



EPISODE 813

**#1 EXPERT on BURNOUT
Shares the Truth About
What's Making Us Sick &
Depressed**

With Guest Dr. Neha Sangwan

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SHAWN STEVENSON: On this episode, we're gonna be diving into a subject matter that is impacting millions of people, but we usually have no idea that it's happening. In fact, our special guest is going to walk me through an exercise and bring something out of me that I truly did not expect. It impacted me deeply, and I'm just blown away. This was a really emotional episode and also very insightful and this issue needs to be brought to the surface. We've got to talk more about this and really be mindful that all the different things that are going on in our lives can overwhelm us. Bye. If you're like me, we have the ability to push through.

We have the ability to get things done and to step up and to take care of our family, to take care of our mission, even when we might be carrying things that are overwhelming us, that are leading to this condition called burnout. And there are many different flavors of this issue and our special guest is going to help us to understand and really unpack what burnout is. And also to unpack the physical, the psychological, the emotional, all the different inputs that can lead us to tipping ourselves into a place that can get real bad, real fast. And so to equip ourselves with this knowledge and also practical solutions, that's what this episode is all about. Again, this was incredibly impactful. And I'm so grateful to be able to share this with you today.

Neha Sangwan MD is an internal medicine physician, international speaker, bestselling author and a communications expert. She addresses the root cause of stress, miscommunication and interpersonal conflict, often healing chronic conditions such as headaches, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and burnout. She consults with organizations such as the American Heart Association, American Express, Kaiser Permanente, and Google. And through her books and private practice is making a huge impact on creating a healthier, happier society. Let's dive in this conversation with Dr. Neha Sangwan. I'm so grateful to have you here.

We've already been having a good time and we're going to talk about An issue that is really gripping our society and it's not getting a lot of attention. It is very real. It's impacted both of us. It's probably impacted just about everybody listening. And it is this topic it has the label that we give it called burnout. But there's some deep biological and psychological Aspects of this that we're going to unpack today. And so I love to start off by talking about what is burnout?

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, I think one of the most important things we can do is demystify burnout. Personalize it to each listener and everyone watching and then give them powerful

practical tools to heal. So let's do it. What is burnout? I'm going to give you a more scientific explanation to start and then I'm going to tell you where I disagree with what that is, okay? And that's just through my lived experience of going through burnout myself and being a physician and treating tens of thousands of people with us. so Burnout. If you read about it, it's actually a triad. So it's the triad of exhaustion, physical, mental, emotional exhaustion, and that's usually going on over a period of time.

It's not like you wake up Monday and you're fine and then by Friday you're exhausted and burned out. That's not how it works. Because our bodies are so sophisticated. Our blood pressure changes, our heart rate changes. We start adjusting physiologically well before we get burned out. On top of that, we use strategies, numbing strategies, coping mechanisms, all sorts of ways to prop ourselves up, whether it's an energy drink. It's a soda, it's sugar, it's drugs, it's alcohol, whatever your flavor of it is. It's make mine a double today when you talk to the barista. I don't know what your flavor of it is, but we've also got these external ways that we prop ourselves up. That physical, mental, emotional exhaustion, which is the first part of the triad, occurs over time.

Another piece, the second part of the triad, is cynicism. So cynicism comes in where, okay, now you're exhausted, but you're still driving towards whatever it is you want, but then this undertow, almost like you're walking on the beach, and you can feel an undertow, but you might not be able to see it. There's this thought process that comes in that says something to us like, It doesn't matter how hard I try, it's not going to make a difference anyway. And our own thoughts start to undermine that exhaustion that's already going on. Now you're in trouble. Because the third element is ineffectiveness. So you literally cannot do the thing that you were once really good at doing or able to do pretty effortlessly.

It starts to become hard and you are no longer effective. So exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. I want to give you one more. Peace on the cynicism angle. What starts happening after people have been exhausted for a while is they naturally go into a way of conservation. So even though they might feel isolated from other people, they might seek connection. They actually do this thing called depersonalization where they don't have the energy. To Socially connect so they'll distance themselves or they'll let's say I'm a doctor and I'm in the hospital. I'll say things like this Patient in bed 9. I won't use their name. I just don't have the energy to connect that much.

It doesn't mean I'm not a caring doctor or nurse. It means, or a teacher, or anyone, right? It just means that there's this part where I just need to distance myself from the emotional aspect because I don't have it in me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Holy moly. This is, you're just describing things that I've experienced and so many people have and even this aspect of depersonalization. It's not that we mean to, like you just said, we could be a really great person and have great intentions, but just because our bandwidth has just been, we don't even have the band anymore in the bandwidth. And yeah, this is scary, because what are some of the outcomes that happen when we experience burnout? This is the part where we need to start to check ourselves before we wreck ourselves. Shout out to Ice Cube, by the way.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Let me, I'm just going to confess something here that if doctors or nurses are listening, they're going to be like, I can't believe she said that out loud, but it's really on reflection that I realized one of the ways that I did this. So I'm a busy hospital doctor. I have 18 hospitalized patients that can crash at any time. The hospital wants me to make sure I discharge by 11 a. m. Like a hotel, right? Get out your checkout at 11 a. m. Which is smart because they want to know how many beds are available for new people coming in.

I did not realize this until I had burned out. The psychiatrist I was speaking to said to me, Did you find yourself adjusting in any way in the past couple months? And it really hit me. There was this moment where I was like, I knew that if I worked really hard to discharge four patients instead of three, what it meant was at 6:00 PM I get the gift of a brand new patient, brand new family, brand new. So I started adjusting, when I told you that depersonalization started happening. I was not lazy at all. In fact, what I would say is I'm a mechanical engineer. I'm an internal medicine physician. I work really hard. And that's a mistake people make about burnout. They think that people are like trying to get away with something.

People who burn out are usually your highest performers. They're working them, they're working straight through their own physiology to get the job done. But really in that moment, I started pulling back and saying, if I could come up with a reason why the next day was okay, I would say, you know what? Let me take care of these three discharges. Let me tell the fourth one to get ready, because it'll be tomorrow. And that's how I saved myself for another eight months. Now, in my previous world, I would have called myself a slacker. I would have been really hard on myself. Now I understand, after researching this for 20 years. Oh no, thank you Neha.

Thank you for being so smart physiologically to figure out how to maintain your energy so you didn't burn out, right? So sometimes the external world is going to place demands on us. Yeah. Don't allow us to think for ourselves or figure it out. Sometimes we're going to speak up and say, that doesn't work. I'm exhausted, but we aren't going to be heard. And what I want you to know is it's as important when you're interviewing for a job, for a position, for working with a company, for being in partnership.

