

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 724

Get Better, Bigger Results with THis 10X Strategy

with Dr. Benjamin Hardy

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today. Many of us feel the desire to do, be, and achieve more, but we end up suffering mightily, trying to get there. And according to our special guest's scientific research, a lot of our suffering is because we are thinking too small. That's right. In order for us to do more, often times our struggles are because we're thinking incrementally, instead of changing our vision, instead of really understanding what's possible for us and even beyond what's possible for us, that is a territory that we need to be in. Whether this is for our relationships, whether it's for our physical health, whether it's for our work and our success in life, everything applies here because it has a lot to do with our identity. And so today we're gonna be deconstructing what our identity is and how to shift our identity, and also starting to get ourselves into the territory of the impossible. Now, just like Tom Cruise and in "Mission Impossible", it always ends up being possible, but it's being able to just tweak our thinking and upgrade our identity in order for us to truly achieve what is possible for us.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So this conversation for me personally changed me. It changed the way that I'm thinking about reality. So I'm very, very excited to share this. Now, as you're here on this episode, in really working to transform my own health and well-being and taking it to an entirely different level, certain obstacles came up along the way, as you're going to hear about it might be something that's expected to up-level our thinking, but one of those keys for much of physical fitness and performance is our sleep wellness, as you well know. But sometimes we can overlook the small things that can lead to much better outcomes. And as I've been working in the past few months to really transform my own health and fitness and performance, while being in the process of having an epic new book coming out to the world, and this is the "Eat Smarter Family Cookbook", and if you have not preordered your copy, head over to your favorite retailer right now, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and of course, eat-smarter-cookbook.com and preorder your copy ASAP because you wanna be a part of this movement. But even with all of that going on and this new focus on my own fitness and performance, things can be a little bit turbulent when it comes to making sure that you're getting adequate sleep, not to mention my youngest son having these AAU basketball tournaments, it is supposed to be every other weekend.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what the coach said. But several times recently, it's been every weekend, and this truly takes up a weekend. So your sleep patterns, your flow of events can be a little bit thrown off. And so a couple of days of things just being a little bit off, I opened up my cabinet and it was looking right at me, it had been there the whole time, but my filter wasn't such that I was seeing the Reishi medicinal mushroom right there. And so I've had a

rekindling of my relationship with Reishi and it has been fantastic. Literally for me personally, and everybody's different, but just in one night, it really helped me to recalibrate my sleep and my sleep quality, that was already good, but again, we're talking about going from good to great. And the reason that this is so effective, one of these studies, this was published in the journal Pharmacology Biochemistry and Behavior, found that Reishi, again, this is a medicinal mushroom that's been utilized for centuries, was able to significantly decrease sleep latency. This means that it's clinically proven to help folks fall asleep faster. It was found to increase overall sleep time, increase non-REM, so this is deep sleep time, and also REM sleep as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So it improves sleep quality. So the quality is now improved, and this is one of the things we're talking about today is, well, the quality of things, focusing on quality versus quantity, and the spillover benefits rather than what we would frame as side effects versus something like popping some Ambien or whatever the pharmacological model might propose to improve our sleep quality or to improve our sleep at all, what we have with that is really something like a pseudo-sleep, it's hitting our sleep channels with a hammer versus understanding that we need to help and support our body create conditions to where our body can go through our sleep cycles naturally and normally. I know what it's like, I was struggling 20 years ago now with a chronic debilitating health issue with an advanced arthritic condition of my spine and my bones. And my biggest struggle was sleeping at night, and taking prescription and over-the-counter medications to help me to sleep because that was my biggest struggle and pain waking me up. What I experienced was waking up in a deep fog and taking several hours just to feel like I'm "awake", and not to mention each night, now having this dependency on this substance, just to get a couple of measly hours of pseudo sleep. And that, I can't even believe that that was my life.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But understanding that so many people are leaning towards those things versus something that truly increases or improves the total body health and wellness of the system, improving the environment so that sleep quality can be improved, because one of those spill-over benefits is... This was cited in the Journal of Pharmacological Sciences, found that the polysaccharides in Reishi have extensive immuno-modulating effects, literally helping your immune system to be dialed up or dialed down based on what your body is needing right now. All right, so if your immune system is running a little bit low and needs to be more on point...

SHAWN STEVENSON: In particular in the study it was talking about the different immune cell faculties that it's impacting, so humoral immunity and the like, but also being able to dial down the immune system, if it is running hot and hyperactive. That's really, really special. And all of this is found in the Reishi Elixir from Four Sigmatic. Go to foursigmatic.com/model, that's F-O-U-R-S-I-G-M-A-T-I-C.com/model. And you're going to get 10% off store-wide,

including their dual extracted organic Reishi Elixir. So this can be utilized as a tea, you can add this into different drinks and smoothies and things like that, but having it as a tea, maybe 30-45 minutes, an hour before bed is ideal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, listen, listen, no one said that Reishi tea is delicious. All right? No one said that. It's an earthy, it has an earthy taste to it, so adding a little bit of a fat, maybe just a tiny bit of some grass-fed butter or some coconut oil or emulsified MCT oil or ghee, something like that to kinda cut that earthy flavor a little bit, maybe a couple of drops of stevia, it could be a nice evening night cup. So again, one of my favorite things, but it's been a few months and it was just sitting right there. It really helped me to recalibrate and I'm so grateful for it, such an awesome product. Head over there, check them out, foursigmatic.com/model for 10% off store-wide. And now let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five star review titled "Again and Again," by Burt JM. "I recommend these episodes to so many people because of how much they helped shape my perspective in such a positive way on a vast range of topics. I often find myself listening to an episode two or even three times because of how much amazingly useful information there is. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I can't say it enough. Thank you."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so very much for leaving that review over on Apple Podcast, it truly does mean so much, and if you're yet to do so, pop over to Apple Podcast and leave a review for the Model Health Show. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Dr. Benjamin Hardy is an organizational psychologist and author of eight books, which have sold nearly one million copies. His work focuses on the psychology of exponential growth and transformation, future self science and more. We're really looking at understanding how our identity is impacting all of our decisions and of course, our outcomes. So this is a fascinating and powerful conversation with the incredible Dr. Benjamin Hardy. All right, Dr. Benjamin Hardy, welcome to the Model Health Show. It is good to see you, man.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Thank you, man. Good to be with you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The first thing I wanna talk about is identity, because obviously our identity is a key driver of our choices in life, whether it's choices with our health, whether it's choices with the work that we're doing. Let's talk about identity and why this is really the place we wanna focus if we're wanting to make change in our life.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: You said it, I mean, identity drives actions and behaviors, and identity fits very much with time. So I really look at identity as two core things, it's your story, which is the story of your past self, present self and future self. And psychology time is holistic,

meaning, who I am right now is based on how I frame my past and my future, and that's what's shaping how I'm talking to you today. So it's the story, but it's also your standards. So standards in psychology is that what you're most committed to, and so the story side is your past, present and future, and your standards are your floor and your ceiling as a person, and emphasis on the floor, it's your minimum standard, it's what you say yes to. So you can know what your standards are by what you say yes to. And so I look at those two things, story being the way you frame things, and then standards are the way you filter things, and so, yeah, they're just everything. And there's obviously effective ways to have identity. People get really caught up in their past identity, they have got very little connection to their future identity. So yeah. What questions do you have about it? Let's go into it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. Yeah. This is so fascinating, even the floor and ceiling concept.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Raising the floor is a fundamental aspect of changing your identity and starting to say no to a much higher filter, whether that's in your business, whether that's with your friends, whether that's what the information you consume, the food you consume, raising the floor and having a higher filter, and you want that filter to come from your future self. That's when the real work happens when you start raising the floor and start saying no to the things you used to say yes to. That's the deep emotional work, it takes a lot of commitment and courage to do that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I was shocked reading your book and how much our... Having this desire to up-level but thinking too small in a sense because of our identity, and I was just... First of all, of course, I'm a very skeptical 10x is better than 2x. Easier.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Easier, even more skeptical.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Easier. And I was like, okay, when we're wanting to progress, maybe it's in business, for example, we're trying to improve incrementally.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And for you to come in with this radical idea that 10x-ing it is going to be easier, it was alluring, but also I was very skeptical, but as soon as you lay it out why, I was like, this is so obvious, we create so much suffering for ourselves because we're thinking so small because of our identity.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Big. Big. Yeah, so I'll give an analogy. I look at 10x-ing like going to your next level, so that would be like going from crawling to walking. That's how I would call it a 10x. And now that you're a walker, you can do so many things that the crawler version of you

couldn't do, so to 2x-ing would be like, I wanna crawl faster. And so you're trying to optimize for crawling as fast as you can and it's like, no, no, no. Let's start walking. What's the walking version of whatever it is you're doing? And so that's operating from a different place, and so back with time...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Going to 2x or going for linear growth and anything means you're mostly operating from your past and your present, and you're letting the present to dictate what you'll do in the future. So if you're going for a 2x it means you're just gonna do more of what you've already done, so you're letting the future literally dictate what you do, or sorry, you're letting the present dictate what you do in the future. And so 10x is an opposite approach, you let imagination be the starting place. Imagination is more important than knowledge, as Einstein would say. And even Daniel Gilbert, Daniel Gilbert is a Harvard psychologist, he studied the idea of past self, present self and future self for 20 years. And he says most people think that their future self is the same person they are today, because we let our present self dictate how we see the future rather than letting our future self dictate who we are in the present.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so that's 10x, is you wanna have an imagined future, and even we can go into it if you want, but you wanna take it... Scale it up to the place where you actually think it's impossible, you wanna make it so big, and there's a lot of reasons why. It really simplifies things, it cuts out the noise, but when you make it that high of a filter, almost nothing will get you to 10x. Almost everything you're doing right now could get you to 2x. I don't have to change much to get to 2x, but if I wanna go 10x, almost nothing's gonna work. And so it forces me to be a lot more honest. Most of what I'm doing fits in that category of 80% of things that are producing almost none of my results, so it's a lot more of an honesty filter, but that's really the key, are you letting the future dictate the present or are you letting the present dictate your future?

