

THE MODEL **HEALTH** **SHOW**

EPISODE 704

**Use These 7 Tips For More
Inner Peace & Outer Success!**

With Guest Light Watkins

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to the Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert Shawn Stevenson. And I'm so grateful for your tuning into me today. Do you find it difficult to be consistent in your diet and exercise program? Does life keep throwing you curve balls that make it exceedingly difficult to stick to the script, to do the things that you're setting out to do? Now, could a minimalist approach to exercise and nutrition be the answer you've been looking for? I was shocked to find out how practical this actually is. Now, this is just one of the many powerful things we're going to be diving into in this new episode. Most importantly, today's guest is going to provide you with a mindset shift that makes our health practices, our relationships, and the work that we do more fulfilling. Because at the end of the day, that's what it's really all about.

I loved every bit of this interview and I can't wait to share it. Now. Our special guest is going to reference a practice that he's well known for. That's one of the only anabolic switches or anabolic states that humans can get into while being in a waking state. And I'm saying that because during sleep, we're switching over into more of a heightened state of anabolism, or the release of more reparative hormones and enzymes and just being awake and being in this kind of day-to-day beta state of consciousness. It's a very catabolic state to be in. A lot of things are breaking down, but that's not a bad thing. The breakdown of things allows for the healing and regeneration and potential growth, the betterment of things. But we do need that first domino, which is for things to be broken down. This is why exercise is so phenomenal during this process of exercise, we're actually having these kind of, these micro tears of our muscle fibers that then heal back better if we allow it to happen, if we create the conditions for that growth and repair.

And strength. Strength. All right. Put a C in there. Strength to actually take place. Now, being asleep is the most anabolic state that the human body and mind can be in, wouldn't it be something incredibly valuable to invest in our sleep quality? Well, one of the things that is part of my evening routine is drinking some organic Reishi Tea. And this is because a study published in the journal Pharmacology, biochemistry and Behavior found that this renowned medicinal mushroom Reishi was shown to significantly decrease sleep latency, meaning that it helps you to fall asleep faster. It was found to increase overall sleep time, and it was also found to improve our sleep efficiency, increasing our non-REM deep sleep, and improving our light sleep as well. There are a few things ever discovered that can have these kind of benefits. People out here on these streets taking Ambien, right?

Getting knocked the out. Shout out to Chris Tucker, right? Getting knocked out and then having this lag time and this struggle trying to wake up if and when we get this pseudo sleep

from taking these conventional sleep related medications. Now, the primary thing is remembering this tenet that a great night of sleep starts the moment that we wake up in the morning. So, creating conditions in our lives where we're helping to facilitate great sleep when we lay our head down at night. And that has to do with our practices getting exposure to natural sunlight of sleeping in a cool environment. The list goes on and on and on. We talk about all of these things here on the Model Health Show, but if we're going to add in a supplement, we want to do things that have true efficacy, that have a high degree of safety.

And for me, what if humans been utilizing the longest? And so, this is why I'm such a huge fan of Reishi from four Sigmatic. It's a dual extraction of Reishi, which most companies are not doing a dual extraction. This means that they're using a hot water extract and an alcohol extract to actually pull out of this powerful medicinal mushroom, all of these compounds that we're looking for. So, if you're just doing one modality, one extraction method, you're going to be missing out on, for example, if you're doing just a hot water extract, you're going to get the beta glucans and these kind of antioxidant components, but you're going to miss out on the triterpenes and these kind of hormone related hormone modulating components. That's what we want in particular when it comes to improving our sleep quality. So again, they've got this incredible Reishi Tea that is a part of my evening routine.

I like to have it like maybe 45 minutes before I plan on going to bed, but also, it's blended in with their organic Reishi Hot cacao. All right, not hot cocoa, hot cacao. So, they're using organic real chocolate. All right, the root of chocolate cacao, and that's what Four Sigmatic is really known for, is that making this process of utilizing some of these storied medicinal mushrooms, enjoyable, dare I say pleasurable. All right. Using delivery systems that we are used to. We might not be used to taking something like a Cordyceps Elixir or a Reishi Tea but having a hot cocoa. Yeah. So that's the easy on ramp for people to bring in these nutrient sources that many people have never gotten access to before. And the same thing with their coffee blends. Their including or blending in things like Chaga mushroom, lion's Mane, cordyceps into their coffees as well. So, love, love, love four Sigmatic and what they're about, what they stand for, and their integrity. Check them out. Go to foursigmatic.com/model. That's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model. You get 10% off storewide plus extra special bonuses on their new bundles. So make sure to check those out as well. Again, go to foursigmatic.com/model. And now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five-star review titled “Friendly With a Touch of Humor” by DeJoy K. “Friendly, brings it down from the technical big words to practical and tangible with a touch of Mr. Cool humor that even my tweens don't complain about. When I listen to this out loud enough Technical, you explain the word and they don't feel you're dumbing down. Not too much technical. They tune out one of my favorite podcasts for years.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: That is so awesome. Thank you so much for sharing that review over on Apple Podcasts. We are inclusive here, all right, from the tweens to our folks in their senior years, and everybody in between. That's incredible. Incredible. Thank you so much for, again, sharing your voice over on Apple Podcasts. Listen, if you're yet to do so, I would love if you leave a review over on Apple Podcasts or whatever platform you're listening on. If you can rate the show, leave a review, do so. All right. It's nice, of course, just to share your heart and also to let people know, to tune into the Model Health Show, because obviously we're bringing on the very best experts in their respective fields, and we're really looking at creating a movement of empowerment. And our special guest is truly one of those experts who's delivering a wealth of knowledge when it comes to empowerment.

And this is empowerment truly from the inside out. Our guest today is Light Watkins, and he's a multi-time bestselling author and renowned meditation teacher who facilitates workshops and retreats all around the world, giving powerful insights and talks about happiness, mindfulness, inspiration, and leadership. Again, he has three bestselling books, the Inner Gym, Bliss More, and Knowing Where to Look. And his new project is, I'm going to say This right now, it's my favorite yet, because it is absolutely, it's poignant. It's right to the point, and it's so filled with insight and bringing these tenets that he's going to share with you to life through different stories as well. It's really shareable and things that are great for family and friends. And even being able to share these stories with your kids as well is just really, really cool to get access to this incredible information. And so, without further ado, let's jump into this conversation with the one and only Light Watkins, my brother, Light Watkins. How you doing, man.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yes sir? Great to be here again.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes, another one.

LIGHT WATKINS: I think this is my number four or five even, probably.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah, yeah, man.

LIGHT WATKINS: It's good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And even how we met, man. Well, I mean, there was a time, I know that we met before, but I'm fuzzy on, but the way that you live your life, the principles in your book, it shows up in reality. Even like we bumped into each other on the street, right? Which might seem random.

LIGHT WATKINS: It wasn't.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's not it's not. And so, to have this opportunity to create with you and have these incredible conversations is just such a gift, man.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah. And I'm honored to be here in the headquarters for the Model Health show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Superhero headquarters, avengers' headquarters.

LIGHT WATKINS: The Fortress of Solitude.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All of this. Let's go. So, I want to kick things off by talking about, obviously minimalism has become a popular concept in our culture. And for many good reasons. Of course. And you've brought in one of the most remarkable, kind of a twist on the concept, but something that is very much grounded in science in a way, but also, it's so much more in depth. But I want to start by asking you about this minimalist approach to exercise. Because you're one of the most traveled humans I've ever met. And you doing your thing to take care of your own health and fitness while you're out in the world and sharing your gift. Let's talk about that, the minimalist approach to exercise. What is that about?

LIGHT WATKINS: Sure. Yeah. So, we'll get into like why I went minimalist in a bit, probably, and how I went nomadic in 2018. But I was on the road pretty much permanently since 2018. And during that time, I had a gym membership and there was a gym that was in a bunch of locations, so I could always have a place to land. And I like towel service, I like nice places, big, spacious, beautiful. And then the pandemic hit, and the gym situation shifted, and I was still wanting to work out. So, I started experimenting with this, essentially a calisthenic routine, but one that would help me.

Get through this pain point that a lot of people have with working out, which is, oh, I just don't feel like working out. I know I should do it. I know it's good to do, but it just feels like a hassle, right? And I thought to myself, well what if I did less? What if I did less than I would otherwise do if I was at that gym in such a way that it would leave me wanting more? And what if I did just what I could do with what I have available? And what if I did everything on more of a schedule so I didn't have to think about what am I going to do today? So, long story short, I devised this workout program using mostly body weight and a band. And Mondays was pushup days, right?

So, I start with 25 pushups, or however I could probably do 50 pushups, but I started with 25 pushups. Tuesdays was air squat days, right? So, I would just do air squats. Sometimes I'd do double pump air squats. Sometimes I'd do jumping squats, but something related to squats,

I'd do 25 of those, which would take me like five minutes to do. Sometimes 10 minutes. Sometimes I'd do 'em in the shower. I'd just do regular air squats in the shower just to kind of see what that experience was like. So, I tried all kinds of different configurations. Wednesdays was back days, so I had some pull up bars around the corner from the place where I was staying. So, I would go there and use the resistance band that I had to support my pull-ups so I could go for full extension and go for quality over quantity.