Don't look at it as they're interviewing you. Look at it as a two way interview. Is this a place I would thrive? If I speak up and say something, do they hear me? because I believe how fast the our world is moving is going to require a new level of iteration and partnership like we have never seen before.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely and you just said we unconsciously make these adjustments to try to just keep going especially if we care.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: You bet.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ironically.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: You bet.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you mentioned also the coping mechanisms that we turn to, and again, a lot of this stuff just starts piling on and we don't realize it because we're just doing what we've got to do. The story we've told ourselves and what we've got to do.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: And it can be as simple as even working out. Some people will say. I went for a run. I could always manage my stress. Go for a two mile run, three mile run, whatever it is. And I could manage my stress. The moment you notice you need five miles to get the same effect you got with two or three, pay attention because your physiology just shifted. You coped with it in a way that gives you an awesome physique, feels good, releases endorphins, but if you're not paying attention, you're not realizing that the temperature getting higher and higher. So whatever your coping mechanism, notice if you need more of it to get the same effect.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's like cooking a lobster.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, it is.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So this is really important because when we, I know for myself, when I hear the word burnout, I would. Psychologically tie that to work, for our society. But you've really enlightened us in so many ways on how it is not just about work. It is our overall life scape, right? It's all the different aspects of our lives because it could be relationship related pouring into that burnout equation. It could be spiritual, just feeling a lack of purpose and connection and you really unpack all these different areas. I love that so much because it's real that there's not one part of us. We're dynamic. We have so many aspects that make us who we are. And you address each of these the physical compartment and the emotional

compartment. And if you could let's talk a little bit more about that our overall kind of burnout equation.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: All right, let's back up here. So the World Health Organization when I burned out in 2004 and literally, Shawn, I walked in, 18 hospitalized patients, fifth day on service. They asked me to take the alpha pager, which means you take all air traffic control of transfers coming in from all local hospitals. So you can imagine the level of busy, right? I need to sign off all my patients. I'm doing all of this. 11am, I walked up to the nurse and I said, Hey, Nina, could you please get 40 mil equivalent of IV potassium for the gentleman in 636? And she looked at me and she said, Dr. Senghwan, are you okay? And that was my first indication that I might not be.

And I said, yeah, why? And she said, because that is the fourth time in under five minutes that you've asked me that same question and I've answered you every time. I had no awareness of this. And that's what I mean when I said, you know how we just did the triad of exhaustion, cynicism and ineffectiveness. That was the moment I hit a wall without knowing it. And I have to tell you, we have to pay attention to each other now. I'm swimming in the temperature going up and up, degree by degree, and I'm not noticing that something's happening. If that nurse didn't say that to me, I could have written the wrong prescription, the wrong dosage, I could have done something much bigger than I did.

And so one thing I'll say is I think We're going back to the old days where it's the return of community. We need each other. We're moving too fast. Now, when I burned out in 2004, in 2003, the World Health Organization had decided that burnout wasn't a diagnosis. It was like a collection of some symptoms that might contribute to this. Fast forward 2019, is the first time that they have agreed that it is a collection of symptoms called a syndrome and it is due to unmanaged stress at work. Now this is where I disagree. My patients have had a special needs child at home, and have been going through a difficult relationship at home. Exactly the things you were saying. I don't care where stress comes from. If it is chronic and unmanaged for you. It can lead to burnout. So it could be any one of us.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and I would imagine it's gonna spill over into those other things.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: It has to. We like to say things in our society like, keep work at work and home at home. I think that's just because we don't know how to handle conflict. And so what we do is we try to make it all nice and clean, which is leave your emotions at home, leave home at home and work, work at work. Except how do you get into a subway, get in a car and get out of it, however you commute in the days when we commuted all the time.

How could commuting change who you are at home or at work, just because you get in some sort of transportation.

And now I think what the pandemic did was it made work, home. And it stripped us of those barriers. And so now all of a sudden, who can say that? We see your dog running around, we see the kids playing, like home is work. And so now we're starting to learn that maybe we're running away from conflict and things that drain us. And maybe if we learn to lean into those, we would up level what I call our human software. So that we can function, all of us can function in the world we've co created. Because we've used our minds to co create a world that's going faster and faster. Here's generative AI, right? And now we're moving even faster and faster.

Except, what I don't think we took into account when we thought we, as a society, say, faster is better, do more with less. What we did not take into account was our own biology. Our biology needs exertion and rest. There's a rhythm that goes on in nature seasonally and within us. And we did not respect that. What we have decided is faster is better. And the people who are successful in our world amass the most amount of wealth, name, power, whatever it is. And so we have something socially going on that actually doesn't match with our individual biology.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Being that this is. You mentioned the s word. You said stress.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It can be and this is a thing too, of course We don't want to villainize stress. Stress is a part of life. It helps us to grow and to adapt There's hermetic stressors that help us to get stronger.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: You bet.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But when it becomes chronic.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And being that stress is the undercurrent for burnout.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This can obviously, and this is a big part of the reason why I'm excited to have you here, which there's many reasons, is that folks can be dealing with stuff, especially in our culture, as you just described, powering through, doing what we've got to do, getting stuff done, taking care of people and experiencing health issues, a myriad of health issues. This could be an autoimmune condition. This could be some cognitive dysfunction, this could be sexual dysfunction and to enlighten folks on the fact that this could be due to burnout. So if you could, let's talk a little bit about some of the outer expressions that we might see that might give us a little bit of an indication, like maybe we need to look inward.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. So how this might show up. So we talked about the triad of burnout. So exhaustion, cynicism, ineffectiveness, that happens over time in three phases. So the first phase is the alarm phase. The alarm phase is almost like you jumped on a treadmill going too fast, just slightly too fast, that moment where you're a little bit jarred, your adrenaline kicks in and you're getting your bearings. So that's the alarm phase of burnout. And during that phase, you might feel pretty obvious, like heart racing your gut, your stomach might be turning. We have lots of nerves in our, yes, in our brain, in our spinal cord, yes, in our heart, but really also in our gut. And GI symptoms, diarrhea, constipation, stomach turning, just feeling really unsettled, headaches, insomnia, all sorts of issues.

Now, the first thing I want to say is, anytime you have any of those symptoms, please don't go straight to burnout. This is the doctor kicking in on me. Please go get a clean bill of health because it could be signaling something else. But once you go to your physician, your practitioner. And they say, Oh no, we've run all the tests. There's nothing physically wrong with you. And then they say, you're fine, you're not fine. That's what I want you to think. Oh, What if this is unmanaged stress? What if this is burnout? But that's always the second line. So there's some physical symptoms. Then there's also emotions that you might notice like irritability.