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is one of the things that I wanted to ask you about actually, is what does the science say about "impossible goals" versus the more practical possible goals?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So obviously there's a huge amount of research on smart goals, those are kind of the cliché approach, but I don't think that a lot of... I think finally, a lot of psychologists are connecting goals with identity, goals with process. I like looking at different places of the research and different types of researchers and who they're working with. One thing I just wanna say flat out, being a psychologist, I take all research with a huge grain of salt, especially in the social sciences, because most of that research, first off, they cut out the outliers, they're focused on the bell curve, they're focused on people in the middle, and so if you take a lot of psychological research, seriously, you're comparing the results of the common man, often college students, 'cause those are the types of people that the studies

are done on. Obviously, some research is different, but when it comes to decision-making. One of my favorite guys, his name is Dr. Alan Bernard, he's who I reference... His research is who I reference in the book, but he has been studying impossible goals for 15-20 years.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: He said he has a concept called constraint theory, and it's a theory of business, but he has been studying this idea of impossible goals for a long time, and he finds that there's two really important things that happen when you start pursuing a goal that you believe to be impossible. So he works with businesses and he'll ask them, "What's your goal?" 'Cause we all have a goal and the goal is what is gonna determine what he calls the bottleneck. The bottleneck is the thing that needs to be solved to achieve the goal, but there's always a bottleneck, so if you want to get healthy, what's the bottleneck? What's stopping you? What do we need to solve? So he'll ask people, "What's your goal?" And they'll say, "I'm an entrepreneur, I wanna make 100 grand." "All right, do you think that's possible?" "Yeah, I do." "All right, well, what about a million in the same time frame, do you think that's possible?" "Well, maybe." "What about 10 million? Do you think that's possible?" "Heck, no." "Okay, let's start there."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Then he asks the a question, "It would be impossible unless what?" And then the reason you wanna do that is only by asking that question, unless what? What would make it possible? Then you can start to find the few things that actually have a huge upside, call it the 80-20 principle, the few things in that 20%, they have the huge upside, if you're not doing that, then most of what... If the goal is not high enough, you really can't discern the signal from the noise, you can't discern what are all the things you're doing that are honestly either taking you backwards, like are you're not moving you forward, but also once you make the goal impossible, genuinely impossible. And this is super practical, you can apply this like I applied it even last month, you and I are filming this in September. I actually set two impossible goals for my team, and one of them we achieved.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: We had a goal that we wanted to accomplish before the end of the year, and I just said, "Nope, we're gonna just do it in August." And I had another... And so we actually did achieve that one. And so this spring... and then the other one we literally made nothing, we got nowhere near it. But the cool part is not being attached to it. But what it does is, if I'm going for something that's possible, or in my mind possible, what that means is I think I know how to do it. And if I think I know how to do it, what that means is I'm operating from my past assumptions. I think I know how to do it, therefore, I'm not gonna ask new questions, I'm not gonna look outside the box, I'm not gonna try new things. And so once you get it to that higher place then finally you can start asking new questions, maybe seeking new solutions that are totally outside your current reference frame.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is fascinating. And like I said, after you laid it out in the book, it just started to make more and more sense, and it's just like, why don't we do this in the first place? Of course, there's a cultural aspect to this.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But it just seems, I think we're really operating from logic, like the logical step is to go from crawling to crawling faster. But there are situations where... And this is a true story, all right? When I was born, my feet had to be broken and set in place.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Oh, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right, and so I had those little special shoes and my mother got them bronzed, I think it was called, and put into... There was is like a picture, and this was something they did in the '80s. So I had these special shoes, and the prognosis from the doctor was like, I don't know if he'll ever be able to walk normally, run normally, all those things, and according to legend, because I was a baby, but my uncle had went down this particular hill and he was like my superhero, and I just went from crawling, I got up and ran down... I had no choice because of gravity, and I ran down the hill after him. So I didn't take first steps walking, I ran first. And so there are people whose story does not fit into that common scenario. Not only that, I became a star track athlete, by the way. And the list goes on and on and on.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Totally.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So learning from that and what's possible can be so much more viable and even helpful than that logical progression.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: We'll even take yourself, for example, here's a question I have for you, seriously, and anyone who's listening, put yourself... So one crucial component of identity, one crucial component of all of this is, and this fits with past self, present self, future self, this is the... One of the things that Daniel Gilbert said is, he said, "the person you are today is as fleeting as the present moment", so I'm not... And tomorrow, I'm gonna be a little different, but also I'm not the same person I was yesterday or a week ago, or five years ago. And if I take the time to look at it, I can recognize that, and especially if I frame for it, you find what you filter for. And so if I'm looking for the ways in which I'm different from who I was a week ago, maybe I now know things that I didn't know. What do I know? And so this is not a question for you, but also for anyone listening is, go back to the version of you back on January 1st of this year, eight months ago or something like that. Has anything happened or have you achieved

anything or have you experienced anything right now that that version of you, January 1st, would have thought would have been impossible?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely, that's so crazy. I never even thought about that. Absolutely, yes.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I guarantee it. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. It's like if you go back to who you were and what you were framing for, what you were filtering for, if you thought about what you were going for, just go back eight months to the January 1st version of you and think about your goals, your objectives, what was in your frame of reference and what you... Even your goals. And then you just fast forward here. I'm guessing a lot of things have happened that you would've never even considered. And also the things you're now pursuing would've been outside of even the imagination of, call it your past self even eight months ago.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'll just... You want me to share?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Please do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. I.... So we were just talking about this before the show. I've had several book-related injuries, all right? Post-book related injuries. As you know, writing a book, whether it's a health book or not, it's not a very healthy process. And so certain things can get neglected. It's a stressor even if you enjoy the process. And so prior to heading to Mexico where I was obligated to speak at an event that I had signed in to do this thing for, it'd been a year, and really good friends and all the things, and I tore my calf muscle just days before that event, and I had to speak on stage. No way could I conceive of, and literally my leg was not firing properly to me getting on that stage. And people coming up afterwards, they... But I put it into the talk that I had this injury. They would've like... I would've never known, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Because of the way that I had shown up in that moment. And then my father passed away, and then the next thing, and the next thing. And leading right into doing all of these interviews in media that I was about to travel all over for, to do for this new

cookbook, and all of that... Because in my mind I'm like, oh, I'm gonna do this, it's gonna be a lot easier this time 'cause I've been through it before, and so I'm gonna map these things out. No, but life had other plans for me, and I was able to rise to the occasion and level that I didn't even know was in me, but it was obviously in me.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. So [chuckle] that's crazy, man. So you've had a huge year.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, to say that it is not done yet.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: How, how's your calf?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man, I was just, even yesterday I was... I was balling outta control, I was hooping. And it's just the small things. And even it's funny there's a certain star athlete out there that had recently had an Achilles injury. I'm not gonna say any names, but their team just reached out to me yesterday. I was like, "Actually I got some pretty close experience with Achilles and calf stuff." And my prognosis and my recovery was about 30% faster. I was like, "I can definitely help out." So I'm not gonna drop any names.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: You get involved to support that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: A superstar football athlete.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I know who it is.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I'm gonna be watching that team soon this weekend.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But you see how life will qualify you to do certain things, right? Because I'm bringing a certain, a different knowledge base into this scenario for something, again, very high level that my childhood self or even myself five years ago wouldn't have saw a connection there.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: No.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? So, yeah, man, you're talking that real stuff.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude, that's pretty awesome. Plus you're taking something that could have been perceived as a trauma, right? Or something that was at least difficult and you're deciding very much, you're doing amazing things with it. And that's a crucial component of

