

# **THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW**

**EPISODE 629**

## **How Stress Controls Biology & How To Achieve Your Thrive State**

**With Guest Dr. Kien Vuu**

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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 into me today. Right now, we have access to a plethora of new tools that can essentially tell us how long we're going to live. We have a biological age, and we have a chronological age. Our chronological age is what we see on the calendar, how many trips around the sun, but our biological age is telling us our health span. And looking at this comparison chronologically, we might be, say 50 years old, but biologically, our health span, our state of health, our cellular state of health could be in our 30s, or it could be in our 70s. There's a very big difference between lifespan and health span. We don't want just to extend our lifespan, which is the modus operandi for so many people today, they're looking to extend their lifespan. We want to extend our quality of life, our health span, our years of functionality to be able to enjoy an extended life.

And today, our special guest is a physician who's really stepped into that role of helping people to extend their health span. He is a physician who's dedicated to the science of longevity, but not just, again, extending that chronological age, but longevity in terms of our cognitive function, our sexual function, and of course, just being able to do the things that we truly love for many more years. One of the things that we're going to talk about today with our special guest is some of the science around telomeres. This is one of those biological markers that we can now measure that give us an indication of essentially how long we're going to live. But not just, again, our lifespan, but our health span. These telomeres are essentially the endcaps of strands of DNA. And as time goes on, little bits and pieces are getting chopped off of those endcaps until essentially these things are going to unravel.

Now, Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, won the Nobel Prize from her discovery of telomerase, amongst other things, which is an enzyme that essentially can add length back onto those telomeres, add length back onto this biological marker. And thus, essentially, again on paper, first and foremost, looking at this process of reversing our age. Now, I say on paper because that's what got the Nobel Prize. But if you stretch this out and look at this in the real world, including our special guest, the story you're going to hear is remarkable. But I'm saying this from the perspective of someone who's experienced this firsthand. When I was just 20 years old, I was diagnosed with an advanced degenerative disease. So much so that my physician at the time told me that my degeneration of my spine, he said these words, "You have the spine of an 80-year-old man," and I was just 20.

Now, yes, immense pain, suffering, struggle for several years, and of course, if you know my story, I had a choice to make. And eventually I was given the opportunity, which the opportunity was there the whole time, but just awareness cognitively to make a choice to take

control of my health, to get healthy. And I went from that state of having a spine of an 80-year-old man according to my physician, to regenerating those tissues, to having these two herniated discs retract and to grow in their size and their volume, and having the spine of someone that is more appropriate to my age. Essentially the age of my spine reversed. How is that possible? When that first physician told me that, "This is incurable, this is incurable, this is something that just happens." Those are the exact words. "This just happens. I'm sorry that it happened to you." He apologized, but he was trying to write my story for me. He was writing the prescription on how my life was going to play out, and here's the thing, I can't fault him for that faulty information. This is simply how he was trained.

He was trained in pharmacology; he was trained in surgery. He was not trained in epigenetics. This wasn't even in his awareness all these years ago. Now, it's on the tip of many people in the health profession's tongue, though they're not really leaning into that. Where we know today, factually, when we say that genes are causing disease, we know that about 95% of all diseases are driven by lifestyle. Only about 5%, 1-5%, depending on which text you're looking at or which experts you're talking to about 1-5% of all diseases are due to true genetic defects. Epigenetic influences, our nutrition, our stress exposures, our activity levels, our sleep quality, all these inputs that listen, our genes expect from us. Our genes expect us to get adequate sun exposure. Our genes expect us to get adequate rest and recovery. Our genes expect us to provide ourselves with the building blocks of real food. This is what we evolve with.

Today, 60% of the average American's diet is ultra-processed food. Stuff that's never existed before in human history, now makes up the majority of our diet. Things that are so far removed from being anything natural. They're not processed food, they're ultra-processed. A honey bun, if you look at a honey bun, there's no context to where the hell any of those ingredients came from. You don't see Mountain Dew or Coke Zero springing up from the ground like water. It's just water, where does that come from? The thing is, we've been inundated with these things. We've been so immersed in these things that we've normalized them. It is normal to guzzle a Mountain Dew or to see a Mountain Dew. We know what that is. We know what that does, what it does. The same thing with this fast variety of breakfast cereals and all these artificial ingredients and the chips and the cookies and all these things, and not to villainize these things because everything is an option. We don't want to get into this, giving food morality. There might be some joy in having an occasional Tiffed with Tony the Tiger.

However, when that becomes normalized, when that becomes the rule and not the exception, that's when we're building our tissues. We're talking about our genes and our genetic expression, nutrigenomics, and nutrigenomics shares with us that every bite of food that we eat inherently changes our genetic expression instantaneously. That's what it does. And we have power, 'cause the power isn't just in our hands, it's at the end of our forks. And that's what this is about, is putting the power back into our hands, putting the power intentionally at the

end of our fork and in our relationships, as you're going to hear about today as well. So, what we're talking about today, again, is stacking conditions in our favor, and it can be something as simple as changing up what we're sipping on, changing up our beverage choices, can have a profound shift in our genetic expression. And there are beverages that have been utilized for centuries, for thousands upon thousands of years that we know are affirmative towards health, and now we have modern technology and innovation to be able to test these things and really to see what it do.

For example, a study that was published in the Journal of Health Science uncovered that antioxidant in green tea called catechins, are able to increase the rate at which body fat gets burned for fuel. Fun stuff. These tea catechins are able to increase the rate at which body fat gets burned for fuel. You don't have to do nothing, you don't have to go and run on the treadmill longer, you don't have to... Fill in the blank, simply by swapping out or adding in a couple of cups of green tea each day. So that's an amazing benefit on the metabolic side, what about for cognitive health? Well, there's another compound in green tea called L-theanine that works to improve focus, and this was highlighted in the peer review journal, Brain Topography. The researchers observed that L-theanine intake increases the frequency of our alpha brain waves that indicates reduced stress, enhanced focus, and even increased creativity.

There is one type of green tea that stands above all others, and it is Matcha Green Tea specifically, Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea. It's shaded 35% longer for extra L-theanine, and also it is the first Matcha that is quadruple toxin-screened for purity. The tea industry, well, there are wonderful things to be found within these story teas, can be littered with pesticides, with microplastics, with heavy metals. So, for a company to go above and beyond and do a quadruple toxin screening to make sure you're getting the highest quality, purest green tea, it's really something special. There's no preservatives, no sugar added, artificial sweeteners, nothing of the like. This is Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea from Pique Teas. Go to [pikelife.com/model](http://pikelife.com/model), that's P-I-Q-U-E-L-I-F-E.com/model. You get 10% off their incredible Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea, but also their other award-winning tea varieties as well. I love their pu'er, I love their ginger tea, so many great varieties to choose from, but definitely check out the Sun Goddess Matcha Green Tea. Again, that's [pikelife.com/model](http://pikelife.com/model), P-I-Q-U-E-L-I-F-E.com/model, now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

**ITUNES REVIEW:** Another five-star review titled, “Motivated Momma” by Jenny Bell, 1978. “Absolutely life changing. It's been a little over a year since a friend let me borrow her Eat Smarter book. When I listened to my first Model Health podcast soon after, I felt an energy and inspiration I haven't had in years. As a busy mom, it's so easy to put yourself last.”