You're snapping at people and you don't recognize yourself. You're coming in late. You're starting to, you're missing deadlines when that's never you. This is gonna sound silly, but people say to me, Oh, you wrote a book on Communication. So I'm sure all your relationships, none of them have conflict, and I'm sure that you're never burned out. Okay, launching a burnout book nearly burned me out. Okay. And so I say no. What I want you to know is all I've done is compiled what I've learned in a way that I hope my pain and growth and life school could be someone else's survival guide. But what's changed for me is that when I fall off the horse, I get on much quicker and I recognize things much quicker. So as I was launching the book, this is going to sound silly, but it's like I missed a mani pedi appointment that I had prepaid for. And they called saying sorry, we, we don't see you here.

Are you coming? I didn't even, I didn't even check my phone, nothing. So two hours later, I realized I just lost more than a hundred dollars. Because I missed an appointment and I thought to myself, Neha, slow down. And it was one of those early alarm phases. So what I'd say to you is it sounds simple and maybe minor. But I knew it was the alarm phase of burnout for me on the book tour. And so I got back on, I stopped, I slowed down, I canceled everything that was non urgent and I slowed myself down.

So it's not that when you do this, you're done or that. Someone who writes a book on burnout doesn't burn out. It's that when you know these signals and signs, you pick things up earlier and you don't get all the way to the end where I'm ineffective as a doctor in the hospital. So that would be the alarm phase. You'll start noticing you're coming in late, you're missing deadlines, all of that. Then if that continues and the alarm phase becomes your way of living now, you've put in all those coping mechanisms. We talked about you're having two cups of coffee in the morning and a glass of wine after work to take the edge off. You're doing all the things you're doing your physiology.

Now, you're moving into a chronic adaptation phase Where you're just hanging on by a thread your physiology is trying to help you but now you're starting to notice things like The weekend isn't enough to recover. It's Monday and you still feel heavy, right? So there's going to be these ways where you start to call in sick. Procrastinate. Do what I did where I didn't discharge the fourth patient, right? I'm not trying to be a jerk. I'm literally trying to hold on in chronic adaptation. And then one more thing happens, and it might be a small thing, so and so can't make it to your birthday party. Oh, the whole thing.

You go sliding down the slippery slope of exhaustion phase. to ineffectiveness. Everyone, what's wrong with you? You're overreacting. It's just someone couldn't make it. And it's huge to you because you have no capacity left. So the alarm phase, chronic adaptation phase, exhaustion phase. Now, how do I know somebody is getting to the end of the chronic adaptation phase? Apathy. They start not caring. They're using more and more of that coping mechanism that we talked about and they didn't even realize it. And so then when you slide down the slippery slope of burnout, that's when a week off doesn't help you. That's when you're feeling you, you might cross with depression and burnout are not the same thing.

There's a big debate going on in the scientific community about that. But the best way I could say it to you is burnout is like fire energy. It's there's something that you're going to create. I want to, I single handedly thought I could change healthcare. I've got the best intentions. Yeah. And there's something that starts to happen that unravels that experience and you start to realize you're carrying a boulder uphill and it's not going to work. Depression can come from in an instant. It can come from an old wound being triggered. It can come in a very

different way and it's more of a stuck energy, a heavy stuck energy, more than it's a On fire driving energy.

That's how I think of it. So when my clients are coming in and they're asking me like, doc, do you think I'm depressed? Do you think I burned out? I'm paying attention to the context of what's happening, right? The onset, the, what is this? Is there some sort of drive? That was a really simple way to try and describe it. But those two things can overlap, but they're not always the same thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love this, at the end there, you mentioned how you were single handedly going to change healthcare. And the thing is that aspiration to dream and to see so big is necessary.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But, I've said this before, I had that same kind of pull to change the world and it almost killed me, like you're trying to do this thing that is seemingly impossible, but here's a cool thing. You have made, you've made your mark in a major way. The trickle down effects of your work already. And the same thing I've seen in my life. And sometimes we don't acknowledge that change because we're looking at this massive thing. And what happens is, and what really helped me was realizing, and you said this earlier, We need each other, right? Cause you said single handedly, that's just, that single hand is one hand, but you just got two of them, we're not like, you know what I mean? We're not octopuses out here and being able to work with. other people to be able to collaborate, and the power, like there's this amplification that happens when you are united with others to accomplish things.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: That is unable to happen alone.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: There's just this magic, this synergy. And I think we have to come back to that because I think there's a way where. We've really gone solo. We've become Lone Rangers and it's been cool and to be independent and all of this, which it is, it's wonderful. When we're too dependent, like it's almost like too much or too little of anything is the problem.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Sounds like some Goldilocks stuff.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, a little Goldilocks stuff because it's like, yeah, I'm a, I'm an independent woman. And I also realized that I was lonely. And so when I started dating my partner, I could carry my own bags. I could pay for everything myself. I was financially independent. I was in my career and what I learned was. That's his the way he loves me. He wants me to allow him to do that But my father growing up said no daughter of mine's gonna be dependent on a man. You are gonna be independent financially and otherwise and then I used to say dad am I packing too much?

And he said honey, no problem. I got three girls and your mother you pack it you carry it And so from a very young age, I learned that and I realized that too much of that Started to create the stress of loneliness for me And when Raj and I got together, one of the things I said, Oh, I can carry it. And he said, I know you can carry it. I'd like to carry it for you. Are you open to that? And I was like, oh wow I didn't realize that I was creating my own isolation.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man, where do we do that in our lives in other. , okay, so we've broken this down. We've got the alarm phase, the chronic adaptation phase, the apathy phase and..

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Apathy is right at the end of chronic adaptation that sends you right into it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: exhaustion. So that is the bridge..

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: But the apathy is the key. That's the, that's how I know you're going to tip into the last one.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's the rickety bridge.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: It is. Because when you start not caring you're going down. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. So we're looking to reclaim our energy. We're looking to rejuvenate. We're looking to be powered by us. Be powered by ourselves. You've broken this down again. There's a masterpiece within these pages because you're addressing all the different aspects that you know It's gonna affect each of us differently. You know I felt when I started to even look at the table of contents of the book like this might be like a Little bit of a choose your own adventure

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: On what you need to focus on a little bit more. Because for some of us, it is physical. It's going to be more of a causative agent. For some, it's more of a solution.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: For others, it can be something more emotional exercises or emotional triggers that's causing it. The spiritual aspect, you look at that as well. And I want to talk about a little bit of each of these categories because I want to talk about solutions. For folks that are hearing some things that sound familiar and they're wanting to address this burnout. We don't want to make our aspirations of getting rid of burnout burn us out. And so just being able to like, what are some, Science backed tools, but also we talked about this before the show and how important it is for that in one equation and really paying attention to work. What works for you? The data might say this but something might work for you that isn't necessarily for other people

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, and you got to trust that. Okay so much in what you just said, but here's what I'll tell you. The truth for me is what's really important is that for one person it can change. So in my 30s It was my career and physical that w that was draining in my forties. It was my emotional and spiritual crisis around meaning. And so the cool thing about powered by me is really what it is wherever you are on the spectrum from. Burned out to fully charged can be determined by whether you have a net gain or a net drain of energy on a physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual level. And so we'll give the listeners an assessment that they can take, which is intuitiveintelligenceinc.com/burnout-RX.