identity as well as time, is just that... And this is a like a straight up psychological concept and quote is it's more accurate to say that "the present shapes the meaning of the past than that the past shapes the meaning of the present". Another way of saying it is it's the present that defines the past, not the past that defines the present. And so I just like that no matter what happened in the present, you're doing all sorts of good things with even what could have been seen as a crappy situation. Like you're getting so much good stuff out of it. So, yeah, I just think that that's powerful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, man. This is one of the things... So this is something that I came upon previously, but talking with you, it's really fleshed out, which is how our identity is really determining our choices in life and our potential. So the question is truly like, let's dig in and how do we change our identity?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. So a big concept in psychology is called psychological flexibility. Think about that, psychological flexibility. This is cognitive and emotional flexibility. So I've been bringing up the past a lot because often people's identity is rooted in their past. The whole idea of a fixed mindset is, is that who you are or who you were and who you are is who you are, right? And so people with a fixed mindset have a very rooted identity in their past and present. And then what they do is that they push that off onto their future self. And that they imagine that their future self is gonna be the same person in the future. So I'll explain to you how to honestly build massive psychological flexibility, which then allows you to be a lot more flexible with both your past self as well, and your present self and your future self. But just, I gave you a thought experiment earlier. So I'm gonna give you a different thought experiment. And this is for you other people as well. So go back 10 years, literally 10, back to 2013. Are you the same person you were back then as you you are today?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I barely know that guy.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So think about that guy, though. Go back to 2013, we're in September. Think about... Try as close as you can to get to, not that guy's headspace, 'cause you actually can't get back there. But think about where you were and as much as you can, think about what you were thinking about, think about what you're focused on, your habits. Think about your tastes and music, the five people you spent the most time with back then. Think about your expectations for life. So you go back 10 years, obviously, massive difference. One thing that's really important here is that although you're not that same guy, nothing but massive respect for that guy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Love for that guy. But most people, they regularly don't reference their past self. But you can get really good at where you're referencing your past self, even at the beginning of this year. You've achieved things that that version of you thought were impossible. Well, let's go back to one week. Go back to a week ago, but go back to last week or even just go back to sometime mid-August, a month ago. Are you that same person or are there things that you now know that that person didn't know? Are there things you're now aware of and things that are now possible and things that you're now pursuing that that guy a month ago or even a few weeks ago didn't know? So this is really important because this allows you to continuously recognize and reference that you're not your past self. You're actually different. And by recognizing and appreciating that, and even by writing it down, I actually do this on a daily basis. At the end of my day, I say, what do I now know that I didn't know 24 hours ago?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: What's now possible? What have I done that my past self didn't even think was possible? So by doing that, I recognize that I am not my past self. So that's a huge step to developing psychological flexibility, right? But I'm also very happy with my past self. I've got complete empathy and compassion towards my past self. From a positive psychology standpoint, what you want.... for a very effective present, me being chill with you. I'm talking a lot about past and present or past and future, but it's solely so that I have a powerful and effective lens and experience in the present. A lot of people, their present is really messed up because they have a lot of unresolved stuff, or it's really just ineffective framing. It's psychological rigidity towards their past. But also they're either overly tied to their past, they're mad at their past or mad at someone else back there.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So you wanna have a past that you're... You want your past to be an asset, not a liability. It's an asset. Just like your calf experience is a huge asset and it's creating a lot of benefits to you right now. You could have easily had that be a liability where it was defining you versus you defining it. But the reason I bring up this is psychological flexibility goes the other way as well. Just like I know that I'm not my past self even 24 hours ago, and I recognize that. I also know that I'm not my current self. That goes straight back to what Daniel Gilbert said. He said, "the person you are right now is as fleeting as the present moment". But also, again, back to the common approach, and there's a lot of research on this.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Most people, and this is the 2x approach by the way, the linear approach is they take their past and present and then they push that off into the future. They say, well, here's where I'm at, so let's do more of it! Let's crawl faster. That's 2x, whatever that is for you. And so they take the present and they use that to define the future. And most people do that with their identity. Most people, as Daniel Gilbert would say, they under predict who their future self will be and who their future self could be. And so a big aspect of flexibility as well, as well as transforming your identity is, go to imagining your future self.

Who is it that you wanna be? Who is the person you wanna be? And a big part of flexibility and also even mastering this skill of thinking back on the past is that all progress starts by telling the truth.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And I don't need to worry about your opinion of my relationship with my past self, but also I don't need to worry about your opinion about what I most want for my future self. This is between me and me, and it's intrinsic motivation. All progress starts by telling the truth. But as I start to... And there's a lot of research on this, like the idea of, first off, you have to imagine your future self, but also developing an emotional connection to your future self. You go from thinking to feeling to knowing. You think about it, you clarify it, you emotionally connect to it. You start to operate from your future self. Even in this interview, you could do it. You could think about, who is my future self? And just operate from your future self the way you wanna show up.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And it's just honestly living with intention. But the more you can let the future be the filter and the frame for what you do now, especially if it's like a really imagined exciting future, you're totally gonna act differently or non-linearly from your past self. If the future's really different, and I'm using the future as my frame and filter for what I do right now, of course I'm gonna be different than who I was yesterday. But also I'm recognizing and appreciating how different I am from who I was yesterday. So it's just a massive way to develop flexibility. But also you wanna operate from the identity of your future self.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. So there's even practical exercises, like what you do every day...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude!

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is what have I learned over this 24 hour time period?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: How am I different from my past self? How am I different from who I was yesterday?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: You could also say like, what have I experienced? So one super practical way, looking backwards is, and I actually have, I have five questions I stick in the front of every journal I write. First one is, where am I right now? Five bullets, just writing down my current context, you know, writing a book, blah, blah, blah, blah. What are the wins from my last 90 days? Just write down whatever I see as wins. Could be honestly just had a

freaking great day with my son. Whatever I define as a win is up to me. What are my wins for my next 90 days? Who's my future self in 12 months? And who's my future self in 36 months?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: With the last two, I would stick with just three bullets. So who's my future self in 12 months? Only three bullets. There's a really great quote from Jim Collins who wrote "Good to Great". He said, if you have more than three priorities, you have zero. So for me, when I'm thinking about my future self in 12 months, only three priorities, what are the three areas of focus and priority that reflect who that person's gonna be? 36 months, same thing. They might be slightly different priorities 'cause they're such different timeframes, but yeah, I mean, you can... Time is a really powerful tool if you learn how to use it. I know you're a writer, and so the past and the future are also like the draft. They're like a draft of a chapter. How I frame my past will be different tomorrow than how I'm framing it today.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So I don't have to be psychologically rigid or dogmatic about my current view of my past. That's actually a huge component of psychological flexibility, is the ability to change your mind, which is a big part of reframing. So it's like, I don't have to say that that's exactly what happened. That's the story. My dad was a drug addict, he was a bad guy. It's like, maybe there's a different story. Maybe there's a different angle that I'm not aware of. Maybe I'm not quite as right as I need to be. Instead I can be more curious. And so that's just a big part of it, is willingness to change your mind, willingness to see new angles, willingness to reframe and let go of the emotional attachment to that story.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. And I the first step into that I think is just even giving yourself a little bit of permission to do that. Why do we become so attached to those stories and create that rigidity where we can't reframe it or see it differently?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I mean, life can throw you curve balls. [laughter] You know what I mean? Like, it doesn't even have to be a... Well, two reasons. One, life can throw you curve balls. You can get hurt. Something can happen. Like I said, my dad was a drug addict when I was a high school student. That was a curve ball. And so when something happens to you, you can easily let that be defining, you can let that... You really don't want the past to dictate the present. You want the present to dictate the past. But that takes responsibility. That takes agency, that takes choice, that takes making a decision that I'm gonna actually approach this rather than avoid it. Like in psychology, motivation is often broken up into approach and avoid.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Either you're avoiding something you don't want to deal with or you're avoiding something you don't wanna happen or you're approaching it. And when it comes to not wanting to deal with some of that stuff, we often just avoid it. We push it under the rug and then we don't realize it's driving us and we're still saying, yeah, my present is this way

because the past made it this way. Rather than saying, no, I'm the one who defines what it means. So that's one of the reasons is just that life happens and we are emotionally avoiding dealing with it. The second one though, is honestly more common, on the day-to-day. And it's just that we don't think about it. So like, as an example, there's a lot of research on the whole idea of gratitude at the end of the day.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: The reason rather than inputting, like rather than scrolling and just doing what we all do, which is just surfing the web before we go to bed, the reason for gratitude at the end of the day is because if you just sit down and think about it and say, what are three things that I'm grateful for today? You find what you're filtering for. And so if I'm filtering for it and if I'm thinking about it, usually most people don't think that time to even just think about it. They just go to bed or surf. They don't... But if you look at it and you think about it, you will find what you're looking for. It's like, oh, there actually was way more than three things I could be grateful for. So that's that second piece is, is that people don't actually look for a new angle. They don't look for the ways that they're different from who they were a week ago. They don't look for the wins that have happened. They're so focused on what other people think are on their own future self, that they're not looking back and saying, actually, "holy cow, a lot happened just today, or a lot happened this week that I wouldn't even thought about or that I was downplaying". So they honestly aren't even just taking the time or framing it in a way that they can see it and learn from it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so powerful. You're changing your filter. We do that...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude, everything is a filter.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We do that for our house and our air conditioning unit, [laughter] and it gets nasty. If you're not changing your filter...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: If you're not changing the filter, dusty.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It is definitely...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Moldy, dusty.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And of course you're not getting the coolest air and all the things, like it's going to reduce...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Good point, good point. Think about water filter.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's gonna reduce your outcomes. Same thing. Water filter, your car. We gotta change those filters, guys.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude, the filter is the frame. And your identity is your frame and your filter. That's how you're seeing the world. Thus, of course, how could it not shape your behavior? Everything's coming through the filter. And so the filter is your identity and it's how you frame it. It's how you filter. And so that's what's pushing out your behavior.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back. Neuroplasticity: The ability of the human brain to grow, and adapt, and evolve, and really to unlock our superhuman capacity is driven by our experiences, our practices, our activities, but also our nutrition. Fascinating new research published in the journal Neuron found that magnesium, this key electrolyte is able to restore critical brain plasticity and improve overall cognitive function. Again, neuroplasticity is the ability of our brain to change and adapt. Now, this is one key electrolyte, but it works in tandem with other electrolytes like sodium. Sodium is critical for maintaining proper hydration of the human brain. If you didn't know this, the human brain is primarily made of water. We're talking somewhere in the ballpark of 75, upwards of 80% water. It's so important because just a small decrease in our body's optimal hydration level, what's noted in the data, just a 2% decrease in our baseline hydration level can lead to dramatic cognitive decline. Helping to sustain and maintain proper hydration levels in the brain, sodium is critical in that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And also researchers at McGill University found that sodium functions as a "off on switch" for specific neurotransmitters that support our cognitive function and protect our brains from numerous degenerative diseases. Right now, the number one electrolyte company in the world is delivering a gift for new and returning customers with each purchase of LMNT, that's L-M-N-T, the number one electrolyte in the market. No binders, no fillers, no artificial ingredients, no crazy sugar and sweeteners. My friend's son was just over at our house and my son, my oldest son Jordan was training them, taking his teammates through some workouts. And we opened the freezer and there's a bottle of Gatorade, there's a bottle of Gatorade in our freezer. And my wife's like, "Whose is this?" 'Cause we know we don't roll like that. We don't mess with the gators, all right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: We don't mess with the Gatorades. And we knew who it was, it was one of his friends. And he came in, he's like, "Well, at least this is the no sugar kind." And then I go through some of the ingredients with him and I find those curve balls of like, here's where they're sneaking in these artificial ingredients and things that the human body has no association with, but he's taken a step in the right direction by being in our environment. So, you know what I did. I put the LMNT in his hand. All right, make sure that he's got the good stuff, the very best stuff. And also this is backed by peer-reviewed data and a huge body of

