stuff and I get a lot of DMs from them. So, it... I really want to do like an all men's retreat just to like really fellowship with people and like create an outlet.

And then the other one other thing is like, follow me on Instagram because me and Scott are going to do our wine night. So, during the Pandemic we did Wine Night After Dark, and it's about like relationship and intimacy and communication and just for people who either are single, and they want to dive deeper into love or people who are in relationships and they just want, we created a Relationship Thrivation Course, you know, just like of our time being married. Just so like, I think it's really important if you live with somebody to be as connected to them as you possibly can in a really great way. Because I did find out from multiple therapists that during the pandemic there are a lot of people that, you know, because they realized that they were kind of just coming home from work but not really knowing each other and knowing each other's growth. So, we just kind of took the opportunity to get people to connect to their spouses and it just has been really great. But I just say, I just tell people, follow me on social media. And just turn on your notification so you never miss anything good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go, let's go. My guy, my brother. I'm so grateful to be able to hang out with you for this little bit and man you're just one of the... Man, I'm just grateful that you are around right now at this time on Planet Earth when I'm here. So, I get to experience and see this.

SHAUN T: Dude, I'll...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is grateful for you.

**SHAUN T:** I have to tell you sometimes I'm like, you have such incredible guests on your show. So, if anybody's listening from my show, and you've never listened to The Model Health Show, you have to just like subscribe now. But my expertise, if you will, as I grow, it's just like life and living kind of what we just talked about. Like, I'm not really great at something scientific or food or you know so I've always like damn, like I want to revisit the show, but I don't know if people really understand my way of thinking, but after today I'm like, that is cool. I feel like I belong here.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You absolutely do man. I'm so again grateful to have you here in this space. Like...

**SHAUN T:** Thanks for having me.



**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This is an epic moment, man. So, I appreciate you again, everybody make sure to follow Shaun T just to be connected with all the things because you're a decathlete out here in these streets So love you man. I appreciate you.

**SHAUN T:** Love you too. Thank you.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Shaun T, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out this, definitely follow Shaun T and stay up to date with what he's doing and if you were inspired to attend one of his in-person events, please do so. I spoke at one of his events not too long ago and they're just world class and also some of the most amazing people come out to Shaun's events. He just attracts a level of greatness. And also of course check out his podcast Trust and Believe as well. And of course, he's a bestselling author. Don't forget about that. His book is really inspiring too. But this episode today is about introspection and being able to turn within and being able to find meaning in those moments of challenge and to really decide on who you are and how you're going to show up.

Because we get to choose that's the power of being a human right now and this experience and this ability to really realize our agency that we have in our lives, our ability to make change and to write our stories. So yeah, I hope you got a lot of value out of this. If you did, please share it out with your friends and family. Take a screenshot of this episode and tag me. I'm at shawnmodel on Instagram and tag Shaun T. Let him know what you thought about this episode. We've got some incredible masterclasses and special world class guests coming up very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day. I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes. You can find transcriptions, videos for each episode and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much and take care. I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.