And so you can do an assessment so that you can figure out, wow, if this is choose my own adventure, what area, my area, Or areas, am I having a net gain and where am I having a net drain? Because someone who's burned out, truly burned out, doesn't need to be reading a 300 page book, right? What they need is the emergency toolkit on page 20. And I'm happy for you to link that as well. If someone directly doesn't need to buy the book, but wants that emergency toolkit. What I put in there was the first thing we have to do is ground you back in your physiology. Because no matter what is draining you of stress, it's been going on for a while.

And so I know in your other episodes you've spoken of things like vitamin C and magnesium and all the things, the biochemical reactions going on in your body under stress that deplete you. And so what this will give you, the emergency toolkit, will give you a way to use your imagination, your breath, because it's called guided imagery, right? That's one tool that I'm thinking of right now. Guided imagery is a way that. You use your mind, just like athletes use their mind at halftime to imagine themselves holding the trophy and celebrating a victory at

the Super Bowl. Or a diver in the Olympics creates that perfect 10 visualization. We too can use that imagery to help ourselves heal before a surgery.

There's studies that have been done showing that people who have guided imageries before they go into surgery need less pain medication on the way on the other end and heal faster. Now, you don't need to be going in for surgery for this. You need to be living in our everyday world to be benefiting from this. Now, how do we know this works? I want you to just take a really simple example, a nightmare. You're lying in bed, someone's chasing you, you're falling off a cliff, they're breaking in. I don't know what they're doing. In your mind, your body doesn't know the difference between thoughts that are real or imagined.

So when someone's breaking in your dream or chasing you or whatever it is. All of a sudden you wake up, your heart's pounding, you're sweating, you're throwing the covers off. You look around and it's pitch black and silent because your body doesn't know the difference between what's real or imagined. So if that's what happens in a nightmare. Why wouldn't we flip that and use that capability to take us to our favorite place? Maybe it's a safe place, a place you feel safe and comfortable. And so there's experiences like that. If somebody knows when they're listening right now, oh my God, I am totally burned out and you don't feel like you've got the bandwidth to do that.

Do much more than listen to this podcast, right? Go there and just get some exercises that will help your physiology reset itself. You also talk about breath work. I've listened to breath work is great too. There will take you through exercises more than that. There is so let's just start, let's start physical, okay? So on a physical level, I speak about the way you nourish yourself. Okay. And the frequency with, during the day, you got to find what's right for you and that you're eating. Whole foods, rather than what my friend Mark Hyman calls Frankenfoods, food that is in a box or is packaged and is not really wholesome food for you.

Then there's sleep. Are you getting seven to nine hours of quality sleep a night? I, of course, you know what's so amazing? Yes, I wear my Aura ring. But I get really upset with myself when I wake up in the morning and I don't check in with my body. I look at my readiness score. Hehe. Am I done yet? Am I ready? I don't even check in with my own body anymore. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Do you know what I mean? Yeah, absolutely. That's one of the, it's paradox, and part of the reason that we're in the situation that we're in is we're not checking in and paying attention to that internal data and it, our body is, and I, this was, Oh, a big part of, when I was researching you, that it kept jumping out was like, You directing us to pay attention because our body is very good at telling you stuff if we're listening. And so we get dependent on these external things to tell us how we feel, ironically, right? And it's cool that

we have this stuff, but we need to cultivate our own internal intelligence because it is far more powerful than any of this stuff.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: If I, if we think back to our ancestors, The rustling of leaves would be the difference between life and death for them. That's how tuned in they were, right? Paying attention to their surroundings, paying attention to their gut. We notice animals, whether it's a tsunami, a fire they know they sense, even, do you ever notice how animals just come and snuggle up next to a person who has like peaceful, harmonious energy?

Animals know. So there's this instinctive inner world and I call it, it's chapter four in the book, and it's really about deciphering our body's unique language. So for me I was excited to come and meet you and be on the podcast today. And I noticed, and I said to my partner, Oh, like I feel a little bit of contraction, like in my throat and a little bit of turning in my stomach. Now that's my body's way of saying I'm excited. Sometimes it's my body's contracted way of saying you're not speaking your truth but I've learned to decipher in what situations my body's trying to communicate with me. But for you, it might be something totally different. And for the listeners, it might be. They're heart racing or sweating. Do you know what it is for you when you get a little out of your comfort zone? Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, maybe..

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Like when you're out, go on vacation and it's a little out of your comfort zone.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay. All right So I tend to have bigger things happen, right? I'm not really a person who experiences a lot of if i'm, Doing something, you know going on TV. For example, I don't really get nervous around those kinds of things or experiencing anxiety or anything like that.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I know what those things feel like.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Back in the day I would experience some of those things, but I'm very comfortable. I'm just very comfortable Doing the things that I'm set out to do.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Maybe I'm not because maybe I compartmentalize and I carry things. And it might show up, for example, this is the second year in a row where I take a vacation time and my entire vacation I'm experiencing neck pain, right? Second year in a row, no neck pain through the year, any other time. But, and it was, it was a result, the neck pain was a result of a knot showing up in my muscles, like in my shoulder and, causing some restriction on one side and then, I work I've picked up skill set from last time this happened and I work on that, work that knot out and I can move my head with more range of motion, the next day the knots on the other side hey, tapping me on the shoulder, hey!

And, I'm going to pass this over to you, but one of my kind of superficial, because it's not really superficial, this is an internal investigation as well, but being able to get an outside perspective, I'm grateful for that, but it's just really you know, carrying the weight on my shoulders, and being dedicated to changing things. And I have this thing and I'm about to say it out loud. I don't know if I've ever said this before out loud, but just, I want my life to matter. I want to make sure that when I leave here, things are better than when I got here. And I've already seen some incredible things, but also there are growing other issues at the same time.

