



EPISODE 782

Microdosing Exercise, Staying Motivated, & The Best Way to Build Muscle

With Guest Mark Bell

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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. It's well established that muscle is the organ of longevity. Our muscle is literally a reservoir for anti-aging anabolic hormones. It's a virtual fountain of youth. But the key is are we doing what we need to do to build some healthy muscle? On this episode we're gonna be talking about the very best strategies for building a healthy amount of muscle. This does not by any means mean that we need to walk around with a hulking amount of muscle. We don't need to get so big that we look weird doing normal stuff. Have you ever seen The Rock on a 10 speed bicycle, for example, it is a very strange thing to see. But some people want to be big and jacked and so learning from our special guest today, whatever end of the spectrum you're at, just wanting to have some healthy muscles. So you stay functional, stay youthful Or you want to put on some real size?

You're going to be learning from literally one of the foremost experts in the world on building muscle. But not just building muscle functional muscle, because not only is he a world record breaking powerlifter, but he was able to parlay that experience into being an accomplished bodybuilder, and most recently he has parlayed that into being an accomplished runner. And I'm not talking just a casual runner. He just ran the Boston marathon. Alright, It is just incredible to see the range of things he's been able to accomplish. And with all that being said, also having such a great knowledge base that you're going to be able to extract from today. for you to have healthy, functional muscle for a lifetime. And now before we get to our special guest, let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five star review titled "by far my favorite health podcast" by Han HH. I love Shawn and all the information he shares. I've been listening to him for a few years now and have found his tips and tricks very helpful. He presents information in a simple way, without getting too deep into peripheries. He makes health actionable and attainable. I love his Eat Smarter book, and I just bought his Eat Smarter cookbook. I am absolutely obsessed. Every recipe is divine. I've tried other health cookbooks and have not been impressed, so I was hoping this would be better. It exceeded all my wildest dreams, and I will be making all of the recipes regularly. I have already bought four more copies to give as gifts. Thank you, Shawn, for sharing your cookbook and your podcast with the world. You inspire me to live a healthier life.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy moly. Thank you so much for sharing that review over on Apple podcast and the love for the E Smarter Family Cookbook. That is just amazing. That is going above and beyond. Wow, I really, really do appreciate that. That means so much. And listen, if

you've yet to do so, please pop over to Apple podcasts and leave a review for the model health show. It really does mean a lot.

And without further ado, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Mark Bell spent many years as a world ranked powerlifter, his highest squat was actually over a thousand pounds. This was 1,080 pounds. His highest bench press was 854 pounds. He's deadlifted 766 pounds. The list goes on and on with his accomplishments in powerlifting. But Mark Bell set out to share his love of lifting with people all over the world. And he opened his super training gym in Sacramento and had people all over the world coming in to utilize his gym for free. And more recently Mark has been working to extend his knowledge and share his information with more people through his top ranked podcast, Mark Bell's power project. Now he's back here today on the model health show to share his incredible insights with all of us. Let's dive into this conversation with the amazing Mark Bell.

All right, this is iconic. All right. You didn't know this, but you were my very first guest. When I moved to LA, my very first guest, and now here you are in a new studio, the legendary Mark Bell.

MARK BELL: Huge honor. I didn't know that until you mentioned that. When I walked in, I was like. I knew I was early because I remember, you know, meeting up with you like five years ago or so. And you just moved to LA.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I'm grateful to have you back, man. So much has happened since then. And you know, you're one of those people that when, when I'm around you, true, true story. When I came up to film with you and I brought my oldest son, Jordan, along with me, when I came back, I changed what I was doing with my fitness. All right. It compelled me to like, let me get a sled. Let me find a way to, and that's the influence that you have, you know, because you're one of those people that you figured things out over time. Experimenting with so many different things and you're sharing open heartedly. And also you're constantly challenging yourself. So world record breaking powerlifter, excelling from there in bodybuilding, experimenting with so many different types of training. And you even recently ran a freaking marathon was the Boston Marathon, right?

MARK BELL: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I got questions. All right, so I would love to know what motivates you to keep challenging yourself after all these years. What, what, what's motivating you to keep getting up and getting after it?

MARK BELL: Sometimes motivation is an interesting thing to try to get a hold of, you know, to try to figure out, , especially if you're not competing in something. If you're competitive in something, then it's easier. So like for powerlifting, it was easier for me to get locked in. Powerlifting was something that kept calling to me. I tried to push it away a bunch of times, but it was like an old girlfriend that just wanted to be with me and I didn't want to be with her but powerlifting always kind of reared its ugly head. I was.... I was just pretty good at it just right off the bat. I remember my friends, you know trying to lift a barbell or maybe tens on each side. And they'd really struggle and squirm and lock one side out and that kind of thing. And I remember doing, you know, 95 pounds for like a few reps and I was just like I don't understand why it's so difficult for these guys.

But I've always been into many different forms of exercise. It's always sort of been something that's called to me. When I was a kid and their commercials would come on and stuff I would do like push ups in between, you know in between watching a show or sit ups or just I just always liked it. I did boxing, track... all kinds of different things when I was younger and then being older. I think you sort of owe it to yourself You To give yourself challenges, because I think you need to try to find what's on the inside. There's stuff inside of us. That's really powerful and really strong. There's things within us that we have that they're not going to really come out unless you're really challenged. And so I'm not going to at this age, in this stage, I'm not going to challenge myself so much that I'm going to put myself in a position where I might. You know, hurt myself like I would when I was younger. When I was younger, I wouldn't mind rolling the dice a little bit. Nowadays, I'm a little bit more cautious with it, but to be truthful is that if something's not dangerous, It's probably not... It needs to be a little dangerous here and there for it to be challenging enough for it to stimulate your mind for it to be motivating in the first place.

I think motivation is an interesting thing because I try to motivate people. I try to communicate a certain way to tell people to get out there and do it. But what I've noticed from myself is that Movement is motivation. Motion is the lotion. So once you get moving, a lot of times you get motivated. So what I would encourage a lot of people to do is like, rather than waiting to be motivated to do the new thing or, do this thing that you said you're going to do every day is just do a tiny bit of it. This morning, my wife was doing a Peloton workout, a body weight workout, and it's kind of challenging for me. My body is stiff. My movement isn't amazing. It just, it just sort of is what it is, from all those years of powerlifting. But I'm like, I can mimic a lot of the stuff they're doing. I can do some of these things. Let me just, so I did them and certain things I just When I saw the instructor showing certain movements, I just, I didn't feel bad about it. I just chose to do a different version of it for myself. And once I started moving, then I gained more confidence. I got more motivated to do the workout harder. And then my wife was like, damn, like, you're not only, you're doing it, but you're, you're now surpassing some of the stuff that I'm doing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's amazing and I love that you reference this and we'll put the study up for everybody that's watching. But there was this huge meta analysis. It was over a thousand studies and it was like a hundred and thirty thousand study participants were included. And they found that exercise was 1.5 times more effective for reducing symptoms of depression, than pharmaceutical drugs and psychotherapy. Not to negate the value of those things, but exercise just worked better. But you just said it a lot of times we wait for the energy, you know, we wait to not feel depressed to go and move when truly like moving starts to activate all of this chemistry in our bodies that makes us feel better. You know, so just... having the, I love that you said that just a little bit, just do a little bit and you've created a life and what I've seen. Where it automates the process of getting that little bit in. Right? So you've created an environment, to where the movement is just something that happens almost automatically. Talk about that a little bit.

MARK BELL: We call it, we call it microdosing. You know, some people hear microdosing like, oh, what's he gonna share about like, mushrooms or whatever. Although I do like that kind of stuff as well. I think it's great to microdose your fitness, microdose your exercise, and maybe even microdose your diet. You don't have to be on this crazy strict protocol all the time. And if you haven't, , really participated in buckling down and trying to fix your nutritional situation, you haven't had like a dietary intervention quite yet, then why not just take it like for a meal? Why not just say like, Oh, the next meal, I'm not going to eat any carbs. Or the next meal I'm going to really pay attention to the fat calories or they're over. I just want to see what it feels like to eat a meal that's a complete meal with whole foods. It's like 500 calories and let me just see how I feel afterwards.

So I think if we can break things down into smaller jobs. I think it was Henry Ford that said, "No job is too big. If you break it down into smaller pieces". You break things down into smaller chunks, and it's just more digestible. It's easier. If I said, Hey, you got to do a hundred pushups every day, you might be like, I don't know where I'm going to really sneak that in a hundred pushups. But if you do five here, five there, you do five sets of like, or you do 20 sets of five reps or something like that, or the reverse of that, you end up with a hundred reps at the end of the day. So, I will work out before my podcast. I will work out after my podcast. I will sometimes work out before I work out. I sometimes will work out after I work out. This morning is a good example of that. I got up. my body felt kind of stiff, so I was like, I know I'm supposed to kind of work out with my wife a little bit this morning, but I don't feel amazing. And then, so rather than like reaching for stuff that's going to give me energy, like a coffee or an energy drink, I think it's a good idea to recognize your body can create its own energy.

