

EPISODE 216

Creating an Evening Routine

Shawn Stevenson: Welcome to The Model Health Show, this is fitness and nutrition expert Shawn Stevenson and I am flying solo today.

My amazing co-host and producer is on Spring Break somewhere, and no she's not on the beach, I don't think she is, but I remember when I was growing up- and I don't know if you guys remember this, but MTV Spring Break back when MTV actually played music, I don't know if you remember those days, but I would see all the parties going on, all the artists coming to the Spring Breaker events and I'd be like, "When I grow up, when I get into college I'm going to do that."

But when I got into college I was just working overtime during Spring Breaks, but that led me here to you, so I'm all good for that. But just a big shout-out to her, and thank you for joining me today.

Today's going to be an epic, very, very powerful episode and something that is truly going to influence your life and benefit your life for the rest of your life.

This is something that's going to really help to optimize what you've been doing on a nightly basis specifically, not a daily basis, and so today we're going to be talking about how to create an optimal evening routine.

We're going to talk about nighttime routines that enhance sleep, accelerate fat loss, and supercharge your brain. That's a big bill of goods.

Optimized nighttime ritual that can actually help you burn fat? Yes indeed and you know we've got the science to really help you to back that up. So we're going to dive into that today.

And I'm actually- talking about Spring Break, I just got back from the Philippines a couple of days ago, and I was speaking at an amazing, just absolutely mind-blowing event called Tropical Think Tank.

And it was hosted by a friend of mine, Chris Ducker, and this was more of a kind of entrepreneur event and I was really brought in- I was actually the closing keynote speaker, and this event has been going on annually for a little while, and now he's shifting gears and he's going to start doing a bigger event in London coming up here, but this was the last time in the Philippines and I was the very last speaker of all- I think it was sixty speakers over the years, which is really an amazing honor, and my talk was on something that I'm very passionate about and it was a topic called, 'Entrepreneur of the Future.'

And this is really just to kind of summarize the talk, is that no longer is this just about making a dollar, but it's making a dollar and making a difference. And also not just a difference in the global perspective but in your own health, in your own body, and in your family, and in your community.

So truly the entrepreneur of the future has success in all areas of life, not just business, not just financial health, but relationship health, physical health, and being able to actually play the long game because your body and mind are built for it.

You know again, this moniker that I'm going to keep saying is that you stay ready so you don't have to get ready, and that's what it was really about, and just providing some really powerful essential tools for people to implement in their lives and it was a very, very amazing experience to say the least.

And just the country itself, and we were actually in Cebu which is a really interesting part, and there is some poverty there so being able to see some pretty extreme poverty where there are shacks, these little shacks where people are just kind of putting together boards or a little bit of tin here and there to make their homes.

And to see that disparity, and it's kind of even hard to talk about, and then you see these grandiose hotels, and businesses, and buildings right next to people who are living in poverty, and it just really kind of wakes you up to what's going on in the world.

We become very sheltered in many aspects living here in the United States and don't really understand how blessed and fortunate we are to be here, and to have the opportunities we have when many people are subsisting on about a dollar a day in life and trying to get by and provide for their families with an income like that.

And it's very eye-opening but also to see so many people just being so welcoming, and so happy, and so gracious, and grateful; I couldn't walk even to my room from having a meal without being greeted and spoken to ten different times. And really what was so beautiful is when they're greeting you, they actually really do see you. It's not just some passing thing, you stop and you acknowledge the person.

Well not necessarily stop, you can be walking along the way, but that acknowledgement that we all need to know that we matter, and we can bring that into our lives here in just speaking to people, and just being kind and warm instead of walking around like we're looking for problems, you know?

Like some of us can do, we can put on those problem glasses and see a lot of problems when there's also a lot of good in the world, and how much good we can do in the life of another human being just by letting them know that they are seen and that they matter.

So I just wanted to share a little bit of that, that was my Spring Break, I was out in the Philippines spending quite a bit of time traveling obviously from the Midwest to the Philippines, which shout-out to Cafe Pacific Airline, oh my goodness.

Thank you for taking care, and the international terminals and the international kind of little clubs they have, fantastic. There was even a juicer! There was a juicer in the airport in this little area for Cafe Pacific, it was crazy.

So had an amazing time but just really quickly before we get into the topic of the day, on the road of course I brought some important things with me that I always travel with.

I brought my Alpha Brain, the nootropic from ONNIT. So this is their flagship product, of course I brought that along just to be sharp for my talk, I'm having it right now actually in preparation for the show. Got it right here.

And so if you want to make sure you're functioning on all cylinders with your mental capacity focus- and they've actually done some clinical trials to prove its efficacy. This isn't just like, "You know what? This nootropic is the bomb, it works. It's like Limitless Pill."

No it's not really like that, it's actually backed by science, this isn't just hearsay. And so make sure to check that out, the Alpha Brain. And I brought along- funny enough, and I talked about this in my book 'Sleep Smarter,' their fantastic melatonin supplement.

And I'm not a big fan of melatonin for the average person, somebody who's using this on a daily consistent basis, because that can actually be dangerous for the simple fact that research shows that it can downregulate your receptor sites for melatonin by taking supplemental melatonin on a consistent basis.

So that's the issue, however in spot treatments I think it's wonderful. If you're changing time zones, if you had a couple of rough nights of sleep and you're just wanting to get back on track- daylight savings which just came up recently, that's another great spot for helping your body to get a little bit of extra dose, a little nudge of melatonin to do its process is big.

Just because you can get it at CVS, or Walgreens, or Walmart, or Whole Foods doesn't mean that it's safe to just start taking haphazardly. It's a hormone, this is literally hormone therapy, so we have to be aware of that.

And of course ONNIT uses earth grown nutrients for their formulas, and this is something that you can take sublingually, it's a spray so you can spray it right under your tongue and that's how I take it in, and it absorbs into your body much faster that way as well.