And, so do I carry this weight on my shoulders and also. My family, my kids and wanting to be a good example and all the things. And so maybe it's when I have my quote, time off, my body's you got time to feel this. Now you've got time to feel this stress that you've been carrying, that you've been able to maybe cope with and show up and kill it and do all the things that you set out to do. But you know what? You've got some things you didn't process. And so now I'm going to have your head straight ahead. So is this, I don't know if this is sounding?

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Oh, this is amazing. Okay. I'm going to take a little left turn here and we're going to give everybody a tool that's listening. So when I went on burnout, medical leave for burnout, I started researching and I found that. 80 more, more than basically stress causes or exacerbates more than 80 percent of all illness. So stress is not a bad thing. Like we said, you can have you stress. You can have for me deadlines, get me moving.

That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about unmanaged chronic stress or the things that we avoid in order to keep this stream going right. That we may not have fully resolved to keep this going. So when I figured that out, I started. Asking my patients all right, first, I came back and asked all my colleagues, Hey guys, if stress causes or exacerbates more than, 80 percent of all illness, rather than having someone having a heart attack and us heroically saving them, getting chocolates and cards and flowers from the family were amazing.

And then three years later, they're back in bed nine with another heart attack. That felt like a revolving door to me. And that was the moment I realized. I wasn't solving their problems, I was band aiding them through a crisis. And, if stress is at the root of this, why are we not asking them what's at the root of their stress once we physically stabilize them?

I asked countless doctors, my colleagues, in all disciplines, and they gave me some version of this. Neha, we're already so busy. Why on earth? We wouldn't order a test. That we didn't know what to do with the result. Why would you ask a question that you didn't know what to do with the answer? And I was infuriated. I was like, because the world is depending on us to figure this out. That's why we would do it. And so I decided to go off on my own and this is what I started doing. Five questions. You can apply it to your health, and I'm going to ask you right now. But you can apply it to much more than your health.

Why you didn't get the job, the relationship, whatever it is. So just whatever's natural, and you've started to already sort through quite a few of these, but whatever comes to you in each of these questions, just let that be the right answer. So it's called the Awareness Prescription. So question number one. Why this? Why a heart attack? Why not someone's liver or their left leg? Why did this part of your body start talking? And so for you, it is your shoulders, right? And it's not one side, it's both. And so I think you, you started on that one. So why this?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah I think I, I started to allude to it, which is like just carrying so much weight on my shoulders, trying to, and crazy enough, we leaned into this a little bit earlier, but single handedly. And I over the I would not have gotten to this place had I not started to outsource but I can see As i'm talking to you right now why you're so good at this because as i'm talking this out I'm seeing where I have contracted over the past year and where I have not connected where i've not worked with others where i've not You know outsourced and you know deloaded. And Yeah, I can see that and this is hitting me like a ton of bricks because as I mentioned, it was literally one year ago. Through the vacation, then I was fine. Same thing this last time. I started back to work yesterday and it was as if nothing had ever happened, it progressively got better, but it was still like 20 percent more to go then boom, it was gone when I started back to work.

And yeah, so that's definitely what it is. I've contracted, I have really And you asked me this before we got going, initially started when my father passed away right before the first time this happened. And, I definitely had some feelings still of being, A light, being the one to uplift my family and to take care of things and being the one that people can count on and not sharing that stress, even with the people close to me.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. Whew. Just feel it. Feel it. Feel your bottom on the chair, feel your feet on the floor. So the night before I discharge people, these are the five questions I'd be asking them to help them get to the root of their stress. So question number one, why this? And we just explored why your neck and shoulders, carrying the weight of the world. And on multiple levels. So then, question number two. Why? Now, so that would be why on those two vacations specifically, why not three years earlier? Why not two weeks later? Why literally in those intervals has it been contained?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Because in the day to day I was caught up in the day to day. I didn't have time to feel what I was feeling. And I also have these practices that keep me going, right? Very similar, you had a conversation with Mark Hyman, like we have these wellness practices that can band aid things, right? And actually having the time where my mind is free, where I've determined, okay, I'm not going to do the day to day thing. I'm not going to push the envelope and focus on service. I'm just going to. To power down and then that's when the onset of this symptom would come up.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. When you slow down and there's actually time for you. Literally, not a practice, not a schedule that you've got to get through, not a routine that you've put in place, but the unstructured space of new, unknown, unfamiliar, right? Then your body gets a chance. It knows it's not in that thing and it gets to relax. And the moment it relaxes. It goes knock, knock, knock, knock... Are you there? If you're not paying attention, it knocks a little louder. And then when you get it out of one side, it's oh no, I'm not done. And it's going to keep going, right?

So it's interesting, when something's showing up, something unresolved on a mental, emotional, social, and spiritual level will eventually show up in your body to get your attention. So not only did you have the grief of losing your father, but you had the added responsibility of I'm already moving at this pace. I better step it up, right? And so you'll meet that challenge. You've trained your physical body, your mental and emotional self to do the thing because the higher purpose becomes my life better matter. And in the process, the question becomes, are you allowing all of you to integrate on that journey? So question number three. Since Hindsight's 2020, what clues, signals, patterns, are perfectly clear now that maybe you didn't pick up along the way, but now you can see them, anything?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Communication, being able to share, In real time, you know how I'm feeling if something, is weighing on me, literally, you know Especially with my best friend my wife My friends my friend group, I've been very much and they know it, you know I've been MIA, you know the past year. You know so much less just responsive, and just because each time I felt if I showed you how many, let me, I'm going to show you right here. Matter of fact,

since you're right here, this is, look how many unread messages I have. Do you see that at the bottom, the text?

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Oh, 629.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Unread. Unread. So this is in real time and I didn't even realize it until vacation like oh my god. There are all these messages

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I want to respond to each person and I felt each time that I would like, I want to give them Proper attention. Yeah, so I'll reply to them later like later today, but then another two would come in. It's just like that's too much

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's Usher Raymond's confession right now.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, and it's amazing because if we don't pick these up It's almost not noticing that the half a cup of coffee turned into one turned into two so these are signals when my unread messages Move up another hundred, right? I went from the six hundreds to the seven hundreds. That's like it moving up. Yeah. So that's a great clue. And then the other thing that you're speaking about is that almost depersonalization space in the sense that you want to connect to your friends, but not now, if they could only, if they could see, Oh my God. And so there's this way that you're. Not connecting, right? Or when you do get to connect, I bet you it's like a deep dive. It's like you just make time for them.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, exactly. Exactly. And if I had it, if I had a healthier connection and I wouldn't have allowed this to pile on me and depersonalize, for the people that I have in my life now, so often they want to help. They want to be able to like for me to be able to offload some of this or, certain things that I want to accomplish and they could be right there to support that if I just took a moment, but of course there's also this underlying feeling of people wanting things from me as well that I might not have the bandwidth for and just like that all getting mixed up in a weird psychological gumbo.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: So a little bit of boundaries, right? Being clear on. Clearly, concisely, and compassionately being able to voice boundaries. The other piece, I think I use depersonalization in a little bit of a not gr not the right way. So depersonalization is more like, When we don't connect to someone, don't use their name, don't use their like the person

in bed nine. You aren't really depersonalizing with your friends. You're just distancing yourself from them. And you're doing that to conserve energy too. You're also feeling like if I connected to them, The dam could break. If you had to tell them what was really happening, it would be like, Oh, so you'd rather connect to them when you had that space and time to do it. But in the process, you're isolating a little bit and distancing. Okay. Question number four, what else in your life needs to be healed?

