



**EPISODE 842**

# **Nutrition Secrets From the #1 Place on Earth for Longevity**

**With Guest Simon Cheng**

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**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Today you're going to discover some secrets from the place that's ranked number one in the world in global longevity. What are they eating? What are they doing? What's causing people to live? So long not just lifespan but healthspan living healthfully into old age. What are these secrets? And not only that, we're going to look at what can go wrong when somebody moves away from that environment and those principles and the ramifications that can have on somebody's health. And I'm telling you, this story is going to blow your mind, but also the insights and their rich history. And these secrets that should not be secrets are so powerful. And I'm so excited to share this with you today. And before we get to our amazing special guest, let's kick to the Apple podcast review of the week.

**ITUNES REVIEW:** Another five star review titled "What the world needs now is Shawn sweet Shawn" by addictive in a good way. If I had three wishes, one would be that this man, this cause reached the height of his targeted success. All this drive and passion for what a sexy six pack and a seven figure income. No, he's stopping nothing short of revolution. He is leading the charge to throw off the chains of big business and lack of information to bring the joyful and youthful expression of our awesome genes for everyone. This is the biggest reason I love Shawn and hope for his success. He's helped me learn that bringing health justice to all communities is a critical cause that can and must be addressed as a priority today. He gives us powerful information to positively impact our own health and then calls us to action to empower the change for every man, woman, and child.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yes. Thank you so much for leaving that review over on Apple podcast. I received that. Thank you for sharing your heart and that hit my heart and listen, if you have to do so, please pop over to Apple podcast and leave a review for the model health show. And on that note, let's get to our special guests and topic of the day.

Our guest today is the incredible Simon Cheng, and he received degrees from Harvard and Stanford and is a member of the Harvard School of Public Health Nutrition Roundtable. Simon is also the founder and CEO of Pique Life, a wellness company that's dedicated to beauty from within and education through cutting edge science and nutrition. Let's dive into this conversation with the incredible Simon Cheng.

All right. I've been excited about this for quite some time. I actually told my son. That's going to be talking to you today and our experience a few weeks ago, actually having tea at your headquarters, but it's really good to see you. Thank you for coming. Hang out with us today.

**SIMON CHENG:** For sure. For sure. It's great to see you, Shawn. Thanks so much for having me. I'm so grateful to be here.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** It's my honor, man. I love to start off by talking about the longevity connection between where you were actually born and raised, because I don't think a lot of people really realize data that's coming out of Hong Kong.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, so Hong Kong the women in Hong Kong live the longest. Ever since the tsunami hit Japan, we rose to the number one basically and it's an incredible Phenomenon because if you think about Hong Kong, it's like this bustling place. It's super hectic. It's the biggest stock market force. You know, one of the biggest in the world, how are these people living so long?

Men are also like in amongst the top, obviously women are ranked number one. And it's a place where there isn't a lot of space to move around very tight. But the one thing that we do really well, or they're two things, but the most important thing is people in Hong Kong eat super well. So it's an island a lot of people don't realize that right? So there's a ton of fish. There's a lot of fresh vegetables that we get from China. And, you know from a very, you know, the culture of eating there is centuries old, right? So it's like actually it's probably millennia old. So it's constantly been refined. It's like how do we eat better? How do we eat healthier?

And how do we make these things that taste good, but also make us live longer, right? And the cuisine, the art of the cuisine has gone very sophisticated. One of the things that we do in Hong Kong is every day there's like a soup, right? And this soup is made according to different recipes. The recipes Change according to the weather. And so every season, every month you know, whether it's in that day in January, it's raining or it's like dry and hot there's a different set of herbs that go into that soup. Right, every single soup has like some collagen foundation to it, right? So it's either like fish or it's pork or it's beef or it's chicken.

So there's always some, you know, like entirety, some entire bones plus tendons and the bone marrow and the meat and everything goes into that broth. Right. And even like the type of protein you use changes according to the weather. And you know, in this kind of broth culture is this foundational concept that your body is responding to external factors, right? And I guess this ties into the whole traditional Chinese medicine approach. You know, your body is like a mini universe. There's a outer universe, right? The weather you know, what's happening humidity, the heat, the cold, and then inside is changing according to your age and all these things. And how do you balance those two things? And the broth is one of the key elements.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's powerful. Just the fact that we're looking at nutrition through the lens of helping to adapt. And have synergy with the environment, with the world around you, you would think that would be super obvious. But even with the evolution of culture in Hong Kong, we're still seeing this foundation of again, paying attention to adaptation.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yes, absolutely. You know why that is, is because it tastes great. Think about that. It's every season you have certain soups to look forward to. It's like, Oh, it's the summer. Season for melon soups or it's the winter. Time for soups that are incredibly warming and you miss those things. So when those seasons come along, set of foods is not just soup. It's like all these seasonal things come into play, and so eating seasonally, like people know that's super important. And when you get that deeply passionate about the food then you also become deeply passionate about the source of the ingredients. So this fish is better than that fish, or that the season for this fish is at the end. This soup isn't good anymore or you know, like these vegetables. Oh, you can only get it for these two weeks, now's the time to eat it. All these things actually have medicinal qualities to them. They're meant to be eaten during these seasons. And so ultimately it provides a super balancing effect.

Obviously community, which we haven't touched on is a second hugely important part. And it's a very interactive city. It's very small. So there are like 7 million people. The main islands that are populated are pretty tight. Terms of living space. So a lot of people have to get out of their homes. What are you going to do the weekend? You're not going to sit at home and hang out. And it's just, everyone's living in a very small space. And so when you go out with your family, you go out to meet other people, meet other friends. So there's a huge emphasis on socialization. Constantly hanging out with my friends. My mom, she goes dancing. She has mahjong. She has her card games. She goes to museums, always with friends, and concerts. And, you know, it's great that when seventies, she has a, like a headaches, more vibrant social life than I do. And just think about that for somebody who's at that age where she's got a packed social schedule and she's going on trips to do things with her friends, like how invigorating that is, right?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Now the question would be, what happens when we don't have these inputs. When we don't have our nutrition with regard to what's happening in the world around us and helping us to adapt. What happens when we don't have that input, this epigenetic influence of environment and community and social support and outlets for us to connect as human beings. When we start to pull those things away, I would imagine we start to develop some dysfunction.

**SIMON CHENG:** Completely, man. Just look at the world we live in. You know, today is massively dysfunctional. It's there.

There are two holidays where you see your family, otherwise, you know, parents are, they don't see you. They don't see their grandkids. And even those moments you hear the way people talk about Thanksgiving, it's like a huge emotional wait and burden for a lot of people to gather, you know, be together. And it's just it's so rare to begin with. I think, you know, the biggest problem is with the food is it's, you know, going to the supermarket and getting your chicken skinned with just a piece of breast in a plastic wrapper, and your salad, you know, it comes in a box that's triple washed.