So I brought that along, and also I'm a huge fan, I've been using this a lot lately, their Recovery Protein. If you haven't tried it, make sure to check it out, it's amazing.

So this has the Colostrum, features the Colostrum in there. Of course they have the hemp in there, but the Colostrum has every known immune factor, growth factor, essential fatty acid, essential sugar (AKA polysaccharide), essential protein, every amino acid, it's all in there in Colostrum.

It's amazing, plus the BCAAs, all that good stuff that you would be looking for in a recovery protein. And actually I have this cool little post-workout protein shake that I use, so if you want to know that recipe, hit me up on Instagram. Alright? Hit me up on Instagram and I'll let you know my little recipe that I use.

But head over, check them out, www.ONNIT.com/model for 10% off all of this and more. Alright? And on that note, let's get to our topic of the day.

So today we're talking about nighttime routines to help you to enhance sleep, accelerate fat loss, and supercharge your brain. Many of us now are very much aware, and the science behind this is much more pressed into culture, the importance and value of having a consistent morning routine or ritual for maximizing the results of your day.

But my argument is that this actually starts the night before in constructing a smart evening routine to help to set you up for great sleep, which is the number one influence for your energy to actually do stuff the next day. Plus the mental clarity, your metabolism, all these other factors that we're going to talk about today.

So why is this so important? Well number one, and this is probably the biggest thing, is that having a consistent nighttime routine, it eliminates the uncertainty surrounding sleep and preparing for the next day.

So for many of us, going to sleep is like- it's a toss-up, it's a crapshoot, you don't know what's going to happen, and when it's going to happen, how it's going to happen, what it's going to look like.

We don't know how we're going to feel the next day. That creates a lot of mental anguish that's just kind of floating around in the back of our minds and it's not really fair to us.

And so oftentimes we're setting ourselves up for problems because we don't have this consistency in eliminating this uncertainty. Uncertainty and variety is a great part of our lives for sure, but not when it comes to our sleep, right?

We want to have some variety, we don't want life to be boring, we want to make sure of course that our sleep quality is optimized, and also that we feel good, that's really the bottom line.

Feeling good is the key because everything is exponentially more difficult when we don't feel good, and we've got to try to pull ourselves up and push ourselves into doing the things that we need to do, whereas if we can create a consistent structured nighttime ritual, our vision and our energy can pull us in action every single day.

And it's just a much more evolved way of living, and that's what the opportunity we have in front of us, is to create these things so we can truly have the body, the health, the life that we truly want, and create consistent results. So that's one of the big reasons around this.

And also being able to prepare for the next day to set you up for success the next day. As you're going to find throughout today's episode, this is where the preparation for tomorrow really starts, and our execution is all going to be set up by what we do the night before.

And just a little bit of science, a little bit of a background on why this matters is the American Academy of Sleep Medicine found that the use of a consistent bedtime routine contributes to improvement in multiple aspects of children's sleep, nighttime behavior, and mood including the maternal mood, so the mood of the mothers.

Now this is really interesting because we know this for kids, and I was privy to that as I was growing up for a phase of my life which we'll talk about in a moment, but we know that having that consistent routine for parents to do that, how much it matters to the sleep quality of our children.

But what about us? What about adults? We're really just big adult babies, you know? We have the same basic programming, the same basic wiring, but because we're big adult babies we can just do whatever we want.

Like, 'You know what? I don't want to take a bath tonight. I don't want to read. I don't want to,' and so we just do what we want. You know there's a new Netflix series on, I'm in, right? We can just throw a monkey wrench in the whole thing because we don't have anybody kind of governing our activities, whereas we are the guiding force for our children.

But the same thing rings true. This is clinically proven. Having a nighttime ritual helps to improve sleep quality, bottom line. Helps improve your mood, helps improve nighttime behavior, AKA you're not getting up and going and throwing down some cheesy poofs. Right? 'It's my cheesy poofs, okay?' You're not being little Cartman, alright?

So how do we really structure this? We're going to dive into that today.

But first and foremost I want to talk about what routines do for your brain, so let's dive in there and actually look at what's going on in our brain.

So this conversation starts with myelin, and we've talked about this multiple times on the show. So myelin is what coats the axons that transmit electrical impulses throughout your brain.

So what does that mean?

Well these axons are what send information between each of the cells in your brain, it's very important. It's all this electrical activity and just brilliant, beautiful movement, and activity that's going on in our brains, and the myelin actually coats this conductivity, it coats these axons.

The more that we do the behavior, and the more myelin that gets laid down, the stronger that connection begins to become. And so this is what happens when we practice.

So I love the quote that says, 'Practice makes perfect,' but that's not really accurate. A better quote would be, 'Practice makes permanent,' right? 'Practice makes permanent,' because practicing something that's not advantageous to you might not be perfect, right?

It might not be what's perfect but it definitely can make it permanent in your brain as more and more myelin gets laid down insulating that nerve firing, and making it an automatic behavior.

This is the difference between the first time you try to shoot a basketball if you're Steph Curry, and what he's able to do today, basically falling out of bounds with his eyes closed, having that nerve impulse to be able to shoot the basketball pretty much the same way, right?

And that's really what this is when creating a routine for ourselves, we're making it so it's automatic. We've talked about this on the show as well, we've talked about myelin, we've also talked about this idea of automatic, and what does that actually look like?

Well so all processes of learning and behavior have four essential stages and it starts with something known as an unconscious incompetence.

So this is where you're not aware that you're doing things a certain way. Basically you don't know what you don't know. So that's an unconscious incompetence, right? So you realize- or you don't realize yet the fact that having an evening routine can help you to improve your sleep quality, you have no idea that it even matters.

You're just kind of living, you've been growing up in the Nintendo era, you're a gamer, you're jamming down energy drinks, you're just living a different life. You don't even realize that it matters.

Then we shift to something called a conscious incompetence. This is where we know that what we're doing is not accurate. We realize that, 'I don't know that thing,' and so we for the most part set a course to try to change that thing, and we start to try to change our habits.