We already have tons of energy in us and on us here in the United States. We, you know, we don't have a lot of problems with, with that. We have plenty of nutrition in our system to go do something. And, you want to think about what are some things that your energy can be

stimulated by, so your energy can be stimulated and released by exercise. So I just went out on a walk, came back from the walk. My wife was already kind of in the middle of the workout. I was like, Oh, well, I can, I feel a little bit better now I can join her and mix that in. I think it's really important that people grasp this concept of, you know, Energy. Yes, it does come from calories and yes, it came from calories at some point, but the sun being outside cold weather, you know, go outside when it's like 50 degrees and pop your shirt off. Like it's, it's not going to feel amazing, but three to five minutes of doing something like that, you're, it's going to feel like a really strong cup of coffee. It's going to feel probably even more powerful than that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And we know. And this is something else I want to talk about, you know, you've been sharing content around this about, you know, bro science versus, , so, you know, so called conventional science. And what's so fascinating is that these simple implements, right? So we know, for example, when you're exposed to cold, right? Your mitochondria. are ramping up. They're doing different things, right? These energy power plants in ourselves. And this is something that a lot of us have access to, even if we can, and I grew up in a situation where my power Or the gas got cut off a time or 12, right? So taking a cold shower wasn't a foreign thing, but it's different when you choose it versus when you have to, you know what I mean? But just small things like that, getting some cold exposure, getting out in the sun. We were talking before the show that you were sharing the episode I did on, on sun exposure and that's going to elicit all this chemistry that makes us feel good, you know, just getting out, but we have to get into it, get out of our kind of current rut.

And that brings to mind some novelty, right? So you're here, you're out of town traveling with your family. And even if we're kind of cooped up in our hotel or Airbnb for a while, just getting out in the environment, even if you are at home! Every time you go outside, it's different. It's not the same. Like we can, if you choose to, you can notice different things all the time, right? And so that novelty, all these things start to stimulate us feeling better. I

MARK BELL: I want to expand on that a little bit. So, you brought up something that I wasn't even really thinking of, but we can stimulate energy in so many other ways. Novelty is one of them. Try something new or different, but try something new or different that is in your wheelhouse. You know, it doesn't feel good to do something you really suck at. So something that you really suck at is something that you can kind of keep in the back of your mind, back of your head as like, that's kind of a blind spot for me. I'm not that good at that yet. And I'm going, I'm going to work on that, but like, let me work on that after I already feel amazing. That's not, not the first thing you're going to go to because, let's just say, let's just say you're thinking about doing things like walking lunges, but your knees hurt. Don't tackle walking lunges at that point. Do something slightly different that will, um, and maybe it is new. Maybe it's still something novel.

But we also have nostalgia. Nostalgia is huge. Throw on an old song, you know, throw on your old favorite song, whatever it is, throw on some Ice Cube or throw on some Metallica or whatever. Whatever's your bread and butter, like what's your song? What's your, what's your thing? What's your, is there, is there something from eighth grade or something that you're like, it just kind of reminds you of that time, puts you in a good mood. And then even beyond that we have relationships. You know, you're bummed out. You're just like, well, today sucks. You're, we're going to go for a walk. You had all these intentions of doing all these things and it's raining and you're just, you don't feel great. Your back hurts or whatever it is. Think of the funniest friend that you have in your phone and, and text him and be like, what's up, you idiot, you know, and just go back and forth with him. That right there will probably put you in a good mood. Like you ever have a friend that you can't even, the second that you see him because they're goofy and funny and silly, maybe you think they're like a jackass or something, but the second that you see them, you can't help but smile ear to ear. That's the kind of stuff that elicits and, and will just really help the energy that you already have in your body to start to come out.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I want to lean into that more too, because when it comes specifically to training, the environment, the people you're surrounding yourself with, let's talk a little bit about that.

MARK BELL: Yeah, if you walk with the lame, you'll develop a limp. You need to find like minded people that want to get better. You need to find people that are hungry. They don't have to be like stronger than you or, or better than you per se, um, but it helps a lot if they're better than you, they're flat out just better than you. That's awesome. That's one of the reasons why I invited Encima to be on my podcast is because he is a bigger, larger, more jacked version of me. And I find that motivating. I've always found that motivating. I've always tried to like, almost like be friends with, with the guy that's like that, the guy that's faster, the guy that's bigger, the guy that's smarter. If you hang out with smart people, you're going to become smarter over time. You hang out with strong people, you're going to become stronger. You hang out with fit people, you're going to become more fit. And so over time, You can kind of bypass a lot of things by just some of the people that you hang around.

Super Training Gym, which was a free gym that I had for over a decade. I recently shut it down and we moved on to start to do some different things. But the reason why that gym was free was for selfish reasons for me. To be as strong as I possibly could be. And that's how the whole gym, that's how the whole thing started in the first place. Spending money that I didn't have, doing all kinds of things that were... yeah. I didn't have money to buy a 3,000 squat rack and all these different things, but I figured out ways of making it happen because it was a dream of mine to get myself to be as strong as possible. And so I knew the only way that that was going to happen was if I'm not so motivated and so fired up to do stuff that I'm, that I think

I'm going to do it by myself. I know that I probably could figure it out, but I'd rather do it with friends. I'd rather do it with people and I'd rather have a good time doing it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. That's such a smart investment. You know, that's, that's ROR, return on relationships. You know, you were making those investments and creating an environment to where eventually that led to a lot of success for you. But up front, you know, your wife, I'm sure was like, What the f*ck is wrong with you?

MARK BELL: A hundred percent. I mean, it was a huge struggle at the time. I didn't have. You know, when my wife met me. I don't know what happened. I don't know what, I don't know why she picked me, but I got lucky because when she met me, I didn't have a car. I didn't have a bank account. I didn't have a driver's license. I sort of had a job, you know, as a bouncer and I was doing whatever to make ends meet, did some personal training and stuff. But one thing I wasn't is one thing I wasn't, I wasn't a bum. I wasn't like not doing stuff, you know, I was always doing things. I was always trying to work and I was always working on myself. And so sometimes I think people might think that that's a little bit of a selfish endeavor. Especially when you maybe don't have the money to pay the bills and you're spending time, what seems like, seems like you're spending a lot of time just dicking around with your friends, lifting weights. And that's kind of what it was. but, I. Even though it probably didn't seem to anybody that I had some sort of plan. I always had a plan. I always felt, and this is probably just came from my mother or my parents or something like that, but I always felt special. I always felt like I was going to be able to do something on maybe a different level than, you know, just another guy that works out.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. And that's what she saw, you know, she saw that you were doing things. You were trying to figure things out and that's such a great character trait to have. And also, you know, you working as a bouncer at the time. A lot of people don't know this, but the movie Roadhouse is actually based on your life story.

MARK BELL: That's right. A hundred percent. That's why Jake Gyllenhaal got so shredded for it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly! Exactly. Shout out to Jake Gyllenhaal, Patrick Swayze. Yeah. Here's what's crazy. Before I knew they were remaking the Roadhouse, I watched it probably, I don't know, a year ago. You know, I was just, one of those days I was hanging out at home, threw that on. Yeah. It's pretty iconic. It's like. If looking back on it, it's not a really great movie, but it's so not great as far as, you know, what you might, Put his ingredients for gravy that it's great. It's like the best at what it is.

MARK BELL: It's a classic for sure. And then you know, the latest one they put out, it's just fun. Did you get a chance to see it?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I did. Yeah. Conor McGregor walking around. Yeah.

MARK BELL: He looks huge. He's walking around naked half the time. And Jake Gyllenhaal looked crazy. He looked incredible. That it's just cool to see. Like, I am so excited and so pumped that on every podcast, it kind of makes me, you were talking about bro science earlier. It just makes me like, yup, that makes me think, you know what I mean? Like, amen to this because I've been doing this for so long. And now to finally get confirmation from every single podcast that talks about anti aging or reversing your age or trying to stay young and fit and healthy. So much of it comes back to muscle mass. So much of it comes back to strength. I do think that we have a tendency, especially here in the United States to like really go way overboard with like over correcting. You know, and going the other way, way too much. So, I think it's important that people. Jake Gyllenhaal looked amazing in, in the movie, right?