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Wow, thank you so much for sharing that, sharing your story, and sharing your voice. If you get to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for The

Model Health Show, and on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is Kien Vuu MD, and he's one of the most sought-after anti-aging physicians in the country. He's the author of the best-selling book, Thrive State. He's been featured on an abundance of major media, including the Doctors, Access Hollywood, many other media outlets, and also, he's helping to train the next generation of physicians with a new empowering mindset as Assistant Professor of Health Sciences at UCLA. And he's just one of the best people in the field, an incredible voice, an incredible human. Let's jump into this conversation with the amazing Dr Kien Vuu. My guy, Dr V. What's up, how are you doing man?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Dude, I'm doing great. I always get jealous listening to your smooth suave voice during the podcast, and now I get to be in front of you listening to that smooth suave voice, it's amazing.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Thank you, man. So, my face like it comes out of my... Some people, when I meet them, they're like, "Your voice, like it's right here in front of me." It's just this surreal thing, but yeah, thank you man, I appreciate that.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** You got it brother. It's so comforting. It puts me in the thrive state.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Let's go! That's what it's about. Speaking of which, your book is fantastic, I'm so grateful for the honesty. I felt so much more connected to you, just reading your book, and hearing your story, your insights. And one of the things that you talked about in the book... Now, obviously working as a physician, you were working with a lot of unhealthy people, but there was this segment where you shared, "I was an unhealthy person, working with unhealthy people."

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Talk about that.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, I didn't realize in medical school, I wasn't really given the tools to be healthy. And so... I'll back up a little bit. I was born as a refugee from Vietnam. Spent eight months in a refugee boat. Three months in a Philippine refugee camp, and then we were brought over by a Catholic church. And one would think a kid being brought over that early would be so grateful to be alive. But I remember when growing up, I got bused to a more affluent area for school, so I was constantly being teased for the holes in my hand...

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** This was here in California?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Here in California. Yeah, yeah. Definitely. The holes in my hand-me-down clothes, the aromatic food my mom sent me to school with, I got a lot of like, "Go back to your home country, Chinky." And so, growing up, I just didn't want to be who I was. Not rich enough, not tall enough, not American enough. All these not-enoughnesses basically drove my life. And I made choices from that place. I think throughout childhood, I felt like I just needed to attain something outside of myself, to make me feel like I was worthy and worthy of love. And that went on into medical school. I actually wanted to do more media and entertainment as a kid, but my mom was like, "Look, you're going to... We came here from Vietnam, post-war Vietnam. We spent eight months on a boat. You're either going to be a doctor, an MD, or a physician." And so, I went to medical school. And I strived to enter the top residencies, I went to the National Institutes of Health, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute...

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Graduated magna cum laude.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** There you go. Wow! You've been doing some research on me.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Of course, man!

**DR. KIEN VUU:** So, I try to achieve all these things, and I become this interventional radiologist, which is basically a type of doctor that uses medical imaging to perform minimally invasive surgeries. So, we knew exactly what diseases look like in the body, we diagnose that. But I was able to use those machines to treat end-stage diabetes, cancer, things like that. I become section chief of my hospital. Bought a fancy car, bought a fancy house, doing all those things that you were told in your life would bring you happiness and success. But during the pinnacle of that journey, I was overweight, I was diabetic, I had high blood pressure, I was on several prescription medications. I was getting stage-1 of what so many patients came to me and ended up in my operating room table. I was a sick person treating other sick people. And at that moment in time, I didn't have the tools.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's powerful, man. Wow. I don't think a lot of people... You even shared in the book; I'm actually going to share this direct quote. You said, "How do I walk into a patient's room, look them in the eye and tell them how to take care of their health when I am not even taking care of my own? Who in their right mind is going to take and more importantly, follow medical advice from a walking, talking chronic disease statistic?"

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely. Yeah. One in two Americans has a chronic disease, unfortunately. One in four have multiple chronic diseases. And unfortunately, I didn't recognize... Before I thought, "Okay. Yeah, it was genetics." And in medical school, we learned how to give some lip service as to, "Oh, go exercise, walk and do all these things." But as I dove into the science of disease and human performance, I realized the most important thing. How we live our life is

medicine. The choices that we make in the categories I talk about in my book, create this energetic state that basically becomes this, the environment for ourselves. That basically tells our DNA how to act. And I didn't recognize that at that point. That basically the choices in my life, living from that programming gave me disease. And disease was not actually a disease of my genetics, but a disease of my consciousness.

And once we become more aware of how we live our life, if we could become aware of our old programming making poorer choices, wow, we can start to make newer choices. And man, if you start to make newer choices, particularly in those areas that I talk about in my book, you'll notice a shift in your energy, your vibration and that speaks to your DNA, which then tells your cells, "Man, this is a great state to be in." And that's basically the state of optimal health, longevity, and peak performance.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, yeah. Powerful. So, you mentioned, and I actually just shared that direct quote from the book, and you said that, "Who in their right mind is going to take and more importantly, follow medical advice from a walking talking chronic disease statistic?" Unfortunately, ironically, most people because this is becoming the dominant form in healthcare. And I saw this... When I was at my university, a lot of my clients... Because even as I was... I was still in school, but I became a personal trainer at the gym. And a huge portion of my clients were nurses and pre-med students. And they were already f\*cked up. They were sleep-deprived, overweight, diabetic, pre-diabetic, on Lisinopril. They were already just cultivating... A better way to put this is that it was a culture of sickness that was just being bred right there.

And a lot of them, good intentioned, they're trying to make a difference, they're trying to be successful. A lot of them are trying to change their family's story, there's so much riding on them. But they're just kind of thrown into this culture that again, just kind of breeds disease.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Oh my God. You give me goosebumps just thinking about it. The culture of how medical doctors are trained, it's like, "Sleep is for the weak. You have to put in these 80-to-100-hour weeks." Before there weren't actually work week restrictions. Now they put in the 80-hour work week. Which I know many programs actually go past it, and if you report it, you're being seen as somebody who was weak. That's not good. They don't teach you about nutrition, in fact many of the hospitals I used to work in has terrible food. And then some of the even have fast food joints in them. One of the hospitals in here, a children's hospital has a McDonald's in it. Unfortunately, this is the culture that we tell people, and they actually think that they are going through life, learning and living life and trying to learn how to become healthcare people not knowing that they're being taught to live in such a way that breeds disease.