That stuff never goes bad. And by the way, we've all washed salad before and it goes bad pretty fast in those boxes it stays like perfectly Chris what? Two weeks. It's obviously something that's been added to it for a fact there is, but it's like what's going on in these situations where the salad dressing is like in a packet or a bottle. So there's like a total disconnect between eating blueberries every single day, regardless of the season. There's a total disassociation with the whole external internal balance that we're talking about. Because all foods become this evergreen thing. You eat it every single day. You don't prep it. Everything is done for you. Everything's about convenience and whatever your favorite thing is like chicken fingers. You eat that every single day. You don't want to try anything else. And yeah, for sure. You develop metabolic dysfunction.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Let's talk a little bit about one of these other X factors in Hong Kong. Again, we're talking about a number one place on earth right now. Again, we've got data to affirm this, if we're talking about longevity, And there is a very large tea culture. Can you talk a little bit about that?

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, of course. Of course. It's, I think it's a big thing in all of greater China and probably many parts of Asia. The studies are pretty well known. Harvard school of public health, they recommend drinking three or more cups of tea a day to experience health benefits. It's not like the one every week or the one when you're sick and you have flu, right? Tea is something you need to drink quite a bit of, and in Hong Kong, the minute you sit down in a restaurant, you're served tea.

Right, you've been to Japanese restaurants. They're like, do you want tea? Do you want water? So in the offices in Hong Kong, there's a person that comes around filling everybody's teacup. There's actually like a tea lady or like a tea uncle that comes to serve tea to everybody. So they're drinking tea throughout the day, basically lunch, dinner, you might start at home and breakfast. And it's just this thing where it's like, there's a cup or there's a kettle, there are leaves in there and you just keep filling it, right? And maybe it gets weak, you change the leaves out, but your whole kind of hydration thing is based on tea and hot water. And so you're getting like an immense amount of antioxidants through that process.

And again, it's like this incredibly enjoyable thing where there are all these different varieties. You don't want caffeine. You can have this, you want caffeine, you can have that. You want black tea, green tea, fermented tea, like the works, right? Everyone has their favorite, different foods go with different teas. So it's again, really just part of the whole culinary kind of culture and tradition.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's fascinating.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So just going to work and somebody comes along with tea.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's very different.

**SIMON CHENG:** For sure. Even like you work at JP Morgan, there's somebody that's doing that, right?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Now this gets into what happened with you, you know, because you grew up in this environment and then you came to the U S to go to school and going to Stanford and getting this education and you ran into some serious health issues.

**SIMON CHENG:** That's right. That's right. So it was interesting. So I grew up in the eighties and as a child, as a teenager You know, just get sick, right? You get sick, you get the flu, you have a sinus infection, whatever, right? It's just common. I remember my grandma telling me every time you're sick, you got to go straight to see the doctor immediately and take all the drugs, all the medication, make sure you finish everything, right? Especially the antibiotics.

And in the 80s in Hong Kong, there was a huge shift away from TCM, traditional Chinese medicine. It was like, Oh, you know, that's not scientific. It's BS. It's old. Forget about that stuff. It's all about modern science. And so every year I got sick, and so I was taking antibiotics for nasal infections. Of course, my immune system just got weaker and weaker. I was doing steroid sprays for blocked nose, you know, and then like issues breathing, steroid sprays for the throat, like asthmatic, skin issues, steroid creams for that, antibiotics for acne. And so like every year was like a rotating door through the doctor's office, like multiple courses of antibiotics and steroidal treatments every single year.

Right, from like adolescent onwards. And then in my twenties My health, I think, really just hit like a roadblock, right? So I had two operations. Both my lungs collapsed, got staples in both lungs. And then the final kind of hammer on the nail was when I turned 30. I was at Stanford at the time, and I knew I had sleep apnea, right? Of some sort. I snored girlfriends would be like, you snore friends. I shared rumors that you got, you should check it out. So finally, when I was at Sanford, I was like, this must be the best hospital in the world. I'm going to go check it out now. And sure enough, I went to the sleep center and my score was severe.

So severe obstructive sleep apnea. And the doctor said, you're going to die. There's like a 85%. A higher chance you're going to die of stroke, a heart attack, premature death. And I was like, Oh my God, so alarmed. And they told me that the standard of care is to use a, this machine, a CPAP machine. But you're young, you have to think about your love life. Literally the words they said, you got to think about your love life. You don't want to be sleeping with a machine. You probably, you don't know what you're going to be doing. You're bright, promising career. You're going to have to travel a lot. You don't want to travel with a machine, but we got it figured out.

We invented the surgery. That's like, everyone's doing now greater than like somewhere mid 80 chance of success, non invasive. So I was like, damn, sign me up. Like, this is like, I won the lottery, like up here in the right time, right place. And I just remember the most visceral thing is you know, after the surgery, I was in the ICU, and I just looked at the nurse. I was like, the ICU, why am I here? Did something go wrong? They're like no, this is just procedural. And then the next day, it was the look on my classmates face when they saw me. It's like my head was like the size of a watermelon. And they came in there, and these are friends of mine. They're like, we saw you yesterday.

Like what, like you elected to do this. Are you going to die if you don't do this? I was like, no, this is how it works. This is trust me. This is the way, this is the best, right? This is the method for curing my sleep apnea. And then it was like insanely painful recovery. Every time you breathe or cough, it's just intense pain. They basically cut out huge parts of my soft palate, radiated my turbinates. And then they're like, we're going to move your tongue out of the way. And I was like, how? And they're like, explained like in this very vague way. And I went on my summer internship after the surgery, you know, by the way, that the recovery is intensely painful, liquid codeine.

They were, there were points where it was like, I was numb to it. And so I had to wait, like I was watching the wire, like in the middle of the night, I was like, I got to distract myself because it's so painful. I can't even think. So I just watched the wire, like all seasons, that recovery.

And anyway, so I went on my internship and my jaw started swelling a little bit more every single day. And I was like, what the hell's going on? Called the doctor and they're like, Oh, you know, you probably have a jawbone infection. Come back. I was in Shanghai at the time. And I was like, why? I was like, you didn't do anything to my jaw. And they're like we did actually, we cut a hole in it, pulled that piece of bone where it's connected to your tongue to move it out of the way.

There's like a tendon. And then we put a screw in there. So you got to come back. We have to take out the screw. I was like, what? Shocked right. And I'm not like. I'm not going to blindly do a surgery, right? Like the fact that I didn't know that is, is pretty, it's pretty bad, right? It's shocking, right. So I went back, they took out the screw and then they couldn't figure out what caused the infection. So I was on intravenous antibiotics for two months, broad spectrum through a PICC line going into heart valve, destroyed my summer. And they were like, you can either go to a chemo clinic or a dialysis clinic or self administer, but if you screw up, you're going to get a heart infection.

So I was like, you know what, I'll just do it myself. I don't want to spend four hours a day in like a dialysis clinic, and so healed the infection. I was like totally incapacitated the whole summer. And the surgery was a failure. It made my sleep apnea worse. Because of all the scar tissue. And I sleep with a CPAP. Like, 10 years after that surgery, I went to a sleep doctor in L. A. And they're like, Your score has improved by like 80%. I was like, oh my god, like, The T must be working. And they're like no, Stanford basically counts all these events as apneas that aren't to, Basically exaggerate the severity of the sleep apnea and the surgery now, like, you know commonly known as a success rate below 30 percent. So in any event like that was like the ultimate wake up call for me like this huge epiphany for wow, like I'm on a trajectory towards early death. And actually being heavily medicated and operated on between now and then. And so It was just, it was the best thing actually that happened to me, right?

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I'm just really thrown off right now. That is insane, you know? First of all, of course, the framing on how successful this surgery is, but the fact that they use psychology in..

