



EPISODE 913

The Gut-Heart Connection

With Guest Mona Sharma

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Today we have emerging science affirming the powerful impact that our gut health has on our heart health. A brand new study published by the American Heart Association titled Gut Heart Axis, the role of gut microbiota and metabolites in heart failure. The study states that alterations in the gut microbiome, abnormal gut permeability, and gastrointestinal disorders contribute to heart failure through various pathways, including systemic inflammation, metabolic dysregulation, and modulation of cardiac function. The researcher state, "the relationship between the gastrointestinal tract and the heart is bidirectional, termed the gut heart axis." We're gonna be talking about this and much, much more with our special guest, and she knows a thing or 2000 about heart health when you hear her story. It is insane and absolutely amazing that she's here today to share her story and her perspective on this.

And we're also gonna be talking about several other influences on our heart health and on our gut health, so that everything is working in what she terms "coherence". One of the things we're gonna be talking about is the impact of our community and social relationships on our heart health and our wellbeing overall. We need to make this a must more than ever today, and a great way to go about this. A great way to leverage those dynamic social relationships and to get that valuable input is over a meal, is having meals together is proactively scheduling time each week to have meals with family and friends, getting a cup of coffee with friends, whatever the case might be. But having that time and bonding through this medium of food. We gotta eat anyways and connecting over food is something that humans have been doing for literally thousands upon thousands, upon thousands of years forever.

It's a very human and nourishing thing to do, and we've talked about this many times here on the Model Health Show. But this is something where I practice what I preach, I practice what I preach. We've been having less meals together in the Stevenson household recently because of the NBA playoffs, all right. My son is big into basketball, so we've been having more meals while watching the game, and so he was actually my youngest son. He was like, Hey, we need to make sure that we have family dinner tonight. And he said this yesterday after we were leaving from somewhere, and I was like, absolutely, we're gonna get back on track.

And according to the data, it's three meals per week, three meals or more is that minimum effective dose seen in multiple studies to be protective against obesity for family members, against disordered eating, to reduce stress and to help our bodies to more healthfully, modulate the impact of stress and much, much more, three meals or more per week. And so a big part of that is finding ways, especially in our culture where we're so pulled apart, spending a lot of time on screens. How do we get everybody together? The screens are so seductive. How do we get everybody together? It's to add in some benefits that are equal to or greater than that experience of being on a screen.

And so having fun in the real world, one of the most common ways that we have in our modern culture is through playing games together, having a family game night. And that's exactly what we did after dinner yesterday, we had this amazing meal, and then it was my oldest son was like let's play Pictionary, which we've never played Pictionary, it's been sitting on our shelf for years actually. And so I don't know why he said, let's play Pictionary, but we play Pictionary. And I realized, I think we all realized very quickly in our modern society being on these screens, type it a lot. That ability to draw is just, it was bad. It was just bad to, to put it lightly. We found a little bit of a flow eventually, but the pictures were not looking good.

And one of them, I'm gonna share with you the word that I had to draw and I was going against my oldest son and, and my youngest son were on teams together and it was rocket man. And so I got the rocket right out the gate. Rocket easy. Okay. Couple of shapes, you know, got a rectangle, got a triangle on table of fire at the bottom. But the man part, I drew a stick figure guy and then I put a dong on him. I put a dong on him and my wife immediately started giggling. All right. So it's like, you know it, okay, it's, but then she starts going in with, with the dong. Okay. It just wouldn't get off of that. And so I ended up like trying to affirm like, no, come back.

No, come back, man. Man. And so I just. For whatever reason, I started drawing more dongs. And before you know it, I've got like a paper full of dongs and I showed my kids afterwards and my oldest son was like, dad! And then we're just rolling tears, laughing at this situation. I don't know what happened, how it escalated so quickly, but yeah, I just kind of turned into a caveman, obsessed with follicles trying to communicate something.

So anyways, whatever game you like, whether it's Pictionary, whether it's Monopoly, whether it's Uno, there's tons of amazing games out there for us to play. And yeah, you can even bring the phone into the, into the fold, but you gotta be careful even having the phone around. There's cool games that you can use on your phone. That you could play with family, like heads up you could download and you know, the list goes on and on. But find something fun to unite everybody. And you know, this could be, it doesn't have to be something that's necessarily "fun", but maybe it's something that's challenging or creative. You know, sometimes we'll freestyle after dinner.

Sometimes we'll have deep conversations about different subjects, you know, so just be intentional and also tie in something rewarding for everybody so that we all feel we have something to look forward to with that family dinner in a world that is constantly trying to pull us apart. So again, getting together over a meal, over coffee, over tea, a cup of tea is such a vibe as well to connect and to be present and to share our experiences to make sure that our loved ones feel seen. And again, friends and family, all everybody's included in this. And by the way, when it comes to tea, as a matter of fact, a study that was published just last year found that people who regularly drink tea age slower than those who do not. And obviously there are many varieties of tea with a vast amount of benefits and flavor profiles from green tea to roas tea, ginger tea.

But speaking specifically of anti-aging and anti-obesity effects, alright, beating obesity is a key element in improving your health span. A study published in the Journal Clinical Interventions and Aging took 59 overweight or mildly obese subjects to see if the renowned tea called Pu'erh makes a notable difference on weight loss. The randomized doubleblind placebo controlled trial had participants to either receive a placebo or Pu'erh for a 20 week study period. There were no other interventions noted. Here's what happened. "Consumption of PIR was associated with statistically significant weight loss when compared to the placebo. Fat loss was seen for arms, legs, and the hip and belly region."

The participants who received Pu'erh lost more overall body fat, and what was especially remarkable was they maintained. Their valuable muscle mass. The tea that I personally drink most often is actually Pu'erh but the only Pu'erh that I drink is from pique life. It's triple toxin

screen for purity and made through a patented cold extraction technology that makes it as effective as what was seen in that study. It's wild, harvested, and truly the best Pu'erh on Earth. Head over to piquelife.com/model right now and you'll receive up to 20% off plus some limited time free bonuses, like an electric frother to mix your favorite beverages, and you get to try peak tee's risk free with their 30 day money back guarantee. So you'll either love it or you'll receive a full refund. Go to piquelife.com/model. That's P-I-Q-U-E-L-I-F-E.com/model right now for up to 20% off. And now let's get to our phenomenal guest and topic of the day.

Mona Sharma is a globally recognized nutritionist and corporate wellness strategist whose work has transformed the lives of performing individuals and Fortune 500 executives worldwide. After recovering from two heart surgeries and corporate burnout, she became passionate about holistic healing, deeply influenced by her roots growing up, and spending time living in an ashram where she experienced firsthand the power of food, mindfulness, and lifestyle practices for wellbeing. Mona is also the trusted wellness advisor for a-list celebrities like Will Smith and powerful influencers like Jay Shetty.

