

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

The Model Health Show with Shawn Stevenson Session #77

Show notes at: <http://www.shawnstevenson.com/77>

Announcer: This podcast of The Model Health Show is presented to you by Shawn Stevenson with Rare Gem Productions. For more information visit theshawnstevensonmodel.com.

Shawn Stevenson: Welcome to The Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, here with my beautiful cohost and producer, Jade Harrell. What's up Jade?

Jade: What's up Shawn?

Shawn: How are you doing today?

Jade: I am tranquilpitous, Shawn.

Shawn: Tranquilpitous?

Jade: Yes!

Shawn: Yes, what is that?

Jade: I am serendipitously tranquil.

Shawn: Wow.

Jade: Yeah, it just happened by accident.

Shawn: W-O-W!

Jade: I'm saying! I feel so tranquil and I wasn't even expecting it.

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Shawn: I just had me a cool pop!

Jade: There you go.

Shawn: I'm cool baby! Alright, we've got an amazing show for everybody today and we will be talking about a subject that does not get enough attention in our society. As a matter of fact, this is something that has really been suppressed and it is behind closed doors. We're going to really open this up and provide a lot of different solutions for people. So today we're going to be talking about depression.

Jade: Wow.

Shawn: And the reason that this is such an important topic is the fact that depression is now the most common type of mental illness affecting more than 26 percent of the adult population in the United States.

Jade: One in four!

Shawn: Yes, exactly. A little more than one in four. And it affects about 121 million people worldwide.

Jade: My goodness.

Shawn: Now the WHO (World Health Organization) has estimated that by the year 2020 depression will be the second leading cause of disability and premature death throughout the world, trailing only heart disease.

Jade: Oh my goodness.

Shawn: Here's the issue. When you hear statistics like that it's like, why is this growing so rapidly. Obviously our current treatments for depression are not yielding great results and that's why we're going to dive into this topic today. Today we're actually going to talk about how depression is linked to early death, why rates of depression have skyrocketed, what some of the major underlying

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causes of depression are, and clinically-proven, safe natural treatments for depression plus a whole lot more.

Jade: Great.

Shawn: But first let's go ahead and give a huge shout out to our show sponsor, onnit.com.

Jade: I want to shout out and hug them.

Shawn: That's onnit.com/model for 10% off all of your health and human performance supplements. You know we're loving the Hemp FORCE.

Jade: Oh yes.

Shawn: It is a must. And, of course, with the show topic today, talking about how does protein impact our brain function, how does protein impact our endocrine system, our nervous system. And if you don't know, now you know, it's one of the most critical things to you being a healthy human unit...you actually need the right kind of amino acids. These things help your body to kind of transition these building blocks over into the important hormones and neurotransmitters that we need like tyrosine getting converted and eventually things like serotonin and dopamine showing up.

We need to get the right kind of amino acids in our body. Hemp FORCE, by far, hemp protein is the most bioavailable protein source for the human body and a lot of people still don't know that. This is why it's so important to look into these healthy organic plant proteins so you're not dealing with all the nefarious, weird, what-did-the-cow-eat-today kind of thing you get when you're dealing with whey. It's just a much more sketchy market instead of giving yourself an organic, high-quality hemp protein. That's what you're finding here with Hemp FORCE. And, it tastes good.

Jade: It does taste really good.

Shawn: Deliciousness.

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Jade: Kicks it up a notch. Smoothies are super smooth.

Shawn: Absolutely. So head over there and check them out. Grab yourself some Hemp FORCE. Give it a shot. I guarantee you that you're going to love it.

Jade: Yeah.

Shawn: Also, we're loving the SHROOM Tech.

Jade: That is my stuff!

Shawn: As Jade says it, it's for pre-life. I use it for pre-workout, she uses it for pre-life.

Jade: Pre-life dealings.

Shawn: Because you know we've got a lot going on in our world today and this helps to give us that extra edge. You know, the nutrition, the exercise, your stress management are the real foundational building blocks in getting that high-quality sleep. But these are those small pieces that can give you a really big edge. And it's based on the cordyceps mushroom which has thousands of years of documented history and use in the Chinese medicinal system. Today our modern-day scientists are proving that it does, in fact, increase the oxygenation of your blood, boost your stamina, and also improves your insulin sensitivity so these are all things that correlate to you being a happier, healthier human being and having a fitter body and feeling good.

Jade: It makes the sun shine brighter every morning. I don't know what it is but I really do wake up super refreshed.

Shawn: No that's not the scientific version of that statement, but that's what can show up for you. So definitely head over there and check out onnit.com/model for 10 percent off all of your health and human performance supplements.

Now let's get into the iTunes review of the week.

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Jade: This is a good one Shawn, exclamation points on this word for the title, Empowering, and five stars from Arctic Reading.

“I came across Shawn whilst trying out Abel James’ podcast a few weeks ago. I have now downloaded all previous episodes and this is all I listen to in the car. I have been offered various pieces of advice in my life. However, unless someone can tell me why then it’s not going to resonate with me. That’s where Shawn and Jade come in. They give you scientific facts and experiences to back it up. I started off trying to lose weight, build muscle, and look good. After making this podcast a part of my life, my aim is to be the best version of Me. My mission is to spread the word to other people now and I look forward to giving my son a healthy and nutritious life. Thank you The Model Health Show.”

Shawn: Incredible. That’s incredible. And that is coming from the U.K. You know, all this time, we recently had the amazing Pat Flynn from [Smart Passive Income](#), and I just joined the Integrity Network on iTunes and I was taking a listen to some of the new shows. He also has a show called Ask Pat. So, I downloaded an episode and it was to do with reviews on iTunes and come to find out, I’ve only been looking at reviews from the United States. So, the 100 whatever reviews that are there, the 200 reviews, those are all just from the U.S. All the other countries, I had to scroll down, click a little flag thing, and then BOOM, now I see the reviews from the U.K. and from Canada, all over the place. And it’s just like, oh my goodness! I couldn’t believe that I couldn’t get to see these at first.

Jade: Well how about that. We’ve got to read some of these.

Shawn: Yeah. So that’s coming from one of our friends in the U.K. And just a huge shout out, thank you everybody tuning in from around the world listening to the show.

So now let’s go ahead and dive into the topic of the day. Today we’re going to be talking about natural treatments for depression. Just to reiterate, this is a far bigger issue than a lot of people realize and it’s having a huge economic impact. It’s having a huge global impact on our communities and the individuals within

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those communities are often, you know right now we're in a place where it's one in four people, and they are often dealing with this very quiet, very hidden issue of depression. So today we're going to open this up and provide a lot of incredible solutions for this condition.

What I mentioned earlier was the fact that, right now as things are rolling along, by 2020 it's going to be depression as the number two leading cause of disability and premature death.

Here in the United States, major depressive disorder is actually the leading cause, it's already the leading cause, of disability for people between the ages of 15 and 44.