Like, he looks incredible. Jake Gyllenhaal is probably a very, very healthy person, period. But, I don't imagine that he's gonna walk around that shredded all the time. I don't think that that's necessarily. Maybe there's some people that can navigate that just fine, and maybe they, you know I've always been leaner, but to walk around at like 5 percent body fat or to walk around with like hardly a lot of times to get to that level, people will really reduce not just their calories, but they'll, they'll reduce a lot of fat calories and you start to plummet down your fat calories and your hormones and stuff. So while he may have been happy, his wife or significant other probably wasn't too pumped about his decisions because nothing really works. Other than like, you can go to the gym and that's, that's about it. But your energy isn't great at that point when you do things like that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And that's what people don't really see when they see these magazines. For example, we've had like Don Saladino here who's trained a lot of these big screen actors and he's been on magazine covers himself.

MARK BELL: He stays shredded too, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And he'll tell you just, he can be relatively close, but he's gonna have a few percentages higher body fat walking around just to feel good. And I've done this, of course, myself, been sub 5%, like 4.6 at one point. That's the worst I ever felt, you know, looking back on it. But the thing is like, you're walking around like this. And for me, I wasn't necessarily trying to have that low body fat. But it was the way that I was eating at the time,

and of course I was training, but just over time you start to, things get harder and harder to do, right? And also you become, as you mentioned, with those hormones, and also fat works as an insulation for your nervous system. So you start to become more sensitive. More irritable, all these things, but this is very logical stuff. But, you know, aspiring to be a certain way and not putting it in proper context is unhealthy. But with that being said, it gives us something to aspire towards as well, which is really cool, but we need to have that kind of well rounded education.

And this is where we also share this love for, you know, these aspirational, inspirational figures. Like, so when I'm talking about Roadhouse, for example, those are the elements that I loved, right? So we've got, you know, this guy who's like standing up against the bullies, we've got, you know, super fit. We've got the, the, the martial arts, he like ripped the guy's throat out. Okay. Who does that? You know what I mean? And, thinking about those characters that inspired you, you know, like Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, all those things, we grew up in that age of that. And there was like a.

We, we deterred from that a little bit and now there's kind of this resurgence, but the coolest part about what you shared, which was a lot of cool stuff there is that you're now seeing. What you've been doing so long showing up on the big screen. For example, like a lot of these guys are using training methods and modalities that you've helped to popularize, really, that you've been experimenting with yourself for decades. And I love it because, you know, a lot of people are also tuning into you more, to get it from the source, right? You know, which is really cool. So how do you feel about that?

MARK BELL: You know, I, I kind of, you know, people hear me say all the time, I say strength is never a weakness and weakness is never strength. And I think that we should keep our eye on strength, not necessarily. You don't have to necessarily bench press something that somebody else bench presses. However, Pretty much every person should start to, every person that lifts, and if you don't lift, you don't count. That's the saying of mine as well. Sorry for everybody that doesn't lift. You gotta get out there and lift. But when you're lifting, you should have an idea of like, what kind of weights you can do on particular exercises. And so maybe it's normal for you to be able to bench press one plate for a couple of reps. Well, why don't we try to just keep that around for as long as we possibly can, because that's going to show us a sign of some sort of youthfulness.

That's going to show us a sign that you are still sending your body a signal. And if you just think about each thing that we're trying to do, all the biohacking, getting some sunlight in the morning and cold plunging and all these different routines and all these things, what are we trying to do? We're trying to send a particular signal to the body. With strength never being a weakness and weakness never being a strength. I think we owe it to ourselves to try

to keep a certain level of fitness, keep a certain level of strength. X amount of push ups, X amount of pull ups. How you lift or how you exercise is kind of up to you.

There's a lot of different things you can do. And I say lift, you know, if you don't lift, you don't count. Some form of resistance, you know, if, if you're doing rock climbing, it's like, I don't think you really need to spend a ton of time in the gym as you have a different approach. But, I learned so much, so many great things from powerlifting and powerlifting is Let's see what you can do for a one rep max. And a lot of people are scared to do things like that. A lot of people are scared to go out and just give it hell and just go and sprint as hard as they can. They're fearful of trying like a heavy squat. And you should be because you can get hurt. And so there's really not, there's, I'm not encouraging people to go in the gym today and go and try a one rep max. However, what I am encouraging someone to do, learn the skillset of a squat. And then maybe over a period of time, you just say, like, let me see what I can hit and still have my form be just dead on. I'll have somebody else watch it. I'll record it. I want to make sure that the technique is really there. So I'm not going to put on three plates when I barely made two plates look pretty good, right?

We see that a lot with people and they end up doing these reps that are just, you atrocious. So you want to try to, when you're working on your strength and just even working on yourself in general, you want to make sure that your reps always look really clean, that your reps always look really good. Something that I share with people often is that your last rep of your last set, should look like the first rep of your first set. So that's a really practical thing. So if you do three sets of 10 of something, your 30th rep, your last rep of your last set should look a little bit similar now, okay, there's going to be a little wiggle, you got some fatigue, I totally understand. And I'm not saying that you have to train that carefully all the time, but that's about what it should be. So now when you go to do a bench press or now when you go to do a squat, you don't have to be fearful that you're going to get hurt because you're doing with textbook technique and kind of back to the sprinting and stuff too.

You'll hear people say, Oh, you know, I think. Everybody knows sprinting is the best hands down. There's not even, it's not even close. It's just not even remotely close. There is nothing like sprinting. There's, there's nothing that mimics a sprint, but if you can sprint, you can probably fight. If you can sprint, you can probably get away. You can sprint. You can just, you have access to so many things. If you can sprint, you can probably jump. And if you're really good at sprinting, you're probably can run pretty far too. Like someone like Hussein Bolt, who probably never really trained to run longer distances. I'm sure him running eight miles or something is, even though he'd probably hate it, it's not as like his thing that he likes. He would probably still be pretty damn good at it. So, get, try to figure out a way for your body to sprint, you know If you're listening to this and you're 50 years old and you're like, well my

knees and my back and I don't know. Can you sprint on an airdyne bike? You might say no. Can you sprint on an elliptical?

Can you? Can you sprint with a curl? Can you sprint with an overhead press? Like maybe you can figure out like a certain amount of weight, maybe 40 pound dumbbells pretty heavy to you. Again, with good technique and good form, maybe you can bring the weight to here and maybe you can figure out a way to like press it overhead. I think that that, some of those things I just mentioned right there, I think those are more of the key to our health and our longevity. More so, even just, even something like jumping down from something. I don't know if people, other people did this in school, but I remember like jumping down from the back of the bus in school in case there was an emergency or whatever. That would destroy most adults to jump down like that. But I remember being excited about that. Now I'm sure I would probably shuffle over to the edge and I'd probably look down and be like, Mmm, and maybe go to my butt and then, and then go down. So your ability to jump, your ability to sprint, these things are, they're so crucial because of the signal that it sends to your body.

It's showing a sign that you're still youthful. Even something like getting on the ground. Yeah. I say, Hey man, get on the ground and do some of these exercise with me. If I circle around and I move around a bunch like a cat trying to like, you know, get comfortable on the ground that tells you immediately that I'm in pain, but I was like, okay. And I just pop right down on the ground. It tells you something a little different. So I just wanted to mention all that. And I know it was a little long winded, but I wanted to mention all that because I think in the era that we're in right now, people think they have to be muscular. I don't agree with that. I don't think so. I don't believe so. Even though I'm muscular, this is what I like to do. And what you like to do is actually in a different category of things, because what you like to do is massively important to your life as well. And massively important to your health as well. I just worked out yesterday with Michael Hearn. He's 253 pounds. He's probably like 55 years old. I don't necessarily agree with him staying, you know, above 240 or something like that, all the way into his late 50s and 60s and stuff. But if he really enjoys that, if he really likes to do that, I could see the argument of like, I got to kind of back off of that and say, I think he's probably healthier doing what he really enjoys as long as it's not, as long as it's not clearly to his detriment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that you're talking about the signals giving our body these particular signals whether it's being able to spend time on the floor. Whether it's being able to jump off of something. Here's the thing a lot of times we lose these capacities because we stopped doing them Yeah, right. I was just thinking about my youngest son. We were walking somewhere.

MARK BELL: How old is he?

SHAWN STEVENSON: He's 12, and so we were walking and he climbed up on something just to jump off of it, right? And that's what we do, but then we stop doing that stuff because we get the idea in our head. Usually, it's before any type of injury happens, we just stop doing the thing, and then we get to a place years later that, oh, I shouldn't do that thing.

MARK BELL: Remember when your son was seven?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Oh man. He, he didn't even just, he didn't walk to another room. He ran.