From there we shift to a conscious competence. So this is where we're doing the thing, but we have to think about it. We're aware that we're doing it, we have to put time and energy into laying it down. This is the 'practice.'

And from there it evolves to become an unconscious competence. This is where you don't have to think about doing the thing, it happens automatically.

You don't have to think about brushing your teeth, I promise you you brush your teeth pretty much the same way every single time, it's just on automatic and you can brush your teeth while doing five other things as well. You might miss a spot here or there, you might miss a little stink germ, but you do it pretty much the same way every time.

So this is where we really want to evolve to, to where this becomes a part of who we are, just like any of the things that we want that are advantageous to us, becoming the best version of ourselves. So that's really the process that we're talking about, and myelin is the key to that unconscious competence taking place in our lives.

So this process of myelination is basically how behaviors become automated in our brains and in our bodies. And neuroscientists have also noted there's a specific part of the brain that influences our habit-making behaviors, and this is called the basal ganglia.

The basal ganglia.

Now we talked about this a little bit when Dr. Daniel Amen was on the show, and he's one of the four most experts on the human brain in the world, right? In the world, in the entire planet, he's taken more brain imaging scans than anyone else by far. And so we'll put that in the show notes of course.

But the basal ganglia which plays a key role also in the development of emotions, memories, and pattern recognition. So this is where this whole kind of habit thing is going down, this is why habits are also tied to emotions as well, and pattern recognition, and then on the other side though there's decisions.

So we have this habit thing going on where it's automated, and decisions are happening more so in the prefrontal cortex. This is a more evolved kind of human part of the brain, right?

This is where executive functions are taking place, this is where you're able to distinguish between right and wrong for social control, right? So these are parts of

the brain- it's a more evolved part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex where your decisions, decision-making is taking place.

Now as soon as the behavior becomes automatic, it shifts gears to really become more solid in the basal ganglia and essentially the decision-making aspect of the brain can basically go on sleep mode. You don't have to think about it anymore and it literally just like that part of the brain for that behavior is on sleep mode.

So this is where we want to focus on getting ourselves, and it really doesn't take that long as long as you're stacking conditions, and that's one of the things I'm going to talk about today when I share with you an optimal nighttime routine and the different components that you can utilize, that you can pick and choose from, or take the whole shebang and create an epic nighttime ritual to get epic sleep and have epic days every day.

So I want to share with you really quickly how every habit is essentially created, and this comes from the work of Charles Duhigg in his book, 'The Power of Habit.'

Now every habit begins with a psychological pattern called a habit loop, alright? It's called a habit loop and this is a three part process.

The first part, there's a cue. There's a trigger of some sort that tells your brain to go into automatic mode and let the behavior happen.

So Michael Hyatt who was on the show recently, it's an incredible episode, he talked about something called activation triggers, so things that initiate behavior for you.

So for him, he has his lights shut off automatically in his office at I believe 5:00 to let him know he has to get out of the office. He's trained himself, he's created this activation trigger so that he's not bleeding over, and not sticking to what he holds most dear.

Which he's crushing it in his business, but his family matters first. So for him to unplug, get out of the office, he set an activation trigger that, 'You can't be here. Lights go off, you don't have to go home but you've got to get the heck out of here.'

That's how he set it up. And so we need to create these activation triggers for ourselves. We already have them but oftentimes they're for behaviors that might not be advantageous to us.

So first thing, there's a trigger, there's a cue.

Then there's the routine aspect, and this is where the behavior itself happens. So you have the trigger, then you have the behavior itself. And this is what people think- oftentimes when they think about habits is this part.

So the actual action for Michael Hyatt is for him to leave his office. That's the habit aspect, that's the routine aspect that we see on the surface, but there was first a trigger.

The third step that he talks about in 'The Power of Habit' is the reward. This is very important, the reward. This is something that your brain likes, that helps it to remember this habit loop in the future.

So you get something by doing the habit.

So often we try to change our habits, we're very good at creating 'bad habits' in our culture. You know people have a smoking habit, or a drinking habit, or a sugar habit, or a sex habit? Shout-out to Eric Benet, messing it up with Halle Berry.

But the thing is we have these different habits that are not serving us in one way or another, and they are popularized, but we don't talk about all the good habits that people can construct.

We really don't hear much information out there about that. 'You know what? Here are some things to help you to create healthy habits versus all this conversation about bad habits and the drama that they bring.'

So you can create these good habits but you have to anchor them, right? We have to have that reward and we leave that part out oftentimes and this is really the secret.

So now that you know about the habit loop, we can go ahead and dive in a little bit deeper, and I love this quote, and this is from Samuel Johnson, and I've said this quote many times, I love this quote so much.

'The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.'

'The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.'

Your life is really a result of your habits. The life that you have right now in this moment is a result of your habits.

It's not the things that you've done every now and then, it's the things that you've done consistently that have led you to this point, and moving forward your habits are going to create the life of your future. And this is the opportunity to be a conscious creator of those things, and not let the environment dictate what you do with your life.

So when it comes to building your nighttime rituals it starts with this very important word which is 'consistency,' right? Consistency.

This is really the foundation of the whole thing, and consistency specifically in time, and the time that you do these things in your life is going to help to really solidify this

evening ritual. And this is a major key from everything from brain health, to fat loss, to maximum sleep benefits which you're going to learn about.

And little do people know, there's this new phenomenon out there when people are jumping around in the times that they're going to bed based on what day of the week it is, based on the different activities, what might be on TV, what's going on with the kids, in jumping around in their sleep time, they're creating this new phenomenon called 'social jet lag.'

Social jet lag.

So we think that Friday rolls around, 'just got paid, Friday night, money in my pocket, hey!' Right? Friday is here, time to go and just let the hair down, get out, go do stuff, go out, it's the weekend finally, time to sleep in as well. Stay up late, sleep in.