And so, I had this whole thing laid out seven days. Seven days. The seventh day was like a stretch day. And I would just do that week after week. And each week I would add another few reps on keeping the same level of quality. Anyway, I built up over a couple of years to doing a 100 reps a day of each of those. But sometimes different variations of those. And it was true, I oftentimes finished wanting to do more, feeling like I could do more. But that was the, that was what I actually was targeting because then it eliminated that major pain point of, oh, I don't really feel like it's going to be too much of a hassle. It's too overwhelming. And the whole thing would take me 15 to 20 minutes. Now I'm, I just turned 50 years old about a week ago, and I've had the experience of getting big, getting the six pack, and doing all that.

And now I'm just kind of on this maintenance program. I just want to maintain the muscle. And about a year ago I started lifting weights again. 'Cause I act, I honestly missed it. I missed doing dead lifts. I missed doing squats, weighted squats. I missed doing bench press and the other compound exercises. And I had a period of my life where I went from being about 172 pounds at six foot three and a half to becoming 210 pounds within about six months from working out differently. Before I was doing too much of the same things. I was plateauing. And I wanted to take advantage of how the body naturally responds to compound exercises, progressive overload and things like that. So I started to employ those same minimalist, frameworks to weightlifting. And now I'm at a point where I still do chest on Mondays, legs on Tuesdays and Thursdays, back on Wednesdays like that.

LIGHT WATKINS: I still do that, but I do it with weights now. And I do one weight exercise, five, usually it's around five to seven reps and five sets. So about 25 to 30 reps total each day of whatever weight exercise is targeting that particular body part. And it takes me about 20 minutes depending on how much rest I give myself, but I play with the rest. I play with the extension, I play with the weight. And I'm always looking for ways to do the progressive overload so that I maintain that muscle. And then I obviously extend that to the diet. And I the sort of minimalist way of looking at diet is just instead of counting calories and getting into the minutia of all that, which could be overwhelming, and Oh, I don't have time to weigh my food and da da da da.

LIGHT WATKINS: I weighed my food and counted my calories for about a week, and I looked at the things that I eat most often and how many grams of protein are in those things. And now,

I'm just targeting protein. And if I can hit my target range of protein, which is usually around 150 to 170 grams per day over the course of three meals and maybe a snack of Greek yogurt or something, it ends up displacing the craving to have other BS stuff that I know is not good for me, and that it's not adding to my ultimate goal. So, one compound exercise a day, focus on your target protein goal, spend a few days weighing things out or figuring out how many grams of protein are in eggs or in, yogurt or in steak or whatever your source of protein is.

And that way you kind of have a mental model as you're going through your day eating things. So now I see four eggs, not as four eggs solely, but oh, this is 25 grams of protein. Or I see a chicken breast, not as just a chicken breast. Oh, this is 25 grams of protein. Right? And my little thing of Greek yogurt is 11 grams of protein mixing with some protein powder. Oh, that's 35 grams of protein. So, I don't have to be doing all these configurations in my diary. I just kind of know now mentally, okay. I'm really close to hitting my protein goal. And by the way, when you eat all that protein, you're not going to want to have as many fries and chips and cookies and other kind of stuff that you know is not adding to your goal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is incredible, man. Listen already, the buy-in is so much easier. Like with this framework, with the minimalist approach to your health and fitness, and it's all, it's logical, but it's also effective. And by the way, the people that are watching the video, when you said, I just turned and then they're like, they're, they probably went away from their computer for a moment, and they're like screaming like, what the, how is this po... Because you're just like, you're just spreading out anti-aging, right? It's incredible, man. You're telling me years are probably just like super vital chilling. And it has to do not just with these factors. Of course, we're going to dig in deep and talk about the most powerful factor in all of this, but just to drive this point home, number one, one exercise a day, one compound exercise.

Can you do that? Everybody listening? Who finds it difficult to motivate themselves to exercise, to be consistent? Can you do one thing a day, just one. And you started again, because here's, this is one of the secrets that shouldn't be a secret. Once you start doing it, once you start that exercise that you're not wanting to do, it's just like you suddenly feel like, oh, I could do whatever. Like, it just, it opens a door. It's kind of like, and this is one of the things that I do just floss one tooth. Like once you do one, it's just like, I might as well, right? You do the rest, right? I'm not out here flossing one tooth, by the way, but just to, it's kind of the same concept. If you just take action on the one. It's like literally, it's a snowball effect. So.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah, the habit you're ultimately building is consistency. You're just doing it through whatever the exercise is. And then once you get that habit going, you can apply it to diet, you can apply it to lifestyle, other lifestyle choices. You can apply it to whatever's going on at your job in your relationship. We're going to have a consistent date night every

Thursday's our date night. And the more we do that, the more you start looking forward to Thursdays in anticipation of this thing that's enjoyable.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? Your brain is connecting with that thing. Right? It's creating that they say neurons that fire together wire together, right? And the same thing with your nutrition, just focusing on minimalist approach. Protein. That's mine.

LIGHT WATKINS: Protein yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But there's a domino effect there because that satiety that's induced there of course higher quality protein foods that you're using. Yes. That's another like caveat, but that satiety factor and the strength factor, what's it doing for your metabolic health. So many other things are taken care of. Just focusing on that one thing. It's pretty incredible.

LIGHT WATKINS: And it also gives you a way to plan 'cause like you said, I travel a lot and you want to plan not for when people think about commitments, what I want to commit to, oftentimes they plan for the perfect day. In the perfect world, on the perfect day, I'm going to have this in the morning, this in the afternoon, I'm going to do this in the gym. You want to plan for your busiest day. So, I think to myself, okay, what's my average busy day look like? Right? Where I have meetings. I may not have a whole lot of time to drive somewhere to the gym. So, I need to have a band, a resistance band on me at all times, if that's what it takes. I may not be able to go and lift weight somewhere. I may just have to drop down in my work uniform or outfit in the conference room right.

With the lights, off and do those pushups or do those squats from my chair. Maybe I can't even move away from my chair, but I can at least stand up and sit back down in the chair that's called a chair squat. So, I can do 25 of those. And it's you don't have to break a sweat; you don't have to hit your PR with chair squats you just got to move a little bit. If you move a little bit knowing you could have done more, then that's going to make it more enticing the next day when you come in and you're like, okay, I'm going to do those again. Those were actually kind of fun.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Yeah. Such a great concept. And again, for me it's the buy-in. It's such a easy buy-in for people now, the more expanded version of this. And ironically, man, this came through so well in this book, how this inner focus or single pointed focus leads to so much more expansion in our lives. And we're going to unpack what that means, but travel, like this is your new book, your new project. What was the inspiration behind this? And again, tying this into this minimalist movement, there was a piece that was... A glaring piece that was missing in this concept, and you really brought it to light here in the book.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah, so the subtitle is Spiritual Minimalism to Live a More Fulfilled Life. And I added the word spiritual there because oftentimes when we think of minimalism, we usually think of it as a purging of whatever's happening externally, right? I mean, get rid of the extra chair in my living room. Let me clear space. Let me clean out the closet. And all that is wonderful. I'm not anti-space or organization or neatness or anything like that, but we make a mistake in assuming that once we make this space in our external environment, that it's going to bring about some sense of peace and serenity inside, right? But that's not how it works. Because if you're still experiencing lots of chaos inside, if you're experiencing misery or depression or anxiety, and you clear out your living room, you're just going to be a miserable person in a very sparse living room.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right, right.

LIGHT WATKINS: It doesn't change your internal state. And if you truly want to experience minimalism, minimalism is a concept that means I'm able to do less and accomplish more. That's what it means. So, minimalism with exercise, doing less and accomplishing more. And then let's add a little word in parentheses after that word more, fulfillment. Do less, accomplish more fulfillment. So, I make that distinction because I don't want people thinking that do less means taking the easy path. That's not what it means. There is no easy path. Being overweight and out of shape is hard, and exercising is hard. They're both hard, but only one leads to more fulfillment. So, taking the path that leads you to more fulfillment is the one you want to be on. So, then the question is, "Okay, well, how can I do this in such a way that it feels less chaotic?" That's what I mean by less. Do less, do something that feels less chaotic that leads to more fulfillment. So do less, accomplish more.