MARK BELL: My daughter jumped all the time. My son ran all the time. And so I think that might be hard to like start to figure out how to microdose that right into our own lives when you're 45 years old. But just, can you start to think about that? Can you start to look at that a little bit and say, every time I park my car, I'm gonna make it a goal to, like, literally get out of the car as quick as I can. It sounds like so silly or so foolish. When I get up from the dinner table, I'm not gonna use my hands. I don't want people trying stuff and doing stuff that they're going to hurt themselves. But maybe it's something that you work yourself towards. A friend of mine, Joel Green. He actually will just, he's 57 years old and he will actually just sprint down the street randomly. And when he was on my podcast, he was wearing like nice shoes and he was, he was dressed, nicely.

And I, I was like, Even in those shoes, you know, he's like, it doesn't matter, man. I just take off just like a little kid. He's like, because again, that's the difference between a young body and an old body. So the inputs that we give ourselves, they, it can't just be the gyms. Not enough is what I'm trying to basically say here, going and doing a lifting session and growing out and just getting like muscular, that might have some benefits and it might chew up more glucose and it might help us to be able to eat more and to be more lax with the diet or something like that. It can help us manage our body weight. There's a lot of cool things that it can do. But it can't really mimic that youthfulness that we're looking for. And so therefore I think you need other strategies.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. The youthfulness is associated with moving quickly, right? We think of growing old as slowing down, right? But are you proactively doing things to stay quick to stay Fleet afoot, right? And so I love also you guys have been sharing some content around just like jump rope, for example. And this these are things again. These are like they can be in the background of our awareness But my wife told me because this is one of the things that we do Often, but she told me when she was in Kenya little girl that they would

jump rope and I had no idea. This first time She told me I've known her for 20 years And she told me that she used to jump rope when she was a kid for me people would do double dutch, you know, the girls in the neighborhood whatever These are all like fast twitch quick quick off the ground. Yeah, and these are things there's even today There's jump ropes that don't connect You don't even have to have the whole rope to jump over. You could just do the action and do a jumping motion that feels comfortable. It's great for people to do, you know? And so it's just like, where can I get this input? Send this signal for youth.

Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back. Listen, I've learned a lot from Mark Bell over the years about lifting and about fitness overall. And I love his concept of micro dosing our fitness, but the key is making it as easy as possible. And one of the ways that I utilize micro dosing for my fitness is making sure that I have cool tools around that inspire me to do a little bit of whether it's mobility work, strength work, Or just some functional fitness. And these tools are from Onnit. I love their primal kettlebells, their steel clubs, their steel maces. They have these wonderful sandbags, the hydro core bag. So many cool tools that I just have them kind of planted around my house. And a lot of times when I'm walking by, I'll just pick up and do a couple of movements with them.

So whether it's doing a couple of kettlebell swings or doing some swings with the steel maces, which is one of the coolest exercises, it definitely brings a lot of attention and eyeballs to you if you're doing this movie in the gym, and it will also humble you because these movements might look relatively easy, but if you're not accustomed to training with these different tools, they can really offer up a challenge and it's challenging our nervous system, our musculature, our mobility.

And we can train these things. And the key is having some tools and implements to make it as easy as possible. So I highly recommend checking out on its fitness equipment. And by the way, you're going to get 10 percent off all of their fitness equipment. When you go to onit.com/ model, that's O N N I T. com/ model. And you're going to get 10 percent off all of their fitness equipment and also 10 percent off storewide. They have some science fact, double blind, a placebo controlled studies done on some of their human performance supplements. Like their shroom tech sport pre workout and their alpha brain nootropic. So definitely pop over there, check them out. That's Onnit. com/ model for 10 percent off everything. And now back to the show.

Also, we know today, and you've talked a lot about this is that muscle Is the organ of longevity. And so you're not saying that we got to walk around with a hunking amount of muscle, but adding some muscle to your frame is going to help you to age better. And so having you here, I want to talk about training. I want to talk about how do we most efficiently build some muscle. All right. So let me know.

MARK BELL: I love this kind of stuff because I love, you know, we can get like philosophical and we talk about all kinds of different things, but it's great to just give people straight answers. So, there's many ways to get muscle. You know, some people get it from. They wrestled in high school and they got a big neck and, and they got, yeah, they got, yeah, they got big arms. I have a friend, um, that used to work for us. He had these massive biceps. It was just amazing looking biceps and he got it from sprinting. It's like, you know, , sprinters have nice shoulders, nice arms and stuff. This guy had like 19 inch arms and look crazy. So sometimes people get hypertrophy from like particular sports, but the easiest way to get it specifically is to go to the gym and do some resistance training. And it's pretty simple.

You want maybe to utilize two to three exercises, two to three sets per exercise. Now, as you start to do this more often, you might want to do a little bit more than that. Two to three exercises. Two to three sets, two to three body parts, um, maybe, , maybe per week, maybe as you get more advanced, maybe it's two or three body parts per session, depending on how you want to do your split. And it's just kind of old school Joe Weider style sets of 10. Something I've found to be super effective over the years is To do three sets of 10 and go light, medium, heavy. So you, you're going to do incline bench press and you have a little experience with it so you, you know how to do the form and stuff. And just grab whatever you consider to be like, you know, each person's gonna be a little different.

Whatever weight you consider to be like kind of a joke weight like that you can do, you want to get that first set in because that is where you do a diagnostic. And you do an analyzation of yourself, where am I today? Like what's? And sure enough you pick the weight up and you move it around and you're like, Oh my god, there's like something going on with my wrist or something, like, I don't know. That's strange. And so what do you do from there? Well, you're going to now audible and you're not going to go as heavy on the next two sets. You can kind of ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: Or you change your position.

MARK BELL: Yeah, right. You change your position. you're like, Oh, well, a barbell doesn't feel good today. So maybe I'll try a dumbbell. Right. And that's where you can kind of make these audibles as you go. And you'll, you'll know how to do that a lot more as you move forward. but something like three sets of 10 light, medium, heavy. Chest as the example, you did incline bench. Now maybe you do, It'd be nice to do maybe some pushups or some dips, , two to three sets, 10 reps. Then move on to, , maybe like a cable crossover or something like that. Two to three sets of 10. That's a great chest workout. Now, depending on. How advanced you are, you might need to make it harder. You might need to put your feet up on a box for the pushups. If you are less advanced, you might have to do your pushups off your knees or use my invention, the slingshot, which assist you in bench press pushups, and dips.

But that's kind of the basics of it right there. Two to three sets, 10 reps is a great start. How often do you need to train? What kind of frequency? That's always a really interesting question, but I, just to flat out answer it, I would say just two to three times a week. Something that I've found -that might be of interest to people is that if you give yourself something that's too low. I like to aim low. I think aiming low is crucial. I was talking earlier about sprints. The best way to do a sprint is to just go out and like jog real lightly, go as slow as you can, and then speed up, speed up, speed up. So you want to kind of ramp yourself up into it, so you're doing it in a safe fashion, right? If we kind of take the same approach to weights, um, we're going to kind of ramp ourselves up into these things, , slow and controlled. And so You know, the way to gain muscle mass. You know, over time is you're going to increase the intensity of the things that you're doing. Um, you're going to be brushing up against, what I would call, like a functional failure. Like you're, you're, you're no longer able to do a technical limit, they call it.

You're no longer able to execute the exercise with good form and precision any longer. And, that gives you an idea of when to kind of discontinue the exercise. But yeah. What the point I was trying to make about sometimes something's too low is that if I just said, Hey, I, you know, Shawn, I want you to do a 10 minute walk, you know, once a day, you might do it here and there, but it's like, there's like nothing to it. You're like, I don't know what the point in this is. So I do think it's great to aim low. But you still need stuff to stimulate you. So if you're in the gym and you're doing like these two to three sets, light, medium, heavy, and you want to ramp it up a little bit more, go for it. Like you're already at the gym. You're already there. You already spent the time to get yourself there and all these things. And so that's where it might be a good idea to just say, this feels good. I like doing this. Instead of the three sets that someone recommended, I'm going to do five.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay. Now you mentioned with the frequency. So, are we talking two to three sessions per week on a certain body part? Ideally?

MARK BELL: Yeah, I think so. Some people will say like on the smaller body parts that maybe two or three times a week would be appropriate for those smaller body parts. And some people say, you know, legs or, or chest or back or something like that, that maybe you only need to do it like once a week. The way I like to look at it is I. Personally, like to do something almost every single day. But I don't really recommend that to people that are new. I think people that are new, I think there's a lot of great things they could do. I mean, you can get an app and follow along with an app. You could get a trainer, something like that, but to commit to a trainer or to commit to this new time commitment out of nowhere, is a tough investment for people sometimes. So while I enjoy exercising every day and I like to spread things out quite a bit. And because I exercise so often, I don't even really think about that question anymore. But for people that are newer, that are trying to like grow, let's say their

shoulders, they want their shoulders to be a little wider, they want their back to be a little stronger, a little wider. Probably looking at like two or three times a week for those particular body parts. And maybe other body parts where you're like, I think my legs, my calves, or I think my this or that, like looks decent. I'm not going to worry about it as much. Maybe only one time a week for those body parts.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Cause we have this notorious term in our culture now, leg day, right? Which tends to be once a week.