SHAWN STEVENSON: My son, my oldest son, he moved out recently and just that transition. Was not what we expected it to be, and expectation is part of the issue. That coming after it bookended. My father passing away, then going on this sprint to try to get this family oriented cookbook to the world.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And then my son leaving the nest.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just a month after the book comes out. And, I just wasn't prepared to process all this stuff and now I've got my little boy at home.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Oh, yeah, take a nice deep breath. This is so beautiful. There's so many people going through it right and You're feeling it, but this is what slowing down is and then you just let it move through you. I just want to say thank you because What I believe about us being emotional is that we trust ourselves enough. You trust yourself enough. You trust me enough. And you trust the listeners enough to show us what's close to your heart. Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Thank you.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. That piece of it is a big shift and a big change that you're going through. Yeah, and then I'd say question number five, if you spoke from the heart, what would you say?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Everything is going to be okay. Trust the process. Love myself, take care of myself. Pour into me, make myself a priority. Of course I carve out that time for myself to be strong for everyone else, and then another thing that's coming up is just to talk with the people that love me, talk with my son, yeah.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. What would you tell him? What would you tell him?

SHAWN STEVENSON: That I love him and I'm proud of him. And I believe in him. And he gets to write his own story.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: I can feel myself now. Thank you for that. So the awareness prescription. There was never a single patient that didn't know. What was at the root of their stress? Why something had happened? And what I believe is, every interaction, experience, relationship, I've known you for how long? An hour. And what I'd say is that it felt like a sacred exchange to me. That it doesn't as human beings, we don't need to know each other for a long time to dip in and choose to be real, to trust ourselves and share what matters. I did this every day with my patients, right? I think in health care. Giving people a physical prescription and telling them to take three pills twice a day and see you in two weeks Is a big miss on the healing and I just want to say thank you for being willing to be vulnerable on your own show And being willing to be the one to go through the questions. That can get to the root of your stress and then now just check in with your shoulders. It might be a little.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I feel lighter.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Oh good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I feel lighter right now. Good. I'm so grateful. I did not know this was gonna happen today. But yeah, I'm so grateful. And I knew I, we had a couple little synchronicities that we talked about before the show, but I knew that today was for me. And yeah, I didn't know what form this was going to come in, but yeah, I'm so grateful. Yeah. Thank you.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: You are so welcome. Thank you. You are so welcome.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We've got a quick break coming up, we'll be right back. If there was one beverage that is most correlated with reducing stress, it's tea. Now the only tea that I knew about growing up was sweet tea. Alright, my grandmother would make sweet tea or I'd go to different restaurants that ordered the sweet tea matter of fact, when Lipton brisk hit the scene, right? So this is sweet tea that was in bottles that you could buy from the vending machine. It was so full of sugar that it had this frosted appearance. It was like frosted tea. All right. So I'm not talking about that abomination of tea. I'm talking about. The storied traditional teas that have been utilized for thousands of years to support human health.

Now, one of the most well known and well researched teas that help to manage and reduce stress is green tea. Green tea contains a unique amino acid called L theanine. This is one of the rare nutrients that's able to cross the blood brain barrier with relative ease and impact

the activity of a neurotransmitter called GABA, which helps to reduce anxiety and makes us to feel more centered and relaxed. Now, some teas like green tea might have a small amount of caffeine, but because of L theanine, not only does it not have that stimulating effect, it actually helps to reduce and calm the nervous system. A peer reviewed study published in the journal Brain Topography found that L theanine intake increases the frequency of our alpha brainwaves, indicating reduced stress, enhanced focus, and even increases creativity.

Now, this is the most important distinction about this conversation. We're talking about green tea, not all green tea is created equal, not in the slightest quality matters immensely here more than ever, because not a lot of folks realize that even some organic teas are contaminated with heavy metals and microplastics. We want to make sure that we're getting teas from the best source possible. And the green tea that I drink is a matcha green tea that's actually shaded 35 percent longer for extra L theanine. It's the first quadruple toxin screened matcha. And there's no preservatives, sugar, artificial flavors, none of that stuff.

Just the highest quality matcha green tea in the world from Pique Life. Go to piquelife.com/Model. That's PIQUELIFE.com/Model. And you're going to get access to some of their incredible bonuses for the different bundles like free shipping and also an exclusive 90 day risk free guarantee. If you don't love Their matcha green tea or any of the products from Pique Life, you can send them back for a full refund. All right. So they're really standing behind their tea quality. They go above and beyond and highly recommend checking them out. It's piquelife.com/model. That's PIQUELIFE.com/model. And now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: We all have this ability, and unfortunately because we're and this is one of the things you talk about in the book as well. To the life that we are all living today, there isn't any time for it's not about disconnection. It's more like reconnection, like connecting to what is real. What is eternal? You mentioned earlier that rustling of the leaves and that being an indicator it being a very important data and Us evolving as a part of nature and now we have this distinction, us and nature, which is very strange because we are, we not be a part of it.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: We breathe out, the trees breathe in, the trees breathe out, we breathe in.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And now, today, we have this, and if you think of the span of time and how, the jumps that we've made, 10, 000 years of agriculture and being able to create industry eventually. That was just a spot. That was like a 200 year period after just figuring things out. And prior to that thousands of years of hunter gatherer and just a few decades of

even having computers, and suddenly we are at artificial intelligence, like these jumps in, I'm saying all this to say that. Part of the new world, the new terrain that we're trying to navigate is Endless access to us and endless access to data. But not "natural data", you know those inputs we evolved with.