She's regularly featured as a health expert on leading shows like the Today Show, the Doctors, and many other media outlets, and in this powerful conversation. Mona's gonna be sharing some game changing insights about the gut heart connection. Let's dive into this interview with the one and only Mona Sharma. Mona, it's so good to see you. Thank you for coming hang out with us finally.

MONA SHARMA: Finally, we made it happen. I'm so happy to be here.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. Awesome. Well, we got to hang out a little bit yesterday, of course, at your studio. Brought my son along.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you know, one of our connective tissues is family.

MONA SHARMA: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And education, you know, for everybody. But you've been especially impactful in this field. And we're gonna dig in on the different ways. But I want to know how you got into this field in the first place. Let's talk a little bit about that. Talk about what was going on with your heart 'cause I think that's really gonna blow people away. I know it did. When I first heard about you. That story blew my mind.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah, it's so interesting how our greatest challenges become our greatest gifts, and I can't even think of my life being any other way than it is today. But my life about 15 years ago looked very different. So, I was in corporate sales for big luxury cosmetic companies. I, on paper, my job looked amazing. I was able to travel the world, do makeup for fashion shows and celebrities and train people that worked in all these luxury brands. But at the end of the day, it was that typical corporate scenario. So, sales driven. I was waking up in hotel rooms, not knowing what city I was in.

There was a lot of stress. It was in fashion. So it was pretty cutthroat with other women, and I think anxiety for the longest time had already been my blueprint. But in this time, anxiety went up and our lifestyle was good. I was exercising a lot, but I was going hardcore at everything. And all of a sudden I started getting these heart palpitations. So I would bend down to pick up something on the ground, come back up, and literally up to 200 beats per minute, I would almost hit the deck. And over time I just thought like, what is going on? Tried cutting out coffee and the stimulants and stuff like that and it still didn't work. And I just, that's it.

Went to the cardiologist. Doctors at that time, the cardiologists at the time, they were really pushing like, you know, how much cocaine are you doing? How much drugs are there? And I'm like, there's nothing. But because I was young and I was healthy, I passed that standard stress test. And after just wearing Holter monitor, after Holter monitor, we decided to put me on a beta blocker medication, prescription med, and it worked. It slowed everything down, though I became completely lethargic. And it got to the point where I didn't wanna work out anymore. I ended up gaining 45 pounds. Yeah, 45 pounds. And I went back to the doctor, I'm like, okay, this is not working at all. And they said, well, we can go in for surgery.

So I ended up going in for a cardiac ablation where you're awake for the whole thing. It's a catheter ablation. They go through your groin and through your neck and you can see wires on a screen going towards your heart. And they're inducing me with caffeine and adrenaline to induce these palpitations that I knew would only happen if I was out moving my body or bending down. And, they ended up doing two ablations in that surgery. And it's intense cold, but it feels like heat going off, like fire in your chest. And the next morning in the hospital, I woke up and it was still going. So it wasn't successful. Desperate for a solution and at that point I wasn't interested in getting to the root cause, like gimme the quick fix.

That's why I said yes to the, the beta blocker. And they said, well, let's go back in. So just a couple months later, I ended up going back in for my second cardiac ablation. And this time they spent a little bit more time. They did one more ablation. They still found that there was irregularity, but they found that the tachycardia had moved from atrial tachycardia to sinus node tachycardia. And they said, well, if we go through with this, you might have to wear a pacemaker for the rest of your life. And in that moment, I'm like, okay, so I'm identifying as somebody who's sick. I'm in my twenties with a heart condition. Now I'm gonna have a battery pack under my skin to keep me alive, like what is going on?

And it was one of those moments where like, my life flashed before my eyes because I knew that there was a better way. Growing up, I shared a bit about my parents. So my dad's Indian. My mom is Danish, and I've only ever known my mom to suffer from complete debilitating rheumatoid arthritis. So all deformities in her hands and her feet. So when she eventually found a functional medicine doctor, when I was a teenager, the motto in her house was, eat at, it's good for you, drink it. It's good for you. This woman tried everything to heal. And with my father's insight on Ayurveda, he would take us to live in an ashram every summer. So ashrams, I always say everyone go experience what an ashram is.

They're these spiritual centers where you practice yoga and breath work and eating outside, eating in community with people. You're doing yoga every single day, and there's like, it's just a sense of stillness. And I remember seeing the power of mindfulness and breath and nature and movement on my parents. So in that moment in the surgery table, I knew that I had to go back to my roots, and that's exactly what I did. I didn't leave corporate fully at that point, but I

ended up becoming a yoga teacher, just for my own healing journey. And at that time, when I was living on the ashram for about two months, Sean, like the weight melted off my body.

My palpitations stopped. I was sleeping again. I should have also mentioned I had terrible PCOS, which looking back just makes sense. It was driven by insulin resistance because of my diet and the way that I was traveling and eating and my lifestyle practices. My body just healed itself. I started eating more carbohydrates than ever before. But carbohydrates that come from the earth and for me, you know, it's not to say that you need to lose 50 pounds, go to an ashram. What happened is that I began to regulate my nervous system and. What I wish cardiologists had asked me was, why are you so stressed? Tell me about the anxiety in your life.

Tell me about some past traumas that have happened. Do you process your stress? Do you have resilience with your stress? I would've said no to all of those things. I was a very stressed out kid. I remember like anxiety being my blueprint. I was always kind of scared or quiet or an introvert, and I think that my nervous system was really stuck in this dysregulated state for all of those years. And finally, my heart, the vibration of my body was like, I can't take this anymore girl. You're going so hardcore, like you gotta do something. And it was a powerful message that forced me to tune in. And thankfully because of my parents growing the way that they, they taught me growing up, I really recognized the power of the body to heal.

And this foundation is ultimately what I share with my clients today. You are the healer. I can guide you to different practices, but all of us have this incredible vessel that's asking us to, to tune in and listen and pay attention. But I don't think we, we do that. We ignore the symptoms and we still are stuck in this world looking for quick fixes and fads and gimmicks that will work. But I think people are waking up and ready for a change, and that's part of my drive to help them see that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my gosh. First and foremost, this just brings to the surface number one cause of death, currently heart disease. All manner of, of heart disease and it can manifest different ways, of course. And it's interesting that your physicians were asking about these external things, these inputs. Right. What kind of drugs are you doing? Yeah. You know, of course like diet is related. Are you exercising? Are you doing these external things and really not honoring the fact that your thoughts and your perception.