And most people are engaged in the do more and accomplish less. More chaos, less fulfillment, right? Whatever choices I've been making are resulting in my life feeling more chaotic. And I'm usually moving in the direction of comfort, and that's what comfort leads to is more chaos. Ironically, sitting on the couch for hours and hours on end, scrolling through Instagram makes your life, makes your mental state more chaotic. And that leads to less fulfillment internally. And when you have less fulfillment internally, you come up with ideas about why you can't work out. And they're legitimate sounding ideas. I don't have enough time. I don't have the right coach. I don't have enough money for a gym membership. In other words, you're excluding what you have right now as a potential solution because you're comparing yourself to whatever everybody else is doing. And that creates more paralysis. And you start prioritizing the wrong things, things that lead to short-term satisfaction at the expense of your long-term fulfillment.

So, this whole book is really... It looks like it's a travel book with the title "Travel Light" but it's really a lifestyle book. And it's showing you how to bring more lightness, more fulfillment into

every aspect of your life, your mental life, your spiritual life, as well as your physical life. And maybe as a result of you feeling fulfilled, you decide I'm going to clean out my closets and clear out my living room, and that's great. That's your path, but that's not a path for everybody. You want to make those choices from the state of fulfillment that you cultivate inside, as opposed to trying to acquire fulfillment by external achievements.

SHAWN STEVENSON: In the book, you really detail this in having this inside-out approach to minimalism, because like you said, we can get rid of the stuff, downsize, right? And for some people, that can help to reduce the clutter and all this stuff. They say that your outer world is a reflection of your inner world, but that doesn't always change what's happening in the inner world, right? And so proactively doing this inner work and going within. And by the way, and I love this so much, and we've got to dive into some of these. You provided these seven principles of spiritual minimalism, and they're so remarkable. Each one of these, if you just focus on one of these things, it can be transformative. Let's dive into some of these. So, the first one is prioritize and cultivate inner happiness. So, prioritize is the key word for me in this one.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah, so that's usually facilitated through a stillness practice. That's the most efficient way to get there. There are other ways to cultivate inner happiness. Maybe it's through service, going out and volunteering at a homeless shelter. Maybe it's through giving to charity. Maybe it's through having daily gratitude lists and stuff like that, and that's all nice and wonderful, but there are powerful biochemical effects from a stillness practice, a daily stillness practice. And I say it, somebody was asking me, "It's interesting you use the word stillness versus meditation?" And that's because in today's age, there are so many activities associated with the practice of meditation, walking meditation. Somebody told me about a Gyrotonic meditation recently, dancing meditation, running meditation, whatever, and that's all nice. What those are, though, really are meditative activities. Those are activities where you're doing them, and while you're doing them, you're not really thinking a whole lot about the future or about the past. You're just kind of in the moment, listening to your breath or whatever, feeling your body.

That's great, that's wonderful. But a stillness practice, as you know where you're sitting with your eyes closed, you're able to tap into that relaxation response. And the requirement for the relaxation response is that you're not using any physical activity, meaning you have a passive body, so you're not sitting with your back straight, actually. You're not having your fingers together like it looks like you should be doing if you Google what does meditation look like. Those are all stock photographs with models. Those people aren't actually meditating. Real meditation for regular people, sitting comfortably, closing your eyes, passive body, passive attitude, and you can tap into the fourth state of consciousness, which means your body and your mind are doing something biochemically different in that state versus in the waking state,

which is what we're in right now, as we're having this conversation versus the dreaming state, which happens while you're sleeping, and versus the sleeping state.

So those are the three states that everybody experiences, waking, dreaming, sleeping. Then you have the meditation state, the fourth state, the relaxation response, scientifically known as the hypo metabolic state of restful alertness, which describes what's happening in the mind and the body. You're basically going in the opposite direction of the stress reaction when you're meditating with stillness. And internally, you start off with that kind of hyper surface mind activity where you're super aware of where you are and what you're doing, and this is what people typically complain about, "Oh, my mind is so busy while I'm meditating." And they disqualify themselves from thinking that they can meditate because they're having the same internal experience that everybody starts off with. Everyone has that. No matter how long you've been meditating, you have a busy mind. In other words, it's not a quantity issue, it's really a quality issue. 'Cause nobody's complaining about having too many happy thoughts or too many creative thoughts. And so...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

LIGHT WATKINS: All that means is you're having a lot of thoughts. But if most of your thoughts are leaning towards being negative, that's what you complain about. 'Cause you and your mind think you should be thinking about white lights and waterfalls and rainbows and that kind of thing. But you're probably thinking about what you're going to have for dinner, that conversation, your to-do list. That's just where you start, though. And so, in that regular person approach to meditation, you're sitting there with a busy mind and all that. And here's the hack if you will. All you have to do is allow your mind to be free-range. In other words, to roam around, be curious, dive into whatever it's thinking about without judgment. You don't have to let go of anything. You don't have to notice anything. You don't have to witness anything. You don't have to imagine anything. You don't have to concentrate, contemplate, analyze, evaluate, expect, anticipate, nothing. Just sit there, do less, and you will accomplish more. Do least, and you will accomplish most. Do nothing, and you will accomplish everything you want to accomplish in meditation.

And what that means in a real-world sense is scale back on the focus. Try not to focus, actually. Try not to notice, try not to witness. And the thing that you are not resisting will eventually fade into the back of your awareness, and your mind will become more settled. This is the minimalist approach to meditation. Sit comfortably. Don't try to sit uncomfortably. Don't try to have your back straight. Let your mind be free-range. And then without even thinking about settling the mind, it'll just naturally settle on its own, and you too will tap into that relaxation response. And then, from there, you'll start to cultivate more fulfillment inside, and from that

state of fulfillment, you'll connect to the next principle, which is you'll start to hear and connect to your internal voice of guidance, which I call the heart voice.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We've got to get to that. This is profound. Let your mind be free-range.

LIGHT WATKINS: Free-range.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so powerful, because you out here, everybody will want our chicken-free-range, but you want your mind to be factory farmed up here. [laughter] Just let your mind be free-range, as well. Again, the buy-in is so much easier for folks, because it should be, which a lot of times, even with meditation, we tend to overcomplicate things. And again, there's so many choices. And this is another one of these, too, is talking about choice, which we'll come back to in a moment. But to dig in on this... Again, this is another principle, make your most important decisions from your heart, not your head, right? So, let's talk about that one.

LIGHT WATKINS: So, when you're able to get more settled on a more regular basis, this is not something that you can do once a week and expect to have profound changes. Just like working out, just like eating healthy, you have to do it on a regular basis. And as you do it on a regular basis, you will start to connect to and hear your internal guidance more and more. Now, it's already in there. The internal guidance has been speaking to you this whole time, but a lot of people feel like they can't hear it. And that's not to say that you don't have the internal guidance. It just means that you have other voices in there that are shouting at you and screaming at you. And those voices typically include the voice of pain, the voice of past trauma, the voice of fear, the voice of social conditioning, the voice of your teachers, the voice of your parents, the voice of news, the media that you consume, right? All of these voices are in there shouting and vying for your attention. And the thing that dictates which voices are the loudest is basically the ones you've listened to and taken action on the most.

And so, a lot of people haven't cultivated the relationship with their heart voice because that's the voice that tells you to do things that society tells you are gullible when you follow through on the heart voice. The heart voice is the one that's moving you closest to your path and your purpose. So, your heart voice will have you thinking seriously about leaving a very well-paying career to do something that feels more meaningful and more fulfilling, right? Now, everybody in your family and your friends, they're going to vet this decision. "Well, what are you talking about? Well, why can't you just do it in your part-time? Why do you have to leave your job?" They give you all the reasons why based on their perception of what is success, what success means. Meanwhile, you are feeling completely disconnected with whatever you're spending eight, nine hours a day doing. It's sucking your soul. You're always thinking about this other thing and what would happen and what the possibilities would look like and blah, blah, blah.

But then your head voice is telling you, "Well, you're going to have to move out of your nice place. You're going to have to move into some apartment somewhere. You're not going to be able to save for the future. Your family may not be supported in the same way."

And these are all the reasons why you shouldn't do it. And so, people who listen to that head voice are going to turn up the volume on the head voice and the heart voice is going to feel more and more suppressed. So, meditating, practicing stillness turns up the volume on the heart voice enough so that it's not just a still, small voice. We call it the still small voice. It becomes a loud annoying voice. And it's like that roommate that you may have had in college where you owed some money on the light bill, but you didn't pay it for whatever reason. They're going to let you hear it every single day. "Hey, the light bill is due. Where are you going? Why are you going out there? You haven't paid the light bill yet?" And you need that. We need that because of how strong those other voices are. You need it to get to a point where it's so loud and so annoying that you can't ignore it any longer. And then you move in that direction. You leave the other soul-sucking situation and now you're in a more meaningful situation. And you have this level of presence in this meaningful situation that really lights you up inside when you start to see what it actually feels like.