**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. There's a study that was published in The Lancet. This is one of our most prestigious peer review journals. They actually did a study on physicians' performance when they're sleep-deprived. So, they had them come in and to do a simulation procedure and they tracked all their metrics. Sleep deprived them 24 hours, which is a... It's considered to be a short-term sleep debt and is not uncommon in the field. Had them come back to do the same exact procedure. What happened? They made 20% more mistakes doing the same exact thing. And another thing is, it took them 14% longer to do the same thing i.e., Growing healthcare costs and losing efficiency because we're... This is not just for physicians. This is us as a culture. We tend to perceive working hard and doing stuff, and we mistake that for actually being effective.

So, we know the numbers... And this gets me back to another thing I want to ask you about. You said... Just in passing, you mentioned genetics. And this is something we both were taught about in school, and that family history. And even though this obviously does play a role, we know today, fortunately, that somewhere in the ballpark of 1-5% of all diseases are actually true genetic defects. In some conditions, like Alzheimer's, right around 1%. And yet we're seeing this epidemic of Alzheimer's creeping its way into our top five causes of death. So where are we at now, again, knowing that 95% of diseases are under control of something else?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. So, epigenetics. And actually, we do inherit something if we end up being overweight, diabetic, having symptoms like our parents, we inherit their lifestyle and we inherit their choices. So, the science of epigenetics tells us this. I would probably say relatively a young field that came out 15, 20 years ago or so. Epi means above, genetics genes. So, what makes up who we are? Basically, genes make RNA, make protein, and then the different proteins in our body basically make up who we are. That determines performance, that determines longevity, that determines our health. Well, that comes from our genes. But epigenetics tells us that the fate of our cells isn't actually reliant on the genes that reside in it, but actually, these genes are not just pre-programmed, they're listening every moment to its environment, "What's going on here? Are we safe? Are we in danger? What's up?" So, there's all these cues from the external environment that then speak to our DNA that basically can turn genes on, turn genes off, and that makes the RNA, that makes the protein, that makes up who were. So, it's the environment around the cells that actually determine genetic expression. What creates the environment of our cells, and can our choices create our environment of our cells? Absolutely.

When I started this study, human performance, and longevity, I was looking through the book, The Blue Zones, Dan Buettner. And they found five places where people were living over 100. Costa Rica, Sardinia, Okinawa, Loma Linda, I'm forgetting one more, but why were they living so long? They found some traits. They moved every day. They didn't stuff themselves with food. They occasionally celebrated with wine. They had deep connection with friends, families and



loved ones. And they all had purpose. I was like, "Woah, they didn't have access to any of this technology, stem cells, peptides, all those biohacking stuff. How are they living so long? Could they just be living so long from the way they were living their life?" And so, I dove into that.

I started to study genetic markers for disease and longevity. I looked at telomeres, I looked at this gene sequence called the conserved transcriptional response to adversity, which is basically one of the cell danger responses. And when I looked at these things, and I also started to look at epigenetic clocks, and I started to look at, "Oh, okay, based on the way people were living in the Blue Zones, did it change the biology?" And it turns out all these different things actually did shift the cellular environment. It'll change your proteins, it'll change the signaling molecules and all these things, and actually change the environment of your cells that then affect your DNA.

And basically, the things I write in my book are the things that showed up most. Five things. Number one, physical, which includes sleep, nutrition, and movement. You wrote two awesome books on two of those. The next one is emotional; your emotions actually change the environment of your cells. Mental. So does your thoughts. Social, the relationship you have with other people, and how those relationship bars also change the environment of our cells. And then finally, spiritual, which is having that sense of purpose. And if you have that sense of purpose... I demonstrate in my book that there are molecular changes that happen in your cells. Your cells actually think that you're not in a survival state because you're caring for other people. That tells your body, "Oh, I'm good here, because I'm serving other people." Those are the levers that we can create this energetic environment of our cells. I call that the thrive state, when we make choices that basically give our cells exactly what it needs to cause the gene expression for optimal health, longevity, and peak performance.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Powerful. You mentioned one of these biomarkers, telomeres.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, can you talk a little bit more about that? And basically, you're looking at ways that you can sustain or even protect your telomeres from degradation.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely. So, telomeres... I believe in 2009, Dr Elizabeth Blackburn won the Nobel Prize for discovering telomeres and telomerase. Right? So basic...

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, there's the book right there behind you.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Oh, touché!

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** The Telomere Effect.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** The Telomere Effect. So basically, what it is, is they're basically just extra base pairs at the end of our DNA. So, it acts as basically these things at the end of our DNA. And every time our cell divides, it's a possibility that you lose some genetic information. So, the longer your telomeres are, you protect your DNA from fraying every time it self-divides. And so having preserved telomeres is actually a marker for longevity. But shortened telomeres are a marker for chronic disease as well as a shortened life span. And we know from her book and her work, that the number one cause of telomere shortening basically is stress. Childhood stress, the stress that we take on every single day. But if you read The Telomere Effect, what is so empowering is that the choices that we make, like I said, in those five things that I mentioned, having a sense of purpose, having community with you, eating right, sleeping right, all these things actually will preserve your telomeres. And so, the choices that we make, again, actually causes physical, biochemical, molecular changes in our body. And that's super powerful.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** The crazy thing is even as you're saying this, as... It's difficult for us to wrap our minds around the fact that stress can age us so quickly and create the onset of disease because it's invisible in a sense, it doesn't have calories. But a big med analysis published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that upwards of 80% of all physician visits today are for stress-related illnesses. This was published quite some time ago. This is not new, but yet people... We still don't get it. And even with that being said, I think that... And if you could, talk a little bit to what the stress components are. Because I think we have also tunnel vision on what, "Well, I'm not stressed," like, "Work is fine." Let's talk about the global perspective for a person. Like somebody's life, what's... What kind of creates their stress inputs?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** 100%. And I would love to bring this up by bringing up another genetic marker called the Conserve Transcriptional Response to Adversity, the CTRA. My colleague over at UCLA, Steven Cole, did a lot of work on this. This is actually a stress danger response. It's a gene complex that's in your body... Now, back in the Paleolithic days, this gene complex would get turned on when there was a saber tooth tiger or a neighboring village about to attack you. And basically, what it does is this. If it senses stress in the body, it'll change up the state of the cellular environment, it'll basically ramp up inflammatory genes, it will turn on inflammatory genes because what if you get bitten, or you have a flesh wound? Inflammations got to protect that. And it'll actually lower your immunity genes. Because why spend your body's energy on fighting against cancer or an infection when you're about to be someone's lunch? So, any time the body senses stress, it would turn this thing on. And his research demonstrates that there's an increase in inflammation and drop in immunity. And when this thing is chronically activated, it leads to chronic diseases, like Alzheimer's, like cancer, like metastatic disease, like infections.