MONA SHARMA: My beliefs.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Your beliefs can dramatically impact your cardiovascular health. As a matter of fact, it impacts every cell in your body instantaneously. We were talking about this a little bit together yesterday. All of our thoughts create chemistry in our bodies. And what are you habituating? And so I wanna ask you more about this because whether somebody is dealing with a heart condition or PCOS or an arthritic condition, like I experienced as a youngster, how can we really tune in and understand the impact of the nervous system? You said the nervous system specifically? Yes. And I would imagine like that was part of the root cause and, putting attention on root cause healing. So let's talk about the implications of our thoughts, of our nervous system, and even you mentioned our beliefs on our overall health and wellness.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah, and maybe I'll hover just on this for a second, 'cause often when I share my story, some like hundreds of people will reach out, Hey, I've got heart palpitations. What can I do? What should I do? I'm going in for surgery next week. There's a time where these cardiac ablations, where they save lives, right? But the thing is, it's a surgery that's on the rise. In the US there was about 360,000, more than 360,000 of these procedures done last year. That's a thousand cardiac ablations a day. And my hope is just that doctors start to investigate. And again, people who have AFib, this surgery can be absolutely life-changing, but there's so much more to the puzzle since we now know that the heart is connected to everything including our gut microbiome, right.

And for me, it would've also been interesting to assess. So, from the time that I was a little kid, I was on antibiotics one to five times a year from the age of three till about 12 or 13 when

my mom found that great doctor. So we didn't do probiotics back then. I'm sure my mom gave me some yogurt and stuff like that. But imagine that amount of antibiotics. It was constant tonsillitis and strep throat that I was getting. So when I'm looking back, I'm thinking, okay, my gut microbiome was definitely completely compromised. Leaky gut, I'm sure I had major digestive issues, gas, bloating, you name it, right? But I'd had that, those symptoms for so long that it kind of just became me.

I really normalized it. Next was that PCOS diagnosis, so the insulin sensitivity, eating lots of starches, but I learned very quickly that when I started cutting out breads and flowers and pastas, I would feel better, but my community would criticize me. Like, oh, she's, she's dieting, she's stu, she's going hardcore again. And it's like, no, it's actually part of my healing. But I was getting criticism from people around me because they didn't understand it. And so many people suffer from that, right. So, and then the third thing which you wanna discuss is nervous system regulation. So all of us have had some traumas in our life, a lot of us, especially as children.

And I don't think I've ever shared too much about it because it was nothing that was terribly bad. Like I wasn't assaulted, I wasn't raped. There was nothing that terrible that had happened. But the way that we all experience trauma is trauma. Our nervous system knows it as trauma, and a lot of us get stuck in that state. So from that point growing up, if we hadn't resolved the traumatic state that we had been in, acknowledged it processed, it learned to become resilient again. Every time we, we encounter those micro stressors or triggers that make us feel that stress response, we go back into that activation of our sympathetic state.

Over and over and over, and for me, I think what I had mastered is being busy. I moved in immediately into hypervigilance. The busier that I was, I thought that I was more productive, and it was just part of this activation that felt kind of comforting for my body because that's all that I knew. When we would go to the ashram, I would experience the complete rest and relaxation, but I didn't. I didn't take it on myself to know that my superpower was, was to create that I thought that I had to go somewhere to achieve it. And that's not the case. So I think that for listeners is to recognize how often are you stuck in this sympathetic state throughout the day, especially now, right? We are exposed to so many stressors in our lives.

We talked about this yesterday, like how many of our friends and family just experienced, gosh, I'm just stressed. Life is intense. It is a lot these days. And just because we're adapting to higher levels of stress doesn't mean that our body is normalized it, right? And over time, scientifically, we know there's so many studies that show chronic consistent stress. Not only does it impact our digestion, it impacts our gut. It, it causes leaky gut syndrome, and of course, it impacts our heart. There's a vibration around our heart and our frequency when we don't feel safe. Now if we are someone who's out there, well, I'm gonna do yoga and I'm gonna meditate, but I just don't feel a difference.

A lot of that has to do, if we move up the ladder into our brain, our brain kind of adapts to living there. When we're used to living in this activation or hyper vigilance, that's what feels normal. We feel like when we move into rest and relaxation or safety, oh, something's gonna happen. The ball's gonna drop. I better get, get back here. Be busy again. And so we're training our bodies to move into the state. Our brain is really good. Our egoic mind is like, it kind of loves that activity. It loves being in control, but our body, we're just literally decapitating ourselves from the wisdom of our body. And over time, I, I really believe that this is how chronic disease begins because we kind of shut off the system, the communication way from our body, sending us all these symptoms every day, right?

Whether it's heartburn or gas or bloating or aches or pains or whatever it is, our bodies are sending us the symptoms, but we tend to ignore them. So I think that maybe some quick takeaways for people is just one to recognize how often you're in that sympathetic state. And two, can you maybe start to practice throughout the day coming back into your body's resilience, whether that is through taking deep grounding, you know, diaphragmatic breaths, whether that's going for a walk, calling someone that you love, hugging, hugging, someone dancing, singing, you know, you name it. So many things that can make her body feel good. And you'll experience the shift. It's gonna feel like coming home into your body. You'll notice your posture instead of leaning forward into activation all the time, you're resting back into who you are and the peace and the knowingness that your body has got this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm. I just feel more relaxed even.

MONA SHARMA: Okay, good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, taking a little bit of that in. You know, it's so fascinating that you mention we become acclimated to stress and anxiety like that's our safe space in a weird way. And if we've allowed our nervous system to be trained to be that way. And I wanna talk about the opposite like it might feel uncomfortable in quiet.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And I think there's an epidemic of that right now where people feel uncomfortable when there isn't something going on. Right. And you are there with your thoughts, just you and your thoughts. And what our bodies are always. And the this innate wisdom that we have, our bodies, as soon as they get a chance, our brains, our minds wanna start processing things.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Bringing these things up to the surface, to metabolize. And so I wanna talk about being uncomfortable with quiet and solitude. And also caveat, there's a difference between social isolation and solitude.

MONA SHARMA: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. So can you speak to that a little bit, just, just being uncomfortable with being calm and being quiet.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah. I think this is when we can talk about putting the consciousness back into healing, right? So when we in yoga philosophy, we'll, we'll talk about the voice in our head. Who is the voice in our head? Right. Who's driving it? Who's causing you to think? And then we think about this body also just being a vessel. So if we kind of separate from the two, there's a consciousness that's guiding everything when we come into consciousness, then there's a sense of peace and liberation that comes into mind because there's so much stress.

There's nothing to do, there's nothing to fix. The mind can't go into chaos. The body's not feeling like it needs to look a certain way or get a six pack or lose any weight.