Jade: 15?

Shawn: And if it's not in that age group it will be number two on the list of things for disability.

Jade: Sure, on the others, but that's a young generation.

Shawn: So again, a lot of people have no idea about this but we're going to open this up today. I want to start with talking about something that's the antithesis. I want to give the definition of what mental health actually is.

Mental health is a state of well being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities. They can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and are able to make a contribution to his or her community.

That's the definition of mental health. On the other end, what is depression? This is according to the Mayo Clinic. They say that depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest; also called major depression, major depressive disorder, or clinical depression. It affects how you feel, think, and behave and can lead to a variety of physical and emotional problems.

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So, let's start there. Let's talk about how this is correlated with premature death. Let's talk about these physical problems. So, statistically, if you look at the research, depression increases mortality rates from cancer, Parkinson's, diabetes, heart disease, and so many other things.

Take, for example, heart disease. People with depression are four times as likely to develop heart attack than those people without a history of this illness. And, after a heart attack they are at a significant increased risk of death or a second heart attack. Now this was according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

The data just keeps rolling in. This was from twenty years ago.

Jade: It accelerates these already terrible conditions.

Shawn: Right. And what it really does, the major impact of depression, it's a hormone-related illness and it weakens the immune system. This is what we're going to be looking at. And then we've got the more obvious thing that's connected with it which is depression is associated with high suicide rates.

About 50 percent of individuals who have committed suicide carry a primary diagnosis of depression. So, that's kind of the Captain Obvious of the situation that will be correlated with that deep feeling of sadness, the pain that can be associated with being in a depressed state. So, what we do in our society today is we turn to drugs.

So why drugs?

Why would we use drugs when they're not used to treat the underlying cause of the depression?

Jade: So that we feel better.

Shawn: Right. They're only there to treat symptoms. They're a pacifier, not a cure. They are not actually addressing what's causing the depression.

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Jade: If we were able to address that we wouldn't have the symptoms then to treat.

Shawn: Precisely.

Jade: Ends it, put's it to an end.

Shawn: This is why it's so important to be gentle with yourself in the beginning whenever you have this state, or you're diagnosed, to be gentle with yourself, not jump into synthetic chemicals if at all possible. Now, there is a place for that. Absolutely! But we want to look at being more empowered and doing things as natural as possible to allow your body to come out of that state in and of itself.

This is why, synthetic drugs will displace, or mimic, your body's own natural production of neurotransmitters and hormones. This is very important. This can lead to short-term relief but long-term problems. And these drugs are actually, bottom line, they are foreign to the human body. It is what it is.

Also shown statistically, liver damage. We did that awesome show, [Love Your Liver](#).

Jade: Yes, and I do love my liver more.

Shawn: The liver is responsible for something called drug metabolism. It's dealing with all of these synthetic chemicals coming into your body.

Jade: Trying to.

Shawn: Also, you're going to experience a down regulation of your androgynous hormone production. This means your body's own ability to produce hormones is going to be down regulated because you are bringing a hormone disrupter into your system. Also, the down regulation of receptor sites that even pay attention to the hormones can happen. So even if you get into a place where you're producing a serotonin or dopamine but your receptor sites are not picking it up which can be a really, really bad situation.

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Jade: That's such a waste. And then all the while the problem is increasing and continues to grow.

Shawn: And then we've got the hormone-related side effects such as weight gain or unhealthy weight loss, anxiety, suicide, and many others. Now I want to share a little bit of data. Of course, before we get into the more joyous information, the strategies, I want people really understand why we're taking this approach.

Patients that take selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors which are SSRIs (this is the typical thing distributed such as Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft) may experience side effects such as violent behavior, mania, or aggression and it can also lead to suicide. This is very, very well documented.

In tests of Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil, Celexa, and Lexapro on children with major depressive disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, and psychiatric disorders twice as many of these children experience suicidal thinking, behavior and attempts, as compared to the placebo group.

Jade: No, no.

Shawn: Okay, so it's right there in black and white. There are a number of parents who began to file lawsuits against Pfizer who is actually the distributor of Zoloft after their babies have been born with birth defects. This lawsuit, there are particular lawsuits that I pulled out, showed that Pfizer did not offer adequate warning about the risks of taking Zoloft and more than 250 Zoloft birth defects are a part of this particular lawsuit.

Jade: Gee. Before they even get here, not only for the mother, the family, but before the babies can even get here.

Shawn: Why is this an issue? How is it even possible? It is affecting your hormones is the bottom line. So we can go on and on with the studies demonstrating the negative kickback of the negative effects that have been seen over and over again. We can also pay attention to the people who are getting

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relief. But we need to understand that this is not addressing the issue at its core level and often times individuals do experience some relief for a phase.

Jade: Well, sure.

Shawn: But how many people know somebody who is on an antidepressant but they are still depressed?

Jade: And to what cost?

Shawn: To what cost, exactly. What is it doing to your internal organs. What is it doing to your brain and your hormones.

Jade: And your future.

Shawn: So my question is, how are these companies able to market this way? In the product Zoloft, for example, they were able to have commercials stating this, "While the cause is unknown, depression may be related to an imbalance in natural chemicals between nerve cells in the brain. Prescription Zoloft works to correct this imbalance. You just shouldn't have to feel this way anymore."

There was an essay that was published in a particular medical journal and it criticized these advertisements for their reliance on the "serotonin imbalance." This was a theory, this is the thing, it was a theory. So when asked to comment, the FDA answered that "we use these reductionist statements as an acceptable way to explain the neurochemistry of depression to the fraction of the public that functions at no higher than a 6th grade reading level."

So they are blatantly saying that they are going to be talking to people like they are not smart enough so they are going to oversimplify and basically make something up that's not true to get your to take this drug because it could help you.

Jade: And then have the nerve to say, "for the fraction of" but they are communicating that to all of us.

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Shawn: Here's what's really going on, there has never been, NEVER, there has never been a single study in humans that validate the theory of low serotonin and depression.

That's just how it is. Low levels are found in the minority of patients who experience depression. It is just this particular theory but it has been really driven into our culture and we believe this. So, at the core of this we don't need to be looking at one particular mechanism for mental health being serotonin. It's just not true.

Depression is a multi-faceted condition that really requires a multi-faceted approach to treat it. So that's what we're going to be diving into today. We're going to be talking about the very specific domains that we need to address to make sure that you are a healthy, happy human being. If any of these things are lacking we can really look to a potential trigger for depression within these things and you're going to find out why.

But also, this is going to be some of the good stuff, we will be providing some of the most powerful, clinically-proven treatments that you can add to the mix. Again, because it's multi-faceted. You've got to take care of all of these things so that you feel good on all levels.

So we're going to start with the nutrition. Now, when we talked about it before, about the definition of depression, it was very similar to what this thing does. Everything that you eat affects the way that you think, affects the way you feel, and affects the way you behave. Every single thing.