But there's so much to consume so much digital data that we find ourselves spending our time in. And I'm not going to say wasting our time per se, but spending our time in people having 24 seven access to us. When there was a time, if you used to just go somewhere, you just go, you just be gone. I'll see you when I get back, and today we have an entirely different terrain that our biology. There's a mismatch.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That we're trying to adjust for and so I want to talk a little bit about that because I don't I know that most of us do not realize how much we are pulled and I'm not using this word lightly Okay, this isn't like a conspiracy, but we are pulled into this matrix.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. It's seductive. It's, here's the thing. I think we're going to have something called digital health pretty soon, right? Where we're going to be talking about that, just like we talk about our physical health and our mental, emotional, social, spiritual health, there's digital health too, because it's now how we communicate. It's now a whole another realm. Here's the thing, just like money, Just I think technology is the same as money. People make things good and bad, but I think these are just tools. And what matters is the consciousness of the user. No one demonizes Oprah for having the money she has, because the consciousness with which she uses it helps humanity.

She has nice things, she uses it to help the causes she cares about, and she is generous with others in many aspects. I don't think money is the problem. I don't think technology is the problem. But I do think the consciousness of us, as users, is what we need to be focusing on. So when I know my highest values, When I know that love, integrity, service, beauty, and play are some of my highest values, then when I'm making decisions, I can make them almost like with a grid of, does this pass my values filter test? An opportunity, I come up with it, or you come up with it, or there's one presented on, I'm scrolling through social media and there's some opportunity. We have to have better ways of decision making, because otherwise we get lost. It's almost like we are driftwood floating in the ocean. Versus being sailboats with a rudder that are influenced by the wind, but we're charting our own course.

And that's really what I wish for us. I wish for us that in this world, we're the ones who have put our brains together to co create this crazy fast world. And it would never have gotten

done if we didn't all collectively buy into it. I think that we do this and we shut down the body signals, my heart's passion, my soul, my spirit. I say those things are fine. I'm just going to get up and go to work and make my money for the day. I can only do that if I think, if I care more about what the collective thinks success is, and I want to live up to that. If I care about who I am, if I develop who I am and what makes me happy, and I have the autonomy within this collective to have me, we, and the world, we would all be aligned with what we love. It's almost like Burning Man. It's like people show up at Burning Man. With their gift, whatever that is, right? No.

SHAWN STEVENSON: No, I'm just having another synchronicity. Just today, I was making my wife's coffee and she was like, do people still go to Burning Man? Literally today, she said that. So as you were saying.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: I went in 2012. In 2012, I went. I was about to give a talk, a TEDx talk on The community cure. And it was a part of me that felt a little bit like a fraud. How am I the one giving the community cure talk when I haven't experienced what many people, what was that? I guess 12, 12 years ago described as one of the most powerful communities. And so I went there and what I really got was that if each one of us shows up with our gifts and the spirit of generosity, we'll have what we need. But if we're all trying to be. Make the most money, attain the highest number of likes, whatever it is that society tells us is most important. We're contorting ourselves into a pretzel to try and become something so others will like us.

Then when they like us, it's like a double edged sword because I'm like, Hey, listen, you don't really know me. This isn't me. This is the contorted version of me. And so how do we help people now you're doing it through this amazing podcast and your books. But it's like, how do we become a world that individually knows who we are, that collectively is honoring each other's boundaries, able to speak and voice what we need. Connects and is open to our differences and celebrates those as what makes us unique and beautiful. Boy a skyline would be so boring if it was the same You know the same shape and size.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Screensaver skyline.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. Yeah. And so I think that's really how I think about it, yeah, I think this whole digital space we have to raise our children now with time away and a little bit of what we had growing up, which was the, like playing outside with no agenda, like feeling things. They're so afraid of conflict. Do you know, even on my own team. They would rather send me a video of themselves that they can control before they hit send than do a real

FaceTime or make a real phone call. The real time nature is the danger now. It feels scary. It feels too unknown. But then what are we doing to human interaction?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. We're taking part of the reason I transitioned to this was like our access to so much information and the ability to also again, use it ethically and to support and just be of service and all the things is that I have that access through it all to keep working, right? And, again, it can be a distraction from paying attention to the thing that is festering underneath the surface. And you taking me through these exercises and I encourage again, all of us make sure to get a copy of the book and to be able to utilize this knowledge, ask ourselves, do the internal investigation for ourselves because what could potentially happen, let me just give a different scenario.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm dealing with this pain and I don't have any clue about it. Like I was myself. 25 years ago and experiencing that, I might go to see my physician like, Hey, I'm just in a lot of pain, can't really move my head very well. I've got these knots in my shoulder.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Here's an inset.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah. And so..

SHAWN STEVENSON: No investigation into what is the root cause. And now that might give me some relief, but my body is giving me important feedback and it could be through an acute thing. You could be a little trauma, but..

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Yeah, but what we know is your headache is not an Advil deficiency. That's it. It will temporarily get you through. And so there's these two tracks. I'm not against medication. I take thyroid medication each morning. But when you're taking pain medication, that's the acute relief. And then underneath, we're trying to help you figure out what is going to solve and resolve this. And it's the same way with burnout. When people are burned out, let's say they go to the EAP Employee Assistance Program. The Employee Assistance Program sends them to me. Now I've got a few tools that I could give them. One is, I have the power of the pen to write them for paid time off. The second thing is, I can give them some cocktail of medications, an antidepressant, anti anxiety or insomnia medication, depending on the presenting symptoms.

These are really good because if someone's about to fall over the cliff, I get to pull them back, stop that train from just, going right over. And I get to help knock their physiology back into rhythm, getting them to sleep again. Here's the problem. Ten days, Two months later, I send them back in the ring for round two without any idea of what happened. So the acute phase is this phase and then there's the parallel phase, which is why I wrote Powered by Me, which is, all right, if you want to figure out on your time off, What the underlying causes are and how to turn those around. That's going to be important. And what I found when I asked all my patients, the awareness prescription, those five questions, and by the way, I'll, I'm happy to give that to your group as well.

If they want the awareness prescription and a place that they can just fill all those in. What I found was that 85 percent of my patients would describe some What's at the root of their stress as being the inability to communicate with themselves or the people they love or lead? Now what you described in your awareness prescription was, wow, I might not be processing my own pain. That's you communicating with yourself. And with those you love and lead, your son, your community, your grief with your father, feeling that responsibility. So when I realized that communication was such a big piece of the root of people's stress that's when I decided I better put together something really comprehensive because how people get to burnout is as unique as their fingerprint, right?