Now, we don't have to worry about saber tooth tigers anymore. However, if our body perceives stress, such as someone cutting you off on the freeway, such as an argument with a spouse, such as resenting somebody who's hurt you, creates the same state in your body. Increased inflammation decreased immunity leading to chronic symptoms from chronic disease. And when I studied his work, what turns on the CTRA? Surprisingly, it mirrors the way people were living in the Blue Zones. Surprisingly, it mirrors the things that we're talking about in The Telomere Effect, the same five things I talk about in the book, the physical, mental, the social, the spiritual. All these things actually... The body listens. If you make the right choices, you'll keep this thing turned off.

And so, sleep, if you're not sleeping very well, your body's going to think you're stressed out, right? If you're not eating very well, your body will think you're stressed out if you're not moving. Your thoughts, if you spend your time focusing on things you can't control, if you start spending your time really believing those limiting beliefs that you have, it's going to change your biology. So, each one of those categories, there are choices that you make that will put you in the thrive state, and then there's choices that you can make that'll put you in the stress and survive state. And in the stress and survive state, that's when you activate the biology of disease.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Wow. Wow. Wow. As I'm hearing this, it's wonderful that we have that state. It's appropriate in a certain context. We no longer live in circumstances where it's often appropriate, but with our vast imagination and our lack of awareness on our ability to control our thoughts and our actions, we are living in that stress state, as you know, as a society. And I want to circle back a little bit and talk about when you mentioned... So, we already hit on the fact that the vast majority of our epidemics of chronic disease... Oh, by the way, since you mentioned that stress component, and that deactivation of the immune system, I've got to do this, and I will put this study up for people to see. There was a huge med analysis done by the CDC. I've mentioned this study before, I really want people to get this. The way you said it, I think people are going to get it at another level. Published by the CDC, and they were looking at the data from over 540,000 COVID-19 patients. Hospitalizations from over 800 US hospitals looking at their data. They found that obesity was the number one risk factor for death. The second risk factor for death from COVID-19 in this huge analysis published by the CDC, we'll put this sh\*t up for you to see it, was anxiety and stress-related disorders.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Oh yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Was the second leading risk factor for death from this infectious disease. Stress, anxiety, fear. What have we just... Again, we've been inundated with it. Without context... Fear is appropriate but without context and without mind management, we're just

creating susceptibility to dying. Not just from COVID, but from all manner of infectious diseases and chronic diseases.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. Which is why I think we really need to, like you said, cultivate the awareness of being able to assess situations more appropriately, and not have the fear response, which I think is a great time to mention something. Scientists are beginning to learn more about a part of the brain called the default mode network. So, get this, when we're in utero, all the way up to the age of 10, our brain's constantly taking on information. Doesn't matter where it's coming from. The media, teachers, social media, whatever it is, it's taking all this information. And what it's doing is it's making up the beliefs and models about the world. It's making up how we fit in the world.

But here's the thing. This default mode network is actually the autopilot survival mode of the brain. Which is great. It's helped us survive as a species for a long time. So, it's constantly also looking for what can harm us. It remembers fear, limiting beliefs, disempowering stories of I'm not good enough, I'm not worthy of love. That's where it comes from. And unless we are conscious of this, even past the age of 10, we might be making decisions from that place of old programming. And so, one, we have to be aware that there might be some old programming running the show, which is why it's so difficult to want to do something and then decide, oh, okay... Want to do that diet, and then all of a sudden, fall back on it because of some underlying stuff that you have to be aware of. And the more we can become aware of it, the more we could silence it and still make better choices.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's powerful. So, circling back with that genetic template and the empowerment, really, that you're providing. So somewhere in the ballpark, again, about 95% of chronic diseases are related to our lifestyle and our choices and epigenetic influences. With that said, you mentioned how genes are constantly sensing our environment and making shifts. So, one gene can have 100, 1000 different expressions. Not to mention, we have, again, tens of thousands, maybe... We'll just say 20,000, 25,000, which the number changes. Different genes that we're sharing collectively. We start getting into a place where there are countless different expressions, but the body is intelligent. And so, a disease expression, this is how we start to articulate how somebody can be born without Type 2 diabetes and go through their life, and then they have the onset of these symptoms. Our genes make adjustments based on our environment, and here's the ironic part, to help us to survive in those conditions. Because even though Type 2 diabetes is... It looks like is this killer, it's helping your body to survive under unideal circumstances where we have rampant amounts of sugar in our blood that can kill us. So, your body's figuring out other things to keep you ticking. It's fascinating stuff.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** No, we've basically created a state that it's not used to. And the body does the best it can do. And, yeah, it's going to create a state that's not going to be healthy for you if you don't provide it... Just the state for it to flourish and to grow.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, this gets us into what you mentioned earlier. You mentioned... And this blew my mind, actually. I wrote this down, "Diseases of consciousness." Alright? Because, again, we look at the tangible things. What we're eating, our lack of exercise or exercise. Those different things that we're kind of proactive doing, but we don't really think about our mindset. And you shared in the book so powerfully, how it was your mindset, your consciousness that had driven you to that place where you're experiencing this myriad of different diseases that you would be helping other people with. And you shared that this had to do with your story and where you came from and the trauma you experienced. And if you could, please share this, what made you choose to be a doctor in the first place? Because you were like, I'm not proud of this, even now, this wasn't about the top tier thing being helping others. Let's talk about that.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. Goosebumps, brother. You know how to bring it out. Yeah. Great question. So, I mentioned this default mode network. I mentioned, growing up, not feeling like I'm enough, not worthy. And, yes, I joke about my mom wanting to push me there. But another reason of wanting to become a doctor was just to cover up the not enough-ness I was feeling inside. If I could wear this white coat, if people could see me in this white coat and say, "Hey Dr. Vuu." And it covered things up for a little bit, but inside, I was still feeling that. And so, people ask me, "How does our mindset or how does our programming lead us to disease?" Well, let's just use me as the example. Remember the five levers we talk about. Physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual. Let's talk about the mental programming, "I'm not enough, I'm not worthy of love. Okay? I'm going to put myself first rather than anything else." So that's what I was chasing for my entire life. Well, where was my spiritual state? I'm going to put myself first rather than worrying for other people. My body thinks I'm trying to survive. Those spiritual state. Let me put on the mask of the white coat. I'm not enough. You're not going to want to hang out with me. And so how am I connecting with you? Do you really get to see me who I really am and connect with me and show you my vulnerability and have that true connection where we can increase oxytocin in our body? No.

Poor social state. What do you think my emotions were? Stress, anxiety, worry, fear about constantly trying to chase success, which made me not sleep, eat, move very well, and pick up a lot of additional poor habits. Those are all choices, unconscious, because it was coming from that default mode, "I'm not enough. I'm not worthy of love," that set up the stage. All those choices there create a state to my body. Which state was that? The stress and survive state. What happens there? Increased inflammation, drop in immunity, chronic symptoms, chronic disease. I become the poster child of a famous Dalai Lama quote when he was asked, "What do

you find most interesting about humanity?" He said, "Man. Because he would sacrifice his health in order to make money and then sacrifice his money to recuperate his health."