Jade: Because it's information.

Shawn: It's impacting every single cell in your body. Like you said, food is not food, it's information. Your body is like the hardware, right. The software that you install is the food that you put into it. This is really how we operate.

Jade: Or the virus.

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Shawn: Right. People can think about, for example, I'm consuming a drug. That's going to do something. Where is it going? It's going into your mouth. Everything you put into your mouth is going to have a profound function or profound experience that you're going to receive from that. But it's different levels that we actually consciously experience; whether it's a donut or banana, it's going to have an impact.

So, knowing this and knowing that everything we eat affects everything at a cellular level and influences our transmitters and our hormones similar to the mechanism that we're looking at with drugs. We need to really address this and make sure that we understand it. You don't just eat something, it actually changes you.

There was a nine-month study published in the Public Health and Nutrition Journal. This study found that individuals who regularly consumed fast food were 51 percent more likely to develop depression. One of the doctors involved in the study stated that even eating small quantities is linked to a significantly higher chance of developing depression which is just crazy. It's like, so driving to McDonald's, going through the drive-thru is going to end up with me being more depressed.

Jade: Right, that's discouraging. So much for that Happy Meal for your kid.

Shawn: Happy Meal, isn't that funny!

Jade: Not so happy meal. Maybe that's why, to counteract, you don't realize, gee, they're still sad.

Shawn: But here's a toy.

Jade: Right.

Shawn: Now I want to talk about what we're actually getting from the fast food that can make this happen. What we're looking at with fast food predominantly is processed carb-rich foods, right. Carbohydrates actually give us an instant lift because they trigger the release of serotonin.

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According to this profound belief that serotonin is the main trigger, this is what the data is showing. I'm not saying that serotonin does not play a huge roll in this.

Jade: Right, but it's not all.

Shawn: It's not all. So, carbohydrates can trigger an instant lift in serotonin in your body, in your physiology. But it's a quick fix and it leads to consequences which is a huge let down. Just like getting that spike, then your crash.

We had on the amazing [Alex Jamieson](#) for an episode who was in the movie, Super Size Me, and showing that right around meal time when her then boyfriend would eat this fast food he would be overjoyed. He would be joyous, happy, and then he would crash. He would have this huge depression take over. It became this vicious cycle that was pretty difficult for them to break out of. This was solely from the food that he was eating.

Because, here's the deal when we're talking about serotonin, let's just go ahead and clear this up. The vast majority of your serotonin is actually produced in your gut. That's where the whole party is going on. So when you're eating foods that can actually damage your gut integrity, you're eating fake foods, what do you think is going to happen to your serotonin production? Then we're going to turn and take a drug, a serotonin reuptake inhibitor so we can keep more serotonin in our system longer? We're not even producing it in the first place.

Jade: I totally see this as that party analogy. So, the guys that come over and they drink all of this stuff and get stuff in the pool and it's like, oh man, you ruined the party.

Shawn: Breaking guitars. Where's you get a guitar? You don't play guitar. How did you break a guitar in here?

Jade: Who's in the pool?

Shawn: With their clothes on, of course.

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Jade: Right.

Shawn: Not that there's anything wrong with that.

Now, let's go ahead and dive in a little bit deeper. Let's talk about food and mood. Protein, which we mentioned a little bit earlier when we were talking about the Hemp FORCE protein, proteins contain tryptophan. This is a large amino acid that converts to serotonin in the brain. So, the root is tryptophan. Tryptophan works best when it is actually consumed in conjunction with small bits of carbohydrate.

This is a good heads up to everybody that a great source of tryptophan will be, yes, the turkey. But Thanksgiving is not about the turkey giving you that itis. You know what the itis is, right, when you go into that food coma.

Jade: Right, right, because all of the sudden your body starts shutting down. You kind of ease it over to the couch.

Shawn: And the itis sets in.

Jade: It does.

Shawn: You might play some Madden. You might watch football. You will probably take a nappy.

Jade: It won't take long.

Shawn: So, it's not the protein, it's the vast craziness of all of the other stuff that is just like, it's Thanksgiving so I'm going to hurt myself. It's an open invitation.

Jade: That's love.

(laughter)

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Shawn: And I love that love. I love that love. Tryptophan sources are going to be turkey, fish, chicken, nuts, eggs. There are so many different sources of tryptophan. These proteins tend to work better with a little bit of carbohydrate. This is where we're going to be looking to healthy organic fruits which would be a good source of carbohydrates. Vegetables, obviously. They are carbohydrate-based foods. Maybe some starchy sweet potatoes, you know, starchy vegetables like sweet potatoes, carrots. Those things work in conjunction really well to help your body convert this tryptophan over into serotonin.

Now you will notice that I did not say bread. I did not say to use that carbohydrate. I did not say to use grains. That's because a randomized, clinical trial published in the journal *Elementary Pharmacology and Therapeutics* stated that gluten may cause depression in subjects with non-celiac gluten sensitivity. That's basically people who do not have celiac. Because immediately you would be like, well, it probably causes depression in people with celiac. No, they're talking about everybody else.

So, this study was really fascinating and, for me, I was looking at the potential components. What we are dealing with here is addiction and depression. They tend to go hand in hand as well. You have that addiction and it kind of brings you up and you crash.

There is something in gluten called gluteomorphins. Gluteomorphins actually interact with the opiate receptors in your brain, like opium! Okay, it's a very, very difficult thing for people to get off of. Basically, you hear stories of the opium dens and people just kind of check out. You know, they get hooked on that stuff and it's a lifetime thing and they are going to be leaving it early.

Gluteomorphins even has the word morphine. It helps to suppress that pain. It makes you feel good.

Jade: While you're dying.

Shawn: There are several other studies showing that these gluteomorphins have this correlation with depression but that's not all when we're talking about grains and things that have been promoted to our culture as being the basis of

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what we should be eating, our food pyramid; get seven to eleven healthy whole grains in our diet.

There's another compound called lectins. These are antinutrients. These are compounds that can actually tear away and tear into your gut lining and your small intestine. They can allow for foreign compounds to get into your blood stream.

There is also an inflammatory component to depression. There are many studies that are showing now that it is related to inflammation of the brain. There is also an autoimmune component. What's causing this autoimmune component? Well, it's probably the food we're eating. People are literally looking at that study where 51 percent of the people that eat fast food are depressed.

That's showing that we're literally eating the problem. We're eating depression. We're causing all of this inherent gut damage. That doesn't mean your stomach hurts, your brain could hurt. Your brain could hurt. Your feelings could be hurt.

Depending on your autoimmune predisposition, for me it was bone degeneration. That's what I was dealing with when I was 20 years old. For other individuals it could be cancer, it could be arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, it could be Hashimoto's. It just depends on what your genetic weakness is, but consuming these fake foods are going to trigger that.