You literally are in a state of just being right. And it doesn't mean that you have to stay there very long. Remember getting into a regulated nervous system, your parasympathetic state, you can do it in just a few minutes, right? That's all some people need. And I think that isolation on the flip side can actually lead to dysregulation because we know that our community, our environment, dictates our internal state. Right. So at the ashram, everything is done in community. You're sitting in community, you're practicing with community, you're eating with community, you're doing yoga with community. And that reflection of what other people are going through, what their energy is, seeing somebody process something that's incredibly challenging, and that being the evidence to know that I can do that too.

Okay, I don't need to be stuck here. And I think that because of the science now too, right? Loneliness now is a greater cause for mortality, right? Than a poor diet, than smoking a pack of cigarettes a day. We have to move away from the idea of isolation and move into community and getting accustomed to being together again and doing these practices in community, but also normalizing them, right? So how often do, when we go out with people, we make plans, we're always, we gotta do something, we gotta do something big, we gotta do something fun, right? You shared a story of playing pickleball and it's like you had to be better, you had to go stronger, you had to do more. What would it be like to go and just be with someone, like you mentioned your grandmother telling stories of, you know, how she grew up?

I think that our ancestors knew how to go and relax, to take a Sunday off when things used to be closed, right. To sit in a quiet setting or even just spend time together as a family. And that's a foundation for you and I. And I think that these are basic foundations to health that we're really, we're needing to go back to, right. There's nothing more to add in. I don't think any of us need to add one more thing onto our list of things to do. But I think there can be a tremendous amount of freedom that comes to our mind in our body when we do some taking away and further set some boundaries on our health and recognize like, I'm the

architect of this body and of this mind. And if I'm constantly in a state of doing, I'm turning off the wisdom of what this vessel actually needs.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. And we're in perfect conditions right now to distract ourselves.

MONA SHARMA: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And to be immersed in something that pulls us away from what's going on internally. And we've gotta know what we're dealing with of course. And I think a solution for that is community in the real world. And being present, you know, getting off of our screens and having real face time like we're having right now...

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: ...is, I believe it is the most valuable thing for humanity right now. More than ever. More than ever.

MONA SHARMA: I agree. And what comes up, and I'm sure for your listeners too, you and I can say these things, but the reflection of the world is, you know, we were talking about ai, right? We're gonna be able to make our reach span across countries and be more available than ever before. And the pace of technology is getting so fast, so how are we gonna do that? Right. And you and I speak about this a lot too, you know, in the US in 2023 was, what was it, \$4.9 trillion that was spent on healthcare. Okay, \$4.9 trillion was spent on healthcare. The health and wellness industry spends \$4.5 trillion, and yet, for the first time in the US our life expectancy has started to decline.

Rates of chronic illness has started to rise, so this conversation has so much power because it has to be part of every single conversation. And I'm so grateful for the amount of doctors now who are no longer getting offended at functional medicine and talking about healing. They're actually engaging and getting curious. I think this is a message that does have to come top bottom from seniors in our healthcare industry. So that change really does come from the top that boundaries are set, that more guidelines are placed in workspace

environments so that people do start to rest. And we see this trickling, you've probably heard stories of in places like Europe, they will build in trees, in, in workplaces, right?

Or create an outdoor space for people or cleaning up the menu in the office so that people are eating better. They're also building meditation rooms at airports and in workspace environments and stuff like that. It's happening, but I think now is the time for people like us and our incredible community to like be really loud about this, because the intensity that we're all feeling right now, it's not sustainable at all and it's gonna cause us to collapse. And you know, we were talking about aging parents yesterday. Our system is not designed for so much chronic illness. Two doctors were talking about my mother's health. They said we didn't expect people to live so long. And so now the hospital beds are full. So the change definitely is now, but I agree with you. It has to be part of everyday conversation.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yep, yep. So we've got this expanded lifespan, but not healthspan.

MONA SHARMA: Health span. You got it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's what we need to be focused on. You know, if we're gonna stick around here, making sure that we are of the best health possible. And that is totally possible. We have lots of examples of that. But at the same time, we have a paradigm where it's been normalized to have these steep declines. And so this part of this conversation, I want to tie this back. You said something really powerful earlier about essentially the gut heart connection.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? And being on these repeated stents of antibiotics. What's going on there? Because again, somebody might be dealing with a cardiovascular issue and not even considered that their gut might have something to do with it. Let's talk a little bit more about that connection.

MONA SHARMA: You got it. Yeah. So, there's an incredible communication system within the body called the vagus nerve bidirectional communication that moves from the neurons in our gut microbiome. So what is it like over 500 million neurons called our enteric nervous system that resides in our gut, that communicates through our vagus nerve, up through our heart center to our brain. We often talk about gut brain axis, but there's a gut heart. Brain access and the heart takes in the signaling, whether that is safety within the gut microbiome, things are functioning really well, digestion, it's great. We're able to absorb all of our nutrients or a sign of danger. I can't digest this food.

There's too much stress. So my zonulin protein is increasing in. Now the tight junctions in my, my gut are becoming leaky, that gets communicated to through the heart. And if our heart is sensing always 24/7, are we safe? Are we not? Am I safe in this environment? Am I safe within this environment? It's constantly getting messages of, it's not safe. There's something going on. All right, let's take that up to the brain. Then we go to the brain and the brain is like, okay, well now I'm anxious because the heart and the gut are telling me that there's like a red alert going on. We're not digesting our food properly. The heart is freaking out because it's not feeling safe, nor has it felt safe for so long.

And that's what creates that shift in our nervous system state that we have to start to regulate. And this is why I say, you know. You could be on the best protocol in the world, best fitness regime on the planet, but you still might not wake up feeling good. This is a case for so many of my clients. Well, why don't I feel good when I wake up? I'm doing all the things, and often it's an issue of our nervous system. So when we kind of start with nervous system regulation and moving into heart coherence, all of a sudden the system within the body starts to regulate. We come into a place that is safe and that's that rest and digest mode when that is the stage that our body has to be in, in order for every single cell and mitochondria within us to function optimally.

Right. I wish we could see our mitochondria on a big screen to just see what was happening. Right. Do you remember in nutrition school, when you look at a cell with free radical damage? So you look at your blood and you see this one cell with free radical damage, and it literally looks like it has all these spikes wrapped around it. Right. And it's like, woo, if I saw

that, that's telling me my body is, is stressed. I think that day is coming, but just the awareness of, okay, how is my heart today? Am I in a regulated state or have I done something to come into coherence? Right. The HeartMath Institute is incredible for, for now having the data. This is not woo woo anymore. It's more than just vibration and tuning in. It's coming into coherence through your breath, through gratitude, through family, through love, through yoga, through meditation. Things that had, we still be living in communities like at the ashram we would probably still be doing together.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back.