**SIMON CHENG:** Nuts.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** In a really unethical way, you know, you gotta think of your love life, man, you know, if you're gonna, If you're gonna be out here smashing, we need to do the surgery. You know, like that is so unethical because again, the much less, not even much less, uninvasive option is there. You know, for them just to even test, but they're going into, you



know, again, every one of these. If, especially when we're talking about doing surgery in and around your face, it's, there's risk of complications.

And the fact that they also added in, and, you know, actually there's a screw in your jaw that you find out about later. Like this is, but this stuff happens all the time. And I'm so grateful that you also shared one of the most powerful things that you said, and I was really just moment stopped for me. Time stopped. It was, and you said that you were glad that this happened, that you were grateful that you went through this because you wouldn't be who you are today and you wouldn't impacted so many people. Also with your story and what you created, but you went through. When as I'm hearing that I'm like you had to go through a lot of suffering.

**SIMON CHENG:** Absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And it's so unfortunate and I wish you didn't have to go through that but that led you to figuring some things out for yourself and your health now compared to 15 years ago is the night and day.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So let's talk about what you did. What did you do to actually get well? What was that moment when you're just like this is insane what I'm doing and putting myself through because before you were advocate. Your classmates were seeing you like are you sure you're like no this is the latest greatest everybody's head blows up like a watermelon. It's gonna be fine. When did that shift to I need to figure out what's going on with me? And invest in me. Because you came from a culture where this is more normalized, of course that's changed also in Hong Kong as well. But what brought you back to the principles of wellness that many of us in our grandparents' culture and beyond was just a part of our lives.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. Yeah, totally. Totally. I think that the whole suffering thing is, it creates like a rebirth. I think that suffering is so interesting as a part of life. So the pivotal point for me was. When I went back to the doctor after I'd cured the infection, I'd already been like intensely disillusioned right after having spent a lot of my life with different prescription drugs and doctors intensely disillusioned, I went back to the doctor and I was like, expecting like an explanation or an apology and I was like, just looking at him and I was like, well? And he said, "Are you ready for phase two?"

And I was like Phase two involves cutting your jaw apart and expanding it to open the airways and I just looked at the guy. I was like, you know, are you fucking crazy like what? And so I just

like, that was like the whole chapter on, on doctors and medicine just, it, obviously it didn't shut because there's a very strong need for medicine, but it just, the lens completely switched. It was just like, you know, I just like threw those glasses away and put on new ones or just got rid of the glasses. And I went full tilt into believing in alternative approaches to health. I got very into traditional Chinese medicine. You know, it, you know, the food and the soups and all that stuff is not completely related because it's just food.

It's like how we eat, but then it's like, why do we do that? Like, how do we, how do I extend that into the more intense forms of therapy. Whether it's acupuncture or using herbs, medicinal herbs, that inquiry began, like started in earnest. And the very obvious kind of like progression of that was meditation. That, that was the thing that, that really blew my mind. I think I had always wanted to meditate since I was in my teens. I used to go around the forest reading the Tao Te Ching, this Taoist classic when I was in my teens and I knew that there was something very special there, but I never found a teacher.

And it was after that series of, in my early thirties, after that incident. One of my friends who was living in Jakarta at the time, he's like, Hey, Simon, I found this Qigong instructor. You got to come see him, it's 10 days long. You got to come to Jakarta. It's in Bahasa. And so you have to hire a translator. And I said, That sounds crazy, man. That's a long time. I said, why don't we just bring him to Hong Kong? We'll get a group together. We'll just pay him whatever he wants and just invite him to come over. And he's no, you don't understand this. This guy doesn't operate like that. His fees 30 or something for 10 days.

My translator ended up costing like three times more. And he's like, he only teaches when there's a big group that has to be at least 50 people. And it's because he wants to help as many people as he can. And when he told me that I was like, I'm coming. I booked my flight and I went and that experience in Qigong, I don't know how much the audience knows about this, but it's basically like a form of energy meditation. The pranayama is the yogic version and it involves moving your internal bioenergy around and focusing it. And this very specific technique that I realize is very popular. You reconnect meridians in your body during this 10 day period. And it's like raising the Kundalini. It literally just blows your mind.

There are two meridians in your body. One going down the front, the other one going down the back. When you're an embryo, it's actually embryonic breathing. It's like, you're using these meridians to circulate chi energy in your body. And then as you are born, and as you go through this massive growth spurt as an adolescent, those two meridians become like less relied upon for your survival. And they kind of shut down a little bit. The connection, the connectors for them just become deprioritized in your physiology. And so in this 10 day period, you do such an intense amount of meditation that those two things become

reconnected. And people have these incredibly visceral, very powerful reactions to it when it happens.

It's just like a breakthrough. And so I had this intense neck pain, chronic neck pain, back pain, and all my chi was like stuck in my neck. And where your chi is, the center of gravity shifts in your body. It's why in, in martial arts, they say, sink your chi, you know, sink your center of gravity. And so it blew open like a dam and there were other people that was like a guy who was in the military and a bayonet had cut, severed the nerves in his hand and his hand was going like this crazy. And then, you know, suddenly he could move his fingers again. There are people that have huge emotional reactions because they've been withholding so many things. But that was like the beginning for me of a whole new series of events that changed my life. It was from the meditation and I realized that this path of healing that I went on, it didn't just like heal me physically and mentally, but it really reconnected me with my soul basically, and helped me discover this path, this calling.

And that's why, you know, I say this surgery, the sleep apnea surgery was the best thing that ever happened to me because, you know, I now get to build a business that I started that. That fulfills me like every second, every minute of every day that I could see myself doing like to the day I die, you know, hopefully like I'm still functional like towards the later years. But it's like I derive so much fulfillment and joy and satisfaction and gratitude from what I'm doing. None of this would have been possible without that surgery and like the practice of my meditation and me going to the farmer's market to, to buy food and then to prepare it and feeding my kids like.

All of this stuff, man, like how I prioritize, like spending time with my family and friends and like the community, like all of this stuff is just, and being able to share it with people. I mean, think about what a gift that is, like, you know, I was in a terrible career before. Before any of this, it was like soul sucking. That's probably why I got sick all the time, by the way. They say with these respiratory illnesses, all, every illness I had was respiratory. It's actually your soul is grieving.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. It's tied to grief. And that could come in many forms. We tend to think about maybe loss, but it could be a loss of your purpose. A loss of connection.

**SIMON CHENG:** Absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. And wow, man, thank you so much for sharing that. That's very powerful. Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back.

As you know, mental health challenges have skyrocketed in recent decades without addressing the root causes shown in mountains of studies, including social isolation, sleep abnormalities, nutrient deficiencies, sedentary behavior, and many other factors. We'll continue to see rates rise and our communities struggling for solutions. It's so important for people to understand that no two cases of depression are alike. There are unique lifestyle and mental health work that each of us need in different situations. And right now in the United States, depression is the leading cause of disability.

It's the number one reason for people missing work and school. And so we've got to do something about this. Of course, medications can be helpful in some contexts, but most people are not educated about the science backed natural supplement that's shown to be just as effective as many medications. An analysis published in the journal of affective disorders found that the renowned spice saffron was just as effective as conventional antidepressant drugs like Prozac, Tofranil and Celexa. Additionally, the researchers noted that fewer people experienced side effects from saffron than from those other treatments. This should go without saying people should know about this. Something that's been utilized for centuries far safer and just as effective as conventional Antidepressant drugs. Now are we talking about curing this condition?