Jade: And create a vicious cycle because they create a more toxic environment to where you can't even fight back from it.

Shawn: Exactly. So, actually, I want to talk a little bit about that inflammation of the brain because there's something also found in wheat called WGA, wheat germ agglutinin. This can actually pass through the blood/brain barrier. It may attach itself to the protective coating on your nerves known as the myelin sheath. This is capable of inhibiting your nerve growth factor which is important for your growth and maintenance. It's also important for the survival of your neurons.

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What this all really results in is inflammation of the brain. So, it's not just a simple piece of toast. It depends on your genetic disposition whether it's going to affect you a lot or not. So these are all things to consider.

Jade: It's not just a simple piece of toast, I get that. So is there a way to determine what my genetic disposition, desires, or works great with beyond a general, something specific for me?

Shawn: Absolutely. There are many metabolic typing quizzes and we had Dr. Sara Gottfried on the show, [The Hormone Cure](#). In looking at doing an introspection, often times we don't know what's good for us because we don't pay attention to our own bodies. We're so external. Often times we also don't understand the relationship to the food we're eating is causing the problem. A lot of people are looking for more energy and are thinking they need to take a new supplement. Or they think another vitamin or something like that is going to give them energy. In actuality, it's really the basis of the food they are eating, the sleep they are getting, and the exercise that they are probably not doing or are doing too much of.

Jade: Right, I recall.

Shawn: So, that's what it really boils down to is paying attention to your body because after you eat a food if it doesn't resonate with you, you are going to get symptoms. You'll know it. But, how connected are you to your body. Because depression is one of those conditions where it forces you to get into your body but often times we get stuck there. We think there is something wrong with us when there might have been something wrong with the behavior that we were doing.

Jade: There you go.

Shawn: Okay, so let's move on a little bit. I want to talk about how depression is looked at in many ways biochemically. One of those ways is through the depletion of a neurotransmitter called norepinephrine. So I'm going to take you through the chain of chemical events that produce norepinephrine. Again, this is

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another powerful theory that is likely one of the big contributing factors, one of the underlying causes.

The chain of events that produce norepinephrine goes like this: L-phenylalanine, L-tyrosine, dopamine, epinephrine, then norepinephrine. So, your body goes through this natural process to make sure that your neurotransmitters and your hormones are operating at an optimal level. The root of that is L-phenylalanine. This is abundant in all of our diets from protein foods. The issue happens with the conversion to L-tyrosine which happens in our liver. Again, this goes back to your liver. This can be inhibited big time when there is a short supply of an essential vitamin called vitamin C.

Your body requires vitamin C to convert L-phenylalanine into L-tyrosine which helps your body to have this process. It helps you to eventually feel not depressed.

Jade: Right, get to that high level that you mentioned is the end of the line there.

Shawn: So vitamin C, here's the thing, clinical studies have shown that high doses of vitamin C have been effective for reversing symptoms of depression.

Jade: Well there you go.

Shawn: There you go.

Jade: Will your look at that!

Shawn: What we want to do is look at the top botanical sources first. So, for us number one would be camu-camu berry. It has been ranked as the number two botanical in the world for reversing depression. The most dense source of vitamin C of any plant that we've ever discovered as human beings.

Jade: That's so awesome.

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Shawn: Camu-camu is number one then there's one in our system that's called amla berry. A-M-L-A, I like saying that, amla.

Jade: I like saying camu-camu.

Shawn: Camu-camu.

Jade: It's like it's two times the camu.

Shawn: There are certain words that just feel good to say, like fluffy.

(laughter)

Shawn: Say fluffy.

Jade: I love saying fluffy. It's so fluffy!

(laughter)

Shawn: Amla berry then acerola cherry would be another option.

Jade: Acerola cherry.

Shawn: Now let's talk about dopamine-related depression. I would want people, if they are diagnosed with a dopamine-related depression, and there is actually some kind of blood work, brain scan, or something to back this up, and this is your issue, you want to take a look at something called mucuna pruriens. This is a tropical lagoon also known as velvet bean.

Jade: What is that, velvet?

Shawn: Velvet, is that velvet? Velvet bean. This contains L-DOPA which is a precursor to the neurotransmitter dopamine.

Jade: I like saying velvet too.

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Shawn: Velvet? I know it's right in there with fluffy. Fluffy, velvet.

Jade: Velvet.

Shawn: So mucuna pruriens might be something of interest to you if it's a dopamine-related depression. And, by the way, I mentioned the fact that if there was some kind of blood work to back this up or a brain scan, because the field of psychiatry has this unique ability to prescribe medication based off of a conversation.

Jade: Oh yea.

Shawn: This is not actually looking at, is there actually some kind of derangement going on with this person's hormones. Dr. Sara Gottfried said that the majority of people with high cortisol were experiencing depression as well. It's heavily related to that. Are we looking at the person's cortisol levels? Have we actually checked into that or is the person telling you some stories or giving you some verbal data and you are just saying, "okay, you just need this drug."

I feel that it's very unethical to base our science off of that. The field of psychiatry is wonderful. There are so many wonderful psychiatrists and I've had the pleasure of interacting with many, many of them who understand that we need to talk about the underlying cause of these things first and foremost and not just pass out medications. But sometimes they can be in the minority because there's a big vested interest and it's an easy out for people. Because often times even the psychiatrists, and doctors as well, that are prescribing this medication just want to help the person to get out of pain.

Often times they are not trusting the individual that they can handle this without hurting themselves, for example. So, what would you do? If you are a physician and you are a good person and in this position you are going to prescribe the medication. But what it really takes is...the root of the word doctor is teacher. What it really takes is that time to help the person to uncover and go in with them and search and find and pull out the real, underlying cause of the issue so they can be free so they are not dependent on some synthetic thing that was

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just made up a few years ago; so they can be a happy sovereign individual. That's what our medical profession is switching to now. It's happening now.

Jade: I hope so.

Shawn: Information like this and shows like this and all of these amazing podcasts are a huge driving force in this and that is why I appreciate everybody so much for sharing the show and consuming this information and doing something with it in your own life. Because that is worth so much when people can actually see the transformation. That speaks volumes even more so than reading a book.

When they see you've got it it's attractive. It makes people want to find out more. So thank you everybody, so much, again.

Let's talk really quickly about some supplements we can throw in the mix here. Really quick. There are two large studies, one is sponsored by the National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine. They found that a large yellow flower known as St. John's Wort was helpful for treating mild forms of depression. It also, by the way, it was not effective for chronic depression, for the more chronic levels of depression. But, for mild forms of depression it was found to be very, very effective. Also, take a look at rhodiola. It is something that's been used for thousands of years. It's got more of a resonance with the human body. It's something natural that your body can recognize. There are tremendous scientific studies backing this up.