This episode is brought to you by the incredible team at Organifi and their phenomenal superfood blends. Not only does their bestselling green juice blend have the most powerful green superfoods, it also has a therapeutic amount of ashwagandha. A double blind, randomized placebo controlled trial published in the Journal of Psychological Medicine had test subjects with a history of chronic stress to consume ashwagandha or a placebo. Over the course of the month and a half long study period, the group that received ashwagandha exhibited a significant reduction in scores on all the stress assessment scales compared to the placebo group and the serum cholesterol levels of the test subjects were substantially reduced. In the Ashwagandha group, again, this is just one of the ingredients in the Organifi Green Juice blend.

Some of the green superfoods include spirulina, chlorella, maringa, and never sleep on spirulina. A recent study published in Plus one revealed that spirulina has a potential to one, improve neurogenesis in the brain and two reduce neuroinflammation. And right now you're going to get 20% off of their incredible green juice blend when you go to organifi.com/model. That's ORGANIFI.com/model for 20% off. Plus, you'll also receive their 60 day money back guarantee so you have nothing to lose and better health to gain. Head over to organifi.com/model. Check out their variety of superfood blends, their green juice blend. They're red juice blend. They're phenomenal collagen that we use all the time. Again, 20% off at organifi.com/model. And now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, it's so crazy. I mean, we've, we're changing this quickly and I'm grateful for that, but we still overall are looking at our body parts in isolation.

MONA SHARMA: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, and so just even considering the heart, absolutely what's going on with your gut is impacting your heart. What's going on with your brain is impacting your heart and vice versa. What's going on with your toes is impacting your heart as well. It's all connected. We've got a lot of data on teeth and heart. Right?

MONA SHARMA: Yes. A lot. And oral health and the microbiome of the mouth. And the microbiome of the gut, right. We're, we're starting to understand that. But again, let's work up the ladder a little bit. When you go to your doctor, your primary care, or go to any hospital, unfortunately more likely than not, the GI doctor isn't talking to the cardiologist. The cardiologist doesn't even know who the primary care is. And these notes are getting put into a system. But where is the integration? Right. For so long in our industry, we've been talking about integrative healthcare. I don't even think that's happening yet. So I think it's time for integrative healthcare to, to happen. And, Dr. Andrew Weill talks about this often the day that I can show up at a doctor's office.

And I met perhaps with, you know, in the waiting room where I'm queue to just take a few deep breaths. And then I meet with my, my medical doctor, and we maybe are looking at my biology and I'm running my labs, but before I go, I'm also looking at Eastern medicine. I'm understanding, Hmm, is this a good time to incorporate some acupuncture? Could meditation actually be prescribed to me to prevent going on that, that blood pressure medication? Because there's also studies to show that meditation can actually lower blood pressure. If there's that integration and people are leaving with things like yoga and meditation or Pilates or Qigong or Tai Chi. If that was prescribed to you, I wonder would you do it knowing it could change your life? That's integrative healthcare, and that's the future that I really dream for.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I think it's just number one, just even having the option.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Just giving, because of course there is a perspective of well, people aren't gonna do it anyways.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Studies show contrary, you know, and some really sophisticated studies have been done on type two diabetes. And the adherence to lifestyle interventions with patients getting coaching and support exceedingly outperform as far as their results, prevention of the onset of diabetes. So like we'll put a study up for everybody. We're looking at pre-diabetics and having significant benefits that far outweigh, and of course they're utilizing like metformin. They're using some medic medications that can be valuable. But the lifestyle interventions, people adhere to it far more than the researchers gave them credit for.

MONA SHARMA: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And they got far better results. People are willing to do the thing if they're aware that it works.

MONA SHARMA: You got it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And it's an option. Right. And this is about empowerment as well, and I want to ask you about this because you mentioned. Like we've got the microbiome of our gut. We've got a skin microbiome, we've got a lung microbiome, we also have a microbiome of the, of the heart.

MONA SHARMA: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And now the brain microbiome, this conversation is taking place as well. You know, everywhere that we look, we're finding..

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: ...these microbes. And there is a intimate connection between this invisible world of these microbes and our health. Can we talk a little bit about that overall connection?

MONA SHARMA: Yeah. So when we think about, you know, let's talk about mitochondria. I think we can just like pull this straight back to mitochondria. Mitochondria are in every single cell within our body and this is a different type of communication network. Mitochondria, these cells within our body, we're now learning, are constantly communicating with each other. And I'm not a doctor, but it just makes sense. Everything within us is connected. A lot of somatic killers, they'll share stories of, you know, oh gosh, you know, I was working with my client doing yoga today with major back pain and now I've got back pain, or I was working with a client who had a knee problem.

Now I feel the knee problem. Right? Everything's connected on such a greater level. So first there's the physiological level, which I think that the sooner we can understand that everything that we consume, whether it's what we eat or what we drink, or the supplements that we take, a supplement doesn't know to just go and work on the heart or just go and work on the liver or just go work on the brain or the eyes. It's gonna work on everything. So you've gotta understand that in the same way with food, when we think about the food that you're eating. The food is interacting with those mitochondrial cells, that communication network and dictating, is this gonna fuel us and help drive us towards wellness in this version of myself that I'm daydreaming of at 90 or a hundred?

Or is this gonna keep us anchored in our truth? Meanwhile, okay, we're staying here. Keep the inflammation up, let's keep this free radical damage rising. Let's stay in the state of inflammation that H-S-C-R-P is gonna continue to rise. So this is how we need to understand that everything is connected. And there's another thought process that I had that you'd brought up before that I wanna get to when we talk about making these changes, and the studies that you had mentioned. I don't know that I would've come into yoga on my own, but my parents imprinted on me food as medicine. My parents imprinted on me meditation and

yoga. I remember my dad would tap me on the shoulder at five o'clock in the morning to go and meditate. And as a kid I was like, come on dad, seriously, like you're making me go do this.

I would often just fall asleep. But sure enough, in my greatest time of need, I knew that that's what I had to go back to. And I bring this up 'cause I know that you have a lot of parents that are listening and you are an incredible parent. And we talk about the rituals that we have in our households, the things that we imprint for our children will become them. I think that these habits that people always search for, what's a new habit that I can introduce? What's a new ritual? What's a new product? A new supplement. Habits come and go, but rituals become you. They become part of your DNA. They become so important that they actually will change your own DNA. We can now prove this through epigenetics.