And experts have found that this can throw off your biological clock as if you've flown across the country, and many people are doing this every single weekend. And this social jet lag is- and this is a quote from Till Roenneberg, and he's a PhD professor at the University of Munich Institute of Medical Psychology in Germany.

He says, 'The discrepancy between what our body clock wants us to do and what our social clock wants us to do is what social jet lag really is, and it almost looks as if people on Friday evening fly from Paris to New York City, and then back home on Monday morning, they fly back again.'

That's really what's kind of going on in our bodies with the change in the timing. And so this is why Mondays, they call it the Monday Blues, right? You've got a case of the Mondays. 'What's wrong? You got a case of the Mondays?'

This is what we're seeing here and what makes Mondays so difficult for people is because the sleep cycle has been thrown off so much, there's a social jet lag we're creating for ourselves. And we're going to come back and talk more about this.

So I want you to understand this really important term which is 'biological rhythms.'

Biological rhythms.

Your body, as crazy as this sounds, is lined up literally in sync with the diurnal patterns of the planet, right? It's in sync with also the nighttime patterns of the planet. You're synced up with nature. We're kind of hiding out from nature a little bit, but nature still finds us, alright? We're still in sync with nature.

And so our bodies are looking for a very specific day and night cycle. This is how we've evolved, but only today can we basically manufacture a second daytime and just throw all caution to the wind, do the laptop lapdance until early in the wee hours

of the morning, because we can. We can today, whereas our ancestors knew no such thing.

So we're creating this kind of social jet lag, and we're living it. Many people are living in this and just kind of- it's looming over them all the time, and they're wondering why they don't feel well.

So underlying everything is the consistency and understanding the biological rhythm, right? Your body is always looking for a pattern to sync up with nature, that consistency is really the key.

So we're going to come back and talk about this more, but I want to dive in and talk about the brain health, fat loss, sleep benefits here a little bit more.

So let's look at this evening ritual, this consistency and the influence that it has on our body weight, for example.

Now there's a recent study that was published in the journal 'Current Biology' where they looked at the habits of 65,000 adults and found that people with different workday and weekend sleep schedules had tripled the odds of being overweight. Huh? Crazy, huh? That's straight up nuts.

And even more, the body mass index of overweight people tended to rise as the gap between their weekday and weekend time zones widened. So the more that they strayed from their weekday routine, the more that their body mass index grew as well.

There's a correlation directly from that. So that should be pretty eye-opening in and of itself to notice a pattern like that. And this is speaking to all of the really miraculous things that are happening for your metabolism while you're asleep, and we've covered many of these on the show and gone in depth into them. And one of those is melatonin, right?

We know about melatonin as this glorified sleep hormone, but it's also a powerhouse hormone to support your metabolism in fat loss. But again these aren't the things you'll hear about in popular media yet.

We're changing that, pushing this into culture, but behind the scenes this has been well-known by researchers for a long time and its influence.

So how does this work?

Well this was in the 'Journal of Pineal Research,' and this study demonstrated that melatonin increases your body's production of something called brown adipose tissue. Brown adipose tissue, or brown fat, or BAT fat. You can call it BAT fat for short.

And brown adipose tissue functions more like muscle in the fact that it burns white adipose tissue, alright? Think of the Joker. It's kind of the gooey stuff they were trying to get rid of. Alright?

So this is really the disparity here with these two different types of fat. So brown fat is kind of 'good fat' physically, our physical good fat, and the more that our body produces it, the more that we're going to burn off this excess body fat.

Melatonin does that, and here's the major key, is that it's only secreted in optimal amounts with a consistent light and dark cycle.

Okay it's only secreted in optimal amounts with a consistent light and dark cycle.

Your body needs darkness in order to produce optimal amounts of melatonin and the shorter we're making our darkness window, the less we're getting the benefits of melatonin, specifically for this aspect we're talking about but there's many other things that melatonin is obviously important for as well.

So we're setting ourselves up for failure essentially when we're blocking out having a consistent evening routine and ritual, by throwing caution to the wind and diving into the new Iron Fist series on Netflix.

Shout-out, love it! Love it, love it. Marvel fan, DC fan as well. I don't want to create any controversy out there. Somebody posted the other day like, 'Shawn I love Marvel, Marvel's better than DC, I'll admit that, but Batman's better than all of them.' It's like hey, got to respect that, bro. Got to respect it.

So obviously another crucial impact that melatonin has on our overall health and performance is our sleep quality itself. And we've done an episode recently talking about how melatonin is a big influence over your body's sleep cycle, right?

So we broke down in the episode on energy, and building physical energy, which we'll put that in the show notes if you happened to have missed it, incredible powerhouse episode.

But your brain is cycling in and out of different stages, and those stages are what dictate what area of sleep we are in, and each area of sleep we're in is correlated with different endocrine processes and nervous system processes.

So hormone function, nervous system function depending on what your brainwaves are doing, and melatonin is a gear shift to help your body to move in and out of those stages of sleep if that makes sense.

So if melatonin is not being produced at an optimal level, or it's even suppressed, you're not going to be cycling through your normal stages of sleep properly. And

even if you got eight hours of time unconscious on a mattress, you might wake up feeling like a hot mess, alright?

A hot flaming mess of poo, alright? 'You're going to take your bath, we going to light it on fire. It's how we do.' You might end up like that. You don't want to end up like that, alright?

And the big key here is making sure we're producing optimal amounts of melatonin every night. Give our body what it deserves.

Now another aspect of having a consistent evening routine is that it naturally reduces cortisol, because as we talked about earlier, probably the biggest leverage point of having a consistent nighttime routine is the fact that it eliminates the uncertainty surrounding sleep, and it takes a big part of the stress away, and that's what we want to do for ourselves.

Not just for the fact of the kind of noticeable outer perimeter of it where we feel less stress, but what's going on in our bodies when we reduce cortisol?

So one of the big things that happens here is that we're protecting our lean muscle mass. Cortisol has been given a bad name and it's treated like a straight up villain, but it's not, just misunderstood.