evidence. And we're talking about the folks at LMNT, that's L-M-N-T. Go to drinklmnt.com/model and you're going to get a special gift pack with every purchase, whether you're a new or previous customer for LMNT. So again, this is a brand new opportunity, free gift pack with every purchase over at LMNT. Go to drinklmnt.com/model. And now, back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: One of the things I'm inquiring about, because I know it's a complex thing to identify because we're all very different but also similar in many ways. Why do we get so attached to those filters and seeing things the way that we are currently seeing them? And I know that there's a modicum of like we crave certainty, safety, all those things. Even though certain things can be hurting us, we still kind of get attached to them. Why do we do that?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I mean, I think you said it. Even addiction, addiction is something that over time becomes something that is secure, it's stable, it's predictable. And our brain is that prediction machine. And so it's easier to just kind of operate in the known, even if it's a known that you know is not useful, not effective. Whereas if you're gonna go back and reframe things, change the story, and by change the story, I don't mean like you're creating a fiction, but in a lot of ways, it was a fiction from the beginning. Again, it's a frame. So yeah, I think a lot of times it's just, it's easier for people to feel like they know the answer. I like the quote from Brené Brown, she said, rather than trying to be right, it's like, try to get it right, and you're always learning. And so I just think it's a lot more... It takes time to kind of build that initial muscle, but eventually you just realize it's a lot more freeing to have the space to continually think and rethink and see things from new angles, get new value out of old experiences. But I think, kind of like anything, doing it the first time is hard, like jumping into that...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Into a book is hard, but once you get into it, you start getting flow. You start rolling. And so, I think it's just that people.... They're not used to the idea that actually that's just an angle. Like that's just a story. That's not actually what the past has to mean. The time in psychology doesn't have to go this way. It doesn't have to be linear. Actually, you can go back and time actually in psychology should be going backwards. The future should be transforming the present and the present should be transforming the past. But we just don't have these filters. We don't have these angles. And so, I think it's common. It's very common to view time linearly in psychology, where it's just like, of course my past is determining my present. Of course, who I am is because of what happened. And rather than realizing, no, actually it's in the present right now that you have complete power over your past.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is the most back to the future conversation I've ever had.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude, welcome to "Back to the Future", man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're Michael J. Fox.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Marty McFly, bro. [laughter]

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go. Let's go. All right. So, one of the very simple things that we all can do is pay attention to that gap or that transformation. Because when you gave me the example, like beginning of the year to now, it opened up a valve. But you're doing this daily of like looking back, like what do I know now that I didn't know necessarily, you know, 24 hours ago?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. I mean, I find it's really beautiful on the weekly basis, too. Like weekly basis, you'll be shocked at how much you did. So anyways.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's literally, it's opening the valve to be able to see things differently. We're talking about, again, 10x'ing our identity. And one of the things that I don't know how we stumbled into it, but every year when we're working on our goals for the year, my wife and I, the first thing we do is go back and look at the past year and all the things that we accomplished.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: That's the most excellent starting point. It makes sense.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's opening that valve of like, we can do things, miraculous things, totally remarkable things that we didn't even know that we can do. Let's open up that level of thinking as we go into these new goals.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Couldn't agree more. I mean, that's a... Capability and confidence are in the past. By all the things you've accomplished, that builds a lot of confidence because look at what you did, but at the same time, commitment and courage are in the future. And so just because of what you've done in the past, ultimately you want to commit to things you've never done before. You want to commit to things you don't know if you can do or if you could do, but by reflecting back on what you have done, it does build massive confidence.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Confidence is key. All right. I feel like DJ Khaled when I said that. Confidence is key. Why does confidence play a role in this? Because again, I think a lot of the reasons why we don't do certain things is we feel like we can't do them or we lack the confidence to say, "I can 10x this thing." Because even again, reading, when I saw the cover of the book, I'm like, "I don't know about this." And then as soon as you start to lay it out on how

it works, it became obvious that this was the way to go. But initially I didn't feel the confidence that this was possible.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. I mean, confidence.... confidence comes obviously over time, you know, but it comes by looking back. I mean, confidence comes from looking back on what you've done and then it's the willingness to try stuff that might not work. It's the willingness to try something and figure it out even if you don't know if you can. So, I mean, a confident person is going to commit and try things that they don't know how to do it. They don't know if they could do it. So, I mean, yeah, confidence is a big component, for sure. But real quick, with identity, too. And I've talked to some psychologists on this. Someone who's confident is way less likely to be stuck on their past identity. They're more likely to try and... And confidence is a muscle you can grow. I mean, very much, even just by recognizing you're not your past self, by actually seeing the things you've done, that builds confidence.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so, if you're not building that confidence muscle, if you're not appreciating the differences in your past self, then you are more likely to have psychological rigidity. Someone with confidence is going to try new things. Even in psychology, they say that your personality is likely to solidify by age 30. That's not actually true. I don't actually believe that. But the reason is because usually in your 30s, you stop trying new things. You stop having first time experiences. You stop trying things that might completely flop. And so, that's part of confidence. That's part of being... You know, trying the new thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, could this be why we under-predict? Is it due to confidence?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I mean, I think that's a huge part of it. Yeah. I mean, you got that default future. That's what they say is we all have a default future and it's based on our framing. It's based on our language. And so, people have that future that's most predictable. It's the one that they most expect and they're not taking the Albert Einstein secret and imagining the new future and committing and trying the new future because they lack the confidence to try.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Now, you mentioned this and I do not want to pass this up. And essentially, of course, you referenced this earlier. When you have more than three objectives, you have none. Can you talk a little bit more about that? Because this really gets into why 10x is easier than 2x is because we're getting more focused on specific things versus this broad range of things. So, why is it that if we have more than three, we have none?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. I mean, 2x is complex. 10x is easy. 10x is simple. That may sound weird. And so, let me give an example. So, an example I share with my son and this one makes it a little easier for people to understand, and then I'll get to the three. But my son is a tennis

player. We live in Orlando, Florida, and his goal is to play college tennis. And his coach basically asked him, "What's your goal?" And he said, "I want to play in college." And the coach said, "Well, why not pro?" So to me, that's like a 10x. That's like from crawling to walking. And Caleb, it was never even on his frame. You know what I mean? Like a lot of the things you've done this year were not on your past self's frame. That just wasn't even on his frame. But I basically asked Caleb, I said, "Caleb, do you think you can actually go to college? Do you think that you're even on a path to that goal?" And he's like, "Honestly, I don't know." He's like, "Maybe. I think so. Maybe."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I said, "What about pro? Do you think that you're on a path to pro? Do you think you could be on a path to pro?" He said, "I'm not on a path to pro right now." He knew it. But here's where it gets into complex versus simple, and like one thing versus 50 things, is is that if he wanted to go college, in Orlando, there are literally hundreds of different paths that he could do to get there. Tons of coaches, tons of academies, tons of programs. There is hundreds of potential pathways, teachers, mentors, even high school that could get him to college. But to go to pro, there's almost none. Seriously, there's maybe like two coaches that could even potentially get him there.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so when you make it that big, almost nothing will work. It's like if you want to grow your business by 10%, there's like 1000 different ways you could do it. That's pretty complex. That creates a lot of decision fatigue. But if you want to go 10x, almost nothing you're going to do right now is working. Nothing right now is working. And so that's part of why having really big goals is a simplifier, 'cause you can't 10x 50 things. You know what I mean? You can only really 10x like one or two. So it forces you to focus on quality, not quantity. It forced... And even Steve Jobs did this. When Steve Jobs was kicked out of Apple, when he came back, they were doing like 50 different products and all of them were failing. He asked them, he's like, "Which one of these products should I suggest to my friends?" And they couldn't give him a straight answer. So he cut literally 70% of the products and they focused on three, literally three.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And it goes straight back to the 80-20 rule. Like just a few things you're doing are creating all the upside. A few things, whereas almost everything else is distraction. Everything else is a waste of time. And so you want to strip that out. That's your security blanket. Those are your... Those are just the things you're doing to distract yourself from going deep on the few things. And so it's really just about actually deciding, what am I serious about? It's kind of like success is 20 steps in one direction, not one step in 20. But most people would rather just stay busy rather than just like, I'm going to do this and I'm going to do it really well and I'm committed. I'm going to move forward on this. So it's really about quality, not quantity.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So in the context with your son, for example, when it's almost impossible, what are those things to focus on for quality versus quantity and trying all these different things?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So the goal shapes the process, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so the impossible goal in his case and one of the ways, there's like a technical term for it. They call it fitness function. Fitness function is like whatever the standard is that you're optimizing for. So like, you know, an author, like just using an author as an example or an athlete. One athlete might be like, their fitness function might be strength. Whereas another one it's speed. And so the speed goal and it would probably get really granular, very specific, would shape a very different process or path than a specific strength goal.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so you don't want to get that guy's advice if this is your goal. And so the bigger goal is going to shape a very different process, and it's going to force him to get really good at things that he wouldn't even have to be aware of, but it clarifies the idea of that 20%. So it clarifies the few things you've got to get really good at, that you have to really master in order... You don't have as much margin for error. So you don't have as much time to waste on the stuff that has no upside. So this is like, this fits with the framework that Dr. Bernard talks about actually. He's the guy who talked about impossible goals. He talks about how there's four ways that people waste time.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: The first one is that they continue to do the wrong things. The wrong things being anything that doesn't have huge upside towards the goal. There's still 80% of stuff that's making no impact. The second one is that they're not doing the right things. So they're not doing the few things that actually are the quality that they need to get really good at. And then the third one is that they're doing the right things, but in the wrong way. They're multitasking. They're still like, it's just one of the many things that they're doing rather than doing deep work, rather than getting really good at it, rather than developing a unique quality. They're scraping the surface. They're not getting that great at it. And they're just too split focused. The fourth thing is that they're not learning from their experience.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so they continue to repeat errors one, two and three over and over and over, week after week after week. They're not actually letting go of those things that don't have the big upside. And so with my son, obviously his 20%, his few things that have the big upside are going to be different, than mine, but it's always the goal that shapes the filter. And if it's a higher goal, it's like a much tighter filter. Like 10x goals filter out almost