And then you have another opportunity through that which puts you in an even better situation than the one you were clinging onto before. So again, that's why spiritual minimalism is inside out. It's because when we feel stuck, when we feel like we're not really accessing our potential, it's really more about us holding on to some old belief or to a toxic relationship or to a soul-sucking situation that we think we are going to need. That will potentially make us happy one day, even though I'm not experiencing happiness right now or fulfillment right now. But maybe something's going to happen that's going to change the situation, that's going to bring about some happiness, 'cause that's what I've been indoctrinated to believe since I was a teenager. That if you check all these boxes, then you're going to have a "successful life" And that's not what happens. You have to do it from the inside out.

SHAWN STEVENSON: How's that working out for us as a society? You know what I mean? Again, just look at the results.

LIGHT WATKINS: Keeping us up at night.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Something's not working.

LIGHT WATKINS: Starbucks is a \$100 billion corporation. It's not normal to have to need...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Emphasis on the bucks, Starbucks.

LIGHT WATKINS: It's not normal to have to need all this coffee and caffeine to function in your soul-sucking job that you're having to kind of force yourself to go through every day. That's not a normal thing. We've normalized it, but it's not normal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's the thing. It's become common, but it's very, very abnormal. Because again, even just that disconnection from... And this is the next one I want to talk about, your feeling of connectedness and your feeling of purpose. These are like deep human needs. Just for healthy expression of your genes, for example, is feeling a sense of value, right? These are things that we evolved with, like you feeling a part of the tribe, you feeling like you matter, and being disconnected from that. Not because you don't matter, you're not a cog in a wheel at some company, but because you truly feel like you are living your purpose and you're giving from that place your life energy. And it's another one of these principles. And this might be... This is the one that jumped out to me the most when reading, because it's such a great directive towards... Because a lot of people feel like, "I don't know what my purpose is." And so, we're jumping around here a little bit, but one of these other principles is, "Your curiosity is the gateway to your path." And you said, "Your path is connected to that which you already naturally are curious about." Let's talk about that one.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah. Yeah. I say that "You don't ever have to worry about finding your purpose. Just follow your curiosity and your purpose will find you." And what that means is, your purpose is already encoded within your spiritual DNA. And so there are things in this lifetime that you are naturally drawn to, that you are naturally curious about. And again, some of those things, and maybe even most of those things, don't really line up with what you're doing for a living. Maybe they do, and that's great. That's wonderful, coincidence, great, congratulations. But for a lot of people, they don't. And so pursuing your curiosity will oftentimes come with some pushback from your friends, from your family, from society. And I'll give you an example. So, I used to... When I was a full-time meditation teacher, and that was all I was doing, I used to be thinking about, "How can I teach more people to meditate?" That's what I was doing for a living. I enjoyed it, very much my purpose. I identified with that. And I would go on the road, and I would teach here and there.

One night, I'm in New York City, and I just finished a session on a training that I was facilitating. And I'm walking back through Manhattan to my Airbnb, and I'm going through Union Square. And this thought occurs to me to go and get a Rubik's Cube. And I knew that Barnes & Noble had Rubik's Cubes. And there's a big Barnes & Noble right at the north end of Union Square. And it was about 9:35-9:40 at night. So, it was going to close very soon. So, I hear this internal nudging to go and get a Rubik's Cube and learn how to solve it. I don't know where it came from. I wasn't thinking about it up until that moment, right? So, I go into Barnes & Noble. They have one Rubik's Cube left, so I get the Rubik's Cube. And I go back to my Airbnb, and I Google, "How do you solve a Rubik's Cube?" So, I thought you had to be a genius to solve a Rubik's Cube.

Turns out, it's just an algorithm. It's just a sequence. You have to memorize the sequence. So, there are all kinds of tutorials and guides online about how to memorize the sequence. So, I'm following that, and I'm figuring out how to solve the Rubik's Cube.

Then a buddy of mine, who I talk to very often about business and marketing and stuff like that, he calls me, and naturally he says, "Okay, what are you doing?" And I said, "I'm actually trying to figure out how to solve a Rubik's Cube." He goes, "A what?" I said, "A Rubik's Cube." "A Rubik's Cube? Why are you sitting there playing with toys? You should be working on how to get more people into these meditation trainings." And I said, "I'm just curious about this thing." So anyways, kept trying to figure it out. Took me about two days. Finally, I figured out how to solve a Rubik's Cube, which is really one of the most amazing things if you ever find yourself on the New York subway, and you're solving a Rubik's Cube, and you look around, everyone's like fixated, "Oh, you're doing this," 'cause people project genius status onto you if you can solve one. But meanwhile, it's just a memorization.

That's all it is. So anyway, I learned how to solve it, and I'm carrying it around with me everywhere I go, and I'm solving the Rubik's Cube for people, and I'm getting better and better at it faster and faster. And then one day something clicks, and I realize, Oh my god, the way you solve a Rubik's Cube is the same way meditation works. So, you solve the Cube from the bottom to the top, from the bottom row, you solve that first, then the middle row, then the top row, and then all the sides will become in alignment and like that, meditation is solved in levels. So, there's a foundational level, which would be the bottom row of the Rubik's Cube that's kind of like... That's how meditation works in that you restore rest first. So, rest is the foundation. Once rest comes back online, digestion comes back online, that's one of the middle rows, reproduction comes back online. Immunity comes back online; Hormonal balancing comes back online. So, all those are all the sides of the Cube, and I was so fascinated by this comparison that had occurred to me just seemingly spontaneously, that I decided what would happen if I made a video and compared them in the video.

And this was like in 2007 or something. So, this website, YouTube was just launched about a year prior, and I had a point and shoot camera. It wasn't a camcorder or anything, it was just a point and shoot camera, but it had a video function, so I turned my little living room into a studio for the first time, put up a tripod or maybe even like put it on top of some books or something and just I couldn't see what was being recorded, 'cause you have to see it from behind, so it was all just trying to figure things out. And I sat down on my couch, and this is still on YouTube today, and I went through the whole thing, and I tried to speak about how it's like a meditation as you solve it, but I lived in the flight line to the Santa Monica Airport when I was down in Venice. And so that didn't work, so I decided to just put captions on it, and I had to go into iMovie and figure, it took a lot of effort to figure this thing out. Then I uploaded it and I was so excited about it, and I shared it on Facebook, and then other people saw it and they

started sharing it, and it went viral, and I started getting this surge of meditation students coming in to learn how to meditate from the guy who talked about meditation is just like the Rubik's cube.

So, what I didn't realize when I had that initial thought to go to get a Rubik's cube was that the universe or whatever you want to call it, my inner guidance was thinking about my marketing. It was just thinking about it in a more creative way than I was initially thinking about it, I was in there thinking, I need to run Google ads or something. And it was thinking, No, you want organic search. And the way you do that is you solve this thing, I'll give you the idea that makes you make the correlation and then you have to figure out how to upload it to YouTube and blah, blah, blah. And there was nothing about that that was easy, but I was excited about the possibilities, and there was that feeling, tone of expansion that I had at every step, once I learned how to solve the cube, once I made that video, even though it wasn't perfect.

Once I uploaded it, once I shared it, I had to work at every single way station along that journey, and that's what I mean when I say do less and accomplish more, it doesn't mean it's going to be easy by any stretch, but it'll be accompanied by a feeling tone of expansion, as opposed to just going to the soul sucking job, which makes you feel contracted at the end of the day, if you have more experiences that make you feel contracted, that usually means you're going in a direction that's not aligned with your path and your purpose or your curiosity. But if you follow your curiosity, you'll have more experiences of expansion, it doesn't mean you'll have all experiences of expansion, there's still maybe some drama going on in the background, but as long as you're being led by the expansion feeling, you keep moving in that direction. You're going to find yourself in a situation where you are living a more purposeful life than the one you would have otherwise, and that has its other benefits, which we can talk about later.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Incredible with your friend, even on that phone call, that's what really jumped out to me. When I got the gist of this, and he's just like, Dude, you're supposed to be trying to get some more meditation student, you were working on this thing, but he said, you're playing with a toy. Right, and ironically, again, this was the pathway to something even better than what you expected or what you would have done just by hammering away the thing... And this is so funny, I haven't shared this before my wife, for whatever reason, it's the first time I'm even going to repeat this because it would bother me a little bit when she would say it when I'm left to my own devices, if I'm just like kicking back and actually throwing on something on the TV, I get curious about like...

Let me go look up the history of the R&B group troop, let me look at their story, how did they get together, or how did the Celtics win so many championships back in the day, how was their team constructed like... I'm curious about these things, and she'll come in and see me watching these things... She be like, You're such a historian. You're such a historian. And in my mind, I

think I have this pushback because it's like, no, I'm super current, I'm like, I'm forward thinking. But she's right, I am always... Again, on my own time when I'm just left to do something like that, I'm looking into something from the past, and here's where it gets interesting, and you already shared this as well, there's... If you listen to that inner guidance, there's always some carryover into what's relevant for you right now, and so even in my last book and each smarter, I went back in a time machine that took people through the history of the calorie, like where did that...