MARK BELL: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's not necessarily ideal if you're wanting to gain muscle on your legs.

MARK BELL: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So what about the stimulus? Would you, let's just say that we want to grow muscle in our legs, and we're going to do twice a week, would you do the exact same exercises?

MARK BELL: No, I think you'd want to switch it up for sure. And I think that, legs, you know, legs are... with like running, sprinting, cycling, even just using like an aerodyne bike. You're going to get, you get a lot of leg work from things like that. I mean it spin class or something like that burns the hell out of your legs. There's actually a guy on Instagram, he's a photographer, famous cyclist. He does those indoor where they got the aerodynamic helmet and everything. He's called like leg Zilla or something or quad Zilla on Instagram. His legs are just absolutely massive. And you see him doing these like single leg, , split squats with like plates on each side. It's, it is, it is wild. I mean, this guy looks like he can't walk, but he has the craziest and highest like a watt output like in the history of, of, , cycling. I think he's just, just a monster. So there's a lot of ways for your legs to grow. So you might want to try to consider, You know, Oh, this day I'm going to do a little bit of plyos.

This day is going to be a little bit more jump rope. This day is going to be, I'm going to jump up onto a box handful of times. I'm going to do a little bit of explosive training for today. And so that could be like a more like a, it's still going to be, it's still gonna be something that might make your legs sore, but it's like a passive workout. And then you can have another workout that's more geared towards like straight hypertrophy. And that's actually a great rule of thumb for any body part really is to maybe you have one day where it's like a little heavier. And you have one day where it's a little lighter, with something like your chest, you could do

more bodybuilding on one day and a little bit more power on another. So for example, you could do like a five by five, you know, the repetitions that you do dictate the weight. Or the weight that you're thinking about doing can sometimes dictate the reps. So the intensity, you know, sometimes I think people think the intensity refers to like you get all hyped up and , doing like pre workouts.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Smelly salts.

MARK BELL: Yeah, right? But the intensity is just the weight on the bar. in comparison to your one rep max. So you might want to vary intensities. You might want to have a day where you're doing, you know, bent over rows for sets of five, because now you can overload yourself more. And. Just the word overload is an interesting thing. We're thinking about like what we're trying to do in these training sessions. If we think about it from a strength perspective and from like a bone density perspective, we do need a certain amount of weight. If you're just like handling like 20 pound dumbbells and stuff like that, I don't think that's going to be sufficient.

Even if the 20 pound dumbbells are heavy for you, um, while things are relative, I still think that over time you're going to have to be able to pick up something heavier than just a 20 pound dumbbell. The good news is, is there's exercises for this. There's something called the bench press. There's something called a squat and there's something called a deadlift. Those exercises lend themselves to the, those are power lifts. Those are, those are lifts that you can usually handle some pretty good weight. Maybe for some people, the bench press might be an awkward one. Um, Certainly on a squat and a deadlift. When I used to seminars around the country for CrossFit. I would do these powerlifting seminars. I'd say, , who here has lifted, you know, 400 pounds in the last, you know, few weeks? And there'd be a couple hands up. And I'm like, okay, 500 pounds. Okay, 600 pounds. Be a couple hands up. And then when they would say, I would have the guy come up to the front and say, Hey, what lift did you lift 600 pounds in?

And then say the deadlift. And I said, well, what about your overhead squat? Did you, did you overhead squat, 600 pounds? And like, nope. And so there's some exercises, there's nothing wrong with overhead squats, a great exercise. It's a great execution of a movement pattern, great execution of mobility and stability. But there's some exercises that are going to be better for strength. There's some exercises going to be better for bone density, maybe to help you build, kind of like denser muscle. Like we don't, there's a lot of stuff that we don't really truly know. Some of it's a little bit of a guess, but it appears that some heavier training builds a little bit different of a physique than a lighter training.

But I, to me, I'm always like, well, why don't we just do both? You know, like developing a really good VO two max and lifting weights. Those are both really good things. And then you'll have some people be like, Oh, well, if you work on your VO two max and take away from your, but we know differently now, like there's a lot of research now showing that, , the two things can actually collaborate together and be beneficial. They can be synergistic rather than working apart from each other. But just in modern times, and just thinking about like what, People are trying to build and what people are trying to do. I think people want longevity. I think people, they want to still be able to do stuff with good intensity. And I think for all the things that people are looking for, it just pops in my head all the time. Like why not do both?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that. Get you, get you a Mark Bell that can do both.

MARK BELL: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So with this being said, I'm thinking about the, the guys that, you know, yourself included, but also that we know. The majority of them, and there is a smaller camp that says, Hey, one stimulation of a muscle group each week is enough. You need time to heal. Right. Yeah. But that's a smaller percentage. Most of these folks say, it's, it's not enough. Like, Every two to three days, you need to be hitting that muscle again if you're trying to grow that muscle. And so, that leads me to this question about recovery. Because we do want the muscle to adapt, but waiting too long And by the way, caveat here, if you're just getting started, targeting once a week is fantastic.

MARK BELL: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But what happens when you get more advanced and you want to target a muscle group? Working on that muscle group every two to three days, ideally, would, would, would be great. But what about the recovery? Don't we need that muscle to heal up to a certain, to a certain degree?

MARK BELL: You know, I think, we get into these things like when you're in your training, like whatever training you're doing, you know, you're only as good as like your last training session. You're only as good as like what you've been training previously. So, sometimes you need to be prepared for what's coming next. And often times when somebody feels run down, they feel over trained, they feel like they need more recovery, they could be right. They could just need some days off here and there. Like maybe they've been pushing it too hard, but more than likely they, the training that they did leading into the current training they're doing that they're struggling with. It wasn't enough to put them in position to be able to

handle the current situation that they're in. So you want to try to accumulate enough fatigue over time so that you can handle the new intensities.

You can handle the new frequencies, because realistically we should be able to put the muscles under a pretty good amount of stress every single day. Regardless, I mean, if you're doing, You know, straight hypertrophy and you're trying to follow some of the things that I mentioned about doing, you know, two to three exercises per body part and doing two to three sets. And then over time, if you've become more advanced, you might double those stats. So you might be doing five or six sets per exercise. And then you might be doing, you know, three or four exercises per that body part that starts to be really demanding. And the, with the intensity that you're aiming for. You can recover from that.

You can get your body used to that, but you would just be incurring like a lot of damage over time and it just wouldn't be worth it on the joints and on the body in general. And it probably would just register as like a negative stress over time. If you shotgun something and do it for like a short period of time, you can kind of get away with all kinds of stuff. In general, I would say if someone's trying to like grow a body part and they have this like area that they're just think is like stubborn. I think every few days I think would be fine. You know, you want to build your arms up a little bit more. Working your arms every two to three days probably isn't going to be like detrimental in any sort of way. But you do have to account for how much your arm is moving around in your workout.

Every, every press, every push is elbow, every press, every push, every single time is elbow. There's not a lot of stuff in the gym that you do where your arms aren't involved. Like they're, they're almost always involved somehow, some way, right? You're holding onto something. So now, , now we're looking at like, how much can your elbows handle? How much can your shoulder joint handle

SHAWN STEVENSON: Even doing barbell squats?

MARK BELL: Even doing barbell squats, your arms are there. Yeah. They're very much involved. I mean, I've had people that they can't squat for weeks, not because of their knees, not because of their back, but because of their elbows or they have to use what we call a specialty bar, like a safety squat bar or a cambered bar. Some other different type of barbell that allows them to not have their arm in that same position any longer. And so we do have to think about recovery. Recovery is, is critical. But I think that recovery is something that we shouldn't really have to think about that much because our training is set up appropriately. So I guess you can look at it a bunch of different ways and say, well, if you just think about the workouts with recovery in mind, that would be a great idea. And I, and I do agree with that.

But again, I just think. I know some people have gotten like rhabdo and stuff like that before. That's where the muscle tissues will just swell up tremendously. I think they end up with an issue with their kidneys from excess training. And, , they're just having a hard time getting some of this lymphatic system going, but their arms will swell up, just in a crazy way. And you usually see it. You don't usually see it like in the legs because there's really not like you're, you're not bending your legs like that much in a lot of workouts in the gym. Although you could, I guess from like squats or something, but it's usually around the elbow joint is where you see this.