Absolutely not. We're talking about having another option to turn to something that can be supportive in an overall plan to support our mental health. There is no supplement. There is no drug that's going to fix everything. But again, people need to know about this. And there are great companies that are providing easy to use saffron supplements. Like the happy drops from Organifi. This includes a therapeutic amount of saffron, got you cola, passion flower, and ginger. They are amazing. You really do notice a difference. And I highly encourage you to look at the reviews for this product. I'm just going to share a couple with you because they really do stand out. Nicholas said, "happily surprised. He said, I was extremely skeptical of this product, despite all the good reviews. However, after using it daily for the past two weeks, I can definitely say they work. I definitely have an easier time staying positive and rolling with the punches of daily life with the help of Happy Drops".

Hillary said, "Happy Drops will make you happy you ordered. I found out about these little drops of bliss on Instagram. I was skeptical as every product makes claims that aren't always backed. Upon trying these Happy Drops, I've noticed a mood improvement, energy that lasts throughout the day, and improved sleep at night. I'm thrilled". Definitely check out Organifi's science backed gummies. Again, they're called Happy Drops. Head over to [Organifi.com/model](https://Organifi.com/model), and you're going to get hooked up with 20 percent off. Go to [ORGANIFI.com/model](https://ORGANIFI.com/model). Again, you're going to get 20 percent off store wide. Pop over there and check them out. And now back to the show.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I'd love to, to help for classically trained in our culture, science based mind to expand on, for example, and I just want to emphasize how remarkable this is. This is somebody who experienced to collapse the lungs and then finding out about the wonders and the impact that breath work could have actually being able to focus and to bring life and energy. And when you were inundated with this idea that, You know, your lungs are basically not yours. You're just a victim and we've got to bring in all these external things to try to fix your lungs and being able to have this inner energy. And not just not the fact that you didn't have it, but to reconnect to it in a way to realize that you did have it. So you mentioned meridians and you mentioned chi. So can you talk about what those two things are? respectively for my science based mind.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Everyone knows what acupuncture is, mostly, right? The way that acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine, including Ayurveda, the way that it works is, like, there's this map of the human body, and all the meridians that are in it. And these meridians think of them like rivers that break off into little streams and like little triplets. So they're big ones, they're small ones. They're like tiny little ones. And the things that connect all these meridians are like lakes or reservoirs, right. And what's flowing in this entire system is your chi.

Okay. In yoga, it's Prana, but it's basically a type of bioenergy that powers your body, right, and gives you life. And so, the way that Chinese medicine works is based on unblocking blockages in your meridian system. And so when people use acupuncture needles, it's actually diverting the chi from a place where it's plentiful into a place where it's blocked and dead, right? And so That's why with acupuncture you often have to go back again and again, right, for repeated therapy. With Qigong, it's basically, so Qigong actually means breathwork. Pranayama also means breathwork. The two disciplines are identical when you get to the core of it. Qi gong is actually the practice of the chi, the practice of the breath, right?

chi and the breath, two different things, but like very connected. When you practice it, you're able to channel that bioenergy to specific places, and the specific place that you channel to generally are the reservoirs, right? It's the safest way to practice. When you channel it to the reservoirs will overflow, and like water, right? Being channeled by gravity it will naturally flow to the places that are blocked and unblock them for you And so if you have a, you know, if you have a good, you know, solid practice of this type of breath work, you know, your body is constantly healing itself by unblocking things and you become hyper aware to where those blockages are, right? Like, you know, it might manifest in some physical form or, you know, like what we talked about earlier, it's some psychological form where there's like a redirection of stress that's created this physical ailment.

You know, back pain, neck pain, very common. I had eight years of chronic back pain that I healed through this John Sarno's book and combined with the breath work I couldn't even sit on a plane without plugging in a heat pack or like, you know If I didn't roll my back for 45 minutes a night on a ball like I wouldn't be able to function the next day. And within three minutes of reading his book it was gone forever but it was like the combination of my breath, what practice, plus that sort of knowledge. You know, you channeled the energy to unblock parts of your body. And herbs do a similar thing in the sense that they eliminate imbalances, right? And those imbalances prolonged over a period of time also creates blockage.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** I love the analogy with basically these lakes and then the rivers and streams, even, you know, venturing off from that. And this is really related to, you know, our circulatory system. It has all of these different, very strong bodies of water and then these branching off streams and lakes and tiny little capillaries.

**SIMON CHENG:** Totally.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And then the same thing goes with the limb system. The same thing goes with the nervous system, right?

**SIMON CHENG:** Absolutely.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And our ancestors figured this stuff out a long time ago that you can have blockages in these respective streams and backup energy and cause all manner of dysfunction. And also, you know, with the meridians and then. And this other aspect in it, I love that you with the Pranayama and Qigong and the similarities and thousands of years of education around this. And the chakras, for example, and these things aligning with certain glands of the body, right? And understanding there are certain things that we can do. It's not just about a physical application. It's energetic. Your body is made of energy. And so what are some of the things that we can do to help your body to release the blockages?

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** So this brings me into this really powerful conversation and every guest that comes in here and I was just so funny. We got, I got to do that with you today. Just like hey, we've got these incredible Pique teas over here You know, and we just, we're talking about a guest we had on recently my friend, Dr. Pedram Shojai, and I just made him a cup of that or who did somebody make that did you make that for him?

**Connor:** He made it for himself.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** He made it for himself. He just went over to the Pique Teas and made himself a mint tea. And you know, it's such a blessing because your standard and the way that you've done things is, it's in a different galaxy from everything else really. And I'd love to ask, what was the catalyst for you to create Pique? And also, what does Pique mean?

**SIMON CHENG:** Right. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So the catalyst to create Pique, like, you know, the motivation for it was, you know, my health journey. The thing that actually catalyzed it was, you know, when I was living in Shanghai, after I graduated from my master's program, I was trying to start like this healthy food business. It was like in 2009, we wanted to do cold press juices, you know, salad delivery, you know, basically having a super healthy lunch delivery because that sort of food didn't really exist. And it was something that we wanted to build fast service, like scale. It didn't work. It was terrible business.

Like restaurant business is super, super difficult. But because people knew that I was doing that sort of thing, I got sent a lot of products. And one of the products I got was like this tea crystal, right? And it came in this packet. And I remember very distinctly, it was like this kind of thing, gold kind of plasticky foil, like no instructions. It was my like handwritten note and I cut it open. I poured it into water and the whole thing turned black and I didn't even drink it. I have to be honest. I was like, Holy crap. I was like, I have no idea what this is. I'm not going to drink that. And the guy who sent it to me was like, You know, Simon, why don't you just come to Yunnan and meet the founder.

And, you know, it's not a close distance. It's like three hours or something like that, and by plane. And I was like, yeah that's really hard. And one weekend rolled around, nothing to do, no plans. And I said, you know what, like maybe I'll go to Yunnan, meet this guy. And the founder of this, the creator, the inventor of this tea crystal, he was this guy who was like a, he's like part of one of these minority tribes people. So there are these like indigenous people in Yunnan. So Yunnan is an amazing place. It's got the most biodiversity of mushrooms in the world of fungi. Incredible ecology. It's on the, it's in the foothills of the Himalayas all the way on the Western part of China. And it's like just North of like, you know, Vietnam and Thailand and that whole area, very dense tree coverage.