Who has the idea? Nobody's ever done that before in a book format, to give the history of the calorie itself thank you for the superpower my inner guidance system gives me, because in this moment talking with you, I realized how cool that is, 'cause I thought nothing of it when I did it, right? But now I understand it's because I'm listening to the Inter-guided system, even in my "Free time" I am a historian, and I carry that over into these conversations into what I'm creating.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah, man, and it's the same thing we talked about earlier with the meditation, like having... Allowing your curiosity to free range as well, can oftentimes lead to some gyms and some wisdom and some insights that you wouldn't otherwise uncover, and the thing that would stop most people is FOPO fear of other people's opinions about what they're doing and how relevant what they're doing is to whatever they're supposed to be doing in the other people's eyes, and if you can get through that, that in and of itself is a super power because they're not put you in a whole other zone of potential growth and expansion because you're not...

It's not that you're not allowing those other people's opinions to get to you, but you're also not shaming yourself for exploring the origin of the story of the band troop or whatever the case is, and it's incredible what kind of insights you can... And Correlations you can make when you become a student of your own curiosity and you really see it as, "Okay, this is where this is going to lead to, this is a gateway to something that's going to be a very important step along my path, so let me just go all in" And you still have to be responsible, you still got to pay your bills, you still got to do all that stuff... But figuring out a way to allow the curiosity or maybe even budgeting in some time to just be curious and just...

I agree, I watch some stuff on television and I don't feel bad about it, 'cause I know that I've gotten really wonderful ideas from that, as you know, I've been writing this daily dose of inspiration email, I just passed my seven year anniversary a few days ago, and a good portion of those emails, I get the ideas from just doing things that other people would consider to be a complete waste of time, but I'm just really engaged in free-range thinking.

SHAWN STEVENSON: No more factory farm. Thinking out there.

LIGHT WATKINS: No more factory farm thinking.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go, I love this. Got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back, Hippocrates is often considered to be the father of modern medicine, have you ever wondered what was in his treatment protocols? Well, one of his storied, favorite treatment protocols, involves something that the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians were all well aware of, and it was the healing properties of propolis. Today, our modern technology is proving the efficacy of this miraculous super food, a study published in the purview journal antiviral chemistry and chemotherapy, reveal that propolis has significant antiviral effects. Specifically reducing viral lung infections.

Propolis is one of the few substances ever discovered could be effective in the treatment of a variety of viruses, including herpes viruses, a recent study published in Phytotherapy research found that topical propolis applied three times a day accelerated the healing of cold sores faster than no treatment. The research is found the topical propolis not only reduced the amount of herpes virus present in the person's body, but it also protects the body against future cold sore outbreaks, that is absolutely miraculous. Now, this leans into what Hippocrates was noted to use it for, which was the healing of wounds, accelerated healing, the healing of sores, and whether it's a viral lung infection or an infection that is interacting with our nervous system like herpes virus.

There's something really remarkable about propolis, and this is one of the storied compounds that are coming from the world of bees, and humans for thousands of years have had a deep relationship with bees that is today, this relationship has been fractured and the populations of bees are dropping rapidly, a big reason behind this is the use of pesticides, and this is why sustainable beekeeping is so important to invest in, it help to lift up these populations of bees, because our livelihood truly does depend on bees in many ways, the propolis immune spray that I utilize multiple times a week is from beekeepers naturals, and they're committed to third party testing for 70-plus pesticide residues to ensure that we're doing truly sustainable bee keeping.

Creating a wonderful environment for bees to thrive in also, they're making sure the pervasive offenders like DDT are not in your bee products, heavy metals like arsenic and lead bacteria like E-coli all of these things are commonly found in bee products, these are definitely things you don't want coming along with your super foods in your medicine cabinet, go to beekeepersnaturals.com/model you're going to get 20% off your incredible propolis immune spray, the super food honey. And their nootropic that I absolutely love, called Brain fuel that utilizes Royal jelly. Again, make sure to check them out. They're making propolis incredibly accessible and affordable, head over there, check 'em out beekeepersnaturals.com/model

that's B-E-E-K-E-E-P-E-R-S-N-A-T-U-R-A-L-S.com/model, FOR 20% off. Now, back to the show. Now, this next one, this next principle of spiritual minimalism, again, we hear this, but we don't really get it, we don't really get it. And this one is to give what you want to receive, talk about that one because again, treat others how you want to be treated, give what you want to receive, if we really get this one. This is a game changer.

LIGHT WATKINS: Yeah, so just... Okay, there are a couple of ways to look at this one. So, on a more tangible level, give what you want to receive means there's no free anything in the universe, everything has a cost, everything requires an exchange, and you can either determine the exchange upfront or you will be assigned the exchange on the back end, and usually that's the drama, right? When we experience drama, whenever you experience drama, it's because you didn't understand the cost on the front end, for instance, you agree to let somebody stay at your house... Who's in a hard time. Who's just having a hard time. But you're just trying to be a good friend. Right? That person just to be extreme ends up burning down the house. Alright, and you're like, Oh my God. [laughter] And you get upset with them for burning down the house or leaving the door open and somebody came in and stole some stuff out of your house or whatever, instead of looking at the fact that you knew that this person could potentially do something like that as evidence by their track record, and you left valuable things in the house, and they came in and they did what they did, and those things were lost, that was the cost of them staying in the house, instead of them saying, "Hey, I need a place to stay"

And you're saying, okay, well, I'm not going to let you stay at my house, but I will contribute to you staying at the Motel 6 or the Holiday Inn or something like that, I'll give you 200 bucks to stay at the Holiday Inn. Oh, but it's going to cost \$500. I've already looked into it. That's fine, I'll give you \$200, that's what I can provide 'cause again, this person has a track record of bringing drama wherever they go, and so on the surface, it looks like you're not really being a very nice person, but really what you're doing is you're honoring your own boundaries, that could be somebody else who you've had a really sweet relationship with who you'll be more than happy to have to come and stay in your house, 'cause they don't bring the drama, so the drama is the cost, and if you don't acknowledge, at least acknowledge that there could potentially be a cost of this person staying here, so yes, they can stay at my house, but I'm going to put my other stuff away so that if anything happens, then I'm not going to lose that, and otherwise, you get assigned the cost on the back end. So again, that's an extreme example.

Okay, now I'll give you some more realistic examples, you want to go fly somewhere, you may say it's for work, and you see there's two flights, there's one flight that's a direct flight, and it's \$500, and there's another flight that is a connecting flight, that's \$99, and it's overnight, it's a red eye flight. So, you're going to be connecting and freaking Indianapolis overnight 2:00 in the morning, and then you got to wait for an hour and then get on another flight that's going

to get you there at 5 o'clock in the morning, you got to be there at 9 o'clock for your thing that you're going there to do... Well, the one that's connecting looks like it's cheaper on the surface, but actually you're going to miss sleep, you're probably not going to be eating particularly well, you're going to be roaming around in the Indianapolis Airport looking for something to nourish you, and it's just going to create a situation where you're not your best self, when you go there to do the thing that you're there to do, and it's not that you saved \$400, the value of you.

Missing sleep and potentially putting junk into your body, what is that worth? So, you have to think about that on the front end, and then maybe the \$500 flight is actually way cheaper than the \$99 flight that's connecting through Indianapolis at 2 o'clock in the morning, so that's kind of like the tangible way of looking at give what you want to receive.

Now, the intangible way of looking at it is you're in a relationship and you guys are having some relationship issues, you don't feel like your partner is being generous enough or compassionate enough or empathetic enough, or patient enough with you. So then what do most people do? They start bickering. They start nagging. Why aren't you more patient? Why aren't you more generous? Well, I'm not going to spend money on you since you don't spend money on me, and you start doing the whole tit for tat thing, not realizing that if you truly want more love, patience, generosity, compassion empathy, whatever... Mortit. You have to go first, you have to feed that relationship, you have to nourish that relationship with the things that you want, and that way you model what you want the other person to do, and especially if you know better. You have to be the one to do better. So that's a hard thing for us to do 'cause a lot of us are waiting for the other person to go first. And we think, okay, I've already gone first once or twice... Why aren't they reciprocating? Well, that relationship dynamic may be bankrupt.

To use Dr. Steven Cove's analogy of a bank account, a relationship is like a bank account. You have to feed it, you have to fund it with the things that you want with the patience, with the love, with the compassion, and you can do that a lot in order to build up that balance, and then when things go wrong, you withdraw from that balance, but if you've been just withdrawing without making the credit deposits, then you end up bankrupt, and so the slightest little thing can create a huge chaotic situation, the slightest little misunderstanding, the slightest little disagreement, and that's what it means to do the opposite of minimalism. Little things create big drama, big chaos, instead of... If you have enough of a balance, you can make a big mistake and it's okay, you can recover from that, you can get through that because you've taken time to invest in that relationship by focusing on giving as opposed to taking.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It sounds like a very simple principle for abundance is giving, but again, we tell ourselves these stories. We don't have it to give. I've already given so much. And ironically, if we actually focus on the giving, that act and not the getting part, and you know

this, we tend to get far more than what we ever imagined, so don't take this on as a tactic, but as a spiritual principle, to focus on giving what you want to receive.