And you just have to be cautious that every time you do like a row. Any sort of back, all back movements. They're all like, they're all elbows. So it's all forearms and biceps. And so your forearms and biceps are getting worked just excessively, a lot of times. Something I like to think about with my own workouts is how do I get in? How do I sneak stuff in? So like if I'm doing a bench press, well, maybe for the day I'm doing more like a close grip bench press. Now I'm working my chest, but I'm also working my triceps tremendously. So now I don't really have to focus as much on the triceps. Once the workout is discontinued, once the workout is over, maybe on the way out the door, maybe I do a super set with Dumbbell tricep extensions mixed with some tricep pushdowns and that's like my triceps for the day. I wasn't really a huge focus of the training session. You can also do this with like mobility stuff as well. You can say, man, my shoulders are super stiff. and my, my triceps and stuff are kind of stiff. You can start to think of exercises. That are going to open you up more.

So now maybe you do things like dips. You intentionally do these movements and you go to do them and you're like, man, that sh*t, that really hurts. Well, you know, maybe you have to do it with a box under your feet and maybe you have to scale these things down a little bit. Say, I'm going to do this this way for a little bit because I don't want my range of motion to suck forever. I want to get better. better at this, and then maybe take a tricep motion, you know, back behind the head. So maybe you can wash the back of your, back of your neck when you're in the shower, those kinds of things. You can get your body to move and, and start to. If you're, if you're stretching through exercises, I found it to be really beneficial for mobility as opposed to maybe just like a static stretch.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. Great advice, man. Great advice. This is priceless stuff, you know, and so just to clarify get right to the point with this question. We'll just say talking about the triceps and overhead tricep Move and say we get a level of soreness, right? And matter of fact, no no, say we're extremely sore and our tricep feels like Ground beef. Yeah. We probably don't need to train triceps again the next day.

MARK BELL: Yeah. You're probably good, you know, and this is where it's really helpful to have more strategies. you know. all you can do is lift, you know, it's like, it'd be cool if you could do

some other things. It'd be great if you can go out on a run. It'd be great if you did some cardiovascular training. It'd be great if you even if your workout for the day was like dragging a sled and doing some lunges or something, you know, it's, it's good to have different strategies. So if your triceps or particular muscle is super sore, you could train it that day, but you're better off not. I just want to elaborate a little bit more too on that because, So many times people would say, man, my shoulder is killing me. And I'm like, you bench twice a week, you know? And I know like, you know, I'm in powerlifting and I'm a powerlifting coach. So a lot of these guys would come to me and I said, you got to take, you got to not bench press, don't bench with a barbell for, for a little while. Sometimes just one training session would make the hugest difference. Sometimes they need to take off a little bit more. Sometimes it was like two or three, but they could still usually train other muscles that are going to contribute to having a stronger bench press. So these are kind of the workarounds that you start to learn as you're in the game longer and longer, and they're super important to develop.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love this because what you were getting to is listening to your body. Which is the ultimate? Now I want to ask you specifically about, you know, if we're training legs, what about maybe doing something that's a little bit more quad dominant? Maybe one hamstring exercise in the mix, but then you flip it the other leg day, right? You focus more on the hamstrings and a little bit less quad dominant. What do you think about that?

MARK BELL: That's a great way to do it. There's, there's so many different ways we can train and there's you know, there's You know, there's there's so many things outside of like just training, you know, there's like time commitment, you know How long are these workouts taking you? Something I used to do often is in between Quad workout I would do, I would do calves or in between a hamstring workout, I'd sneak in some calves in between, sometimes train the quads. Sometimes I'd train the hamstrings cause they're opposing muscle groups. They don't really take away from one another. So you can cut down your workout time quite a bit by doing stuff like that. What you've mentioned is super smart is, and you could do the same thing with biceps and triceps. You know, one day you really blast the biceps. He did like 10 sets for biceps and you did 10 sets for, or you did a five sets for triceps. You flip it around the next, the next, next time you train, it's also a good way to kind of keep your muscles from just being overworked. You know, if you did 10 sets for both sides, again, you were going to start to run into tendon and ligament issues. I think what we're really looking at when we're thinking about all this stuff is like how, How do we do this consistently?

How do we do it constantly? And how do we do it for a long period of time? Cause the game isn't tomorrow. The game isn't like, Hey, let's see what you can do six weeks from now. The game is more like, let's see what we can do from six years from now. Let's see what you can do 25 years from now. To me, that's the, those are the most important things. I remember when I was young. I was probably maybe like 15, 16 years old. And I was doing like a squat and

I just remember squatting. I think it was like two plates or something. I just remember just putting the weight in the rack. And just, I remember seeing another guy, he was in the squat rack next to me, moving around two plates. And he was probably in like his sixties or so. And I saw him doing his squats and doing them with perfect form. I was like. I'd love to be able to do that. Like, that's cool. Like, this is cool. Like I'm on this journey and I'm on this mission, like lift all these weights and this is going to be like fun, but that's super interesting. That has always fascinated me. How did those, how are those guys doing it? So I think it's cool to really work for a body. It's really cool to work for strength, but we want to think about how do we do this for a really long time? If you're only going to look like this in your twenties and thirties, to be quite honest, anyone can do that. Anyone. But to be able to hold on to it in your 40s and your 50s?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's elite in our culture.

MARK BELL: That's next level. That's next level. Yeah, you're right. And that's a good way to put it because in other cultures, there's plenty of people that are probably in their 50s and 60s that can go and sprint any day of the week.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I love this, and also just circling back to the beginning of this conversation. It's qualifying ourselves to be able to do this stuff over time, like you just mentioned. You know, you don't, don't necessarily wanna come in and try your one, one rep max if you haven't been building up to anything. Qualify yourself over time. Give yourself, I love that you said this earlier, microdosing. Yeah. Some of these exercises. Some of these movements. And qualify yourself build up so that you have the capacity to sprint, right? So maybe if that's your goal, if you are inspired by mark and you're following him on Instagram, which you should be, and you're seeing him sprinting and it's something that you aspire to do and you haven't ran, you know, you haven't, you know, move fast for 20 years. Let's build up. Let's add in and the cool thing is we've got all of these Accessory exercises because sprinting involves so much. You said it earlier. I could totally agree with you. There's nothing better. I think it is the Quintessential top tier exercise it involves so much of our bodies and our nervous system. Certain things over time can become weakened You know, if you're not utilizing your, you know, your Achilles and your ankle and all the bones in your feet and all these different things, you could start to microdose some of these different things to where you're building up those, those capacities like just jumping, right?

Maybe you just hop from one foot to the other. You know a couple of rounds right through the day or maybe you just mentioned jumping off of something for example Maybe it's just one stair. All right, maybe you know You're not doing the whole staircase like you used to but just jumping off one stair or just you know stepping down slowly or Being able to you know, stand on one foot For a while, right? Just working these different capacities. So yeah, it's

tough. So many things are starting to fire, especially if you haven't given your body these different signals.

MARK BELL: One of my favorites, you know, and so we got to talk about balance. We got to talk about coordination. These are all really important things and they, they rarely get challenged in the gym. You know, if, if you're somebody that's been thinking about these things and you've been challenging them in the gym, then that's great. But a lot of times it really hasn't been thought about because we're just thinking about like big arms and big shoulders. And so we're just doing these traditional exercises and those exercises, there's no need for them to disappear. Those are great exercises and they always will be however. Balance, coordination, rotation. The gym, you have to be a little bit creative to sort of land on some of these things. Something that I do often and this is a more recent practice is I just, I stand on one foot and I just do a calf raise on one foot and I try to hold that position and I'm, I will do it on, I have these like slant board type things and I will do it with the slant board facing one way, with slant board facing another way.

And it's ridiculous how hard it is. Like, I'm like, this is insane. I usually have to hold on to something. Cause my balance starts to go. But it challenges your feet, challenges your coordination for some guys that are, you know, young, they're like, you know, why, why am I doing this? You're going to be doing some of these things to again, build a capacity, qualify yourself for the next level of things that you're going to do. You remember this, I'm sure like even when you're young. Somebody challenges you or you go to do something and you just like tear something or you slightly injure something even when you're young that happens. So it doesn't happen when you're like a little kid, but it happens when you're like 20 something and you hadn't played your sport for a while. And someone's like, Hey man, let's race. Next thing you know, trying to impress somebody or trying to impress yourself, you, you know, blow out a hamstring or something like that. And so if we can think about a little extra work in the gym, a little extra, or even just think outside the gym. Like, let's just forget about the gym.