What we're looking at here is rhodiola root extract improving the activities of dopamine and serotonin in the brain by blocking the enzymatic breakdown of these brain chemicals and in particular some oxidases that are in there, some little fancy words. But that's what is the underlying thing that makes it happen. But all you need to know is to check out rhodiola because it just might be the bee's knees for you.

Now let's talk about something that is critical for everybody. Published in the American Journal of Psychiatry it was confirmed that the lower the level of EPA in the system the more severe the depression. Newer studies show that people

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with depression have lower levels of Omega-3s in their system. We're talking about EPA and DHA in particular. So, EPA is one of the critical Omega-3 fatty acids. These are the more anti-inflammatory fatty acids. The Omega-6 is the more pro-inflammatory fatty acid.

Again, these words become very dogmatic and you get a lot of tension behind them but we need both. It's just like the yin and the yang. It's not that pro-inflammatory acids are bad, it actually makes stuff happen. It makes reactions happen in your body. But it is when it gets out of balance that the whole problem can happen. That's why we need these anti-inflammatory Omega-3s in our diet.

This should be coming primarily from your food source. So, in our diet we'd historically be getting about a 2:1 ratio of Omega-6 to Omega-3, respectively, 2:1. Now, what the research is showing is that individuals, on a daily basis, are taking in about 20:1 up to even 50:1 or higher of Omega-6 to Omega 3. It is so far out of balance that we lead to chronic inflammation, chronic inflammation.

So, how is this happening? One of the big culprits is vegetable oils. I'm not talking broccoli oil. I've never seen that. Brussels sprout oil, kale oil. I'm talking about canola oil which is a rape seed. Canola is a genetically engineered, genetically modified plant. It is very, very high in Omega-6. Corn oil, soy oil. These things are marketed as vegetable oil because it sounds healthy and it is kind of shocking that people still don't know about this. There are a lot of people listening right now that are just like, of course.

Jade: Right, canola.

Shawn: But there are still a lot of people who don't know. So this is, again, why it's important for you to help spread the word. We covered all of this in detail in the episode [Eight Foods to Avoid](#).

Jade: At all costs.

Shawn: Right, at all costs. We really dove in on the other negative potential effects of consuming these oils. So, avoid the vegetable oils. Shift over and use saturated fats that are more stable in cooking and in storage. Those vegetable

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oils are already oxidized and rancid when you buy them. It is the nature of taking them out of their particular container, their plant container. Whereas coconut oil is very, very stable.

Jade: Good stuff.

Shawn: Ghee, grass-fed butter, those things that have been marketed as not good for you are actually incredibly good for you. I will also put in the show notes, I did a great article about saturated fat and why you need to [eat more saturated fat](#) and it was a really, really popular article and will address everything there if you've got any fear; because I know I did, when I first ate coconut oil I was like, I'm going to die, I know I'm going to die. I know this is going to kill me. This is straight saturated fat.

Jade: Right, now you've got a beautiful fat brain.

Shawn: I got leaner, healthier, everything improved by consuming these healthy saturated fats. So, that's one way we are getting some Omega-6 oils in a dense way into our population. The other way these Omega-6 oils are really penetrating our culture and making their way into our bodies, even unknowingly often times, is because we're eating factory-farmed raised meats, okay, factory-farm raised animal products. It is, again, it's not you are what you eat, it's you are what you eat ate. And we are feeding our cows, for example, unnatural diets. They are eating soy, grain, corn-fed beef. Cows are triple checked, right? They've got hooves. They can't shuck corn. They're not going to be able to get that corn out of there so it's not a natural cow food.

So when you feed an animal their unnatural diet they are going to become sick and we're consuming those tissues and what the data shows is that the Omega-6:Omega-3 ratio in our meats has drastically changed from the grass-fed meats that we evolved eating.

So, with that said, we want to avoid the factory-farm raised meats. Shift over and eat things that are grown eating a natural diet. You are what you eat ate. Or, you're going to be unknowingly pulling these Omega-6s into your body.

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What we want to do here to address this issue with the Omega-3s is add in potentially some fish oil. Because this is where the Omega-3 studies are all based. I'm just going off of what the studies say. There are so many other wonderful sources of Omega-3s with chia seeds and things of that nature but we really want to look at what does the research actually show in this study and it is usually based on fish oil.

The British Journal of Psychiatry showed that supplementation with fish oil reduced suicidal tendencies versus a placebo. This was a study done over a three-month period.

Jade: How wonderful.

Shawn: Alright, now we can look at, okay, there's fish oil but if there's an efficacy issue there or you might have some fear behind that (a lot of it is unjustified) but we can look at something like krill oil. It is a microscopic shrimp. This is like what whales eat so this is like a very, very profound source of nutrition and when you see it it is actually red because it is very high in astaxanthin. That compound, the antioxidant, keeps it stable. It keeps it from oxidizing so you actually get all of the Omega-3s. So it might even be a higher quality source of Omega-3s to look to than fish oil. At onnit.com/model they actually have an amazing krill oil product that could be something you could add to the mix. Again, this is not a cure, it's a multi-faceted approach, something to add to the mix that can sure up a potential deficiency that could be causing you problems.

Plus, eat healthier animal foods. So, especially fish, fatty fish is where we're going to find Omega-3s. A lot of people know that. So the salmon, sardines, mackerel, those are going to be good sources. Plus, butter and ghee and coconut oil for cooking. That would lead to healthy plant foods which would be coconut oil, avocados, walnuts, etc. Those are going to be some great sources of essential fatty acids.

So now I want to share with you guys four foods that combat depression and increase the feel-good hormones. Number one is chocolate.

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Jade: Chocolate. Chocolatte! Chocolate.

Shawn: Chocolate. Better known historically as cacao. I did a Ted talk back in the day

Jade: That was a good one.

Shawn: TedXSinCity called [How Chocolate Can Save The World](#). I think it was about five years ago now. It really brought into the fold and talked about the history of chocolate and also all of the amazing features that this has as far as even being something that can combat depression. So here's just a real brief summation.

We've got tryptophan, serotonin, anandamide (ananda means bliss, this is the bliss chemical), phenylalanine. These are chemicals that are flowing through your body when you're in love. This is something we can naturally produce but chocolate does that. This is why people love chocolate. It's affiliated with love, Valentine's day, heart-shaped chocolate baby, you know the whole thing. It has a root. It is a very, very dense source of other important minerals and trace minerals like magnesium, all of these things that help to make you feel calm and make you feel good.

Jade: Wonderful.

Shawn: That is why chocolate can be something to add to the mix for yourself. But you want to get the good stuff.

Jade: Cacao.

Shawn: That's number one. Number two is oily fish. We talked about this already, the salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout. Or, we can look at the Omega-3s from plant sources as well. I like to say and/or in this case such as chia, flax, walnuts. That actually leads me to the specific one, number three, which is cashews. That is one specific to look at.

Jade: Yes, cash in on the cashews.