And he's like, listen, like my family, they've been tending to these tea trees for generations. And I finally, like my proudest achievement is that I've managed to like acquire like this mountain with tea trees on it, he's like, I want to show them to you. And I said, sure let's go. So we take this 10 hour drive into the country basically. And I remember where, you know, we go to these places, there's like no toilets, like we're just sleeping, like in rooms, like full of insects, like, it's nuts. It was actually very funny. And you know, we'd be like sitting around a campfire. He'd be like, you know, Simon tried this fish.



We just caught it from this river. It's like this whole thing. It's like, it's only in season for two weeks. He's like, you know, you just hold it and shake it. And the flesh just falls off it because it's so tender. And then they would bring out all these different like nuts and herbs. And it's like, you know, I could just feel like how insanely healing this stuff was. And then the flavor is just mind blowing. And then finally he takes me to the mountain and he's like, you know, look at this tree. He's like, it's like this big. He's like, you know, guess how long it took for this tree to get this big. And I was like, you know, like six months. He's like, no, five years.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That's about a not even a foot is what you're showing.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. It's like the size of a cell phone basically. And I was like, Oh wow. And he said, you know, to be able to harvest the tea tree, you have to wait 50 years. And he's like, the tea trees I have on this mountain they're like 250 to 300 years old. And then I was like, wow, that's like amazing. I didn't even realize how amazing it was. And then he, and then I went to the mountain and he was like macheting his way through to get to the trees. And he said, you know, Simon, like in a tea farm, you would never see anything like this. Normally it's flat. It's all just cash crop planted in rows. Harvested by machines, sprayed by airplanes. That's how a lot of tea is farmed.

The ones that go into like super industrialized tea bags. It's just easy, right? He said, you know, when something gets planted as a seed, a central root grows out of it. You've seen things sprout. There's like one root. And he's like, that root first goes deep before it spreads out wide. Okay. He's like the reason that we can keep this whole mountain completely untouched and let all this vegetation grow is because there is no competition for nutrients with these trees because the roots are so deep, right? They're so deep. They're drawing minerals and like nutrients from the deep earth.

And he says, for generations, my family, all we've been doing is once a year we go and we get to these trees and we pluck just the tender buds that grow out in the spring. And we turn that into tea. And the only thing we do to control pests are plant these camphor trees. And he's like, you can see there aren't even that many, like, I saw like four in, like, you know, it must've been like acres, right? Like a hundred, hundreds of acres. And he's like, they're just no pests. And he's like, these trees, everything here is completely symbiotic with each other. We don't intervene at all. We don't even water. It's like, these are all fed by mountain streams. And he's like, when the vegetation dies, All of that decomposition of this plant material is re enriching the biodiversity of the soil, the microbial life.

And it's the same microbes that are living on these leaves that cause these leaves to ferment. So all the teas are fermented. And that's the famous thing about teas from Yunnan. They're



all fermented. They get better. They turn, they basically turn from green to black with age. And when you ferment the teas in this forest they ferment faster. That's why we know that these bacteria, these microbes, are the beneficial ones, right? And they don't rot, they ferment, right? Very different. And, you know, in an industrial tea farm, not planted by seeds, takes way too long, right? So you basically, you know, take a mature tea tree, you cut the branch off, you know, let it sprout some roots, and then you just stick that thing in the ground.

So all those roots just grow sideways. They're all depleting the topsoil. So you have to remove all of the vegetation through herbicides, you know, weeding, all that sort of stuff. It's all monocrop. So they're super weak. So you have to use fungicides, pesticides, and because like, no matter what you do, it's going to deplete the topsoil. You have to use fertilizers. Just think about the contrast between those two sources of food is like completely mind blowing. And our first products were Pu erh teas made from these tea leaves. And the whole crystal thing. It's like it was an innovation off of how the indigenous people had been preparing that tea into a medicinal form, right?

So very primitive and crude. They were just basically taking the tea, boiling it in these huge pots of water. And then when everything was extracted, they would remove the plant material and just keep boiling it till it was reduced to a resin. And then they would, you know, scrape it up, portion it into balls. And these balls, like the, they were like, an important part of like the sustenance because you know you go from one village to the next it's like a three day walk. And so you have these things to like energize you right. To keep you fit, to keep you immune. But there's a huge amount of destruction of active ingredients through that preparation the heat, you know, the taste is not great. And so we pioneered upon that, like we innovated upon that and created this like cold, low temperature extraction, removing water through like osmosis filtration to actually use reusing the water for something else, keeping the solids that remain and then basically freeze drying the tea to crystallize it. And you get this incredible retention of a flavor compounds, right? Which are also the active ingredients, like the color, the flavor of tea are actually the active ingredients.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah.

**SIMON CHENG:** That was our first product.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That is such a good story. That's magical, you know.

**SIMON CHENG:** It was absolutely magical. Yeah.

SHAWN: And also I want to ask you, because you mentioned just a little bit of comparable tea products that people are exposed to, but you mentioned how In Hong Kong, for example, it's a continuous drinking of tea to get these kind of therapeutic benefits.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And I would imagine that the concentration in the way that you do things Helps to nullify the need to drink so much of it. Is that accurate to say?

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, like In the preparation of the tea crystal, there is like a very high level of extraction of all of the beneficial compounds in the tea. So the concentration of active compounds is generally very potent. Right. And so that's one thing. The second thing is that just the convenience of it, brewing a pu erh tea is a process to extract a pu erh tea leaf to the same level, you would require multiple brews of it. For as long as they're, there's flavor in the pu'er tea leaf. It means that there's still compounds in there, right? Because those are the active compounds. And you know, a good pu erh tea you can brew northwards of like 10 to 20 times. Different infusions with hot water. Like again and again to get the flavor out. And so that's a process that can take all day.

And it's, you know, it's great and all if that's what you want to do that day. And I do that all the time. Like some weekends I just do that. I sit with a pot and I just add water. But I want to drink pu erh tea every day, like all the time. And even when I'm a rush, like every morning I want that. And so that's one of the things with our product philosophy is that, you know, we want to make these incredible foods. Not just, you know, in the most maximally bioavailable form, but also in a format that tastes really good because no one's going to do it if it tastes like crap and then also super easy.

And you can see, you know, how some of these things are tied to the way that I grew up with these broths. It's like, it has to taste good. It has to be beneficial. And it also should be dosed in a way that is that can be sustainable, right? Because you can like 100x the things and put it in a pill, right? Or you can put it in some massive like, you know, delivery like thing where you don't taste it and you just swallow it. I don't think those formats are necessarily good for you. I think that they're probably not great for your body at those dosages. It's like drinking like, you know, You know, fruit juice every single day, you're not meant to. And so the dosage is super important.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And just a little note on Pu erh and this is before I even met you, I was drinking Pu erh, but let me be clear. The Pu erh from Pique is radically different from what I was experiencing before that, but I was sharing the research on this, you know, years before

that. And one study was published in the journal phytonutrient research and it found that Pu erh is one of the rare nutrient sources that has a direct significant influence on the enzyme that unlocks fat from our fat cells, hormone sensitive lipase. And another study, this was published in clinical interventions in aging, Found that pu erh is an effective adjunct to intermittent fasting because of its ability to support fat loss while protecting muscle mass.