A lot of times when I'm on, on a run, I do like parkour type stuff for me. You know, it's not anything that would impress anybody. People would probably look and they'd be like, Oh my God, what is he doing now?, the comments on Instagram, you know, me sprinting and stuff has been funny, but it's like, guys, what do you expect? You know, what do you, how do you expect me to look? When I go to, when I go to run fast, I'm not, I haven't been working on that for many years. And even when I was younger, I always ran with my arms kind of flailing out. I always ran kind of stiff anyway, but I think we need to stop with the comments that we have in our own head. You know, if you said, Hey, you know, Mark, you know, try this, , this one, this one legged, you know, hop, just hop on one foot 10 times. A lot of times you'll see that person

right away. They'll, they'll go, Oh, I'm, I'm, I set my balance sucks. They're like trying to throw something out there just to, just to make you aware.

It's going to be like difficult for them, you know, and, and they don't want to feel foolish. Right. But we need to stop saying stuff like that internally. It's, it's super, it's very damaging. And what we need to recognize instead is it's just new for you. Like cut yourself some slack. Think about if you were training a kid or you're training your own child or showing your own child something. You show 'em how to throw the ball. You don't yell at 'em like, you know, like a maniac. You say, oh, okay, you know, you wanna try it more this way. You try it more this way and you start to see that they're either like getting it or they're not. And you're like, okay. I need to do the hardest thing in the history of the world for a parent, and that's to just shut up.

And you need to let people work through things, right? But we don't allow ourselves to do that. We don't give ourselves like the grace or the time. It's day one, man. Like, Day one on dips and you're have tight shoulders. That's gonna hurt your elbows are gonna hurt day one of you You know listening this podcast and you heard me earlier say, you know getting on the ground getting on the ground is a place Where we rest we need to use the ground more. We need to use the furniture less doesn't mean we can't use the furniture It doesn't mean you can't just chill and blob out and watch some TV and hang out but getting on the ground For a lot of people is, is a place of pain. That's why people don't do it, but you should be able to engage in hard things. You should be able to handle hard surfaces. Even just simple stuff like our feet, like our feet are, we're so used to just being inside. We're so used to wrapping our feet up in these cushiony things and then going outside and traversing the earth. That way, but in general, I think a good life philosophy is to have many, many strategies on how you traverse whatever terrain is coming your way tomorrow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If you saw my circle of friends, I think you'd be surprised to see how many friends I have that are 20, 30, 40 years older than I am. I think it's one of the most valuable gifts that we can have in this lifetime is the access to wisdom and people who figured some things out. And one of the things that my 70 year old friend and mentor share with me is how vital it is to build and maintain muscle tissue as we age so that we can continue to do the things that we love to do. Obviously, long live cultures, including those that have the highest ratio of people living over 100 years. are avid tea drinkers, but there is one specific tea that is now clinically proven to support longevity by supporting fat loss and helping us to maintain our valuable muscle tissue. A randomized placebo controlled study Published in the journal, Clinical Interventions in Aging, revealed that study participants utilizing the revered fermented tea called Puerh lost significantly more weight, lost more body fat, and had significant reductions in blood fats compared to those in the placebo group.

And if you dig even deeper into the data, you'll also find that they maintained more muscle mass. Then those in the placebo group as well. And that's what we really want. Tell me what you want. What you really really want Reduce excess body fat while maintaining our valuable muscle tissue in addition to smart exercise and nutrition habits Drinking wild harvested pu erh is one of my essential longevity practices There's only one puerh that is wild harvested, triple toxin screened for purity, and cold extracted to retain all of its superb nutrients, and that's the fermented pu erh from Pique Life.

And right now, Pique Life is providing us with up to 15 percent off, free shipping, and for a limited time, you'll also get a free tea sample pack with 12 different flavors. That's when you get their most popular bundle, go to piquelife.com/model. That's P I Q U E L I F E .com/model to take advantage of this incredible offer. Again, this is a science back tea that supports fat loss while maintaining our muscle mass head over to piquelife.com/model and get hooked up. With up to 15 percent off free shipping and a free 12 pack sample of their award winning teas as peaklife.com forward slash model. And now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Now, one of the other things that I've learned from you is that, and also just your, your, your community, you know, and SEMA and just really paying attention to again, people who figure some things out is that there isn't just one right way to do a thing. Right, and now this is not to negate the need for quote proper form on certain movements, but sometimes moving around within a movement is going to yield more results and also. Give us the opportunity to in a way be more realistic because a lot of times when we're using our bodies in the real world. For example if we're playing a sport Life isn't coming at you in one very kind of mechanistic movement right like with a squat for example So being able to change positions. Recently on Instagram you you shared a video where you were demonstrating different ways to do a cable fly And you said rather than just moving the weight, you can move around the weight. So what do you mean by that?

MARK BELL: Again, there's so many different ways we can do all this training stuff. So you can move, you can, you can move a weight, you know, you're doing like a cable crossover. You kind of move your arm, right? You're moving the cable, the cables moving. You see the weights going up and down. You can actually kind of hold a position. And have the cable, and have the cable literally not move at all. And activate your muscles really well. Just by simply rotating towards that side, and then you can rotate to the other side. The thing that's cool about stuff like that is we can rotate. Like you, we lose, we lose, like proprioception of a lot of these things. And unfortunately, like these things like die. Like they, the cool thing is they can come back. But they also die. And so you have to, when you start to try to move your body in certain directions. You know, you might, you might say, okay, I'm in this fixed position. I'm, I'm facing forward. I'm going to tilt my hips towards the wall.

And then you kind of do your hips, but you realize that you're moving your shoulders as well. And then you're like, wait a second. Let me try that again. Let me try just the hips and you realize that you can actually move just your hips and keep your shoulders still. And this takes a lot of practice and super annoying. You're like, Oh my God, how come I can't, how come I can't have them be separate from each other? The more athletic that you are, the more likely you are to be able to hone into that or the more practiced you are with it if you're doing you know. Like my wife is a swimmer so sometimes people get lucky like with the sport that they love or that they really enjoy and it just has a certain rhythm to it where it plays into that or maybe you love dancing or something like that and you're gonna just, you're gonna be able to kill it with a lot of this stuff.

But there's no reason why we have to be so boxed in with just traditional exercise. There's so many different ways of doing it. And so rather than just thinking about just moving the weight with our arm or just moving the weight with our legs. Let's start to think about maybe we can move our body around the weight. One of my favorite things to do is to utilize weights as a counterbalance. And you see this done in something like a goblet squat. But then it's interesting because like this stuff is like utilized in one place and then it's like not utilized anywhere else and you're like, why wouldn't we just try to adopt this and use it in as many places as possible? So I love to load up a cable machine and the cable could be high, medium or low, it doesn't really matter. Just walk away from that machine holding on to, hold on to the handle, walk, you know, take many steps backwards and just go ahead and sit right into a squat. And regardless of your mobility, regardless of whether your mobility is, , horrific or whether you have pretty good mobility, you'll be able to get down into a really nice squat.

Now you need to load the weight with a weight that's going to help you to get in position because for someone that's super mobile, they don't even really need the counter balance weight. Right. But for somebody that, is heavier for somebody that really struggles to get in position, they're going to need to kind of load the weight up. So they might need to use the stack or half the stack to be able to do this. But this is an amazing thing to be able to do. And then you kind of just hop down in that squat position and your, your butt is next to the ground. You can actually literally just fall backwards because you have that counterbalance weight. You could hold it with two hands or one hand, whatever feels good or safe to you. You can kind of rotate and move your body around as you're in the squat position. You can start to try to move your hips around. And what I've learned is my hips don't go anywhere. My back doesn't go anywhere. It's actually, you know, years and years and years of building up a lot of strength in my spine.

I didn't really understand it or realize it at the time, but what I was doing is making myself insanely rigid. And I just, I kind of knew it because I knew I was bracing for thousand pound squat and stuff like that. And I recall when I would squat those big weights, I would say all

right, let's lock it in and just don't move. The only thing that's going to move is like my legs and my butt. I'm going to drive my knees out, but my posture is going to, I'm just not going to move from this position at all. Tree trunk. Yeah, tree trunk and just not moving. And that strength ended up, ironically, becoming a weakness nowadays because, you know, it's hard for me to move in some of these positions, but what I'll do is I'll stay in that, , bottom position of that squat.

I'll try to move whatever parts of my body I can move around. And something I'm learning is that I mistakenly will negatively sit, tell myself that I'm stiff. But stiff compared to what? Tight compared to who? Like why, why worry about it? Right? I feel good. I don't have pain. I don't have symptoms. So why the comparison? Like what, you know, why am I expecting myself to be able to move like a yoga instructor or be able to move like, , someone who's been practicing martial arts for 20 years, it doesn't make any sense at all. So I need to give myself some grace and some space with that. But with this particular exercise, another cool thing is you can just fall all the way back. You can just be on your butt, you can be on the ground, you can put your legs out, you can kind of do what's called like a pancake. Some people may have seen Ben Patrick do this exercise and you can just go as far forward as your body can handle. But I'm doing stuff like this in between other exercises.