So how did things start to shift? Well, I had a year that was probably the sh\*ttest year of my life, but as we know, those times are usually gifts. And so, I remember I was in a relationship, she left me for another person because I wasn't paying attention to the relationship. I didn't know how to love. I probably didn't think that she loved me for me and probably loved me for my money. I had a close uncle. I didn't spend some time with him. He passed away from cancer that year. I also had this huge tear in my shoulder, and I was told I might not be able to operate anymore. All of a sudden, 16 years of training and all this stuff... Like, your career is probably going to be pulled up from under you. Everything in the old programming said, "Sh\*t. Your life will never be enough. You will never be worthy."

And I remember as all those things were happening, I think, to me at the time, I thought actually it turned out happening for me. And there was one pivotal moment I remember. I was rounding in the hospital and there was a guy my age, which was like probably late 30s at the time, terminal pancreatic cancer, and I was asked to drain 10 liters of fluid from his belly. He had this huge belly. And when you have cancer cells that plug up your lymphatics, your belly just blows up. And so, I remember I was feeling pretty down, and I was approaching his room and was thinking, "Okay, put yourself together, Kien. This guy probably has it worse than you. So, you just got to pull yourself together."

I opened the door and I get met with this wave of positive energy and his huge bright smile. And he says, "Doc, I can't wait for you to drain this fluid from me because it's getting in the way of sexy time!" He knocked me out of my own programming right then. And I'm like, "Dude, Ishmael, how are you so positive right now?" He says, "Doc, look, it didn't always used to be this way. I used to be stressed out all the time, but I recognized the only power I have is how I choose to show up and I choose to show up with love and positivity." I was like, wow, here's a guy who was about to die reminding me about how to live and reminding me that the power of choice is always ours.

And I didn't realize where I was making choices from, but through him, I was able to make some new choices. And the new choices I made, let's go through the five things. I started to attend A-Fest. I did a lot of personal development, which gave me a new outlook on life. I started to eat, sleep, and move better. All of a sudden, my biochemistry changes. I started to lose some weight, I started to feel more energy, more alive, emotions. With a new body and feeling like I'm on top of the world, I got the girl. I started hanging out, started to meet people from a new tribe, such as yourself, Vishen and a bunch of people.



So, community was better. Spiritual, I'm like, wow, I know how to approach health in a new way. I'm super enthusiastic about it now. Spiritual. Let's go back to the mental. I started to adopt new beliefs like everything in my life actually happens for me, not to me and that I create my health and I create my reality. New choices basically change it, this energetic state, this vibration that my DNA gets a listen to. It's in a new state now. And being in that new state, I actually reversed all my chronic diseases in a very short period of time. I've lost about 40 pounds, lost all the inflammatory visceral fat, and if you take a look at an epigenetics test, I have biologically aged backwards. Boom. Thrive state it will be.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Incredible. Let's go. Wow. Man, that is just remarkable. So remarkable. Man, you're still... Man, wow, that is so powerful. So, there's a similar...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** So back to consciousness, right?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** But there is a similarity here. I got to say this really quickly, have you seen Doctor Strange, the Marvel film?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Come on!

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Hey. Yeah, right? I mean, the girl, losing the girl and also not being able to possibly operate again, the whole thing.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. When I saw it, I was like, yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Bro, you got that magic, is what I'm trying to say.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Thanks, brother.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's what I'm trying to say.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Thanks, brother. Yeah. But you mentioned consciousness and that's what it is. It's, what choices are you making? Because you're either making a choice to put yourself in that stress and survive state, and it could be a tiny, little choice, or it's putting you in the thrive state. And, therefore, with new choices, I was able to shift up basically what my DNA was listening to. And that's why I say disease is not... Disease is from our genetics. It's a disease from our consciousness and the choices that we make.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. Facts, facts. I want to really dig in here on a couple of these and, obviously, your book breaks these down into sections. You talk about sleep and the science around how this actually works to put you in the thrive state, but I want to talk about the



nutrition piece because, obviously, you can stress your way into a diabetic outcome from a variety of angles and... But I think the most cognitive... The cognitive association people have is through food, what did you do differently with your nutrition and what do you kind of champion right now that can support our telomere length and to put us in that thrive state?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, I try not to make nutrition too complicated, but let's see what the stress and survive state we did. I woke up every morning, I got to the hospital in probably around 6 o'clock, coffee, six pumps of International Delight, which is the equivalent of basically 1.5 packets of sugar, so it started off there. Throughout the day, I was sipping on Monster Energy drinks with a bunch of caffeine and more high fructose corn syrup. Throughout the day I wasn't... I picked up whatever was easy in the hospital, one, I didn't put myself in the state to receive the nutrition 'cause I was constantly on the go and eating while I was doing stuff. And so, it was very easy to not do that. And unfortunately, that is the sad or standard American diet. So, removing sugar and processed foods was basically the first thing, and then I make things very easy, just very clean sources of meat, good veggies, and then I also apply intermittent fasting and time-restricted eating, and that's basically it.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Very simple.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Very simple, I try to make it simple. If it's difficult, it's... For me, I can't count calories and macros and things like that, I just try to make things super easy for me to follow.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. Few people know that regularly drinking coffee has been shown to help prevent cognitive decline and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease. This attribute referenced in the journal; Practical Neurology is yet another reason why intelligent coffee consumption makes the list of best neuro nutritious beverages. Another study featured in the journal; Psychopharmacology uncovered that drinking coffee has some remarkable benefits on mental performance. The researchers found that intelligent coffee intake leads to improvements in alertness, improved reaction times and enhanced performance on cognitive vigilance task and task that involve deep concentration.

Now, why am I stressing intelligent coffee intake? This means acknowledging the true U-shaped curve of benefits and not going ham on caffeine. The data clearly shows that some coffee, a cup or two a day, and the accompanied caffeine is a great adjunct for improved mental performance but going too far starts to lead to diminishing returns. So, we want to

make sure that we're getting an optimal intake of coffee, and again, not going overboard, but also coffee is best if it's not coming along with pesticides, herbicides, rodenticides, fungicides, these chemical elements are clinically proven to destroy our microbiome terrain, so destroying the very microbiome that helps to regulate our metabolism, regulate our immune system, the list goes on and on.