Cortisol is actually one of the most important hormones that we have, it does so many different things, it even helps with our thyroid function. Just so many good things that it does, but when it's produced in the wrong amounts and at the wrong time, then it can truly, truly cause some problems for us in the fact that reducing cortisol can help to protect your muscle mass because cortisol can tear your muscle down.

It can literally start to break down all of that muscle that you worked so hard to build, and turn it into glucose, right? It's a process called gluconeogenesis.

Cortisol can break down your valuable lean muscle tissue, which muscle is your body's fat burning machinery. We really have to understand that over, and over, and over again.

Muscle is your body's fat burning machinery. When people talk about, 'How can I burn fat, get rid of fat?' You need to build some muscle. That's the machinery that burns that stuff away.

But cortisol, being in a hyper-stressed state can literally tear that machinery down. Not cool, not cool.

So that's number one, protects your lean muscle mass.

Also reduction in cortisol- cortisol is catabolic. It's a very catabolic hormone, which you need things to break you down. Catabolic basically means breaking down of things. That enables the building up.

Like you need both, we can't just stay the same, there's this constant process always happening of breakdown, build-up, breakdown, build-up, right? But we need the build-up part too, and so many of us are stuck in this kind of catabolic state more often, we're not getting that anabolic side.

So catabolic versus anabolic.

So when cortisol is reduced there's an instant increase in anabolism, this building up of recovery rejuvenation growth. That's what we want.

Also with the reduction of cortisol, through having a consistent evening routine reduces stress-induced inflammation. A big part of carrying around excess weight is its inflammation.

Your body is a protection mechanism to help to buffer inflammation. It's like a little fire basically, inflamed, inflamed flames, it's like kind of this internal fire that's happening in ourselves. So this helps to reduce that inflammation.

And to just even throw in an extra little nugget here, with our sleep quality being influenced by optimal melatonin, we're intrinsically going to have optimal amounts of testosterone, which is another one of these anabolic very beneficial hormones for men and women having the right ratios of testosterone.

And we did an entire episode dedicated specifically to the impact that sleep has on sex, and that sex on sleep, and this really interesting relationship that these two things have, and it's actually called 'sleeping together' sometimes. And it's incredible when you look at the data and how these two things influence each other, but testosterone is a big player in that whole equation.

And there was a study that was published in 2011 that I talked about in that episode, and this was in the 'Journal of the American Medical Association,' and they found that young men who were sleep deprived over one week, just one week- five days, so it's one work week, and they were getting just five hours of sleep per night saw their testosterone levels drop by 15%.

Now that might now sound like a lot, but that was as if they were suddenly ten to fifteen years older simply from being sleep deprived, having abnormal sleep cycle for just five days.

And so how often again are we doing this, in smaller doses sometimes, of course you know maybe we're getting seven hours over here, then five, then six and a half, then eight, and just kind of bouncing around, make up for it on the weekend.

All this inconsistency can be just as negative as having a straight consistent time of having the same amount of sleep, which is probably under what your body really needs. Because it's all about the biological rhythms, and that's the big take-away from today.

It's something to write down and remember, biological rhythms.

Now before we get to the optimal evening routines, let's move on to talk about heart health. Let's talk about our heart health and how the evening routine- the consistency in our ritual or nighttime ritual has an impact on your heart health.

This is crazy, listen to this, the number of heart attacks- from that one hour change with daylight savings time, the number of heart attacks increases by 24% on the Monday after the spring daylight saving time.

Huh? Crazy, right?

And this was compared with the daily average for the weeks surrounding the start of daylight savings time, and this was a 2014 study, and this was published in the journal 'Open Heart.'

Alright and this is becoming a little bit more well-known, I saw this in the media a little bit more this year as the daylight savings time just passed, but what? 24% increase in heart attacks.

That's like a collective sleep deprivation of a lot of people at once, that's why the number rises like that.

Now even more interesting, this was a 2016 study, so a little bit more recent that was published in the journal of the American Academy of Neurology found that the overall rate for stroke was 8% higher in the two days after daylight savings time, and people who were older than 65 were 20% more likely to have a stroke after this Spring daylight savings time.

So just a change in the consistent evening routine, just like that increases our risk of health problems.

And I love this statement by Christopher Barnes, and he's an Associate Professor at the University of Washington, and he said that when we change the time by one hour, it throws a monkey wrench into our circadian process.

And he said that the following Monday we've discovered that people have about forty minutes less sleep on average, and because- this is the big key here, because we're already often short on sleep to begin with, the effects of this just forty minutes is even more noticeable, and that's really the key.

We're already crazy pants with our sleep quality, sleep consistency, and then we throw this in the mix, that's why we see those spikes. So not just because you had less sleep in one night in one instance, because your body is very, very resilient, and you're going to be fine.

Especially people who've got kids, we've got stuff going on, you're going to have times where you don't get the best sleep at night, but that doesn't mean you're going to have a higher risk necessarily of having any of these issues, it's when it's a consistent thing plus a bigger sleep deprivation on top of that. That's where the problems really come into play.

So a key take-away from today is that we get ready for everything else in our lives; we get ready for work, we get ready for school, we get ready for a hot date, but we don't get ready for sleep. It's just something we stumble into, it's like a lot of times just like, 'I really should get to bed.'

So this is why it's so important, even if it's a simple fifteen or thirty minute evening routine to close out your day, to create these strong neuropatterns, it's going to be advantageous for your health, your fitness, and your sleep quality if you create one.

Now to stay consistent with your biological rhythms, it's ideal to be within twenty to thirty minutes of your ideal bedtime and wake time whenever that might be for you on a consistent basis.

So it's not about being neurotic like, 'I need to get to bed at 10:01 PM or else my leg is going to fall off.' It's not like that, but if you're jumping around from 10:00 bedtime to midnight bedtime to 11:00, and just moving around, that's going to throw off those biological rhythms that we've been talking about.