LIGHT WATKINS: Well, and you can't give from an empty cup either, which is why these principles are sequence very specifically, you have to fill yourself up first, that's what you're still is practice does you have to cultivate the abundance first. Then you're able to give more if you don't have the fulfillment inside, then you're not going to be able to give as much, and that's why you can end up staying in a toxic relationship longer than you probably should or relating to your person in a toxic way longer than you should because you don't have the internal faculties to help you see that, Oh, there's another way to do this, or oh, being on my own for a little while and out of this sort of co-dependent situation, or being in a relationship with a narcissist or something like that is actually better than trying to struggle through this situation, so I'm not saying everybody has to stay together and figure it out, you may have to move on, but the only way you can truly know if it's time to move on is if you have enough of film and inside, otherwise, you're just going to think that your happiness is coming from the next person, and the grass is greener on the other side, and that's definitely not what's going to happen.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So powerful. So, another one of these principles is live as though there are no throwaway moments. What does that mean?

LIGHT WATKINS: So when you are... One of my favorite authors who wrote *The Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* Robert Pirsig he has this wonderful quote from that book, and he says the only Zen you're going to find at the top of the mountain is the Zen you bring up there with you. And being on the top of the mountain doesn't mean that you're going to have this experience of profound peace and serenity if you are feeling miserable and depressed and anxious as you're going up that mountain. There's nothing that's going to happen up there that's going to just eradicate whatever chaos and disorder that's happening internally or lack of fulfillment that's happening internally and so if you take the time to prioritize cultivating fulfillment inside you can have a profound moment of peace and serenity at the top of the mountain in line at the post office in traffic in the lobby of the dental office at the cash register in your favorite coffee place essentially anywhere. Because wherever you go there you are. And it's kind of like you know those magic eye puzzles where it's like a screen of chaos but if you look at it long enough and you soften your gaze an image will start to appear from the background, so those images are kind of like the insight I described with the Rubik's Cube. Those are hidden opportunities.

They're hiding in plain sight but you can't see them because you get so focused on what's not happening internally and so the lack of fulfillment perpetuates that sense of chaos and everything is disconnected and these people are a-holes and these people are inconsiderate

and you start being more future-focused and regretting things from the past and it's robbing you of your present moment awareness and if you can tap into more of that present moment awareness you can have profound experiences anywhere you are everywhere you are and then you don't need to be so attached to achieving things to be happy because you have that sense of happiness and fulfillment and contentedness wherever you find yourself and every moment becomes special. Every moment becomes meaningful. And that is what leads to a good day versus a bad day. A bad day is just a day where you can't see any correlation between who you are and where you're going and what you're experiencing. A good day is where you're having these really beautiful moments of serendipity it doesn't mean you have a billion dollars and all the time in the world in that conversation you had with the delivery person or in that exchange you experienced in the fast-food restaurant or whatever place you happened to find yourself or in the train station or whatever.

And that becomes the story that people can't wait to tell their friends and their family oh my God you're not going to believe something told me to da, da, da. Go to the train station or take the bike instead of walking and then I ran into this person and oh I was just thinking about them and can you believe how amazing that is. I mean what are the chances? And those are beautiful moments, but they don't have to happen in a mansion somewhere in the Hollywood Hills. They can happen anywhere if you're present to it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. Wow. Man, this just happened today. Mindy Pelz who was just here she brought up a name of a particular individual randomly seemingly that I had just texted somebody yesterday asking about this individual because I don't know them personally and they had reached out to us or the team reached out to us and I was just asking what is your opinion of this person and she just mentioned this person again I showed her the text I was just like this text I just... This was right at the top of my thread right here and now she's sharing this insight that gave me a complete green light on who this person potentially is what is their character. That's what I was really curious about. What is their character, and these moments are happening all the time all the time because we're connected to all of it but you give such a great story and you got several in the book of course about disconnectedness and there was an analogy of a little wave essentially who wants to be a big wave. And I'm not going to take the thunder away from the story if you want to share it you can or of course people can check it out in the book. But when the story started, I'm like What is he talking about? What is... This doesn't make... Okay. Oh wow. Yes man it's such a wonderful analogy. You've got to share it now. You've got to share it.

LIGHT WATKINS: There's a story called The Lonely Wave and it's this little wave meaning little in size and there are all these bigger waves it's surrounded by and it starts to figure out okay I need to increase my size in some way or increase my strength so I can compete against all the bigger waves and it's getting a little bit anxious around all of this and so this wiser wave hears

this little wave kind of figuring this stuff out and says well have you tried the opposite? Have you tried actually de-exciting. And the little wave goes de-exciting why would I want to get smaller? I need to get bigger I need to get stronger I need to get more powerful you see all these other bigger waves. And the wiser wave says well I get all that just try de-exciting and just see what happens and the little wave goes well how do you de-excite? And the wise wave goes to just do less do the least and then ultimately do nothing so the little wave starts doing less which is something it never really explored before and it starts getting smaller and it's a little bit scared like Oh my God I'm getting smaller and it does least and then it does nothing and it completely flatlines into the ocean and in the ocean it loses its wave of identity completely but when it comes back into its wave "status" there's a little bit of a memory of what it felt like to be one with the ocean.

And that feeling was very profound, so it did it again and it became one with the ocean and it came back into its wave status, and it remembered even stronger what it felt like to be one and it kept repeating this process and over time it started to realize. Wait a minute when I'm one with the ocean I'm connected to all the other waves. They're not separate from me actually they're part of me they're extensions of me and they are expressions of the same oceanic status. And so as it continues with this process it becomes less and less fearful less and less comparison-oriented and less and less needy of thinking that it had to be something other than what it actually was and so obviously that's a metaphor for us prioritizing de-exciting which is to do less with the stillness practice and when we do that we can arrive at an internal state of oneness where we can leave that state and come back into our individuality with a memory of, Hey I'm connected to everything else I'm connected to all the people in my life I'm connected to people I don't even know and I'm connected to this moment in a way that I never really appreciated before and this moment is as special as whatever I'm wanting to happen in the next moment and I'm not going to be any happier in the next moment than I'm able to be in this moment.

So by increasing your state of fulfillment in this moment in your state of presence you're going to bring that into whatever you're going to experience in the future it's not that the future acquisition is going to lead to more presence or fulfillment the future of acquisitions is just going to be an outlet for whatever I'm experiencing right now so again if I'm miserable right now and I achieve a million dollars or I exit from my company or I meet what I think is my soul mate I'm just going to be a miserable person in those situations until I get serious about doing the internal work that's going to create more fulfillment then I can raise my baseline level of happiness and then that'll be there with whatever it is that I'm doing at the time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's where the expansive-ness is the big-ness because if you're just again pining away trying to be that bigger wave and you might get a little bit bigger but that real greatness and the ability to be that big wave without side effects having the ramification

of the big fall and splash and not having comfort. So many different brilliant analogies within this but having the comfort to know that this is part of the process as well I'm going to emerge again. By de-exciting that term de-exciting being still being present and tapping into that oneness that expansive-ness because here's the thing this can still sound sort of ethereal?

LIGHT WATKINS: And all that...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, but this is the reality we are literally. We are literally all connected we are one part of this entire universe we're part of it not only that even to say that there can be an open loop or open possibility of separateness if we're part of it we can't be removed from it. You can't get away from it. As a matter of fact, you are it. All of it in its entirety is you. And so, if you can contemplate that spend some time and really start to understand that and walk from that place like things go from scary to scary good right. And something you said earlier just... We don't get bothered by happy thoughts. God I'm so happy what's wrong with me that's not... It's the things that feel disempowering that feel inflammatory. But even within that one of those principles of there are no throwaway moments I come back to that and starting to ask even when those things happen what is the gift in this... Seeing through that lens and you'll find more happiness or contentment or whatever it is on the other side of even the inflammatory things. Right? And this leads into another one of the principles we've got two more to cover get comfortable with discomfort why is this one of the principles?

LIGHT WATKINS: Okay so I just want to address something that you just said about no throwaway moments. A really simple wave that people can work this out for themselves is you think about what in your life is good. Whatever is happening that you consider to be good, and I know it's subjective so it's going to be different for different people but whatever you hone in on as the good thing that's happening in your life you have to also acknowledge that everything "bad" that happened to you in your life led to this thing that's good now. So if you reverse engineer that thing that you're grateful for then you can't help but also at least consider the fact that the bad thing that happened last year or five years ago or 10 years ago whatever in some way at some time it navigated you to this good thing in other words if the bad thing didn't happen you probably wouldn't have experienced the good thing in the way that you're experiencing it today so really there's no such thing as a bad thing it's all just navigational devices and that's another way to kind of think about the fact that there's no throwaway moments because inevitably people are experiencing something "bad" right now and thinking that Oh this is keeping me back this is holding me back from the place where I think I should be but what if just as a possibility...