everything. Almost nothing you're doing right now works and so you got to stop doing it. That's all your past self.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow. I love this. The big takeaway, one of the big takeaways is to change your filter because...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: You want the filter to be an impossible goal because then almost everything you're doing, you can stop, because almost everything you're doing won't get to that filter. And it forces you to find the few things with a huge upside.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This reminds me in the context of athletics and what we marvel at as far as performance, legendary performance, like Tom Brady, for example, we had his mentor sitting right there. And this was just a couple of weeks ago, Greg Harden, and Tom was a third, fourth string quarterback at Michigan, ready to quit football. He was about to quit. All right. And one of the things that he helped him with, as well as Desmond Howard, who, you know, Heisman Trophy winner, Super Bowl, all the things. And when he talked with Tom, but in particular, let me tell you about when he talked with Desmond, who was same story, looking to go to another school. He wasn't getting the attention that he wanted.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Greg, now talking to you, I know what it was at its core.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Let's hear it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: He got him to change his filter. He told him to stop training for football, stop training like a football athlete and doing what your teammates are doing. I need you to train like an Olympic athlete. This is your full-time job.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Much higher standard.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Much higher standard.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: The standard and filter are pretty similar, by the way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so by him changing that standard, and switching the way that he was perceiving himself, in the context of football now, he's not just a football player. He's the greatest athlete, overall, out there on the field.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Different identity.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Different identity. And so now, but also his performance is so elevated because he's literally running circles around people. He has a different level of endurance, a different level of speed, a different level of accuracy in his mindset. And so seeing this play out as you're sharing it, it's just like, oh, it's even making more sense. And by the way, Greg is such a cool guy. He was about to go on Good Morning America for his book release. It was the day that his book came out. And Greg is just this legendary character. And he called me. And I usually have my ringer off in the morning, but I just finished meditating. I look over at my phone and I see Greg Harden calling. And I'm just like, "What the?"

SHAWN STEVENSON: So I pick it up and I'm like, "Hello?" He's like, "Sean, I'm about to go on Good Morning America, but I've got a special person right here with you and I want you to meet him." He put him on the phone, it was Desmond Howard. And I told him as when he was sitting here, I was like, "Me being a football player, returning kicks and punts, I was fast, but I didn't really understand. I was watching Desmond Howard games to..." And I really start to model how I was playing after him.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: He was good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: He logged that in his mind and he made that special moment for me, you know? And it's just like, again, changing my filter, even in my relationships and how to show up and me creating those special moments for other people.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. I mean, one of the things that... By the way, freaking cool story.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Crazy, right?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So awesome.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: One of the things I said at the beginning with filter is minimum standard, floor. Floor and filter are very similar. And so when you raise the floor, when you raise the... You know, you tighten the filter, then when you raise the floor, now you're not... And this is true in business. It's true in life. It's true in everything. This is an example yesterday, and this is more of an entrepreneurial example, but I was doing a training with a company that is an investment firm and we were talking about their impossible goal and talking about their... If they actually did that, what the floor would have to be, like on their team immediately when they said, "Oh, if that's our goal," they literally said, "We already can identify like 20 people on our team that like, we'd have to be honest, they're not a good fit. These are like low performer..."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: But also on what they said yes to and like... And so I think it's really powerful to just think about what is your floor in the key areas of your life, because that represents your filter, that represent... And so I just think raising the floor is how you how you transform yourself at the subconscious level. And you can know if you're making massive progress by really raising the floor, but also one thing you can do and this just fits again with looking back is how has your floor changed? My guess is if you really look at it. Look at where you're at right now in some of the key areas that matter to you and look at where your floor is that you've now normalized versus where you were at before.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It could be the quality of your interviews or it could be your health or it could be certain things that you're focusing on, like the floor that you've normalized now is way beyond probably the ceiling that you used to be shooting for, and so it's just, it's a powerful thing, but I'll give another example. As a speaker or something like that, I might raise the floor on my price, for example, for speaking, and the the hard part is, is that when you're getting opportunities that are at the old floor, the old lot, and over time you start weeding out better and better things. It's very similar to like the book "Good to Great" and back to Collins. He's the one who said "if you have more than three, you have zero". But you have to eventually let go of being good. You can stay good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: No, like really, this is a big part of quality versus quantity. If you want to go 10x, like 2x you can be good. You're competing with other people, whereas 10x if the filter is this high, you can't be just good to go 10x. You have to really go deep, not shallow. And one of the best books I read while I was researching that book is called "Catching the Big Fish" and he just talks about how if you're... He mentions your consciousness and your creativity but he says if you're up at the surface, meaning you're doing 100 different things, your consciousness is up at the surface and all you can see is small fish. It's like an ocean. The only way to catch big fish, and I'm talking like big fish meaning big ideas, big opportunities, ideas that you think are impossible, is you have to go really deep, which means you have to let go of all that 80%. You have to let it filter out.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: You can't even... It can't even be on your mind anymore, whether you delete it or delegate it. Your attention which is the most finite resource has to go so deep. But when you do, you can be great. You can... That's what's cool, is your future self can be 10 times better, more skilled, more knowledgeable than you are right now, but you have to let go of the good, even the good. The filter has to become that tight or like even the good stuff. No, going great.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That hit me different, man. That's powerful. You know, use that example of being a speaker and your speaking fee and you're having this revelation and where your identity and your future self...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It can be scary to say no, by the way to the old stuff. That's security.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly. That's exactly what I was going to point to which is now I'm 10x'ing this and now maybe even more offers start coming in at my old thing.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: 100%.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It can be seductive. It's just like oh, man.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Remember, that's security. But when you say no to those things, when you actually... Because you have to un-commit to the old standard.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yup.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Which is the old frame, the old filter, the old identity. You got to start saying no to those things. and like from an economic standpoint, say that just in general terms, say your fee is 10 grand, to speak. You raise it to 20 and all of a sudden over the next three months, you get tons of opportunities to speak and all of them say, "No, the fee is 10 grand." I'm just throwing this out very arbitrarily, and you say no to all of them. You just missed, call it 10 speeches, you just missed 100 grand. Saying no to all of those for your identity was worth way more than that.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Seriously. And then maybe you get one at the new fee. That one just changed your confidence because you just watched yourself do something that... Getting that one 20 grand is worth a thousand 10 because now you just watch yourself do something that psychologically was at a new level. But also by saying no over and over and over to the old standard, now you're not desperate, and you're watching yourself say no. And so that is just profound for your identity to say no to the old standard even when it's something great and something you're like, "Man, I really want to do it." It's like when you say no to that, boom you've just sent a new signal to yourself and to the outside world.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It's big.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What you're saying is so... This is so true. And again, this crazy thing is because of our operating from our past and getting comfortable in doing what we've been doing, we don't often acknowledge the potential that we have. And for me even in this example with the speaking, I was speaking at an event with the greatest speaker in the world, Eric Thomas, and he was speaking on stage, this was after I did my talk, and he said, as he was doing his talk, he started talking about me. He was like, "See Shawn can charge blank...."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Boom.

SHAWN STEVENSON:Because da, da, da." And when he said I'm like, "That's way... What? That's way more than I would charge."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Like oh, don't tell the event coordinator. They're paying me one fifth of that. [laughter]

SHAWN STEVENSON: Listen, listen. And then when he said that number, that was the next...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: That became the new standard.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That was the next number...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: That's the new floor.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That I was able to receive. But also, again, for me, it wasn't about value.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: No.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It wasn't about the value because the value that I'm delivering was already at that level. It's just my...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Psychology.