So making something consistent and sticking to fifteen to thirty minutes within that range. So if your idea bedtime is 11:00 at night, get in there somewhere between thirty minutes of that marker, so whether it's thirty minutes earlier or thirty minutes later, somewhere within that time frame.

So there's a little bit of cushion to play with, so that's really the key. And again whether your goal is to be in bed at 10:00 PM or midnight, whatever it is, keeping it consistent and not bouncing around too much.

So now I want to share with you some components of what an ideal evening routine would look like to get all of the benefits that we've covered. Now we'll use the example of starting a routine about an hour out before your desired bedtime, and this starts with going back to when you were the baby. Alright?

Travel back in time with me. So for myself for example, when I was younger up until the age of around six, I lived with my grandmother and it was a very consistent

structure and life there in that household with her. And my evening routine was set, like I remember it so clearly, and so the first thing was I would have my nighttime bath, that's where we'd start.

My grandmother would make sure that I'd get my bath, and I remember just getting dried off, and just having a nice warm towel, and putting on- next thing was putting on the pajamas, right?

There's another neuro-association linked to that process, right? I'm putting on my bedtime clothes, okay? That's a powerful activation trigger, okay? So and of course it was the onesie thing with the feet, right? With the whole jump in with the zipper, right? Some adults still wear those today apparently, I've seen it out on Instagram. But I had one of those bad boys or a few of those, put that on, those were my pajamas, and then I would be ushered upstairs to my bed.

And from there we would say our prayers, she had me say my prayers, and I would do that and at the end of the prayer my prayer ended with saying, "and I'm thankful for," and then I would list all the people that I'm thankful for in my life. And sometimes the list would be pretty long, but my grandmother would bear with me, she was probably ready to go to bed herself.

But I'd do that process, she'd tuck me in, and then I went to sleep.

After leaving that consistent environment of my grandmother's house and moving in with my mother, the routine was much more sporadic and unpredictable for sure. There was not really a routine involved, and as a result my sleep was a lot more unpredictable obviously in and of itself.

And I cannot say that this is the cause, but there's definitely correlation to my behavior changing where I would start to get in a lot more trouble when I changed schools as well, but of course the environment is going to influence that as well.

But I remember thinking like, 'I should not do this thing,' and still doing it anyways, right? There was like this break there in my social control, that prefrontal cortex that starts to go cold when you're more sleep-deprived.

And UC Berkeley actually did brain imaging scans, and they show this, and I actually showed those scans in my book 'Sleep Smarter' and found that that prefrontal cortex 'goes cold' and the amygdala, the more reaction-based part of your brain lights up.

And so I would get to basically a point where I'm like, 'I wonder how I'm going to get in trouble today.' Right? And it's just like having the two things on your shoulder.

But this is the thing, is you start to become aware of these things when you get a little bit older like, 'Wait a minute, why was that stuff going on?' Because we don't really know when we're in it oftentimes.

And that carried over into my teenage years where I definitely saw various times when in high school specifically, I remember freshman year of high school, I felt so many times like I was just straight up in a dream, I just couldn't wake up, I was not fully there.

Like I know that I'm not here, I'm not fully Shawn, I'm not fully here in my body, and I would use like caffeine gum, and like Surge- I don't know if you remember Surge, this crazy soda with all this caffeine in it. They straight gave that out for free, they came to our school and there was like containers of it, you could get free Surge.

Why would you do that? Why would you do that to kids?

And so that and a few other things just to try to wake me up, and eventually I kind of progressed out of that if I could say that, to where I didn't really feel like that anymore, but I don't know if I just became adapted to not fully being present.

And this was also leading up to the time where I had the bone degeneration disease take over, where I broke my hip shortly thereafter, and also the ultimate diagnosis of this spinal degeneration because I was so malnourished, and so unhealthy, but I know that my sleep was unhealthy as well, and the patterns were created when I was younger, but I did have that snapshot of what it was like to have a consistent routine.

So now I want to share with you as an adult how we can employ these things and bring them back into our lives, to have the health and the body and the consistency that we really want.

So the optimal evening routine, and this is an important caveat, you can take pieces of this, and this isn't going to be in a specific strict order, but I'm just laying out some things and how I've been doing them, and what I've found to be successful, and what I've employed in patients' lives as I've worked clinically over the years as well.

So the optimal evening routine is generally going to begin an hour before you plan on going to bed. So if you plan on getting to bed at 10:30, you're going to start this process at 9:30.

First step is shutting off or putting away all of your blue light emitting devices. Alright this is the first thing. When the evening routine kicks into play, we're getting off our blue light blocking devices, and why does this matter?

Well there was a study conducted by Harvard Medical School, they found that exposure to light at night throws the body's hormonal clock out of whack and devastates your sleep quality.

Researchers conducted an experiment looking at the effects of blue light exposure at night, like you get from the screens of your everyday tech devices, to exposure of

green light of comparable brightness. The blue light suppressed melatonin for twice as long as the green light and shifted circadian rhythms by twice as much, and basically every hour of blue light exposure suppressed melatonin for an additional thirty minutes.

Now I've shared this many times before. So this is one of those things that you've seen a lot on the Interwebs, different articles you hear in the media, I've been talking about this for half a decade. We have to have a better relationship with our tech devices.

I love, love my iPhone. We're friends! We have an understanding because I know that sometimes they can take advantage of me, alright? Sometimes they can take me for granted, mistake my kindness for weakness.

I say, 'Look iPhone, we've got to talk about this, we've got to change some things,' and they're always like, 'Okay cool, just turn me off. I'll see you tomorrow.' So that's really kind of understanding what's happening behind the scenes with this, and what it's doing to your melatonin, your sleep cycle, your biological rhythms. This is why this is a valuable thing to do.

So with that said, we have to fill that space with something of greater or equal value. We talked about this earlier, about habit creation, we have to have the pleasure component, we have to do something that the brain likes.