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Shawn: What the research shows is that several hands full of cashews provide 1,000 to 2,000 mg of tryptophan which work as well as prescription antidepressants according to Dr. Andrew Saul.

Jade: Wow!

Shawn: What we know about chemistry is that the body turns tryptophan into serotonin. It's the precursor. So, tryptophan is noted to work just as well as prescription antidepressants.

Jade: Say that again.

Shawn: Data shows that 3.5 ounces of raw cashews, not the roasted, toasted, fricasseed cashews, raw cashews can provide about 470 mg of tryptophan. And even pumpkin seeds too, I'm going to throw this one in there, 560 mg.

Jade: We'll take it.

Shawn: Pumpkin seeds and cashews versus depression.

Jade: There you go.

Shawn: There's your headline right there. So that's number three. Number four is turmeric.

Jade: Turmeric?

Shawn: Turmeric. A recent study entitled Efficacy and Safety of Curcumin (the most active compound people are looking for in turmeric) in Major Depressive Disorder, A Randomized-Controlled Trial. It looked at three groups of 20 participants with major depression according to a commonly used scale. They were split up into one group had Prozac, one group had Prozac plus one gram of oil-based curcumin, and the third group had curcumin alone for the course of the study which was six weeks.

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The proportion of responders with the greatest improvement was the combination group which they had a 77.8 percent improvement in their depressive symptoms. The Prozac group had 64.7 percent improvement and the curcumin group had a 62.5 percent improvement.

Jade: Not bad on curcumin on its own. Not a bad third.

Shawn: Pretty close.

Jade: Good showing.

Shawn: The authors in this study want to emphasize the curcumin's very, very dense nutrition and fortification of your anti-inflammatory compounds in your body, your immune system, all of these things, work very good and very safely up to 12 grams a day. Okay, 12 grams a day, that's quite a bit of curcumin. But, how do you get this in, just make some curries baby. That's a great way to get it in. Of course you can also get supplemental curcumin as well. This can be a potential tool because that's what we're looking at, spreading out the tools for helping to fortify the body against depression.

Jade: To have this multi-faceted approach.

Shawn: So that's phase one. That's number one.

Jade: Nutrition.

Shawn: Now, really quickly we're going to go into some of these other phases but then we're going to wrap everything up with the most important component in getting to the core of the depression.

Now the next phase is exercise. There's a study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine where they divided 156 men and women with depression into three groups. One group took part in an aerobic exercise program, another took the SSRI Zoloft, and the third did both. At the 16-week mark the depression had eased in all three groups. What do you know.

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Jade: What do you know.

Shawn: About 60 percent to 70 percent of the people in all three groups could no longer be classified as having major depression. In fact, groups scored on two rating scales of depression were essentially the same in all the groups. This study suggests that for those who wished to avoid drugs exercise might be an acceptable substitute for antidepressants.

Now here's the deal, there was a followup study done and they found that the results and the effects from exercise lasted longer than those on the antidepressants. Researchers checked with 133 of the original participants six months after the first study. They found that people who exercised regularly after completing this study, regardless of which treatment they had undergone originally, they were less likely to relapse into depression.

Jade: That's great.

Shawn: Powerful stuff. Powerful stuff.

Jade: Very much so.

Shawn: Exercise is medicine. This is a natural way. It stimulates the production of these feel-good hormones, the serotonin, dopamine. You can produce that stuff easily, enkephalins, endorphins, naturally when you get your body moving. This is what the human body is designed to do. But, of course, this can be something that's a challenge to get out of to move because the word depression itself means stagnation.

Jade: Yes, it does.

Shawn: Push down. This is the opposite we're talking about, movement, and how powerful you are to affect your physiology when you have the course to move.

Jade: That's right, stagnation is just the breeding ground for sickness.

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Shawn: Absolutely. So I want to give people some specifics on amounts of time. A study published in 2005 found that walking fast for about 35 minutes a day five times a week or 60 minutes a day three times a week had significant influence on mild to moderate depression symptoms.

Jade: So good.

Shawn: And by the way, they tested less where they did like 15 minutes a day and they found that they did not help as much. So there's your barometer, your bar, 35 minutes a day five times a week or 60 minutes three times a week, that's what the studies show.

Jade: That's great. Walking briskly.

Shawn: Now, let's add in the next phase which is while you're out walking, hopefully you'll be able to get some sunlight. Here's why this is important. There is a study published in the Journal of Internal Medicine. Researchers found there is a direct correlation between the blood levels of vitamin D and the symptoms of depression.

The lower the level of vitamin D the greater the symptoms of depression. Right there in black and white. Conversely, when given high doses of vitamin D the study participants' symptoms improved.

Jade: There we go.

Shawn: Alright. When you are going to supplement with vitamin D it's vitamin D3 that you want to go for. A lot of multivitamins have vitamin D2, not D3. So D3 is the one that actually changes your blood levels. However, what did our ancestors do? What is the human body designed to do because that is a hormone. Vitamin D is a hormone, it's not a vitamin. It's a hormone.

Jade: That comes from the sun.

Shawn: We produce that. We're like walking plants.

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Jade: Yes, we are.

Shawn: This made me think of Little Shop of Horrors, “feed me Seymour.” That was so creepy, creeped me out as a kid, the plant that could get up and move around.

So, we’re sort of like that. Our roots are not into the earth. So we’re doing photosynthesis much like plants do. We’re converting the cholesterol in our system into vitamin D. That’s how it works. And it happens when you are exposed to the rays of the sun.

Jade: I love it. I like being a Jade plant.

Shawn: So this is another thing that’s the antithesis of depression. Sunlight is happy, cheerful in our psychology. That’s what we associate it with. We associate depression with darkness, rainy, cloudy. We’ve been kind of trained that way. But we can even look at those states as something of a blessing. Something of an opportunity to allow things to grow, to allow things to relax, to take some time to go inward. We’ve got to change the association in our mind.

But, I just wanted to point out that sunlight is literally like it’s difficult to not be more joyous and happy when you’re enjoying your time outside, especially when you’re in nature.

Jade: Well, we’ve come not to appreciate all of the seasons.

Shawn: Right.

Jade: Because of those associations we miss out on the benefit of all of those seasons of how going through those natural cycles that were created by our creators or how we evolved as well that those things invigorate us too.

Shawn: You know what else?

Jade: We wouldn’t enjoy the sunshine if we didn’t have the rain.

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Shawn: We wouldn't have any contrast.

Jade: Exactly.

Shawn: But you know what's even more so the case here, we're not experiencing any of the seasons really because we're indoors so much.

Jade: Say it, say it, say it.

Shawn: So we've got to get reconnected to life, to nature.

Jade: And in all of the seasons there is still sunshine, every single one.

Shawn: Yeah. The sun's up there.

Jade: It's there.