So I'm, I'm mixing, you know, some old school, you know, bro science and bro workouts, in with some more modern day, like movement pattern things, because you're going to see, you know, on, on Instagram, you see a lot of people talking about these, these particular movement patterns and what they'll say and what they'll share with you is they'll say, Hey, You know, these movements, you know, these are the best movements and these are for this, this, and this. And I agree with that a lot. I actually think that a lot of these movement practice people have some really great points. Lifting weights can make you stiff. Lifting heavy can create stiffness, but what if you're also practicing other things while you're on your journey for, While you're on your fitness journey, while you're on your journey to get jacked? What if you're also doing some couch stretches?

What if you're also moving around in a bunch of different ways? What if you're also still playing a sport? Playing a sport is a great way to not have to really worry about stuff quite as much because you're getting in all the stuff we talked about earlier, the coordination, the fitness. If you play pickup games of basketball, you're, you're getting in, a lot of cardiovascular training. You're getting tons of coordination. So you might not have to be the person that's like balancing on one foot in the gym. You might have to worry about it as much as the other person. But I'm blending these exercises in, and it's been really it's been really fun to be able to do that. And now being able to get myself to a point where I can sprint, get myself to a point where, you know, if someone's like, When I go and meet somebody and go and do their podcast. some people. they like to run. some people like to do CrossFit, some people like to

bodybuild, some people like to powerlift. I can be down for any of it. I could enjoy doing any of it with them and I think I should pat myself on the back for that a little bit because of the way that I lifted for so many years. It's amazing I was able to survive some of those heavy lifts that I did years ago.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mark Bell is DFW, down for whatever. Remember that. Man, this has been so awesome. So many incredible insights. Again, can you share your Instagram handle? And also your YouTube channel is phenomenal. There are so many great shows there. Of course, I've been on there a couple of times honorably and man, you guys are just some of my favorite people.

MARK BELL: Thank you so much. Yeah. You've been on the power project. I appreciate having you on and we got to have you on again because you were just, you're one of a kind. I love the way that you deliver your message. I love all the research I was going to ask you. I need to ask you this before we drop off here. How do you do your research?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So is this for everybody? Yeah. Awesome. Awesome. Of course. So, you know, I've been, this is year 21 for me. And so, I went to college, you know, like 1997 was my first semester when I went to college and being somebody, well, you know, this is going to be unique to everybody, by the way, but are different, different learning styles as well. And, for me, conventional education wasn't really difficult, you know, I didn't really have to try very hard. A lot of times, it's a true story, I've never really even shared this, but my wife knows. She talks sh*t about this a little bit. But a lot of times I didn't even buy the books, you know, for classes, which they're ridiculously expensive. Yeah, right. You know, partially, and I'm just like, I can get that refund from that scholarship or that grant into my pocket. I don't need these books, right? And so, for me, what it was, was just paying attention. You know, just when I was in class, really paying attention, taking great notes, really helpful as far as tests are concerned.

But I was very acclimated to doing research on my own, you know, so whatever they were talking about, if I can go to the lab, which I mentioned in the 1997 part because computers were not everywhere at the time, right? And so, there was still the Dewey decimal system kind of crossover, but I would go to the lab at my university and I would research things online, right? And I would go to reputable sites, right? And so over time, it's become easier and easier because so many of these published studies are on sites like PubMed, for example, and, you know, kind of housed by the NIH, even. But here's the rub. Not all of these studies are credible. And You've got to look at, you know, who's funding the study.

You've got to look at how the study was constructed. A lot of times we'll go and grab something from an abstract, a summary of the study and base our whole belief on that. And what we tend to do is we look for things to affirm what we already believe. Right. That's the natural human inclination. And so over time I challenged myself and this is what, again, it just goes back to what you're talking about. I challenged myself and I said, To, to think differently. I challenge myself to look at things that don't necessarily resonate or agree with what I believe. And so that gives me a more well rounded assessment. And also. So it gives me a great place to make counterpoints for things that, you know, maybe the argument is against what I believe, but now I have, I can start to understand why someone, someone or a researcher or a scientist would even think this, right?

And so I can start to perspective take. And so I'm saying all this to say, yes, looking at published research is wonderful. Running experiments, myself as well. And also this brings the most important point, which is anecdotal versus peer reviewed. All right. We have to stop negating the value of an N of one, your own personal experience for your life is the most valuable form of research, but we have to pay attention and we have to challenge ourselves. We have to ask questions. We can't just if we do a thing and we get this one result and to think this is the end all be all, of course, but if you found things that work, And this resonates exactly with what you're talking about. Looking at some of these iconic, you know, bodybuilders, you know, powerlifters, this might not be in a published peer reviewed study, be the most effective way, but look at it yet.

Right. Yet. And that's the funny thing today. It was just affirming what you've already known, but we don't have to wait around for the science to conclude that this thing works or doesn't work. And so paying attention to that N of one. Paying attention to yourself and also paying attention to your friends and family and community and and Even though it might not have a peer reviewed reference to go with it. That doesn't mean that it's not valid science. Science is paying attention to outcomes. Science is having a hypothesis or theory and putting the thing into action and seeing what happens. And that can happen for so many things that aren't necessarily getting funding right now. And so to answer your question, you know, it's, it's all of it. A real scientist is constantly questioning, is constantly looking at outcomes and yes, paying attention to published data. Yes. But paying attention to what's going on in the real world.

MARK BELL: Yeah. You're like a great resource for that. And I think when I, Watch some of your stuff. I just think of you almost as a reporter. That's like you went and did this deep dive on this particular subject, which is cool because I think a lot of times we just see people just maybe reviewing like one study, but you'll bring up multiple ones and you'll say, I also found this out, like all this stuff about sunscreen and all that stuff. It's really cool. I think we've heard some negativity about sunscreen, but you only kind of We just pick up like the little headline

thing. Maybe someone talks about one study, but you're talking about multiple things. I think it's really helpful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you, man. Yeah, and it's a lot. I spent a lot of time doing it But that's the thing too. I love it You know going back to what you shared earlier like the joy factor of something even if something is arduous Maybe even it stresses me a little bit But the fact that I love it that adds more fuel to the fire and it just helps it it also comes through You When I'm teaching it too. So yeah.

MARK BELL: It's great. I just want to share one more thing before we hop off, but you know, kind of to your point of like doing something that you love and doing something you enjoy. I think it is really important, but I see too many people doing the thing that they love to their detriment. So just be a little cautious with that because it is a little bit like playing with fire. And when you start to really enjoy working out and you're like, Oh, I could still do this workout, even though my shoulder hurts. You should probably just. There's nothing wrong with taking a day off. You know, we got to remember that. I'm at Mark Smelly Bell on Instagram YouTube You can check out. Yeah, Mark Smelly Bell's YouTube channel super training06. And my podcast is Mark Bell's power project. Thank you so much for having me. Appreciate it. Of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's my honor I love this so much. This is a great value. The one and only, the legendary.

MARK BELL: All dressed up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The basis of Roadhouse. That's right. Mark Bell, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. How can you add in some more micro dosing in your day? So maybe this is getting five minutes of Or 10 minutes of sitting on the floor when it's something that is uncomfortable for you and building up, just getting in a little bit of time on the floor. And by the way, as I've built up time sitting on the floor where I could just honestly sit on the floor for hours, I'll micro dose in spots of static stretching and mobility work as I'm sitting on the floor, just little bits, you know, here or there, maybe.

A couple minutes of a hamstring stretch But it's really about where we are right now looking at ways that we can add in little bits of things We don't have to turn our world upside down to get some benefits to get some of these signals as mark talked about So again, maybe we've got a goal of getting stronger with our bench press or push ups or whatever the case might be And we microdose in some push ups throughout the day. Maybe push ups have

been a struggle for You Our entire life. And we want to get better at it. We want to be able to get up off the floor with gusto. And so we add in like five kneeling push ups, you know, throughout the day, maybe five times, or maybe we want to work on our pull ups and we've got a pull up bar in one of our doorways that we see or walk through a couple of times a day.

And it inspires you to jump up on that bar and get a couple of pull ups in whatever the case might be. Let's structure our life where we can microdose some of these fitness implements. If you got a lot of value out of this episode, please make sure to share it out with your friends and family. Of course you can share this on Instagram, take a screenshot, tag Mark and tag me and share it on your IG story. I'll be on the lookout for that love. And I know that Mark would love to see that love. So please make sure to share it out on social media. And of course you can send this directly from the podcast app that you're listening on to somebody that you care about. And we've got some epic masterclasses and world class guests coming your way very soon.

So make sure to stay tuned, take care, have an amazing day. And I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes. You can find transcriptions videos for each episode. And if you've 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.