SHAWN STEVENSON: My mind about what I deserve was they were out of alignment.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so when you're saying this stuff, like I've literally experienced, it is so true. And so it's getting ourselves to really understand and embrace that 10x is easier than 2x.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It's 'cause it forces you to do less, but better and deeper. I mean, it forces you to filter harder. It forces you to say no to a lot of things you're still saying yes to. Because again, with 10x, almost nothing will get you there. Only a few things extremely well, not a lot of things mediocre, or you can do a lot of things mediocre to go up to 2x. And it's letting the future dictate. Plus, when you go for 10x, every time you do it over and over again, you'll become more of a leader. Like I see it as three things. I see 10x as identity, time and leadership. It's 10x'ing your identity, which is operating from your future self. It's 10x'ing the quality of your attention, which is going deep on a few things. And it's 10x'ing your leadership. It's getting more and more people involved. Every time you keep making these leaps, you can't do it all. You know, because you're going deep on fewer things, you need to be a leader. You need more people who are helping support you rather than doing it all by yourself. So yeah, I mean, it changes your life. One thing I'll say, do you care if I just share a quick story?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Please do. Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I'll share a quick story on this. 'cause I think it's helpful and maybe I'll even ask you a question to hopefully get your mind rattling. So a guy read this book back in March. He got an early copy, you would know, a galley copy. And, he's a guy named Greg. He's 56 years old, lives in Columbus, Ohio. And the main thing is, is that for five years back, in 2018, he started a real estate company. And basically he bought... He built a huge commercial building and he created care facility for people with dementia. And then, so he... Basically the company was, he wanted to build multiple of these, tons of... Well, not tons, but he wanted to build multiple buildings, care facilities for people with dementia. So he built his first one after a year, started in 2018.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And then COVID happened. And, so he couldn't build 'cause supply chain and all that stuff. So you fast forward to 2023 and he's still in the same spot. He's got the one building and he's ultimately like, "I don't know if I... How long I can do this." And so he makes his 10-year plan. Basically, I'm gonna have, I'm gonna get three buildings by the time I'm 65. So in 10 years, I'm gonna have three buildings and I'm just gonna sell them. And so then he reads this book and basically he's like, "What am I doing? Why am I going for three buildings in 10 years? I'm gonna shift it. I'm gonna go for 10 buildings in three, 10 buildings in three." And there's a concept in psychology called pathways thinking.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Pathways thinking is a big part of hope that like, when the why is strong enough, you'll find the how, and often you'll find the who. You'll find the how through the who. But basically the thing is, is that he changed his goal to rather than having three buildings in 10 years, I'm gonna have 10 buildings in three. And that forced him to find new pathways, that forced him to do things that again, were outside the reference frame of his

past. He had to find new ways, and often that comes through a person. So he called his friend and he ultimately found that there were two perfect buildings sitting right there, available and ready. And his friend would've bought them who's in real estate, but his friend didn't have the funding. And the seller had this insane demand that they had to be sold in 45 days or else, basically it was a no deal.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And there's a concept in psychology that it's actually demand that creates the supply. So it's like, think about it. It's like when the why is strong enough, you'll find the how. So like, when the demand is high enough, you will find the supply. You'll create the supply because you start filtering for it. So anyways, in really short, like to super make this long story short, he didn't have the funding. He found the funding, he got the funding, and he ended up going from 100 employees to 300 in those 45 days. And he ended up getting them. So 45 days after he read that book, he had three buildings, fully staffed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Unbelievable.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: That was his goal though, for 10 years out. But then I met him. So this is where it gets interesting, and this is where I wanna push it on you and on your audience. So basically before... At the beginning of 2023, his 10-year goal was, I'm gonna have three properties. Now all of a sudden he has three properties fully staffed, and he grew so much into it. And then that's when I met him and he told me the story. He's like, "Ben, you won't believe this. Now my goal is to have 10 buildings in three, and I already have three buildings. I got two." And and I said, "Well, Greg," I said, "That's freaking awesome." I said, "What's your impossible goal before the end of the year?" I met him just a month ago. I said, "What's your impossible goal before the end of 2023?" He said, "What are you talking about?" He's like, "My goal is to have 10 buildings in three years." I said, "That's awesome, but what's your impossible goal before the end of this year?"

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I said, "What is the thing that's gonna get you out of your current frame? And help you find those new things with huge upside?" So he sat on it and he called me a week later and he had thought about it, and he wrote them down and he laminated it. And he said, "I don't..." He wrote the goal and he said, "I have no idea how I'm gonna do this." It scared him to even write it, to tell his wife. He said, "I'm gonna get three more buildings this year." And, anyways, literally the next day his like co-founder or whatnot said, "Hey, Greg, just throwing this out to you. What would you pay for these three buildings?" And Greg is like, "What are you talking about?" He hadn't even told his friend, his partner, that he wanted to get three more buildings.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: His friend said, "I was just called and I was told that these three buildings are available and what offer would you make on them?" So anyways, he made an offer on those. And then also another crazy... Remember, you get what you filter for, but also supply creates.... demand creates supply. And so he ended up putting offer and finding these most ridiculous deals, which he would've never been filtering for had he not been going for the impossible. And so now he's gonna end this year with seven buildings, 700 employees. At the beginning of this year, talk about achieving things his past self would've thought were impossible. At the beginning of this year, he was on a 10-year trajectory to have three buildings. Now he's gonna finish this year with seven and all sorts of new leadership skills, new capabilities.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so the reason I share all this is I want you to think about before... I'm telling you, this is something you can totally apply. And this is why I think 10x is easier than 2x in so many ways is first off, you're operating from the filter of your future. And you can do it on short term timeframes. Also, you don't need to be attached. Like, I'm not attached to these outcomes. Expect everything attached to nothing, no matter what happens. Remember in the present, I get to filter what the past means. I get to learn from it. My past is mine. You get no access to it, dude. I get to decide what I do with my past. I get to decide and frame what it means. And so I'm not gonna be upset at myself if I don't hit it. But immediately, if you're going for something that you believe to be impossible, it just accelerates everything. It immediately forces you to find the few things that will really matter. So anyways, to you, you don't have to say it, but I want you to think about it. You know, think about it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I already am. Yeah.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: What would be something freaking impossible? Literally. Like something that you believe right now, your future self will say, "Ah, I got that." But I want you to think about it. I'm inviting your audience as they're just listening to this and rattling through their minds. If you're not going for something impossible, then that means you're operating from the assumptions of your past.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Wow, that's so powerful, man. As you were sharing that, and I was going into that, that thing for me, I first went to something that was... It already changed everything. And it started to change my thinking. It was bigger than what I was targeting, but I still felt like, oh, I could figure that out. Then...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Remember you were maybe trying to crawl faster.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Then I 10xed it. Then it was near the end of when you were speaking, and that's when it got like, "I don't know how to do that."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Good. That's where you wanna be.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's where we wanna be.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: 'Cause now your mind can start exploring the, it's impossible unless. It's impossible unless. Now you can start exploring things that are not based on the assumptions of your past. And this is one of the things that Elon Musk talks about is he's... And he talked about someone who'd constantly go for the impossible, but he has his algorithm that he always has. And the first step of the algorithm is to question your assumptions. He even says, if you have... If you're going for things that are impossible, then conventional thinking won't work. And so first one is question your assumptions. That's why going for the impossible is powerful because it forces you to question the assumptions of your past. That's what happened to Greg. So one of the reasons why his goal was 10 years to get those three buildings is because he assumed he had to be the one to build them because he had all sorts of dogmatic beliefs that he believed he was the only person who knew how to make these kind of environments for these people with dementia.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And all those assumptions got... They were straw, man. You know what I mean? People knocked 'em down. They're like, "No, you can buy buildings from other people." So we all have assumptions that we've created which are...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Change The filter.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Are limiting our beliefs. They're limiting what we think is possible. And so when you have a goal that's impossible, it forces you to figure out new assumptions. It forces you to find new solutions. It forces you to ask new questions, and so it's a much bigger filter, a much better filter for the present.