We can literally rewire our genes to age well or age poorly. So for the parents who are listening who think that, you know, putting the carrots on the counter doesn't work, or telling or queuing your child to take your deep breath, oh, they don't wanna do it. They don't wanna go meditate, or they don't wanna go do yoga or lift weights, or whatever it is, keep practicing. It will become the, it will be a ritual in your household that will become so important to them in the future. Don't give up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm. I love this. So we've got coherence if we're talking about our mitochondria. All, everything being in sync and working together. Coherence with these microbial communities. You mentioned earlier heart coherence. And so I want to ask more about what that means like what does that entail. And is this something that we should be striving to do if we're wanting to heal our hearts and our bodies overall?

MONA SHARMA: You got it. So studies really show us now that even something like leaky gut or gut permeability can actually cause a low heart rate variability. Better vagal tone increases heart rate variability. So HRV, it's the variations rhythm and the time between each heartbeat. And although it might not sound like high HRV sounds good, but it's actually something that you want. When our HIRV tends to drop, we tend to be in a state of illness or stress or lacking resilience in our body to, to heal.

So we really wanna, if we're gonna use biomarkers and trackers and all those wearables, recognizing that HRV is a powerful indication of what our heart rate variability is. So now studies have proven that when we focus on increasing our heart rate variability, whether that's through meditation or gratitude or humming or chanting or singing, our HRV actually increases. Well, what does that mean? By going to that space of gratitude? I'm increasing my HRV, which means that I'm building healing resilience within my body. If I'm building healing resilience within my body, I'm actually warding off inflammation. I'm optimizing my digestion, I'm improving oxygenation to every cell in my body.

I'm increasing blood flow to my brain. I'm probably healing my leaky gut and my heart feels as though it's safe. So I think that understanding your heart rate variability in terms of using heart coherence as a tool to get there is something that's so key for the future. And to get into a coherent state is actually something quite simple. Every single morning when I wake up. Obviously because of my history with my heart, I'm so grateful for this thing, man. Like this thing has been beating for me since I even, before I even got here, right? And how many of us even think about our heartbeat, right? Unless it speeds up way too fast or we get scared or we get a heart, a sharp pain.

And studies even show that the problem with cardiovascular disease is that we ignore the symptoms and we treat the pain when it's too late. Don't ignore the symptoms. Show some gratitude for your heart and just notice, one is there any tension? Two, am I breathing? Three, what is my state right now? Am I in a sense of gratitude or am I living in stress and fear? And the challenge with the world right now is that a lot of people are stuck in stress and fear, right? That is not a state of coherence. So first thing in the morning, hands over heart, just think about one, two, or three things that you're grateful for. But don't just think about them, feel them. And I ended up getting into NLP, which is neurolinguistic programming.

And I did that because most of my clients, they generally knew what to eat. But I recognized what we had mentioned before, the power of our thoughts to impact our actions every single day. One of the practices in NLP is just getting into the emotion that you want to feel through visualization. So I'll guide my, my clients into kind of a best self snapshot, and listeners can even do this right now. So when's the last time in your life that you felt a sense of true

happiness or joy or peace. Like, just think about it for a second. When's the last time the event felt a true sense of happiness, joy, peace. Maybe your hands were even up in the air, just like, oh my God, I feel so good right now. Even if it was for a split second, and this could have been yesterday, it could have been on vacation.

You might have to go back to a time when you were a child. Go back to that memory when you felt that happiness, joy, and peace to the point that you make it feel real. You'll be able to start, you know, visualizing what it felt like maybe you'll see colors, you'll remember a smell, you might remember some sounds in the background. We now know through great doctors like Dr. Joe Dispenza, the body doesn't know the difference. If your mind can make it feel real enough, your body doesn't know the difference of it happening in the past or in the present moment. So whatever the emotion is that you're craving right now in your life, make it feel real.

If it's happiness, focus daydream on happiness. If it's health, focus on health and what you're doing when you're a healthy person. If it's peace, if it's love, whatever it is, just focus on that. Make it feel so real to yourself every morning before you get outta bed. This is your morning ritual. You'll be in a coherent state and like starting your day off in that state is everything. You're more likely gonna make better choices for yourself.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Please do this before you pick your phone up, just.

MONA SHARMA: Please! Yeah, no phones. First thing that. Instantly cues stress, right? Yeah. It immediately moves us into, for some of us into a dysregulated state. But if it's just like worry or busyness, we're far too busy. No one should start the day that way. Mornings are magical. Use them for that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. Yes. So we're talking about this, I mean, one of the big takeaways today is the gut heart connection. And being a nutritionist, it has a lot to do, obviously with what you're eating and what's going into the gut. And so let's talk about healing our gut. And obviously we've talked about the implications for our heart health, for our brain health, for our health overall, but what's going on with gut health today? And what are some of the

major culprits, some things that we need to be mindful of and to possibly avoid if we can. And let's also talk about what some things that we can do to improve our gut health.

MONA SHARMA: Love it. Yeah, you talk about so many of these things, but I think people really need to understand, especially now that they're all backed by science, right? So, believe it or not, the first thing as a nutritionist that I work with my clients on is not their food plan. I wanna talk to them about their, whether they're sleeping, whether they're resting. So we start with sleep. Make sure that you're getting the rest and the recovery that your body needs living in today's stressful world. So this means optimizing your bedroom. Bedrooms are used for sleep, for sex, for reading, and for rest. That is it. I do not wanna see a screen in anyone's bedroom. Focus on blackout curtains that is part of healing your gut.

Next we wanna think about just stress resilience throughout the day. So making sure if you're looking at your calendar. At the ashram, one of the greatest things is the schedule that we're on every single day. We call this kind of, it's dinacharya. It's this beautiful sacred structure. Dinacharya is literally going hour by hour at the ashram. You know exactly what you're doing at that time. And there's great people like Steve Koler. He's put the science behind this and he talks about time blocking. During those times, you know what you're doing. You're able to give all of your focus and your attention to that one thing without the distraction of your phone.

I promise this is gonna come back to gut health. It means that you are not constantly getting reminders and dings and distractions through one process. You're probably more efficient and more productive throughout the day. You're gonna feel a lot more peace from that state, and when you feel a lot more peace through that state, your gut's gonna be able to relax and digest your food. Now we can get to our food. How are most of us eating? We're eating when we are on the go. We're eating, when we're scrolling, we're eating, when we're watching the news and global events, which again, remember the power of the mind, whether it's happening across in another country or happening on our phones, we're experiencing that emotion.

We now know that stress completely shuts off your body's ability to digest food. You have to be in a restorative state for your body to assimilate and metabolize the nutrients from the foods that you're eating. So the state that you eat in, should be peaceful. It should be relaxing. You should turn your phone over. I typically, like if I were to meet you for lunch, our phones typically go away. We know this. Put your phones away, look at your environment, and maybe go out for a walk after you eat, to really allow your body to metabolize the nutrients that you've just taken in. And this is so important because digestion takes up a tremendous amount of energy from the body.