Obviously, you want to make sure that those things are not coming along with a high-quality coffee that we're trying to get these benefits from. And also, what if we can uplevel the longevity and neurological benefits of the coffee by combining it with another clinically proven nutrient source? Well, that's what I do every day when I have the organic coffee combined with the dual-extracted medicinal mushrooms from Four Sigmatic. And if we're talking about optimal cognitive performance and the health of our brain, the protection of our brain, there are a few nutrient sources like lion's mane medicinal mushroom that pack these kind of benefits. Researchers at University of Malaya found that lion's mane has neuroprotective effects, literally being able to help to defend the brain against even traumatic brain injuries. It just makes the brain more healthy and robust. So again, this combination of medicinal mushrooms plus organic high-quality coffee is a match made in nutrient heaven. Go to [foursigmatic.com/model](https://foursigmatic.com/model), that's [F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model](https://F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model) to get 10% off their incredible Mushroom Elixirs, mushroom hot cocoas and mushroom coffees. Again, that's [foursigmatic.com/model](https://foursigmatic.com/model). And now, back to the show.

Alright, now if you could, are there any particular... Because again, we still have this consciousness where we're looking for a magic bullet here, so within nutrition, we've got obviously the elimination of things that were hurting you, the addition of things that your genes have a resonance with, that humans have been eating for a long time. What about on the supplemental side? Was there anything that you start to add in? Maybe fish oil or maybe some anti-inflammatories or something?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely, so fish oil was a huge one, that was able to actually drop down my triglycerides a lot and actually help with my lipid profile. And yes, it's a great anti-inflammatory, but I just started off very simple with just a multi-vitamin, added more fish oil and then some mitochondrial support, but that was basically it, and now I cycle through so many different things and I'm not quite sure how it's happening in my body, I feel pretty good, but once you kind of dialed in, it's really hard to know if anything's truly moving the needle.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right, yeah. See, this is the really interesting phenomenon that I don't think a lot of people talk about, which is you just get to a place, there's so much stuff out there, our ancestors had dialed in, depending on which culture, there are certain go-tos for longevity, for mental clarity, for balance, you name it, but it's still based around the biggest pillars, which is eating real food, but today we have this, this society, we have a cultural phenomenon where

60% of the average Americans diet is ultra-processed food. And so, finding these things that kind of add into the mix can be super important. But also, it's in the avoidance of things that are kind of nefarious in our system. Like you even mentioned the dirty dozen in the book, and you talk about the pesticides and some of the potential downsides with consuming a lot of that in that coffee you were probably drinking.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** You probably getting a nice piping hot dose of pesticides along with that, that people don't really think about as well.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Right? Yeah, absolutely. So, just became a little bit more conscious, just a little bit more conscious when it comes to eating. You don't have to be perfect. I would say for most people, if you could just shave off some sugar and some processed foods, immediately you're going to start feeling a lot better. And then you, the more you start to educate yourself on the things that you should be eating and not, then you start to make these little micro changes and it's not going to occur overnight. And when it slowly does, you'll be, "Oh, start to feel a lot better now, now that we work on the next thing."

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. So, yeah, and also like I was saying, people over time, we don't really realize that even with, if we're just doing those big pillars, moving away from things that are hurting us, adding in real food, our bodies get to a place where we don't need all this stuff, we don't need the cabinet full of... You name it, there's so many different... Again, wonderful supplements. There's comes a point for me. I just, you said the word early, and this is why I'm bringing this up. You said cycle through things? Like certain times, like, I just feel like right now I'm really in a vibe with Turmeric like I just feel like I just need a little bit more support with recovery, inflammation, this kind of thing, or the cognitive benefits, whatever. But I've got all these other tools in my disposal. But we don't need to do everything. Focus on simplicity, is what I really hear.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely. Like do the easiest thing first when it comes to making some sort of habit change. And I talk about how there's so many things in the longevity space right now. The, I call it the science of longevity. You've got the stem cell, we've got all the diagnostics, we've got peptides. But the thing... You can throw that at somebody who's living a life that puts you in the stress state and you're basically flushing all those things down the toilet. It basically starts with how we live our life. And creating a beautiful life and making choices that you could be proud of as you get older is true medicine.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** All right. I just got something out of you. You just mentioned peptides.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yep. Okay.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** All right. So again, besides the big movers.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Let's talk about peptides. Because when folks hear that, who are acclimated to the word as far as like nutrition or health, we tend to think of collagen. And we're talking about two different things here.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, can you talk about the peptides that you're speaking of?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. So, in the peptide world now... A peptide is just a small fragment of the protein. So, it's just a couple amino acid put together. And I was mentioning earlier that proteins basically make our body go. And there are certain fragments of protein. Like for example, insulin is a peptide. It's a small protein fragment that basically causes ourselves to take up sugar from the bloodstream. In the anti-aging neurodegenerative space, now they have made molecules that resemble proteins that are part of the body. And so, there are different classes of peptides that will perform different functions in the body. For example, there's a whole class of peptides that help the body secrete more growth hormone. They're called growth hormone secretagogues. Examples of that would be, CJC 1295, Ipamorelin, things like that. Then there are peptides that help with sexual function, that basically increase sexual desire in women or in men that fail, like for example, Viagra can give them lasting erections. There are peptides that basically help with inflammation and healing. So, there's plenty of stuff that's out there. Basically, every biological process in the body is run by proteins. And if you can make something that looks like that protein, it can mimic basically that biological function.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So interesting. So, the peptide can act more of a precursor, so your body is still involved in the building of the thing. Is that what I'm hearing?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, correct. You're not replacing this thing that you want to replace. For example, let's talk about growth hormone secretagogues. You're not giving the body growth hormone. It basically, the pituitary gland gets a signal normally to produce the growth hormone. As we age, we lose that signal. And so, the people in the peptide world basically creates a peptide that basically mimics that signal so that your body can do the same.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So how would we utilize this particular peptide? Is this something that you just pour over your cereal? Like how do you get it?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, so there are basically two main forms that people do it with, they will either do it subcutaneously, they'll inject it subcutaneously, or there are basically troches that you could put on the side of your mouth, and you'll absorb it that way.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Got it.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. Very few peptides are actually orally absorbed. There's one anti-inflammatory, one called BPC-157, that is absorbed, but very few of them are actually absorbed orally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Got it. So obviously you mentioned HGH. In this context it's often referred to as, "The youth hormone." And so, especially in your work today, is this something that you're paying more attention to as far as like supporting people's production of HGH rather than just going right to the kind of in product?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah. So, in the performance longevity practice I run, if you were under the age of 65, I would much rather you maintain the production in your pituitary by helping it create more on its own. If you were to give exogenous HGH to people, they run the risk of their pituitary shutting down a little earlier than they're used to shutting down. So, that's what I would probably recommend in that instance.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Alright. Now, this is probably the most powerful part of this whole equation, but it is the one that is most shrouded in mystery because, again, it's something that we experience. We all experience 24/7 every single moment of our lives, but we don't cognitively associate that to our health outcomes or what cells are doing, which is our emotions. So, could you talk about why this matters so much in this equation and being able to have more emotional fitness?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, great question. As human beings, I think we are blessed to be able... And that we actually should experience the range of all the human emotions, the painful ones, the ones that are unpleasant, to the joyful ones and the bliss. However, the research shows that if we are chronically in emotions of anger, hate, resentment, worry, fear, anxiety, you basically drive stress hormones in your body. Cortisol goes up, you activate the CTRA, guess what? Inflammation goes up, immune system goes down, chronic symptoms, chronic disease. Whereas emotions like joy, like love, like laughter, like connection, particularly that of gratitude where there's a lot of scientific studies on gratitude known to decrease inflammatory markers such as IL-1, IL-6, and TNF alpha, and it actually raises your immune system. So, it does the exact opposite. And those are anti-aging emotional states. And the thing is this, we have to become aware of those things because we can actually start to shift the

state of our emotions by... Oh, here's one really cool thing about this model that I talk about in my book.