Shawn: So this is a really important thing to talk about. So that's the next phase with sunlight. So that was number three on these different phases we're looking at for creating a multi-faceted approach to healing and health and a natural treatment for depression.

The next phase is sleep.

Jade: Ahh, the sleep.

Shawn: Too little or even too much sleep will inherently disrupt your body's natural hormone cycles. Studies have shown that even partial sleep deprivation, I want to focus on sleep deprivation because most people are not getting enough. But, some people, part of their depression is just to sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep. They are throwing off their hormone cycles even more making it more difficult to come out of that. But most people are unknowingly causing a depressive state because they are sleep deprived.

Studies have shown that even partial sleep deprivation has significant impact on your mood. University of Pennsylvania researchers found that subjects who were

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limited to only 4.5 hours of sleep a night for one week, just one week, reported feeling more stressed, angry, sad, and mentally exhausted leading to depression.

When the subjects resumed normal sleep they reported a dramatic improvement in their mood. I say this all the time, when you're tired, your best friend could look like your worst enemy. We know that we become more irritable, we become more edgy, we become more stressed. It's just a natural response of the body, a body that's tired.

Jade: A body that's designed to operate with appropriate rest.

Shawn: Not only does sleep affect mood but mood and mental states also affect our sleep. We create one of these vicious circles or we can tune into a more virtuous circle and start to employ more of the things we're going to talk about in a minute to get into a good sleep schedule.

Poor sleep quality will also depress your immune function, increase insulin resistance, and disrupt serotonin production. Here's another big, huge takeaway from today is that serotonin gets converted into melatonin. That's the sleep hormone. That's the get good sleep hormone. So, if your serotonin is screwed up from what we talked about earlier, not in the theory that serotonin deficiency is responsible for depression, but in the knowing that serotonin is mostly produced in our gut and that it is affecting our sleep. These are the facts that we want to look at.

Jade: So many other aspects.

Shawn: Now we're getting to the root.

Jade: Yes we are, yes we are.

Shawn: The root.

Jade: And how am I going to take on my day if I'm not adequately equipped.

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Shawn: Right. What the research shows is that low serotonin levels result in sleep disruption, sleep disorders including insomnia, and stress is a common well-known cause for low serotonin levels. Just stress, just day-to-day stress, emotional stress, work stress, relationship stress, spiritual stress, feeling disconnected, can depress your serotonin levels. This results in a snowballing effect and a cycle of disrupted sleep, which we already talked about, depression, anxiety, and fatigue during the day. This is all according to psychologist, Joseph Carver, just putting this study together and this data to look at.

So now that we understand these different phases, we understand the impact of nutrition and the studies to back it up on how important this is that we address that. Make sure you've got that shirt up first before we look into taking a drug. Make sure we've got our exercise in order and our movement because your body...what if we did the things our genetics expected us to do? What if you ate the food that your genes expected you to eat and not a Spaghetti-O? What if you did the exercise that your body requires your genes expect you to do? You got the sleep that your body required, the other phase? And you got the sunlight, the natural light your body requires?

Those four levels, if you're lacking in any of those places and you're experiencing depression we've got to look here first because this is where you're going to find the root.

Jade: Well, check out this correlation. You know the definition of disappointment is unmet expectations. Disappointment and depression sound pretty equivalently impactful for a person. So, if our body is not getting its expectations met it's disappointed.

Shawn: I'm so glad you brought that up because it's really important to understand that a lot of these phases that we've talked about involve other people. For example, our nutrition. One of the things our society has moved away from is community. We've become more online communities than offline communities whereas we evolved having tribes and communities of people and we're so isolated now.

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Our sleeping would involve other people. Our nutrition, being outside in nature. And what I want everybody to walk away with is understanding the power of the other feel-good hormones that you can enact and turn on at any moment that you want to.

Oxytocin is one of those. This gets released when we feel love, trust, and comfort. It can be even more powerful than serotonin. Oxytocin is really known as the cuddle hormone. That's what it's really about. If you need a lift, for example, remember the power of spending time with your significant other or family members and friends. A lot of individuals dealing with depression they find that the depression is not there, they are not focused on it when they are around the people they love. They are just enjoying that and then when they get back to their isolation the depression kind of turns back on.

Jade: That makes sense.

Shawn: And because, again, this is a very isolated personal experience and a lot of people who disrespect that and don't understand that and think that sometimes it's not even valid. But it's very, very real, very real. I want for today this to be something that you are no longer dealing with alone. You are not alone. This is a decision we make. Understanding how powerful we are to affect change on our own physiology.

Why I know this so intimately is, I want to share a quick story with everybody. My modus operandi, you know the person I am today, why this show even exists is because of an insight I got from my grandmother. When I was sitting there sick, depressed, 22 years old about to take my medication again to knock me out so I could sleep because my pain was so bad I remembered this woman who raised me until I was five years old, my early years, and my experience of unconditional love was from my grandmother.

I remembered all of the belief that she instilled in me, all of the amazing qualities that she saw in me and my potential because I had an experience. That triggered me to finally be like, I am done. I am done feeling bad. I am done making excuses. I am no longer going to pass over my health to someone outside of me usually telling me there is nothing I can do about this.

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I made the decision right then to get well when I thought of her and what she instilled in me. So my grandmother really had a profound impact on my life. She was my first experience of unconditional love and really stayed with me. It's with me right now and I'm so happy to even talk about this. But she lost my grandfather. They were an entity. You know it was MeMaw and Pop.

So this was prior to me really figuring this stuff out. So this was going on eight years ago. He had multiple open-heart surgeries. He was an amazing guy, an amazing strong character like a cowboy figure. He was a hunter and all of this stuff but he also had the things he was told by his doctor, eat more spreads like Country Crock, eat more partially hydrogenated oil because you can't eat butter because that will hurt you. So eat this substance that is actually one molecule away from being plastic. Hydrogenation is a process for making plastic. So we are taking these already rancid oxidized oils and then exposing them to hydrogen and creating this spread. So he was eating that stuff and Jiffy peanut butter with fully hydrogenated oil in there and putting that on white bread and having his little snack with syrup and that kind of stuff and at the time I didn't know either. I was really trying to figure this stuff out. She lost him, we lost him.

But for her it was definitely...that is why I am saying she lost him because her identity was tied to him. Her value was tied to him. She didn't understand or want to look at life without him. So she stayed around for a little while. About a year later I got married and she was there and my family, the rest of the people there, and my new family that I was marrying into...My grandmother was crying so much, she cried for five hours straight. I was like, it's okay MeMaw, I'm good.

What it really was, in looking back on it, she knew I found what she had. So, fast forward a little while later, she took her own life. She was so depressed and so destroyed from losing my grandfather that she took her own life. She did that with the plethora of medications that she had prescribed from her daughter.

Jade: She overdosed.