And most of us, we don't even think twice about it. We throw whatever we want down the hatch, we expect our bodies to deal with it, and we get back to eating and driving at the same time or going back into intense work. So the stage that you eat is so important to optimize digestion more than any pill, more than any supplement. And then of course, the foods, right? So foods are essential. And I think the greatest thing that I love that's starting to trend right now is fiber. Fiber is essential to an optimally functioning gut. Why? Because the good, healthy, happy microbes within our gut microbiome, they thrive on this fiber. It's their food to thrive.

So without even taking a probiotic, if you can increase your good quality fiber from polyphenol-rich foods that have lots of color, I'm talking about fruits and tons of veggies, eat the rainbow, focus on eating just as much produce as you can. Those types of veggies and that fiber is going to fuel the good microbes within the gut microbiome. And what I teach my clients is ultimately how to build a plate. So how do we do this? Focus less on the diet. If you're looking down at your plate, 70% of your plate should be full of that. Eat the rainbow, colorful veggies, red, purples, blues and greens. That food all has information. The fiber, the nutrients, the phytochemicals, but also the nutrients that come from the soil that they were grown in is information for a gut microbiome, we don't think about that.

This is the power of eating seasonally. If we eat seasonally, microbes within the soil support our immune system at that time. Right? And then of course, there's protein. Protein is essential. Protein is essential for longevity for our muscles for our brain. So focusing on high quality protein. But the challenge today is that right now we're living in a protein crazed

environment where people are eating a lot more protein, but they're not eating higher quality sources of protein. Meaning the animals are from factories. They're eating fake foods or eating genetically modified ingredients to help fatten them up. They're also in a very stressful environment in cages inside without any daylight or any grass. When those animals are slaughtered in a state of stress, the cortisol in those animals is going to spike.

You're going to consume the cortisol from that animal protein that you're eating from those animals. So it's something to think about whether you're vegan or eat animal protein. I'm here for it. Whatever you prefer, whatever feels great for your physiology. But please, let's just start to support the farmers that put the consciousness back into farming to give us higher quality cuts of animal protein. And then of course there's good quality fats. You talk a lot about good quality fats. They are essential to every cell within our body, essential for our brain function, but also essential for our heart. And it's this trifecta, high quality, phytonutrient rich fiber, good quality proteins and good quality fat that will fuel our gut, fuel our heart, and fuel our brain.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's pretty simple.

MONA SHARMA: It's pretty simple, man. Like, the problem is that we, we don't, as we're associating food, as being things that come from packages and boxes. And from an Ayurvedic lens, anything that comes from a package or a box is dead food. It's nutrient void. There is no nutrient prana, life force energy to it. So the reason why the color is so important is we have to think that we digest with all of our senses. We digest with our mouth and what we eat, we digest what we smell, what we watch, what we listen to, and what we feel. So what you see on your plate is part of the digestive process. Make it look beautiful.

And I'm already hearing maybe some viewers think, well, eating that way is too expensive. Right? Why is that? That just eating Whole Foods has become something that's so challenging and expensive for people buy what's on sale. Because the other part about healing your gut is diversity. So if you're gonna the grocery market and every single week you're buying what's on sale, it's forcing you to eat foods that are different. Different foods

have different nutrient profiles, different vitamin profiles that are gonna help you to heal your gut as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, I love that too.

MONA SHARMA: Quality matters.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what I used to do when I was worried about, you know, being at the checkout counter my card not going through. And I would look for those yellow signs. You know, the, the, the things that were on sale. And also sometimes stocking up on those things too. You know, if I could save an extra \$20. Off my grocery bill by stocking up on those things. So of course, and it's just prioritizing.

MONA SHARMA: It's just prioritizing. And you know, the flip side to that too is, okay, now you're buying what's on sale. I don't have the time, right? I don't have the time to cook it, to prepare it, to chop it. One of the gifts is that when you go to the grocery store now, a lot of those things are pre-cut or pre-washed. If that's available, go for it. In our family, one of our other rituals, on Sundays is after we go grocery shopping or go to the farmer's market, we'll chop everything up and we store everything in glass containers in our fridge so that it's literally ready to go.

So every night when I'm cooking dinner, I'll put out some veggies that are already chopped up. My kids will just come by and like start snacking on those. That alone for me, that's like their multivitamin. I'm so happy just with that. So food preparation and just planning for it. Your healthcare, your healthcare starts in the kitchen.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, that's a bar. Okay. So I was surprised. And grateful that you started off by sharing that sleep is part of healing your gut. Again, most of us do not think about that. And of course, you mentioned the stress input. Obviously you got into a diet, but you know, to tie this all together.

MONA SHARMA: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: When we are thinking about this phenomenon of human experience and emotion and feeling, you know, we generally tie that to gut feelings. Right. Or a heart based association with feeling. And throughout time, you know, documented for centuries, the human heart has kind of been this source of love and expression, and even anger, you know, and passion and all these things, these feelings associated with the human heart. And these two organs are most synonymous with human emotion and feeling. Of course, they're connected. And so this conversation is so important for us to pay more attention to our thoughts, our emotions, our stress inputs, processing stress in order to have healthier, you know, gut health and heart health.

I want to ask you about this as well, because, you know, right now there's a lot of change taking place in the world to say the least. And it's, we talked a little bit about this earlier, but the most important thing, I believe, is really being intentional about being with other people and experiencing life in the real world. And you're doing so many things to bring people together and to create education, but also experiences as well. And you've created a show and it's a hit show already. It just took off when it, when it first launched, called Rooted in Wellness. And I want to ask you about what that means. And also how that relates to us collectively as a community and coming together.

MONA SHARMA: Ah, thank you for that. Yeah. It's a passion project that I think mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, I had to just be ready for, because I feel a sight, a hyper sense of awareness of the suffering that's happening out in the world. And you and I shared about the power of when we share a story with people and sometimes the person off the street will say, oh my God, your story really inspired me. I have these heart palpitations and like, oh my God, those people are out there. Okay, I gotta, I gotta share this. So the intention of rudin and wellness was really just based on my own healing journey. I think it's time that we start to merge these ancient rituals that come not just from my Indian culture, but from all of our cultures.

All of us have rituals that exist, that we have to keep alive to heal our body and help us feel better. But we also have to take into account the amazing magnitude and the magnificence that's available to us through Western medicine. Right. Friend or foe. There's a lot of things

that are happening in that world that I think you and I disagree with. It saves lives though and through the testing that we can do today and understanding our physiology today through aging and prevention is there. But we have to merge the two worlds together. So I'm actively just telling stories and seeking experts like you to come on and just share the stories and how we can make that happen.