All these things are energetically connected because they all affect the environment of ourselves. And the environment is one big energetic pool. So, when you make one change at each one of these categories, it will spill into the other categories. So, say you're in an emotional slump, you're not feeling very well, guess what? If you ate better, sleep better, move better, you think you're going to first start feeling better? Your mental state if you start to shift your focus. So, we've got a lot of negative thoughts. They're coming from that default mode network. You'll notice that we've got maybe 80,000 thoughts that we think every single day. A majority of them are going to be the same. A majority of them are going to be negative. Why? Because your default mode network is trying to keep you safe. And there's that negativity bias there. We can't control that.

What can we control? Where we put the flashlight, which thoughts we want to pay attention to? Where do we want to keep our focus? What's the meaning we give to things, our perspective? What's the story we're telling ourselves about this thing? Because if we change that, we change the way we feel. We change the way that we feel, if we start feeling better, guess what? We're lowering inflammation, we're increasing immunity. If we're making ourselves based on our thinking, feel, anger, worry, resentment, fear, all those things, you're turning on that stress response, which is decreasing health and performance by driving that CTRA gene complex we were talking about.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So remarkable. You mentioned in the book that our current system of healthcare is, and you put this in quotations, "symptoms centric." Really focusing on the symptoms and in particular, we're talking right now, if we're talking about our mental and emotional wellbeing, the symptom might be anxiety, which is a natural, normal human emotion that we all experience, but we've taken this emotion and we've medicalized it. And not to say that we can't have states of anxiety that are crippling, absolutely. But the piece that's missing here is actually helping people with their mind and being able for them to manage their mind, manage their thinking. But we disempower people by going right to the symptom itself.

And it's so unfortunate, the reason I'm bringing this up is that you said, you are not here to downplay or to disrespect our plethora of human emotions. All of them have their place, all of them are wonderful in a sense, and they're all giving us feedback. That's the most important piece, is giving us feedback. It might be feedback about what we value, and we might be at a sense of loss for that thing or depression. This doesn't mean that I'm broken or there's something's wrong with me, or that the depression is bad. How can I work through this? How can I learn from it? How can I learn to live regardless of the thing? These are all, I think, really

important tools for us to normalize. We've normalized the treatment of the symptom, but we're not normalizing empowerment and teaching people how to actually manage their mind.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Which is why your show has been doing so well. You're giving people the tools to start to think about these things as signals from our body to say things are not off. And it's not because you are deficient in an antidepressant, it's because maybe where you're spending most of your focus in life, or maybe it's you're so worried about yourself or you're not eating, sleeping, or moving very well. These are all things, and I love to give the simple framework because a lot of times if you could just work on those things, you'll realize that not only either your symptoms will disappear, they'll drastically improve.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. Have you seen the recent... And it just came out this year basically destroying the argument around the serotonin deficiency model of depression. And it's something that has been so integrated into our society. And I actually had a conversation with Dr. Caroline Leaf about this, and she's just like, "Yeah, the authors of the study, she's like, I know them, whatever, da da da." And she was just like, this was disproven like decades ago, but pharmaceutical companies just doubled down on that message because we're not testing for it. So, guess what? You have a chemical imbalance based on my conversation with you. We're not testing for sh\*t, but this is what it looks like. And it's so inappropriate and it has driven this multi-billion dollar...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Industry in the pandemic.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Industry. Yeah. And here's the thing, there are going to be people that experience benefit from various treatments. However, we've got to put this in perspective. Head-to-head, we look at serotonin reuptake inhibitor and exercise...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Boom!

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And we see that exercise can even outperform this, and also, we see placebos. There was one study I came across that found... This was a randomized placebo-controlled trial, the antidepressant, and the placebos were 80% effective in the trial. Right, so just the belief. Again, just the feeling that I'm getting treatment, let's talk about that, the role of your mind and your belief about things.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Goosebumps, yes. Our beliefs are so important because it's how we filter the world through, and it changes the way we feel. And again, our feelings, that's basically medicine in our body. And so, the placebo... I hate to say placebo is inert, because it's not, because the belief behind it is real and when you... So, if you take a look at your thoughts, your thoughts are going to drive how you feel. And so that's why I asked you, what do you put your



focus? Are you focusing on things that you have or things that you don't? Ask yourself how you start feeling it, if you're like, "Oh my god, I'm so grateful for everything I have," versus, "Geez, I don't have X, Y or Z, I can't be happy." When you realize that your thoughts, your beliefs is basically the filter that you use to take a model of the world and it changes how you feel, how you feel like I said earlier, is either your medicine or your poison, so why not be able to start cultivating those things?

And that's the one thing I teach people to do, is how do you start to concentrate? Can you hand that feeling just on your own, just with the thoughts alone when you're quiet, because when you do, when you feel it, you can guarantee there is molecular and biochemical changes that are already happening in your body once you could feel it. If you could feel gratitude, you are creating the medicine that's dropping down inflammatory markers in your body already, that's the power of our mind.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's so cool, it's so cool. And we have access to it...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Boom!

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Right now.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** For free!

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** For free. Just think about something that you're grateful for, someone that you're grateful for, bring that person top of mind, somebody that may have shown you unconditional love or who had your back at a time of need, or even if there are people who grew up in conditions that they didn't even have those things, but they become it for themselves and for their children, and what would that person aspire to have. When you bring that person top of mind or that circumstance and you express gratitude, now you're putting... You're even changing your perspective about what's possible suddenly. You start to vision your life... Michael Beckwith, that's part of the life vision process, he first... That's one of the first steps, it's getting into that state of gratitude, and then we go from there.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, there's a great technique I want to teach people 'cause it's all about choices, so how do you make a better choice? And I go back to the one super powerful quote, and I use this all the time, it comes from Viktor Frankl. If we don't know who he is, he's a Holocaust survivor, saw his father being starved to death, saw his mother and brother murdered, he saw friends and family members tortured, but he still said this, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space, in that space is our power to choose a response. And in our response, lies our growth and freedom." So, every time we get triggered, every time there's something happening, free a little bit of space, take 10 deep breaths in through your

nose, out through your mouth, go for a walk-in nature, whatever it is, and in that space, I want you to act, which is have awareness. Is that that old trigger? Is this old programming that's coming up right now? Okay, I can see it. Next is choose, from that state, you need to have that vision in your mind of the person you want to be like Michael Beckwith said, have that vision and then choose from that place, is it happy, is it healthy, is it confident, is it funny, is it playful?