That's not normal. And let me add one more. This was a recent study. This was published in Nature Communications. And there's a compound that's unique and it's found in pu erh. It's called thea brownin.

**SIMON CHENG:** It's the color.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yes, and I want this exactly. See, we're already locked in, man. That's what I wanted to ask you about next. But they found that this compound. Has some really remarkable effects on our microbiome. The researchers found that the brown and positively alters our gut bacteria. And this was found to reduce excess liver cholesterol and reduce lipogenesis. So the creation of new fat. All right.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And so I wanted to ask you about that because you mentioned that certain things in the T are indicative of the nutrient profile, the color, The flavor. These are indicators. Let's talk more about that.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. So the color of So Pu erh has like the spectrum between green and black the black color is you know theobromine, thioflavin. That's one of the very important compounds, and this is such a big topic. By the way additional things that are very interesting is that Pu erh tea has a It basically reduces dysbiosis, right? So like imbalance of gut microbiome. And it's actually shown in animal studies to have a positive effect on the proliferation of microbiota that are associated with healthy weight and a reduction of the, you know, I guess they should be pathogens, right? That are associated with obesity and that's how it alters your microbiome.

It's very fascinating. And to dig on that further, like, you know, catechins, you know, in a lot of the antioxidants, polyphenols in tea, they're actually not absorbable through the gut lining. It's the metabolites. So it's actually when the bacteria in the microbiome. They actually metabolize, they're eating those antioxidants and those polyphenols. It's what's like coming out the other end, the metabolites that are absorbable. So yeah it's super fascinating, but back to the flavor compounds. The look, the sensory components of tea have a lot to do with

the health benefits and the concentration and the efficacy of them. And so it's like when we make products that taste good it's great in all that it tastes good because people will drink it more often, but you can actually sense from a tea and how it tastes, how balanced that stack of beneficial compounds are.

And, you know, matcha is a really good example of this, right? The pinnacle of matcha is basically umami, right? It's like the savory, you know, parmesan cheese soy sauce kind of a flavor. That's the taste of althene, which is an amino acid. Liquid aminos taste like soy sauce. That's the taste of L theanine. The bitterness in matcha, which people don't like, is actually the taste of caffeine, right? And of course, the greenness is from the chlorophyll. And if you've over steeped your matcha, and it tastes bitter, or you make a matcha that doesn't have the umami flavor, and is like of a low grade, the culinary grade, you're not getting from the matcha what you're expecting to get. Which is calm, sustained energy. That's why people like matcha. And it's the L theanine that's going to make you feel calm, right.

And so I just think it's super fascinating because when things taste great and fresh and balanced, and that's how we formulate things to be, it's actually how they're most maximally beneficial to your health and the way that they're meant to be. Right. So if you want, like, you know, super like pumping energy from your matcha, like overbrew it, like use boiling water, even cover the top and just steep that and it's going to taste super bitter. That's not what much is meant to be like, go drink something else. Right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** That was my experience when you made tea for me, when you made the matcha for me. The bitterness was so much less. It was just, it just tasted better when you made it for me.

**SIMON CHENG:** Lots of praCtice..

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Because again, it's just these little subtle things that we might not realize. Because we don't have this in our culture. Like I didn't know what matcha tea was and the fact that the quality of your matcha, it's a gorgeous tea. First of all, and it's actually is crafted by a Japanese tea master, right?

**SIMON CHENG:** That's right. That's right. So he's a 10th degree tea master. And I think they're like less than eight in the world or something, but he is another guy that's multi-generational. I remember when I saw him. You know, every time I meet one of these guys, that's why I kind of love being in my industry because, you know, I, I work with, in an industry and with vendors that are like just insanely passionate and very connected to their, to the earth and very connected to like their craft and the tradition of it. So every time it's like an inspiration, but

he was like explaining to me how he works with the farmers because team master, you know, you have to obviously get your stuff from farmers. And he said, you know, Simon This relationship that we've had, my family has had for three generations with the tea farmers.

It's not about an exchange of goods for money. It's about the exchange of trust. And I was just like, wow, you know, it's just I find it a huge blessing and privilege to be business partners with people like that. The same thing with the cacao in our new product, Nandica, you know, I went to the cacao farm in Peru. It's like in the middle of the rainforest. And I remember the guy that was like, you know, like I, I'm a little bit arachnophobic, like I'm scared of insects. And the guy does like this huge beetle on his shirt. And I was like, Whoa. And I was like, Hey, you know, there's like.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Bro, you gotta, there's a beetle.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, they're like bullet ants. There's like, you know, there are bullet ants everywhere, by the way. It's like one of the most painful insect bites, like, on earth. And I was like, there's a beetle. And he's like, oh, you know, he's like, don't worry. He's just like, he's just catching a ride. And then he went on and talked about, you know, he was with his son. And he's like, talking about his, you know, his cacao, like, again, it was like a mountain. It was like in a forest, the trees are just in the forest. And he was like, you know, the way that I tend to this forest of cacao trees is the same way that I cultivate my family. And he's like, the philosophy that I bring to this is the same philosophy that I bring to like raising my child.

And every day, like I come to this forest with him to take care of these trees. And they're like part of our family and is like the love and like the balance and the harmony that we invest into this place. You know, not over eliminating pests, like letting things thrive symbiotically, like allowing it to be exposed to the right controlled adversity you know, ensuring like a very high quality of inputs, whether it's the watering whether it's like using like natural nutrient sources. You know, all of these stuff, he's like, this is all reflected in the fruit. Right. And ultimately the cacao nibs that you're buying from us. And it's just like, wow, like you just want to cry, when you meet these people.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Yeah. I love, thank you so much for sharing that, man. Because you said something really remarkable, this currency of trust, and you extend that also to your customers as well, you know, you've got an incredible money back guarantee. Like, you know, how valuable and health affirming your teas are. And if people don't love it, that's like, just don't worry about it. We've got you covered.

But by the way, if folks are just like, I've got to get my hands on some Pique tea, go to [Piquelife.com/model](http://Piquelife.com/model). That's P I Q U E L I F E . com/model. You're going to get up to 15 percent off free shipping. They've got some cool bundles where Like I even got a frother in one of the bundles and some other stuff. You got tea samples that you guys provide as well for, you got a bunch of award winning tea flavors that people get to try out. So it is truly above and beyond. And the thing is, I've been utilizing it for a couple of years now before us even like having this sit down this conversation, you guys have just been taking care of me and providing me with all these amazing teas and the new innovations, new products. You guys do special stuff for me all along the way.

And it's just really special. And I know you guys, I think your team sent a gift for me. That's right. I might've left it in your car, but they're just over delivering and really do love the work that they're doing. And it's making a huge impact. So can you talk a little bit more about this new tea compilation really, that again, it has cacao in there. What else is in that blend?