This is the thing that you need to navigate in order to expand into the person that can do the thing that you're envisioning yourself doing ultimately along your path which is a way more empowering way of looking at it. So anyway, it's finding comfort in discomfort again when you

follow your curiosity and your purpose starts to find you it's not going to be easy, it's not going to be simple, it's going to stretch you in certain ways and just using the Rubik's Cube example again. There's no part of that that felt necessarily easy but I had to find the comfort within the discomfort of learning how to solve a cube and having these conversations with my friends and trying to figure out how to make videos and all the different steps along the path, the example that I use in the book about finding comfort in discomfort was the fact that when I became a yoga teacher in Los Angeles in 2002 prior to that I was a yoga enthusiast who could barely touch his own toes I was so stiff that if I were to do a Forward Fold my hands would be about six inches above the ground so who was I to think I could become a yoga teacher even though I realized that I was very curious about what that would look like if I could be a yoga teacher.

So instead of allowing the discomfort of my secret which was the fact that I could barely touch my toes stopped me from pursuing that path I decided to just take the next step and that's really the call for finding that comfort is you don't have to see... Like Dr. King says you don't have to see the whole staircase all you have to worry about is what's the next step look like? How can I do the most with what I have right now? And so, the next step for me was just finding someone whose class I really liked and then from there asking around what training programs do you recommend and then going and exploring that and then experiencing an orientation and then signing up and et cetera et cetera. The next thing you know I'm in a yoga training still can't touch my toes. Everybody else is super flexible and no one ever mentioned the fact that I couldn't touch my toes, so I thought maybe it's all in my head I don't know but what I lacked in flexibility I made up for in hustle and when I graduated from that training I was accepting substitute teaching gigs all over town.

I would teach anyone anywhere any time and I got a lot of experience very quickly but I couldn't ever really demonstrate poses because I just wasn't that flexible so it forced me to have to develop the skill of being able to articulate movements in a very efficient way because I wasn't actually in the front of the room demonstrating them and I realized over time as my classes started to build that that became a secret weapon a super power of mine. The fact that I was inflexible allowed me to be able to connect with the people who made up the majority of yoga students which were inflexible people most people actually couldn't touch their toes so I became a very popular teacher who could speak to those people and help out the person who also probably had those same insecurities that I had when I first came and they could relate to me and I could relate to them and then one day I'm on a hike with a buddy of mine in Runyon Canyon and he was one of my yoga mentors and he said something I think he was trying to just be funny but he said, "How does it feel to be one of the most popular yoga teachers in all of Los Angeles who can't even touch his own toes?"

And I felt this sense of insecurity that kind of re-emerged and I was quiet for a while I was looking for the perfect spiritual answer and nothing was coming and then finally, he broke the silence and answered the question himself he said. A wise person once said, "You don't have to beat Michael Jordan in order to coach him to a championship" And that was... It allowed me to really just own my experience and be completely surrendered to it and so yeah that was the invitation for finding comfort is just surrender to whatever is happening as opposed to what you think should be happening or could have been happening or would have been happening if X, Y and Z variables were in place because likely whatever is happening is going to become your super power along your path and purpose.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow that hit different. Recently as of this recording we recently shared an episode where it was a compilation of conversations, I had with Tim Grover who was Michael Jordan's trainer and he shared in one of our conversations that he's never made one shot in the NBA himself not one, but he helped to elevate the greatest basketball player that we've ever seen and this is not up for debate. But from him in that time when he was getting bullied by the Detroit Pistons which my historian ass I'd spent some time studying all the pistons and oh I'm going to buy them beer but he couldn't get over that hump and he was like, "I need to get physically stronger not just endure this abuse but to dish it out right, To flip this around to be strong enough to endure get comfortable with the discomfort and also let me make some of these other people uncomfortable as well and we have so many opportunities for this in our lives all the time.

There's a direct quote from the book you said the more comfortable you can make yourself with discomfort now the more resilient you will be when you experience the turbulence of your next spiritual growth spurt this is what we don't want to hear this is what the average guru is not going to tell people because they're peddling and promising enlightenment eternal bliss. The truth is you're going to continue to experience these, and I love it you put it like these spiritual growth spurts that are not necessarily going to feel good and they're going to be challenging.

You're going to experience turbulence but if you're aware that this is what's happening now where you have the presence and now all this? This is what's happening I'm being stretched I'm becoming more expansive. Maybe it's drawing me in to become more expansive. Whatever the lesson is in that moment you can be aware that that's what it is and not be defeated.

LIGHT WATKINS: Right. That's beautiful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Powerful, powerful man. We've got one more here to cover and the final one and this really brings us back... Circles us back to the essence of what people think they

would get with travel light and spiritual minimalism is a very practical bridge for that is to embrace the freedom of choicelessness. Talk about that one.

LIGHT WATKINS: So, I use a story an opening story in that of Rosa Parks and I love, love, love her example. So, for those of you who don't know, Rosa Parks is considered to be the mother of the modern civil rights movement. She was the black woman who elected to stay in her bus seat in Montgomery Alabama in 1955 and when the bus filled up with passengers and two white men got on. The law was... The rule of law was if a bus was full and there were any what they called colored passengers sitting down the colored passengers had to get up and let the white passengers have their seats and this had been the law for however long but for whatever reason that particular afternoon after work she worked as a seamstress in downtown Montgomery Alabama so after work she's going back home and she just...

She just decided, I'm not going to get up today... Now again, this is Montgomery, Alabama. So, the ramifications for this act of defiance could have been as severe as being killed, being lynched, being accosted anything, 'cause black people were still seen as not full humans. And in that Jim Crow era and Emmett till had just happened, the young teenager from Chicago who came down and allegedly whistled at a white woman in Mississippi, and then he got lynched and beaten, and his mom had the open cast casket funeral to show what people were doing down there. So, from all of that, she decided, "I'm just not going to do this anymore, I'm not going to play this game anymore" and her act of defiance got her arrested, and the black leaders in Montgomery organized a bus boycott that was headed by a newly elected 26-year-old preacher named Martin Luther King Junior. And so that set into motion all of these different actions that ultimately culminated in a Voting Rights Act, I Have a Dream speech, and just all these things that have benefited the culture and are still benefiting the culture.

National holiday, the first only national holiday given to a citizen that's not a president, et cetera. And what I like about this story is that if you just look at Rosa Parks on paper prior to that moment, no one would ever say, "Oh, she was living her purpose, she was living her passion, she was a seamstress" Right? There's nothing inherently purposeful about being a seamstress and she was just tired that day. But that one action that you could... Again, you could make the argument that she was being prepared for her entire life, enduring whatever she had to endure, living in Montgomery, Alabama, working as a seamstress being affiliated with these black leaders in the community that had her say, "I'm not going to stand up today" and that set this whole thing in emotion, you can't even point to a more purposeful act than something like that. And I don't know, how old are you, Sean?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Younger than you.

LIGHT WATKINS: So.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm 43.

LIGHT WATKINS: So, people imagine Rosa Parks as this old lady. Alright. And they say, "That's why she didn't want to stand up" but guess what? Rosa Parks was a year younger than you when that happened. She said, "I wasn't old, I wasn't like a weak or feeble or anything like that, I was just tired of giving in" And again, I give these examples because we all have a version of that, maybe you're in a relationship that you've outgrown, and you've been giving in and giving in and giving in. Maybe you work at a place that is no longer relevant for your spiritual growth and you're experiencing all kinds of internal attention and you give in to that, and give in to that, and give in to that, and or maybe there's something that you've been dreaming about doing, but society tells you, that you're not rich enough, sexy enough and fit enough or whatever you think you need in order to pursue that path, and you keep giving in to society's opinions about you.

And when you have these kinds of conversations on... Like I have a podcast, you have a podcast, we both talk to people who on some level, have found their purpose or who are living a more purposeful life than maybe the average person is, 'cause that's why people want to talk to them, and when they're having these conversations, and when I'm having these conversations, usually the thing that everybody wants to hear about is, Okay, what's that moment where you finally said, "Enough is enough" and you pivot it away from convention to whatever your path was, that's what everybody wants to talk about.

So, I call that your Rosa Parks moment. And if you live a life that you don't consider to be very significant or meaningful, it's because maybe you haven't given yourself the gift of that Rosa Parks moment yet. But I guarantee when you do say, "Enough is enough" and you stop giving in and you have your act of defiance to whatever your status quo is, and you disrupt that status quo over a long enough period of time, people are going to want to start to talk to you about that moment, and whatever you're experiencing now, that may seem crappy, that's going to be the set up to that moment. So, we're going to want to talk about that too. So, I want you to pay really close attention to how that makes you feel, write it down, get all the details, remember it because you're going to be giving that same story and perhaps that same key note speech again and again and again, because that's what inspires people.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. I've said that to many people I've met over the years who are in that moment, they're in the suck, and just saying this simple statement, it's going to be a great story. It's going to be a great story.