They have such a unique. set of circumstances that bring them there And so when you look at the net gain net drain of physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual. You can capture Everybody and they'll say something like oh, it's physical and emotional. Oh 10 years ago It was definitely spiritual when I didn't know have meaning in my career and whatever Oh, but now it's so now it's a way that simplifies it, and demystifies it for them

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love this. We are nearing the conclusion of this conversation, which we're going to have many more in the future.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: You bet.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And if you could. Give us just little micro bits because of course like we started to unpack the physical side. You mentioned the nutrition inputs, the sleep inputs, so let's just give a little glimpse into these other categories.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Let me just run down what I would say here. Physical energy, I want you to get a pulse check of where you are in this moment. It may change tomorrow, right? But you wanna know, oh gosh, where am I? Where am I having a net gain? Net drain physically? Am I nourishing myself with physical, whole foods at whatever intervals feel right

to you? I know some people are doing fasting, et cetera, but at the right intervals for me. Next question, am I sleeping seven to nine hours of quality sleep per night? Now, some people can do less than that, but I have to say there's too many people who think they can do less than that. Next, your energy. Do I have consistent energy throughout the day or do I hit those three o'clock energy dips?

Are there times after lunch or whatever where I'm not feeling so great? Next is do I have a joyful way to move my body multiple times per week? And it's about how satisfied are you? With each of these categories. I'm not telling you have to follow what I think is right I want you to ask yourself how satisfied you are with that and anything that's less than a 10 Underneath it just right in each of these categories. What would make it a 10? You've got your whole plan right there physically. Let's move to mentally is really about there's different ways that we think So let's say I was supposed to show up for this podcast and there was no email, no text, and 15 minutes had gone by and I didn't show up. What's the first thought that would come to you?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is she crazy? She's missing out. No, I'm just kidding. Probably that, you're just running late. Something must have happened that's slowing you down.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Okay. Or, you might have think, she is so rude. She should have at least contacted us. I know we sent the number. Or, you could have thought Wow, I might've gotten the day wrong, right? And you might've thought about your, okay. There's different ways when something happens that's unexpected. There's different ways our brain processes it, personalizes it, makes it about me. It might be my fault. Project it, make it about you. It's your fault. You were rude. Or makes it bigger than me. Oh, it's LA traffic. Oh, maybe her flight didn't come, right? Whatever it is. So that's generalizing. In the mental category, you want to take a moment to gather what are the top three thoughts that run on repeat in your mind, the ones that run while you're driving down the highway or in the shower or when you wake up first thing in the morning.

Write down those three thoughts that are running in the back on repeat. And then underneath it, pay attention to your body, whether it's constricted, tight, heavy, that's net drain, or open, relaxed, and light, that's net gain. You know how you said at the end of the awareness prescription, I feel a lightness, net gain of energy, but you're doing a body check in, not just a head check in, not just a heart check in, but a body check in. So when you write down these things, three common thoughts that are on repeat in your head, checking with your body, net gain or net drain on those three thoughts on repeat. Okay. Emotional energy. Pretty easy one to know whether you have a net gain or net drain. I'd ask you where in your life are you avoiding Challenging emotions or conflict, home, work, social, right?

Where in your life are you avoiding those conversations? You can feel it already. It's Oh, that drain. And the flip of that, what areas of your life bring you joy and peace? So you check those and then check in with your body. And overall, do you have a net gain or a net drain? Then we move into social. Social is easy. Write down the top five individuals or groups of people you spend the most time with. I'm looking at the team here. The most time with and online or in person. And as you're writing that in underneath, pay attention to your body checking in because your mind might say, Oh , I can sleep when I'm dead. I don't need to sleep right now, but your body will feel heavy. So that's why those have to be in alignment, your body with your mind. So once you write down the five people or groups of people you spend the most time with, then put net gain, net drain, and then look across them. Okay. and then give yourself in a social level, what are you overall, and then you move into spirituality.

Spiritual, people said to me, why did you write a spiritual energy section in a book that's quote, a business book? And I said, because I think it's the most important section that drives everything else. What I mean by spiritual energy is, do you know what your highest values are? Can you name them? And do you make, are you able to make quick and effective decisions using your highest values? So that's about alignment. And this leads into self trust, which is how do you navigate the unknown? We're in a world moving faster and faster by the minute. How do you assess your own self trust? The part of the awareness prescription for burnout that I'll give you in the notes is essentially asking you, in what arenas do you take risks? Physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually, financially, entrepreneurially, what is it? So for me, what I'd say is, mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and financially, entrepreneurially, yes. Up until recently, definitely not romantically and definitely not as I'm not the one jumping out of a skydiving out of an airplane.

Like people go bungee jumping and I'm like, I'll drive you there. I'll take the photos like you're doing the bungee jumping. So right away when you hear where I take risks and where I don't, you automatically know where I trust myself and where I don't. So when people answer that'll help them in the spiritual energy because that's where you're playing it safe and you're contracting versus taking the risks. Like even today, you taking the risk to just answer so open heartedly, right? That's an emotional risk. And people want to understand that part of the spiritual energy. And then it's about how do you feel valued and appreciated both at home and at work? And lastly, do you feel connected to your life, where you put your energy, that it has a bigger impact and meaning and purpose in the world beyond you?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh, that's so good. The risk often determines the capacity for reward, and so this has been so awesome. There's so much more and can you let everybody know where they can pick up a copy of the book? And also you mentioned a couple of URLs.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: To share some resources as well.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: All right. So intuitiveintelligenceinc.com is where you can find my world. And the book is everywhere. So anywhere you buy books, so Barnes and Noble and anywhere online. And the URLs that I think will be the most useful for today are the awareness prescription for burnout, which is intuitiveintelligenceinc.com. So [inc.com/burnout-RX](https://intuitiveintelligenceinc.com/burnout-RX). So that's going to give them that overall pulse check. It also has six videos of me walking them through each piece. The second URL that I think is really important is the awareness prescription and that will be intuitiveintelligenceinc.com/awareness. And those are the five questions to ask when you're facing a dilemma to help you get underneath what's happening and really get to the root. So take care of it acutely Transcribed And then get to the root in parallel for what's happening.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. So generous. Thank you. I am so grateful for this conversation today. You're amazing.

DR. NEHA SANGWAN: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Dr. Neha, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. Please share this out with somebody that you care about. This is an incredibly important topic. Again, a lot of times this issue is happening behind the scenes and We get swept up in the life and we don't really know that it's happening and burnout is imminent. So again, this is one of those where sharing is truly caring. So you can send this directly from the podcast app that you are listening on.

Of course you pop over to the YouTube channel and check out the video version of the episode. And if you feel inspired, please share this out on social media. Share with the community over there. You can take a screenshot of the episode and share it out on Instagram and X, formerly known as Twitter. And Facebook, wherever you like to do your sharing, please share this out with people that you care about. It's such an important message. 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.