Is it... Whatever it is, you get to choose powerfully and then immediately take action, however it is, even if you're triggered. I use this in my relationship all the time, it might look like "Oh my God, oof, taking 10 deep breaths, I'm reacting, "Oh my God, she triggered this not enough wound that I have. I choose wanting to be loving and connected," and so taking action might look like, "Honey, I reacted, again. I'm sorry, I want to be loving and connected. Can we take a few minutes and start over?" And the more we make new choices over old programming, we are basically rewiring our entire body and nervous system into this thrive state, and we're basically upgrading our old operating system. But so important to have that vision of your life, to know where to make choices from.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Absolutely, and the good news is neurons that fire together wire together. It's retraining those pathways. One of the most powerful things that you said today is that our feelings are basically medicine in our bodies.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yup.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Our feelings are basically medicine in our bodies. This reminds me of that Hippocrates quote that "it's more important to know what type of person has a disease than to know what type of disease a person has." The father of modern medicine.

You took the Hippocratic oath, my guy. And just thinking about this tenant, he's like, the disease doesn't matter as much as the type of person that has it, because your mind matters, your feelings matter, your emotions, how you associate with things. But these are the things that are not talked about in medicine.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Unfortunately, we have this system of quantity over quality now, where five-to-seven-minute office visits and just systems at play with insurance and with drug companies and with legislation and litigation where physicians aren't able to be the definition of the word, which is teacher.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And to be present and to be supportive and act to get to the root cause. And you talk about that in your book as well.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** We don't get trained to do any of that at all. In fact, how do you even do that when you are trained in the culture that makes you sick? But the more people can listen to a show like this and create new tools and be able to make new choices, we're starting to see an evolution of health that's rippling. And here's the awesome thing, if disease come from our choices, once we start to wake up and become more conscious, we get to make new choices. And guess what? Our children, the people that we get to hang out with when they feel this new vibration, this way of living life, they get new programming. So, the old programming for them will be a newer version of itself. And this is the awesome thing, like this is humanity, becoming a better version of itself. And as we do the work to heal ourselves, we're also doing the work of elevating humanity and consciousness as well. So that's pretty cool.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** It is. And so are you, man, I appreciate you so much...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Thank you brother.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** For coming by Dr. Kien Vuu. Can you let everybody know where they can get into your world, where they can pick up Thrive State? Everybody should have a copy of this book, let them know.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah, dude. You can get a copy of Thrive State at [thrivestatebook.com](http://thrivestatebook.com). You could find out more about my work at [kienvuu.com](http://kienvuu.com), and I am all over social media, Doctor VMD, that's spelled out D-O-C-T-O-R V-M-D.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah, man, I appreciate you so much. This's blown me away, truly...

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Dude it was a fun conversation. Lots of goosebumps.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Goosebumps. I've had somebody on this show, and they call it truth bumps. Right?

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So, man, that's so powerful. And I'm just, thank you so much for representing what you represent, your insight, the diversity, the empowerment, and carving out a new path. That's really special because amidst all the chaos and our system of sickness leading sickness, the blind leading the blind, and essentially, because of moments like this where we have access, we have books like this at our fingertips and shows like this where

people can get educated. And also, within our sphere we have so many wonderful physicians listening to this show and reading these books and who are writing their own books and starting their own shows and changing what they're doing in their practice. We're changing things from the inside out.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** It's so powerful and you're a part of that.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Thanks brother.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And again, I appreciate you so much.

**DR. KIEN VUU:** Well, thanks for having me. It was awesome to be on this show.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome. My guy, Dr. Kien Vuu. Thank you so very much for tuning into this show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. This is one to share out with your friends and family. You can send this directly from the podcast app that you're listening on. Of course, take a screenshot of this episode and post it on Instagram. Tag me, I'm @Shawnmodel and tag Dr. Vuu as well. We'd love, love, love to see that feedback. And this is another call to action right now more than ever, everything is in flux right now. We're talking about our healthcare system in one angle, things are worse than they've ever been as far as our epidemics of chronic disease, as far as our just being siphoned as far as our, even our gross domestic product and how much is being invested in healthcare. It's over \$4 Trillion annually being invested from our citizens going into the healthcare system. It is insanity. And yet to yield such poor results.

Of many of the most developed nations in the world, United States pales in comparison to the results of the healthcare system. And so, things have to change. It's clear, it's happening at the same time, the dinosaurs of industry are not going to go quietly into the night. They're going to fight tooth and nail to keep this business model going as is where we have the collective farming of sick people. That's what we have here in this nation. There's so much profit being made from drugs, from surgery, from unnecessary surgery, just to be clear, surgery... Again, our innovations in healthcare, acute injuries, acute situations, acute infections, surgical interventions, wonderful, absolutely incredible, our innovations here. But we're talking about treating real chronic disease, not acute issues, chronic issues. Our system of healthcare has failed because everything is just continuing to get worse.

And so, though that is happening, though the giants of the pharmaceutical industry, the medical insurance industry are profiting so madly. They're not going to go quietly in the night.

But more and more and more physicians are waking up to this industry. They're saying enough is enough. I'm not sure if you realize this, but there's a shortage right now of people who are working in conventional healthcare and we're looking at a growing need because people just, they're getting out of the industry because of what it's doing to them physically and mentally. And also, not vying to get invested into the industry because of seeing this revolving door of physicians being destroyed physically and mentally themselves by working in an industry that doesn't allow for real care, for real stress modulation, for helpful time management, for work that really provides a sense of purpose and for work that is effective.

So as that deprivation is happening, there are people who are rising up in integrative medicine, in functional diagnostic medicine, nutritionist, health coaches, the industry and health coaching is absolutely booming! It is crazy what's happening right now with that. And the opportunity for health coaches to even supplement or even supplant in some instances, working in healthcare offices and kind of filling in where a physician doesn't have the time to, because of the way things are structured. They might have 5, 7, 10 minutes with the patient and though they might want to support them in transforming their nutrition, there's a struggle point there.

There's a gap in actually being able to fulfill that need. This is where health coaches can really rise to the occasion. So there's so much opportunity right now, and all of us truly are a part of that because not only are we voting with our dollar, we're voting with our time and you pushing play on an episode like this and improving your awareness and growing your education and growing your knowledge base and your connectivity to information like this is yet another vote of gravity in the weight that is helping to move this tipping point towards real health and wellness in our society.

I appreciate you so much for tuning in. We got some epic shows coming your way very, 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](http://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 this 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.