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So Nandica is our newest product that we launched this year. I think it's the combination of like all the knowledge and experience and understanding about plants that we've acquired. Like, you know, it's the full integration of so many things. So many things. So basically like it's got Peruvian, a high Andean cacao. So it's a high altitude cacao. And you know, when plants grow at high altitudes, they produce more active ingredients. The adversity is actually very good for them.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Adaptogen.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly. And cacao is an amazing adaptogen. So the cacao powder that we use is super unique. It's been, so the genetics of it is, it's been used for ceremony purposes. Before the Incas, it's a pre Incan ceremonial grade cacao. And obviously selected based on very special characteristics. One of the ones that we value the most is the amount of cacao butter that's in it, right. And so cacao butter is a very important part of cacao. When you buy a dark chocolate bar, there's a natural amount of cacao and cacao butter in it, and it's all from the same nib, right? The unfortunate thing about cacao powders is that people. In order to stabilize the powder, they just eliminate all of the butter, right?

So if you just go buy a packet of cacao powder from whole foods, it's like it's got almost zero cacao butter content. So it's been significantly denatured, right? Like it's not meant to not have the butter in, it's been done to be shelf stable. So our cacao powder has 30 percent cacao butter. It's unprecedented. There's no cacao powder on the market that has that, like none, right. And amazingly the cacao powder, the cacao butter acts as this incredibly, an

incredible delivery system for the other compounds in there, right. And so the other things are functional mushrooms. So we have reishi, chaga, cordyceps, lion's mane.

And I'll go into that in a minute. And then we have the two Pu erh teas, which I talked about. So our absolute best teas, the black and the green mixed together in a blend. And I used to drink that every morning, black green mixed together so I could get the full spectrum. And then it has some chai spices in there, right? And they're there for flavor as well as for a functional purpose. Okay. So the functional mushrooms and reishi in particular has a cooling effect, right? And in order to drink this every day, we kind of balance it out with the warming spices. So your body doesn't get cooler and cooler, according to tcm, which obviously is going to lead to imbalance and blockage and like, you know, issues on a regular basis.

So the chai spices actually provide a warming effect, the mushrooms we have there, the Reishi genetics was one of them. So we have three different strains in there. One was actually developed in space. So this is crazy and it's, yeah. Food scarcity is like something that is, it could be a real problem, right? It doesn't seem like the case right now, but every time we plant something over an extended period, the yield and the active ingredient content goes down. And nobody knows why but that's just like the way nature works. If you keep planting the same genetic, the same seeds, the same strains, the yield and active ingredient content will go down. And so one of the things china is doing and this is in partnership with like, you know I M F W H O is that they're sending a lot of like seeds and different like spores and stuff into space to increase exposure to cosmic radiation. To increase the evolution of these genetics because that's what's happening on earth It just takes way longer, right?

It's exposure to cosmic radiation. That's causing genetic evolution, right? And you know, whether it's like corn or wheat or rice or whatever it is, like reishi happens to be a nationally designated, like very important product, because it's like thousands of years of usage medicinally there. And so they sent these spores there and it's a very laborious and expensive process that you can imagine because very few actually prove out to provide adequate yields and active ingredient levels. But one of our reishi actually is from this program. And then the other two were discovered in the wild.

And so it's like you collect Reishi in the wild, you bring it back, you study it, and like hundreds of samples studied over decades have yielded like eight or something, right? And you know, it's averting a food crisis that's like centuries away, or maybe decades away, who knows, right? But this kind of genetic varietal and diversification is super important. So that's our Reishi. Chaga is wild harvested, the lion's mane and cordyceps, they're cultivated, right? And so our reishi is actually, is also cultivated, but it's cultivated in a wild mimicking environment. So it's actually like in the forest where they're native and have thrived for a very long time.



And it's like using the mountain streams to water them. And then all of the things in the air. So like the negative ions in the air, like the tree coverage, everything is like mimicking the altitude, the humidity level, everything is mimicking. Like it's called wild mimicking cultivation. And we only use the fruiting bodies purely no mycelium. And then we also use water extracted like water based extracts. So no alcohol based extracts of those mushrooms to increase the concentration, right, of what we're getting. You know, a reishi mushroom is super, it's like a piece of wood. It's very fibrous.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Very hardy.

**SIMON CHENG:** It's very hardy. It's insanely difficult to extract and to brew. And it's ridiculously bitter. It's very hard to drink. And it's easy to get, but nobody wants to consume it like that because it's unpleasant and it takes like forever to brew. And so we've taken like, you know, the Reishi spore, so we use the full spectrum Reishi spore powder which is very important and it's actually broken cell wall spore powder through ultrasound. So we've taken the full spectrum of all of these mushrooms, you know, fruiting body in the right concentration. And that's like a functional mushroom stack in this product. There's so much I could talk about. This is just like scratching the surface of it. And by the way, I made this product through meditation, like, That's the craziest thing of all.

Like I, you know, I tried dozens of cacao from all over the world, like literally dozens. And then I had the mushroom stack. I knew the tea was what I wanted to use. And I knew the warming spices that those were easy. But the cacao and the amount of each mushroom, I actually drank every morning and this, like, you know, after I had honed in on this ingredients, like, you know, I tested it in myself for like six months where I drink it and then I meditate. And in those days, my meditation was like, it was the best it's been in years. It was like 75 minutes a day, crazy. And I was going so deep and I would experience every component of how my body was reacting physically, mentally, and spiritually to that formula for the day. And that's how I eventually calibrated and got to the final formula.

And there's this very grounding, connecting, force of the mushrooms. It's like, you know, this is getting into the non scientific arena. Mushrooms are mycelium and they're in the ground and they connect all the trees and like everything. It's like a pathway for communication for trees.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Like a forest internet.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yes. And you know, with psychedelic mushrooms, as well as these functional mushrooms, it has a similar effect in your. When you're deep in meditation, there's like a



connecting, there's a connection that you feel to all things. So anyways there's like the physical, mental, spiritual, obviously like, you know, incredible bliss compounds in the functional mushrooms, adaptogens. It modulates your mood to, to balance you in certain ways. If you're, you know, upbeat, it might calm you. If you're depressed, it might give you, it get you up. That's the power of adaptogens. The cacao is something that people should, I think everybody should eat every day. And it's like tons of antioxidants. Tons of, you know, adaptogenic compounds, bliss molecules. The cacao butter is amazing. You can actually drink it in the morning and like not eat because the butter is like sustaining your energy level and like your satiety.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** A lot of your teas are geared towards that supporting intermittent fasting. You actually have fasting teas with the pu erh, for example, one of those formulas. This is fascinating. I love that you mentioned the Incan civilization in this conversation because the data on some of these things, like, like cacao, like, in particular, these medicinal mushrooms, dates back thousands of years, and it's just like, Mushrooms in particular have been a big part of a lot of these cultures and it's not talked about.

And you mentioned, and they also tied into, you went from the Incan civilization to space. And there are some strong scientific theories that mushrooms aren't even from earth, right? Because there's spores that have been found like out in the outer part of the atmosphere and whatnot. And just the way that they function is so different. And they're the genetics of mushrooms are closer to human than they are to the vegetable kingdom or, you know, the rest of what we consider to be food. It is so different. It's so unique from anything else on earth. And also you mentioned that the fact that it works as this kind of like underground internet for the forest and for really, for life on earth, you know, if we're talking, because we come from all of that stuff, like our bodies are built on what comes from the earth.