Now when I break that down even further, I really just took the foundations of the ashram. So working with my clients, I help them build their own ashram at home. So that you don't have to go away. You have to recognize that whatever your environment is, you make that your healing sanctuary. And on my website, I go through these eight roots of healing. A lot of the things that we've talked about today, proper sleep, proper exercise, proper diet, proper rest, proper hydration, community, but also spirituality and connection. And then there's emotional freedom and trauma release. So these are the kind of the three bigger areas, but I'm finding more often than not with.

Especially over the past 10 years when I start working with my clients, everyone's so interested and Mona, just tell me what to eat. How am I working out? What's the protocol? What are the supplements? I'll just do it. All. The people who stay with me make the transition into making their healing a spiritual journey. Spiritual journey, meaning, you recognize that this body and this vessel, good God, this incredible thing is carrying me through life. The things that I've put it through, the things that I've eaten, the things that I've had to experience and metabolize like this body's carrying me. And then when you get a little bit older, when you get to your forties and you give birth and have children, it becomes so much more sacred and you realize like it's just so precious.

And time all of a sudden starts to speed up, and it's going by really, really fast now, and I wanna preserve it as much as I can. So when I guide my clients into understanding, putting the spirituality back into your body doesn't have to be a religious experience, it's simply the act of tuning in. So through practices every day, we're understanding that we're given this gift of our mind and these thoughts that tend to be way too busy and overactive every single day, but it's causing a lot of the problems and a lot of my suffering internally. So what if I were to continue to practice telling the brain, like, okay, brain, you know, I'm, I'm kind of tired of

you running your thing constantly, nonstop, causing me a lot of stress and anxiety, and I can't take it anymore.

I'm actually feeling pretty sad and depressed. And we put that sense of freedom back into the body so that we can feel liberation. The body can start to like, okay, the brain is not freaking out anymore. It might come up and then you can just gently guide it into feeling, no, I'm not done. Come back into your body gentle practices throughout your day, throughout your year with your community, with yourself, so that you just know what it feels like to feel at home, like this is your first home. How are you treating it? And then recognizing that whatever your environment is around you is what's gonna dictate the impact, what's happening in your home? So choosing wisely, community is so big. I think a lot of us have probably gone through cycles of friends that we outgrew because we're choosing things that are more aligned with how we wanna feel.

We're choosing soul family, who we're friends because of how we wanna feel. We're now seeking to move to places that are more aligned with how we wanna feel. We're now coming online to the fact that this system of go, go, go, do, do do, do more, do more, and then more. Right. LA's notorious for this because there's always another home run here, right? It's like, I don't need that anymore. Like I wanna come back home to this feeling. And what it ultimately feels like is a sense of freedom. When's the last time that we talk about freedom? How often do we talk about freedom in our conversation and just feeling really great or really good? And I think that that is the wisdom, that's a necessity moving forward if we're really gonna change the trajectory for healing and health.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love this so much. I love hanging out with you. Another part of this community tie in that you are very intentional about with your show is you are live streaming the show when it's happening, right? And so we had this experience together. And your husband is running all this stuff. And my son, and this is so interesting. Again, like we have our family members there.

MONA SHARMA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I didn't know your husband was gonna be there and like running all this stuff as well. And my son was just kind of blown away. I, my, when we got home, my wife was like, how many cameras were they using? 'cause he was manager going and I was like, I guess three. I don't, Braden was like four, you know? And so he's modulating all this stuff and broadcasting it live. It was broadcast through, and I got this from my son 'cause I didn't know I was with you, but I believe it was on Instagram being broadcast and YouTube.

MONA SHARMA: On YouTube. Yeah. Shawn, like the, the drive for me right now is impact and also the intention behind the podcast. And the reason for going live my drive every day is how can I help as many people as humanly possible? And some days that could be one person on another day. That could be five or 10, I don't know. But that's really been the driver behind not only the podcast, but also a private membership community that I've been launching.

It's actually why it took me so long to come on this podcast. I'm like, I wanna make sure that this is up and running before I come on, because I know that. Healing for me took living in community at the ashram. I needed to be with other people. I needed other people to kind of witness my suffering and to hold space for me and to acknowledge that I wasn't crazy and that my symptoms were like, oh, they were feeling it too. That was part of the healing. And so now if I can have a community through the hundreds and hundreds of clients that I've worked with over the past thousands, over the past decade, if we can commune together and have synergy in our story, synergy in what's working, synergy in what's making us feel good and turn down the noise in what's happening in the health and wellness world right now, there's almost, look at that.

You just took an exhale. See, it just makes you exhale because the world is loud. If health and wellness feels complicated to you. It feels overwhelming. We are messing things up. We've got the story all wrong. Health and wellness should feel like stillness and peace and coming home and ease and gratitude and love and I get to do this and experiencing joy and victory and love every single day, right? If we're surrounded by more people who like just start to drink that Kool-Aid just a little bit, like, okay, feel it. I wanna come out and believe this. I'm gonna feel it a little bit. We might go back into the stress and worry of modern day living, but the more that we can just like see the light every single day, we become the light. And I think

more than anything I needed the reminder that that light is still there and it doesn't mean escaping life. And it doesn't mean that I have to go hide back at the ashram anymore. It's right in front of us every single day and other people are seeking this too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. Yes. This has been so amazing, and can you share, you mentioned the membership site and..

MONA SHARMA: Yeah, so everything's on mona sharma.com. You can find all the links to Rooted in Wellness. You can find my eight Limbs of Healing. You can find how to build a plate that we talked about today, and of course, the link to sign up to my membership community where there are access to everything that I learned at the ashram. It's guided meditations, guided breath work, guided yoga, all my recipes that I love, the brands that you and I just find synergy with because they're doing such great things in this world, and of course, monthly calls that we're all gonna commune on together.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fire, this is awesome.

MONA SHARMA: Thanks.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is awesome. I'm so grateful we could finally make this happen.

MONA SHARMA: Me too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're amazing. One of my favorite people. Just so easy. You know, it's just easy to connect and to hang out with you and me too. This has been amazing. I can't wait to do this again.

MONA SHARMA: Me too. Thanks, Shawn.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course, the one and only Mona Sharma, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. If you did. Please share it out with the people that you care about. Send it directly from the podcast app that you're listening on. Or of course you could take a screenshot and share this episode

out on social media. You could tag me. I'm @Shawnmodel on Instagram and tag Mona as well. Show her some love. I'm sure that you would love to see that you were listening today. We've got some epic masterclasses and world class guests coming your way very, very soon. So make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to the model health show.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes. You can find transcription 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.