The brain already likes Instagram, it likes Twitter, Facebook, YouTube videos. We can't just go cold turkey like that, we have to fill that with something of greater or equal value. And we'll talk about what some of those things can look like in a moment.

But and/or there are hacks that we can use because I'm not perfect about this by any means, but on a consistent basis for the majority of time, this is what I'm doing. However if we are going to watch a movie a little bit later than normal, or a TV show, or I have to work a little bit more, something kind of unexpected, or I'm working on maybe some research, or whatever the case might be.

This is when an hour before my perspective bedtime, to break out the blue light blocking tools. So whether it's on your iPhone, set it and forget it. Use the tool on your phone, built into your phone right now called Night Shift. Set the time, set it and forget it, and it pulls out the most troublesome spectrum of light automatically from your screen. Alright?

That one thing, super simple. For your computers, desktop, laptops, F.LUX. Great app, been using it for about four years. Again just go to Dr. Google, type in F.LUX, a couple clicks, boom it's on your computer, set it and forget it, and it works like gangbusters.

Alright now what is gangbusters anyways? I'm here in the studio with my engineer over there, and when I said gangbusters I was expecting him to come up with this random trivia answer because he usually knows stuff like that. But anyways, shout-out to anybody who knows what gangbusters are.

Engineer: It's a police officer that busts up gangs.

Shawn Stevenson: Okay well there you have it, and so it is. Now we all know what gangbusters are. It's gangbusters or Ghostbusters. Shout-out to Slimer, Peter Venkman.

Alright now also for all the kind of ambient light and the other lights in your house besides the television, laptop, desktop, stuff like that; blue light blocking glasses. So basically this is screen protection.

Your eyes and that blue light are sort of like having sex, kind of having sex, you need to wear protection or you might get something. Alright? So I hope you understand that. So that protection is the blue light blocking glasses and/or these different apps on our devices.

So for the glasses that I use, and I've tried so many, I use Swannies because they actually look cool, and they work amazing, like over 99% effectiveness for blocking out blue light. And so you can go to www.TheModelHealthShow.com/glasses and you can find a Swannies special discount there only for us.

Alright www.TheModelHealthShow.com/glasses.

So when basically it gets dark outside, I throw my Swannies on and just go on about my business. So that's number one, an hour before bed.

Next up, body work.

Body work.

This is something that you can employ into your nighttime routine. Without body work we start with basic massage.

So massage helps to release endorphins, okay and these are kind of these feel good compounds that buffer stress, it reduces stress in your body.

And then there's acupressure, alright there's acupressure, and there's a comprehensive study that was conducted, and this was done in Italy, and it found that 60% of patients with sleep disorders had an improvement in sleep quality after two weeks of acupressure treatment.

Crazy, 60% of people had improvement. And they used the HT 7 point which is right here at the bottom of your wrist if you can see this on YouTube, and just manipulating that point. It also helps to increase the metabolites, the melatonin metabolites so your body is either producing more / using it more efficiently as well simply by- it's crazy, right?

Touching a point on your wrist can do that, bananas.

But your body is all- it has this really intricate hyper-intelligence, this innate intelligence that's governing all this stuff and everything is connected. So, fascinating stuff.

Also of course partner massage. This could be a little bit more interesting or something you enjoy more than scrolling on Twitter maybe. But a partner massage you get the added benefit of oxytocin.

This is kind of the love compound, the cuddle- it's often referred to as the cuddle hormone, but clinically this has been found, and I decided to study in 'Sleep Smarter' to protect your body against the effects of cortisol. So oxytocin benefit.

And then there's self-massage as well. You can do the manipulation with the acupuncture, you can do the foam rolling, you can do- I like to get a tennis ball and roll that under my foot, or you can use a lacrosse ball.

It could be a little bit more tender if you're pressing down on that lacrosse ball, but these are different options because there's a lot of acupuncture points on the bottom of your feet.

And of course the foam rolling like I mentioned, but something that Dr. Kelly Starrett talked about, and I literally added this chapter to 'Sleep Smarter,' the big version that was published with Rodale, because of his insight and the fact that in your gut you have the vagus nerve that connects your gut to your brain, and we know how- we're very, very good in our society as humans to go from 0 to 100.

We can go from 0 to 100 real quick.

Some people are going to know what I'm saying. You can go from 0 to 100 real quick, but going from 100 to 0, not so easy. Not so easy, alright?

Now how can we do that? The vagus nerve actually sends data, more data, about 90% of the information is your vagus nerve in your gut- from your gut to your brain telling your brain what to do.

So to slow down, shut down, it's basically a parasympathetic hack. A parasympathetic nervous system activation you can get by getting one of those little-

I often refer to it as a 'princess ball,' those little rubber balls that are like in the big bin at Walmart. Right?

Grab one of those little balls, and you lay- put it down on the floor, then you lay your body on top of it, you lay your belly on top of that ball, and just work it around in that abdominal architecture massaging in there, and that's one of those things that can help to activate that parasympathetic nervous system.

So there are some little cool things that you can add in to your evening routine, and I feel that even five minutes would suffice.

And another thing that we can add into our evening ritual, and this was a study- this was published in the European Journal of Applied Physiology and Occupational Physiology, found that a hot bath ninety minutes before bed improved sleep quality and helped participants to get greater amounts of deep anabolic sleep.

How do parents know? How did my grandma know that that nice hot bath a little bit before bed?

So specifically it's ninety minutes out, I want to make this clear because getting out of the bathtub and going straight to bed within maybe ten minutes, not the best idea because your body temperature is still elevated and we've talked about this many times, thermoregulation and this process that your body undergoes.

There's literally a drop in your core body temperature when it gets dark outside to help facilitate sleep, and if we forcefully elevate that really close to when we go to bed, that can be a problem.

Same thing with exercising too late because it elevates your core body temperature, and it's kind of a little bit more difficult to bring it down because there are so many internal things firing if that makes sense.