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Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So it's often through a person. So how does...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Usually it is, especially when you're going for the impossible.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So how does that play into all this? Like relationships, the people that we're connected to and also changing our filter as well and how we're perceiving people that we might know and also being open to seeing... Inviting in new people.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. So the first book Dan Sullivan and I wrote was called "Who Not How", "Who Not How", right? And so there's another different book, which I recently read which is called "The 80/20 Individual". It's by a guy named Richard Koch, freaking brilliant guy. But he talks about how in any situation, like he talks about Bill Gates as an example. Bill Gates, Microsoft. Microsoft has 130,000 employees. But Bill Gates said if you took away our top 20 people, just 20 out of 130,000, if you took away our top 20 people, this company would become irrelevant. And so in any situation, you even look at... Well, yeah, in any situation there's a few people that can have the biggest upside. And so when you start going for the impossible, you don't know how to do it, but you're gonna need help from other people.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: There's just other people who probably do know how to do it or who can at least help you get there. And so it forces you to stop asking how and start asking who, who can help me get there? Who knows how to do this? And so then you start, and they're the ones... I mean, when you start going for who instead of how, the results just... I mean, of course the impossible becomes possible because they're not dealing with your same

constraints or your same beliefs, and they also have capabilities and skills you don't have.? So it's like, if you wanna go for the impossible, one of the things you would ask is like, it's impossible unless, but you could also ask, like if I was partnered with someone or if I was working with someone or if I could get help from someone who could make it possible, there's certain people who could make... Of course they can make it more possible. Then you start reaching out to those people. So, it's very much along the lines of what you said, like with the Tom Brady one, because of his who, he started training as an Olympian. If he didn't have that who, he wouldn't have had that filter. And so the who, other people have different filters.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. So why don't we do that? Why don't we just, for most of us, think about those people?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It's the same thing we do with trying to crawl faster. It's the common approach to operate from the past and present and push that into the future. That's 2x. So that's just the common way to do it. That's just how we're trained to do it. We're trained to just take our situation and go for a little bit more. No transformation. The same thing is, is that we're trained to just do it ourselves. Ask, how do I accomplish this? Rather than asking, who can do this or who can help me? Who is so much faster than how. And so we just don't, honestly, we're just not trying to do it. The initial response when you're trying to accomplish something is, how do I do this? And then we put all the pressure on ourselves and then we feel like we've gotta solve it.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It's like, no, get someone else to solve it or have someone else help you solve it or let... And so we're just not trained on it. It's just like, we're not trained to reframe the past. We're not trained to recognize... And so they're just, they're skills that are very... Like things you can get good at. You just have to practice, like crawling and falling a hundred times before you walk. You just gotta practice. You gotta practice getting a who, finding a who so that you can go deep on your own few things. Or partnering, like actually becoming a leader, having teamwork. Just something you gotta practice. And the more and more you start going for the impossible or the more and more you start going for things that are just, even just 10x, the more you'll have to have whos, the more you'll have to work with other people because it's just too big without. So I just, it's something that you gotta do.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I mean, if you wanna go for the big, you'll have to get better and better at finding amazing people. I'll give one last example on this book, 10x. I reached a place to talk about filters where it reached the level of my last book in terms of quality. And I knew it could be way better. My last book was a solo book, but this was my third book with Dan Sullivan. And it was with the same publisher. And I got the book to a certain level and the publisher was stoked. Dan was stoked. They're all like, "This is... It's done, Ben." And I was just

like, I looked at it and I'm like, I was frustrated 'cause I knew that I... I knew inside me that my own standard was way higher. I was operating from my future self, not my past self.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I'm like, "No, this book is not as good as I want it to be." But I also knew that my current team couldn't get me there. I didn't have the editor. I didn't have, I didn't have... And so I'm like, all right, everyone around me thinks this book is like an eight or a nine, maybe a 10, but I'm like, I want to go work with someone who can get me to the level I wanted to. And so it's kind of like my son going for pro. If he's going for pro, he's gonna have to find a much different coach than if he's going for college. And there's only a few coaches in Orlando that can get him pro, whereas there's a thousand coaches that could get him to college. So that was kind of my idea, was like, if I wanna get this book to this level, I know that there's only a few people that can get me there. And so that became my filter. And so ultimately, I did find this amazing editor, and when she looked at the book from her filter, she said, "This book's a five."

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: From the filter of everyone around me, it was a 10. And so she's like... And so that's what I was looking for. I'm like, "This is what I want." And so I needed a who with a different frame of reference, a different filter, a different ability to help me. And so yeah, I mean that's just... You'll need more and more whos and better whos, those 80/20 who's along the way if you wanna keep doing this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Incredible. Let's put this 10x concept in the context of health.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Let's Do it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And our fitness. So how can we apply this if we are wanting to, we'll just say, you know what, the biggest goal for most people in our society today is to lose weight. All right, let's put this in that context. How would this apply there?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah, I mean.... one is identity of your past self versus present self versus future self. So take your future self. Most people, especially with health, and I think a challenge with health is, is even that goal, I wanna be healthy is such a non-clear filter. It's not tight enough for me to actually... Part of the reason why you wanna get connected to your future self is, is that it gives you clarity on what to say yes and no to. And there's a lot of research on this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And even as I said, lose weight, it was very... It didn't feel right. Because I know that it is so vague still.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Oh, yeah. And it's also an avoid orientation rather than an approach. You're talking about what you don't want, which is fine. So testing it and everyone's got their own priorities, but take your future self, use that as the filter for what you say yes and no to, and then play with imagination. Like what would be the 10x version? It can be focused on quality. It doesn't have to be quantity. What's the 10x quality version of your future self when it comes to your health. It could be sleep. You might have a lot tighter filters for your sleep or for your health. And so I would just say like, really define it about where you want your future self to be specifically. And then you want a really tight filter for what you say yes and no to.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So I'll give an example for myself. I have a health coach, first time I've ever actually hired one, never done that before. And he helped me do all sorts of blood work. You know what I mean? Like all sorts of stuff that probably the average man doesn't really do. You know, I know that... And if you're in the health world, and if you're listening to this podcast, you probably do a lot of things that I don't do. But you wanna work with people who have a higher bar for you. And so, like in my case, I'm now filtering for a lot of things. I'm even like literally taking pictures of everything I eat. And so I'm filtering more, I'm becoming a lot more aware. And so, yeah, I just think... And you might be able to help me with this actually, because health is something that I think is hard for me to define like a really like 10x future self.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Maybe you could help me with that, I don't know. But like, it might be honestly like just that your performance is better or that your sleep is better, that your energy is better and you wanna obviously quantify it. Maybe it's the ability to run a marathon or do it in a certain speed. Like give yourself an impossible fitness goal. Or it's that you're sleeping like deep eight hours. I think you should make it quantifiable. I don't know. What's your take? I'm trying to... 'Cause health is your world. I'm trying to like, how would you apply an impossible goal to health?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, this is such a great question. Actually, this is something, I'm not gonna say that I 10xed it, but I definitely thought differently and bigger than I ever had as a result of that injury, right? And so I had all these stories about why I wasn't doing certain things. I needed to do this first or that first. A lot of us do this in the context of fitness and health. We try to put things in place so we can do a thing, instead...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Commit first and then figure out what's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly. And I flipped a switch in my mind, and instead of making it so hyper-complex, I just started doing sprints multiple times a week, which is something that... I would do sprints once a week back in Missouri, when I was one of the fittest levels I've ever been, but even pulling away and not doing that since I moved and all the things. And of

course, I lift heavy and I walk and all this stuff, but I wasn't doing something... And actually, probably of all the different types of exercise, I wasn't doing the thing I enjoy the most. So even yesterday when it was kind of a "off day", I just went outside, did some sprint drills and did a bunch of sprints.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So I'm not letting a day go by without doing something that is beneficial to not just with the calf, making sure that... Which is crazy, I'm stronger and faster now...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Than you were before.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Than I was before in just a matter of months, by the way, and it's up-leveled my fitness overall, but with that, I had to couple with, what am I doing for my recovery? What am I doing for... I wrote a book on sleep, but what are some of the things that I can do? Because within that, there are simultaneously, I'm doing all this different media and things like that, I've got a book coming out. Where have I been cutting corners for my sleep quality and my recovery because of my whatever? And how can I structure things? So I started to... I literally change my calendar so that I can put things in place so that my recovery and my wellness was first.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yup.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Even during the season of intensity, I'm first. And so that's one thing, putting in place. And here's another thing. Giving yourself permission to have fun, like you wanna do all this stuff with your fitness, why? What do you actually enjoy doing that's physical? What do you wanna have this health and fitness for? Why do you wanna lose weight?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Totally.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What do you wanna do with your body? And so giving myself a healthy allotment of what that is. And so like I just mentioned, even playing basketball yesterday with my sons, and it wasn't that long ago when I played my first game since the injury, and I was just like, okay, I'll just... Some guys asked me to hoop, and I'm just like, "No, I'm not really..." And I was just like, "I'll just play... I'll play with 75%." My 75% was destroying him. And if it was cool, it was cool, then it was rewarding and fun. But my son, he was here practicing with his coach on another basketball court, and he saw me do one of the most incredible moves he had ever seen. It was behind the back layup kind of thing. And he caught me just at that moment, that was the most special part about it, because he went on telling my wife and my son about the story, and it's like creating this core memory for him that my dad went through

this thing, and now he's better than he was before, and so now it's elevating with the fitness piece, it's not just about me. It's about my family. It's about the other people that I can influence, right?. So those are a couple of things that just come to mind.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: When you're talking, it helps me so much. One of them is, your future self is not you. When I was talking about "Good to Great", we tend with our future self to take our past and our present as the reference point. Maybe I've never been athletic enough to do basketball. Or maybe I got that calf injury, so there's no way. But if you take your future self as kind of the filter, and you know that your future self could be... Maybe I'm not that great at basketball, maybe my future self could be awesome. One of the things...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So one, I think it is just super important to realize what is what you think is impossible for your future self, that's not impossible from their perspective. And so I think that being willing to pursue things, but you also said something else which was really awesome, which is intrinsic motivation, doing something you actually want, the thing of fun, doing what you want, doing what you enjoy. I think that that's super important, is doing something that you actually want to do, even if it's not what other people do. So maybe you wanna get really freaking good at basketball, maybe my goal is to run an ultra marathon or maybe my goal... But I think having a high filter, recognizing that your future self doesn't have to be the same as your past and your current self. Your future self could be super fit, right? But I do suggest a very high standard because that will force you to raise the floor. On especially those fundamentals, your sleep, your nutrition, and then with a really high standard in whatever direction you want, something that's intrinsically exciting and motivating to you, often it will lead you to who not how. It'll lead you to getting people to support you, who can help you get to that level, to really dial it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So last piece with this is, I would also take that physical goal, like go head to toe and literally think about how... Your best version of yourself. How does that person look? How does that person perform? How does that person live? But we're just gonna take a super future version of this.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah, dude, I wanna hear this. This is good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So literally going head to toe. You're jawline, there's stuff you could chew on and make your jawline better or whatever. There's all these different things that you can implement, but most importantly, as you're getting crystal clear on what that vision looks like, and as you're sharing, it's just putting in some things each day to help us to kind of get to that end destination. All right.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So just visualize yourself from head to toe.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Keep going. This is great.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this reminds me, and it ties into the beautiful story that you shared about Michelangelo in the beginning of the book, and how he 10xed things.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Again and again and again.