LIGHT WATKINS: But they have to have the act of defiance moment too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. It's a part of the process.

LIGHT WATKINS: And nobody's going to swoop in and do it for you. Rosa Park had to do it on her own, at the face of getting lynched, people wouldn't have batted an eye if she got lynched in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama. If you go to Montgomery, Alabama today, there's what's called the Legacy Museum. It's more commonly known as the lynching Museum, where they commemorate people who have been lynched with these statues, and you walk in there and there's literally hundreds, if not thousands of statues hanging from the ceiling, and each one has a plaque showing why that person got lynched and it's the most trivial reasons. They didn't cross the street soon enough, they didn't say hi when spoken to, somebody came over to take \$100 from them for no reason, and they refused to give it to them, and just people were getting lynched all over the place, so it wouldn't have been anything unusual for that to happen, but that was the power of that act of defiance, and I love that example too, because sometimes what we may consider to be high stakes, which is somebody may say something insensitive to us, it's not the same as what somebody like a Rosa Parks or a Martin Luther King, or a Frederick Douglas or somebody.

Malcom X, this Guys we're facing life and death literally through their acts of defiance, so if they could do it certainly, we can do it as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, oh there's so much there as well. The pendulum swing into this place of hypersensitivity right now. And hopefully, again, we can learn from the past and start to integrate a little bit better, and part of the process, again, you have these seven principles, this final one being embraced the freedom of choicelessness. You've created a life structure to where that is your reality, on most days, because having so many different options on what we can do, her options at the time too, sit down, stay sitting or stand up. Today, she can pull out her phone. Right? I'm on the bus right now.

Right? There's so many different ways. Today, I remember reading this book from Barry Schwartz, the Paradox of Choice, and he delivered some signs basically affirming what we already know experientially, when we get to a place we have a certain amount of choices, it can debilitate us, and we choose nothing... We don't make a choice that can move us forward, and so there's like having fewer options actually helps to keep us mobile, having fewer options helps to keep us from becoming paralyzed. And so how have you done that for yourself and embracing the freedom of choices-ness.

LIGHT WATKINS: So, when I went nomadic in 2018, I got rid of everything out of my two-bedroom apartment in Santa Monica, and I moved into essentially a carry-on bag. So, I only used what I had in my carry-on back. There was no storage, I got rid of everything else, and that was a very conscious choice. I knew that storage was a trap 'cause I would start justifying,

"Oh, I really need this, and oh, I can't throw this away." And what happens with storage is people put all this stuff in the stores room and they forget about it.

And at three, four years, do you not pay \$12000 to store \$6000 worth of stuff that you've completely forgotten about and you go into the store room and it's like, "Oh well, I don't use this anymore, I've overgrown this and I don't really need that" and so it was a really interesting experiment to see what I truly needed 'cause the only way to know what you truly need is to downsize the amount of space you have to carry stuff around. And here's the irony, after about a year of living from a carry-on bag, I realized I have way too much stuff, I wasn't even using some of the stuff, so I downsized from the carry on back to a 40-liter backpack. And then about six months later, I realized, "Oh my God, I still got too much stuff" and then I downsized to a day pack, and so that's where I am right now. Everything that I have fits into my little day pack, which is probably smaller than your youngest son takes the school with his books. But people will ask me. Two things, people will ask me, what do I miss from having a home? And I say nothing, and I really mean that, I don't miss any of it.

'Cause home now is wherever I am. And you realize that home really is a state of mind more than it is a space. Your space that you're calling your home is really just a storage room for all your stuff with a bed in it. It's a storage room that you sleep in, that you cook, that you go to the bathroom in, but essentially, it's just keeping all your stuff and when you leave your home, a part of you is always thinking about your stuff and that... Just a little that amount of attention that you're giving to your stuff, actually, it robs you off being present wherever you are. And I'm not saying this in a... To inspire somebody to get rid of their home or anything like that, I'm just... You just want to at least know that that's how it works. Like one of the reasons why you're maybe not be present, 'cause you're thinking too much about whatever stuff you have, and if the stuff you have is overriding your ability to be present then maybe you should relate to your stuff a little bit differently than you've been relating to it. Because there's a chance that you don't need as much stuff as you may think you need.

The other thing that people ask me is, when did you become a minimalist? And they're expecting me to say, May 31st, 2018, which is the day I moved out of my apartment. But I would offer, I became a minimalist the day I started taking my meditation practice seriously in 2003, and that's when I became a daily meditator because that started to create the fulfillment inside that allowed me to hold on to stuff less and less. To be less attached, to be less in need, to be less engaged in the acquisitive approach to happiness. And then that freed me up to start making choices not based on this idea that I'm going to get happy when these things happen, but choices based on the happiness and fulfillment that I was experiencing inside. So, then the question became, I have all these options, which is the most aligned option? And what you realize is there's really only one option and then there's everything else, and that one option is align and everything else may look literary may be profitable or whatever, but if it doesn't fill

the line, it's not for me, it's not for me, 'cause whatever it is, I'm not going to get happier as a result of doing that thing, I'm bringing the happiness to the party, I'm the one that has the happiness not the thing, not the experience.

So, me having the happiness allows me to be able to choose intentionally, mindfully, consciously where I want to share it, do I want to share it in this relationship, or do I want to share it in this job, or do I want to share it in this lifestyle? Do I want to share it in this backpack, do I want to share it on the road, or do I want to share it in the two-bedroom apartment? Well, it became clear that the two-bedroom apartment option was no longer aligned, the carry-on back situation was what was aligned. So now the only question was, what kind of Carry on back I might going to get. I didn't have a... Okay, maybe I should live in a tent, maybe I should... None of that was... All those were options, but none of it felt aligned. And when you started living in that purposeful aligned way, decisions are super easy to make, and your purpose will be your best editor about, should I respond to this negative email or not? Is it aligned with your purpose? No, then don't respond. Is it aligned with your purpose? Strengthen this relationship, yes. Okay, they respond. But how do I respond? You respond kindly and you respond meaningfully. Which one is more aligned with your purpose? What are you ultimately...

Here's a great way to figure out what's truly important, right? Start going to every funeral you get invited to, and listen to those eulogies, and listen to what people have to say about the deceased, all of those stories are going to be about personal interactions that were meaningful, no one's talking about their bank balance and no one's talking about the house they lived in, no one's talking about the cars they drove, no one's talking about the work opportunities they had. It was all about...

She didn't have to go the extra mile, but she went the extra mile. He didn't have to spend time with me, but he chose to spend time with me, and that's what I... That's what people remember. That becomes your legacy. That's what creates a meaningful life, meaningful existence, that's what leads to a feeling of expansion, so whatever leads to more of that, that's what we want to prioritize, and usually that's the option that makes us a little bit more uncomfortable than doing the conventional thing. So, if anything, I'm hoping that this book and these principles will allow people to have just more meaningful moments with people in their life right now, and through those you can also cultivate more of a sense of fulfillment inside that will make your life feel better.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This conversation has brought more fulfillment for me.

LIGHT WATKINS: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I think everybody can pick up some of that as well, where can they pick up a copy of Travel Light?

LIGHT WATKINS: It's everywhere books are sold. You can follow me on the socials at light Watkins and how to eat healthy in a minimalist way, and it's all like the tortoise approach. So they all have 80% completion rates for 180-day challenges because we go very, very slow, very gradual, so that you build a habit of consistency.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, we can use a lot more of that right now. My God, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom and it's just... It's always inspiring talking with you and just reading your work as well, you could see how sticky those stories were like I'm up here fanning out about a wave. So, you're so great at articulating these things.

LIGHT WATKINS: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's truly a gift, and I just appreciate you.

LIGHT WATKINS: Thanks bro, thanks for having me back on.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Any time. Any time. Light Watkins, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. Were there any of these principles of minimalism that jumped out at you? Minimalism might not seem like a very attractive word for a lot of people, especially in our society of stuff, like having a lot of stuff, but for me, this created a bridge, and it was because it was based on practicality and also understanding that real change is happening from the inside out and taking on that spirit of minimalism internally in our inner world is so powerful, and I think that it's obviously going to be so much more valuable and fulfilling than just a cookie-cutter perspective about what minimalism is.

Now not to rain on the parade of downsizing in the outer world, it's not about that, but it's understanding that if we're looking for more fulfillment, more joy, more peace, getting rid of our external stuff and de-cluttering. Yeah, it can help just to create an environment of more calm. Yes, absolutely. But we still have to do that in our work, we still have to look within, and that's what this is really all about. So, make sure to connect with the Light out on social media, and of course, pick up a copy of Travel Light and listen, we've got some incredible master classes that you don't want to miss in world-changing guests coming your way very, very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care. Have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com, that's where you can find all of the show notes, you could 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.