So our resonance with these things is It's timeless. It is, it predates all of this stuff and all this conversation is just a part of human evolution. So this is really cool stuff. And if you could, there are a lot of folks that already, they love, you know, the prospects of having a caffeinated tea, whether it's pu erh, whether it's matcha. But sometimes you want something a little different and you also have different herbal teas as well And like a ginger tea, for example, let's talk a little bit about some of the like the rooibos tea as well. Let's talk a little bit about those.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. So you know, we have a pretty big collection of different teas. Many of them are herbal and caffeine free And you know, the rooibos is this it's a wonderful plant is from africa. And it's wonderful because it has a very high polyphenol content, but it's completely caffeine free.

And so that becomes a go to for a lot of people that like, want tea, but don't want the caffeine. And it has like this slightly sweet flavor. It's extremely smooth. It's not tannic at all. It's very palatable. And it's definitely one of our most popular ones, but, you know, I think that it's like, you know, all of these different plants from different cultures, our hibiscus is, you know, very widely used in Latin America as a post meal, like a drink. It originates from Egypt and that's where we get our hibiscus from, and it was this, it's actually an aphrodisiac and apparently, yeah, apparently you know, Cleopatra, you know, they would have these like orgies basically,

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Cleopatra was having a Diddy party.

**SIMON CHENG:** Exactly. Hibiscus tea was the drink of choice.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Wow. Diddy got different drinks. That's right. You got the Ciroc.

**SIMON CHENG:** That's right. That's right.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** The thing is, you know, truly you guys go above and beyond and, you make it so easy as well. And a lot of these teas, which was so cool, is that we can brew the tea either cold or hot and they're easy to travel with. And again, if folks are not yet utilizing PTS, it's something we keep all the time here. You see it. Like we've just got it laid out here at the studio. Same at my house. We've got a little collection for guests that come over and for my family. And again, go to [Piquelife.com/model](https://Piquelife.com/model). That's [PIQUELIFE.com/model](https://PIQUELIFE.com/model) up to 15 percent off and they got some great bundles, all kinds of cool bonuses. And of course, a money back guarantee. If you don't absolutely love these teas, you get a full refund, no questions asked. And speaking of questions asked, I've got two more questions for you.

One, the name Pique, if you could talk about where that comes from. And also if you could transition that into. Something that you've hit on multiple times, which is probably the most important element of this conversation and really hitting me right now is this mind, body, spirit connection and how even, you know, the issue that you dealt with your lungs is tied to an emotional root, you know, and so much of our bodies, you know, our bodies are communicating to us, right? The body keeps score, right? It's like, just, we have these incidents, these insults, that happen along the way that we might not be processing and holding on to creating these blockages.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** And so number one, the name Pique and also this mind body connection.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. I think the two are very tied together. You know, Pique is the planting of a seed in the mind to Pique the interest, to Pique the curiosity. And that is the one act of that is that the beginning of anything that is the absolute most powerful, right, is the beginning of an idea. And you know, Pique is really my life mission to help people achieve wellness from this kind of tripartite approach to health, which is the physical, mental, and the spiritual. And we want to do that by planting these seeds. The seeds can be planted throughout products. It leads people down a journey. It can be planted through our content. Hopefully this podcast, I'm sure, will be one of the things that plant seeds in people's minds. But it's really hard to get people to focus on themselves. Actually, it's shockingly hard. It's typically not until you get sick or somebody that's very close to you, a loved one gets sick, that you start to think seriously about your own mortality, right. And I've experienced it. I was sick for a whole 10 years and it was like my third operation before I realized it's like, damn, I got to start taking better care of myself to get people to focus on their mental health is even more difficult because it's less painful.

People can live with, you know, pain. Unfortunately, like mental health issues and depression and anxiety and stuff for their whole lives and not even really know or do anything about it. And then the spiritual health is by far the most difficult. I think getting people to meditate is like, is, you know, virtually impossible unless there's some predisposition or like, you know, there's some like very tangible benefit. And so we think about our mission specifically from a content point of view as a, as an arrow. Which I think I told you about. Everybody's vain. They wake up, first thing you do, you look in the mirror, right? And if we can get people through into this world through vanity, and by that, like beauty from within, right, that is what we consider the tip of our arrow, right?

And you know, don't stay up late smoking cigarettes. And drinking like booze till 4 a. m. every night, like that's gonna make you look better. You know what, if you actually wake up early and eat well and drink tea, and, you know, have electrolytes to replenish yourself, rehydrate yourself, you're gonna look better. Beauty from within. Easy, right? Eat vitamin C, great for collagen production. Wonderful. If you do those things, you might actually, you know, have more calm energy. So matcha will give you more calm energy, right? Tea will give you more sustained energy. And so if you're less stressed out, less anxious, less jitters you're gonna have better mental health.

And so you're actually gonna become more present, right? You're going to become more immersed in what you're doing, whether it's hanging out with your kids or, you know, working

on something for work or whatever it is, your hobby. You're going to enjoy those moments more and be more grateful for them. And that ties into the spiritual component, right?

Like having gratitude for, you know, for all the moments that you have, that you're present in worrying less about the future, regretting less about the past. And that opens the spiritual faculty. And so our mission is to deliver this payload. You know, this, you know, beauty from within and the tip, the first third is the physical, the second third is the mental, the last third of the shaft is the spiritual. So that's our mission, delivering that, that payload of, you know, knowledge of experience. And then providing the products that facilitate that journey.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome, man. This has been so good. Such a great conversation. It's been great. And if you could, is there anywhere else that you'd want people to connect with you? To learn more about Pique?

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah, I think our socials is a great place on Instagram, Pique life. We have a Twitter, Pique. Not super active. But you know and anybody that wants to reach me care@PiqueLife.com. All those emails actually get to me.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome. Awesome, man. Again, thank you so much for you know, the challenges that you went through and coming out the other side and finding a way to help other people. You know, that's what it's really all about.

**SIMON CHENG:** Yeah. Thank you so much, Shawn. It's been such a pleasure. I enjoyed this so much.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Awesome.

**SIMON CHENG:** It's been a great connection.

**SHAWN STEVENSON:** Me too. Me too. Simon Cheng, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. This is one of those interviews that really took me on a visual journey. I could see so many of the things Simon was describing and his story is so incredible and just being able to spend time with him and to see this come from right his intention with his work with his team. And how he's going about things and one of the things he didn't share was that.

Recently, he had his first child again. He went through a lot of challenges, you know in his early 30s, with his health and you know doctors even trying to manipulate him saying hey "you don't want to mess up your love life". You need to get this surgery, right? Don't do the

CPAP. Just get this surgery. It'll be a quick and easy fix. It's going to be great. And you know, him really working to regain his health and eventually having that love, having that community and being able to have his first child.

And that experience has been, just talking to him when him and I were hanging out and he made tea. You know, I had matcha that he made for me and him sharing, like I could see the love in his eyes talking about his daughter. And he actually made the decision to have his child, him and his wife to have their child back home in Hong Kong because of the community element, because of the environment that they were literally in. Just immersing by being in Hong Kong and of course bringing his family back here afterwards after getting that solid foundation built. But this is something that we can create here. We can create here now for all of us, but we need to do this with intention. We need to know how powerful we are and we need to wake up. And so that's what this is really all about. And I appreciate you so much for being a part of this mission. If you got a lot of value out of this, please share this out on social media.

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