SHAWN STEVENSON: One of the things, that is jumping out now, is understanding how the health is truly coming from the inside out. And so that's one of the things that you share in the book. I don't wanna give the story away too much.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: It's all right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But he got into cadavers and really looking at what creates the outer expression of the body. And so as you're visualizing yourself from head to toe, understand that if the bones are good, shout out to Maren Morris, but within that as you're holding that vision, knowing that this is gonna be built from the inside out, and what it's going to take for you to have that outer manifestation. Now, here's leading to my point, and also a question, in that process, because you're not acclimated to that 10x life yet, you're going to face obstacles, and it's very likely. For me, my vision at the beginning of the year, it didn't include tearing a calf muscle, but because of that, it took me to an entirely different level, and what I'm approaching right now is a level of health and performance that I... It's not that I didn't know was possible. It's just that I didn't know that I can have this right now. All of this stuff is going on in the outer world. And so let's talk about that aspect when we are up-leveling and the obstacles that we are likely going to face, how does that play into all of this? Is that a means? Is that obstacle telling us that we need to go back to 2x? Let's talk about that part.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: So I'm gonna share with you one of my favorite quotes of all time. This is a quote from Robert Brault. He said, "We're kept from our goal, not by obstacles, but by a clear path to a lesser goal." So I'm gonna say it again, we're kept from our goal, not by obstacles, but by a clear path to some lesser goal. That's true on a daily basis, but it's true in your life. On a daily basis, my true goal might be, I wanna freaking write that chapter. The lesser goal might be all the mini distractions, the dopamine hits that I want, and so there's gonna be of course gonna be obstacles. There's gonna be of course things that are gonna hit you, smack you in the face, and so I want you to make sure you follow up and let's really clarify your thing. But I think that the obstacles that we face unexpected or just because the goal is huge, where you're trying to up-level the standard, and so it's gonna test you, and then

you can choose to go through the tests or to... I love the quote, lessons are repeated until they're learned.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so that goes back to the four things, the way we waste our time. So I think that overcoming the obstacles or passing through them and then transforming them into lessons is a huge part of raising the floor. So I don't know, man, I'd love your follow-up, and if we wanna drill down further or clarify, but the obstacles aren't what stop you, man. Those are the things that transform you, and for me, I always take everything and transform it into benefits, into learning, into lessons, and so I don't know. That's my take.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah. So would you say... And I know this is getting to some sketchy territory.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Dude, be sketchy, bro.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right.

[laughter]

SHAWN STEVENSON: Sketchy neighborhood.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: We're deep enough. If someone's still listening to this, they're deep into sketch.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So with the 10x vision, should we... And this is the word that's a little sketchy, should we expect that we're going to face some obstacles that we would deem to be impossible...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Give an example.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Again, you're focused on being the fittest person that you can possibly be, and then you're hit with a devastating injury. This particular football player having this... This is a prime time moment...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Herculean.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Huge contract. All the things, writing a new story, a TV show is following you now, and the list goes on and on, and then this devastating injury that can write people off at the age bracket that he's in.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Yeah. So this guy has two choices and they're freaking huge choices. Either this defines him or he defines it, that's always the case with life. And so this can either... And he ultimately gets to decide his direction, it's his future self, he can flip it into something really interesting, but yeah, I don't think it always has to be an injury like that, but you will be tested. You will be massively tested if you're going for big things, because you're trying something way beyond anything you've ever done. And you wanna go through those tests because those things will show you that you could... Like you said, you're way better than you think you can be. So I wanna know more what you're thinking, genuinely when you're thinking about if you're going for something like that, about the obstacles of the test, I wanna know more about what you're thinking about when you're asking this question.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Well, this is why people need to get "10x is Easier Than 2x" so that they can get this road map and this blueprint and understand their potential better, number one, but also being able to... Especially right now, I think that a book like this is so advantageous because so many people recently have become so small or made themselves smaller and started to see life through... And you talk about this a little bit as well, through scarcity, through the lens of scarcity, and so it's opening up, cracking open this new vision of abundance, and it's really a special book and a special project, and so more so than anything, I'm kicking it back to you.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: I gotta tell you, man, you're kicking a lot of inspiration my way right now. I just had a thought for you. Go ahead and share your thought.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You should.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: All right, so this is what I was thinking with the test, the test... And I was talking about "Good to Great". The test is, are you going to keep operating from the past and choose to be good or are you gonna... You brought up Michelangelo. Michelangelo, he went through several levels, but when he made the David statue, he took four years to make that statue, changed the world, and it opened up the opportunity where the Pope wanted him to make his tomb. And so the pope brings them down and loves Michelangelo's work so much. He asked him to do the Sistine Chapel and stuff like that. But he asks Michelangelo, like, "What's the secret? How do you make that David?" And the famous line of, "I just took away everything that's not David." I think that the biggest tests, certainly we have tests, like injuries or obstacles and stuff like that, but I really think that the biggest test is when we're raising the floor, it's kind of like that example of saying yes to the old fee.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: As an example, I was tested so hard, and it goes back to the idea of lessons are repeated until they're learned, every level has got a test, it also fits with the hero's journey, that there's a test at every level. And if you don't pass the test, you have to repeat

the level. But when I was writing this book, a test hit me freaking hard and I almost failed the test, and what hit me really hard was my... So I started this collaboration with Dan when I was still a PhD student. We started in 2018. I wasn't at a conference, he presented on this "Who Not How" idea and blew my mind. And I literally, afterward I said, "Dan, if you ever want... " And he was one of my heroes. I loved his ideas and stuff, and so I said, "If you ever want that to be a major book, I'll do it. Create a dream opportunity for me." Well, while I was writing this book, I went so deep. To the idea of deep, when you go deep, you catch big fish. And I was so deep into this book, talk about like Michelangelo, my life changed on quantum levels, where all of a sudden my view of my future self scaled 10x or 100x, and I was like...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: And so my filter changed dramatically and I realized I can't keep writing these books with Dan if things are the same, and so my test, I avoided it for months talking to him, and ultimately I did, and it's okay if you're sloppy on the test, at least you're going for it. But part of my test was even letting go of this, writing books with Dan, which he was one of my heroes, still is. And walking away from that, I had people, many people, mentors and otherwise say, "Don't ruin this opportunity, this is a life changing opportunity." And I said, "No, my future self is the filter," even if my past self was amazing. But even since then, there's been other huge test of my past self would have quickly jumped into something next, and instead, you create that space. And so the tests, back to the idea of, we're kept from our goal not by obstacles, but by a clear path to lesser goal, that lesser goal is often the thing you're right now doing. It's the thing that is good, but it's what got you here and it won't get you there. And that's not always true.

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Sometimes it is just to keep going. Sometimes it's to keep going deep, but you wanna let the future be the filter, and sometimes that test will be that you gotta let go of something super good if you wanna be great. And those tests are tough, man. And sometimes, we don't pass the test, therefore we gotta keep doing that thing, whatever it is, stay at that level for a long time because we don't trust our future self.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I could tell you firsthand, I have this book right here in my hands, literally, and the way that it was written from the beginning, the story with Michelangelo, it was so enthralling and beautiful, and just like, I'm not reading a book on personal development, I'm reading a work of art, truly. And that's because of your 10x vision. And I want everybody pick up a copy, "10x is Easier Than 2x" right now, everywhere that books are sold. And where else can people dive more into your universe?

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: First off, just thanks for letting me chill with you and for having a few revelatory moments with me, man, this has been fun. Yeah, so benjaminhardy.com is my website. Benjaminhardy.com. Definitely, if you like audio books, there's three hours of bonus

interviews between me and Dan Sullivan on the audio book, which is pretty cool, and then YouTube. Just YouTube, Dr. Benjamin Hardy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You got some great stuff on YouTube...

Dr. BENJAMIN HARDY: Thanks, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Also. So, yeah, again, thank you so much for putting this together for all of us. Pick up your copy, "10x is Easier Than 2x". Dr. Benjamin Hardy, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning in to the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. I can't stress enough how much our thinking impacts our actions, impacts our outcomes, it really starts with the way that we're thinking. It really starts with our identity. When we shift our identity, everything else shifts with it. So, make shift happen. Make shift happen for yourself. And as usual, if you got a lot of value out of this conversation, please share this out with your friends and family, take a screenshot of the episode, of course, you could share this out on social media, tag me, I'm at @shawnmodel on Instagram and tag Dr. Hardy as well, I'm sure that he would love to see his DMs get blown up from this powerful episode. We've got some incredible masterclasses and more powerful guests coming your way very, very soon. So make sure to stay tuned. Take care. Have an amazing day, and I'll talk to you soon.

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