Shawn: So that was a very, very difficult time, obviously, for me and her being my set point. People often ask me, you ask me as well, how did I recover from

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that when my grandmother did it because I lost her. It is really difficult to talk about. When she lost my grandfather it was her perception, it was the meaning that she gave it that kept her in depression. She felt she lost love. She lost the ability to have that kind of love.

For me, how I am so joyous and on my mission right now is that my perception when I lost her was that I'm so thankful, so grateful that I had the opportunity to have such a love in my life. That's really what I want you guys to understand is that it's your perception. It's all about your perception. It's the meaning that you give any instance in your life, it's the meaning that you give it.

So, what do you choose to focus on? Do you choose to focus on, I don't have love, or do you focus on I have so much love to give.

Jade: Or I have received so much love over the course of my life and I am so full and rich.

Shawn: Yes. And you can tune into those feelings at any time and change your biochemistry. That's how powerful we are. Because what are we talking about with depression? What is it? It's a feeling. Where do your feelings come from? Your focus equals your feeling. What are you focused on? That's what's going to change your feelings.

Your feelings don't just happen. They don't just happen. If you are unaware of your ability to adjust your feelings then you may think they are happening by default. But in reality you are adjusting your own feelings inherently based on your perception of the external stimuli going on around you.

So, let's use falling in love for example. When you fall in love often times we, no pretty much everybody, feels that this person has done this to me. I'm in love with this person and they've made me feel this way.

Jade: They made me fall in love with them.

Shawn: In actuality, it was your perception of all of these different things about them and you...

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Jade: It is what you focused on.

Shawn: You produced these chemicals within yourself to feel the way that you feel. This was all within you and you have access to that at any time. But it takes...no one says it will be easy. It takes courage. It takes a courageous heart and a willingness that I know that every single person listening to this has, to take control and understand that I am not a machine, I'm not something that's just going to be a reaction for my entire life. I'm going to be in response. I'm going to be paying attention to all of the triggers and environmental stimuli and feed into the things that make me truly happy.

Jade: That's right.

Shawn: Because there's negative things. If you want to feel sad, there's something negative to focus on anytime. There always will be. But where do you put your focus. And it's not about ignoring the negative things. It's where do you live. Where do you live? And making a decision to live from a place of happiness, compassion, appreciation can really help to shift the way that you see things.

Jade: That reminds me of a time we went to the park, me and the children. We were getting out of the car and there was another car next to us. As we were passing we noticed that in the grate in the front was a little bird that had gotten trapped in there and obviously died. The children were mortified, oh my gosh. I was trying to help them with that moment. How else could you look at this. And so we were able to take that as, wow, maybe he was a little more adventurous or he died flying when this car came up and trapped him or whatever the case was.

I couldn't figure out how to apply the appropriate caption to that for them so it wouldn't be so mortifying. My little boy said, "But he's a bird. He was just happy being a bird."

Shawn: Wow. That is so powerful to hear something like that because he had seen clearly. He hasn't been suppressed by society. He can just see the inherent happiness underlying it all. There was joy there.

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Jade: Look what a bird can do.

Shawn: That was his focus. When you can easily focus on something else. We all have that ability and that's really what I want to shift your focus to.

I also want to make something clear. Depression also serves a purpose. It's actually profound because we all experience depression at one time or another. We want people to ask themselves, if you're in depression right now, how has the depression served you? It is fulfilling some kind of a need for you.

Jade: It's there to serve.

Shawn: It's been meeting one or many of your needs. So we can ask things like, do you feel like the depression has protected you in some way? Has it made you pay more attention to yourself? Has it enabled you to talk about your feelings? Has it caused you to take a good hard look at your life and see the things that are out of balance?

Ask how has the depression served you and understand that it was there to serve you for one season and now we're going to move on to the next season.

Jade: And it was never there and should never be there to create you to be its servant.

Shawn: I want to share something from Dr. Paul Keedwell. He is a leading psychiatrist and expert on mood disorders at the Institute of Psychiatry. He stated that depression is not a human defect at all but a defense mechanism that in its mild and moderate forms can force a healthy reassessment of personal circumstances.

Jade: I love that.

Shawn: So don't beat yourself up about depression, don't beat yourself up about being depressed. In most cases it will run its course provided you take yourself out of the situation that caused it.

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Now from this he is alluding that depression can actually serve a huge purpose for us, deepening and enriching the human experience. By overcoming challenging times in our lives we can actually become stronger. This is evolutionarily speaking because depression is really an opportunity. It's an opportunity. We all become depressed at one time or another. It's an opportunity to grow. It's an opportunity to really bring out and manifest the inherent qualities that are in you to feel love, to feel happiness, to feel joy. You've got a wonderful story now about where you were. You've got so much in you, you've got so much to give, so much love, so many gifts to share. It's time to stop retaining these things and hiding out and get out there and share these things because I guarantee you no matter how depressed you are you are still capable of helping another person.

Shift your focus there. Who can you help? Who can you serve? What can you do to maybe go to a retirement home and bring joy to somebody who hasn't seen a family member in years?

Jade: That's right, or a humane society or a facility for animals or even a greenhouse.

Shawn: Or a children's hospital. There are so many individuals who are depressed as well who are in very, very difficult circumstances having lost a limb or losing a child, losing a loved one, losing a job. Many of these individuals also can be some of the happiest individuals you ever meet with the most amazing stories because it is really, again, what are you focused on. Where is your focus?

Jade: All they need is that connection.

Shawn: And also your perspective because I like how we talked earlier about that contrast. When we look at our life in retrospect or we look in comparison, better yet, to someone else who is in a tremendously difficult circumstance and we're so caught up in our story about why my life is so bad we can really get a baseline and understanding of how fortunate we really are. Again, focus on those things we do have. Focus on those things. Focus on those things you are grateful for. I promise you you are going to feel better starting now. It really is about

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building that muscle so that you are in control predominantly of the way that you feel because that's really at the core of this, addressing that core underlying issue that's causing the depression. You could take all of the supplements you want, you could take all of the amazing food, exercise your behind off, take all the drugs you want and still find yourself depressed if you don't address the underlying cause and shift your focus and attention onto the things that are serving you.

Jade: Make it servant to you.

Shawn: So, everybody, thank you so much for tuning in to this episode. We dove in and provided a lot of profound things that can help to, again, it is a multi-faceted approach to reversing depression. This no longer has to be the second leading cause of premature death and disability in our world today. We can make a change. We can make a difference and it really starts with you.

Jade: It does. Thank you.

Shawn: I appreciate you tuning in to the show. Make sure to share this with the people you care about and I'll talk with you real soon. And, make sure for more after the show you head over to theshawnstevensonmodel.com. That's where you can find the show notes and if you've got any questions or comments make sure to let me know. And, please head over to iTunes and give us a five-star rating and let everybody know that our show is awesome and you're loving it. And I read all the comments so please leave me a comment there and take care everybody. I promise to keep giving more powerful, empowering, great content to help transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.