Whereas in the tub, this is more of like an external influence, and your body- and here's the really cool part is that taking the hot bath, your body temperature actually drops lower than it would have after a certain amount of time.

So it helps to even support that core body temperature drop if you time things appropriately. That's why they say ninety minutes here.

So there's something I like to do from time to time, I don't do this on a consistent basis, but especially if I know that I'm sore, or maybe I've had a rough night of sleep maybe the night before, there's something that I like to add into the mix and I'll do a magnesium soak.

So I'll actually add this incredible magnesium, it's called Deep Soak, and this is actually from Activation Products where I get my EASE Magnesium spray that I use

every night, and so it's something that you add to your bathwater. And you can find that at www.EASEMagnesium.com/model as well, so you can check that out there.

So I'll do that which speeds recovery, because basically we're talking about the historical uses of Epsom salts, which is magnesium sulfate, this is a super-critical extract. This is like 1,000 times more effective and you can use such a smaller amount, and man it makes you feel so good. Like you feel really, really relaxed.

So that's another thing that you can add into your evening routine, but if you're going to do this make it consistent. Even a hot shower, but make sure you give yourself a little bit of time for your core body temperature to come back down.

Another part here to again, shift gears with what's going on with your brain, you know especially for people who have a lot of inner chatter, got to really do this, in setting yourself up for success the next day is journaling.

And you could do a little bit of journaling / scripting your day for tomorrow. I love doing that, that process of writing out the things that I'm going to accomplish, you know those bullet points.

And there's this really interesting thing, your brain is always looking to solve puzzles, solve patterns, and your unconscious mind is able to work overnight to help you to fulfill those goals much easier, and there's sound research on this as well.

So utilize the power of your mind and your unconscious mind- your subconscious mind by scripting out your day the night before. It's a really, really nice thing. It also helps to kind of put stuff out of your head.

Another thing that you can employ here is to read. Read a physical book. And this is a practice that I employ most nights of the week, I'm going to be reading something as part of my evening ritual.

And / or you can listen to an audiobook or a podcast. This doesn't require you to stare into the screen the whole time, you can just turn the podcast on, or the audiobook, and have your headphones on and just chill.

This is a really valuable cool thing that you can do that is on par with just kind of surfing around looking at random YouTube videos. There can be some of the same benefits that you find there in maybe you're studying some marketing material, or relationship advice, whatever it is that you can get in audiobook form or podcast form.

So I really like to do that as well. This is something that my wife definitely does, she does that far more often.

And speaking of wives, a.k.a. significant others, one of the other parts of your evening process could be to have some fun with them, to hang out with them, to talk to actually talk to your significant other, talk to your spouse.

Crazy, I know it sounds crazy, but you can actually have a conversation with them and ask them what's going on in their life, what their goals are, what's going on in the day, what their plans are for tomorrow, what they're interested in. You know? You can talk to another human being.

And also significant other, hopefully as we talked about on the sex / sleep episode, this is another thing that could be added to your sleep process, your sleep routine.

This is something that we don't want to like schedule like, 'Okay 9:30 we're going to-it's missionary...' No we're not talking about being some kind of robotic thing here. We're talking about just opening the opportunity for that by you not being distracted by being on Instagram, okay?

I'm not trying to diss Instagram, I love Instagram. Again holler at me on Instagram @ShawnModel for that recovery protein recipe, if you want to get that from me.

So I love Instagram, but your relationships, your most intimate relationships are far more important. And so hopefully that would be more entertaining than being on Instagram, and Facebook, and watching YouTube videos if you have some intimate connection with your significant other.

Another part of this evening process for me is as I'm walking back to the bedroom I turn the temperature down because we talked about the thermoregulation already, and the optimal temperature according to experts is between 62 and 68 degrees Fahrenheit. That's the optimal range.

My wife, she's from Kenya, she doesn't like the cold that much. She doesn't like it. Alright? But she does find that her sleep is so much better when she is cooler, when the environment is cooler.

Of course we've got covers and things like that. Her issue though is getting out the bed in the morning when it's cold. She's like, "It's just the covers are too cozy." So what I do, our kind of happy medium, I get out of bed first and I go turn the heat up, and that's what we do and it's worked out great for us.

Next thing is shutting out all the artificial light in your bedroom. This should be an automatic part of your nighttime ritual. And I said 'artificial' light. So this is if you're in a suburban neighborhood, or city, kind of urban areas where you've got street lights coming in, and car lights, these LEDs, and maybe your porch light, neighbor's porch light, that kind of thing beaming into your bedroom.

You want to shut those things out, make sure you get yourself some blackout curtains if your environment is like that.

If you live in an environment where you're not exposed to those things, don't worry about it, we're not talking about natural light, moonlight, light from the stars, things like that. Humans have evolved with those things, that's all good.

If you look at their lux, the luminance from those things, and there's a luminance chart, this lux chart in 'Sleep Smarter,' you see that moonlight is negligible, like super, super- it's almost reverse bad for you, you know? It's like reverse bad for you, it's good for you. So- and its benefits. And so obviously another one of these influences over our cycles, our biological rhythms is moonlight.

So shut out artificial light, brush your teeth- brush your teeth. That's another thing that's part of your bedtime ritual, but just doing it in the same process, like plugging it in in a certain position consistently helps your brain to know that it's getting ready for bed.

And for me, after I brush my teeth, this is when I rub the magnesium- topical magnesium into my skin, and it's something I've been doing for many, many years. I travel with it when- I just got back from this trip to the Philippines, you better believe I brought my EASE Magnesium along with me, and here is why.

This is why; the Journal of Research in Medical Sciences found that supplementation of magnesium has been found to improve factors such as sleep efficiency, total sleep time, sleep onset- so this is falling asleep after you get into bed, so the sleep latency, preventing early morning awakenings, and the I.S.I., and this is the Insomnia Severity Index, so improving that score.

And on the other side, and this was with objective measures, so this was actually using monitors. Magnesium supplementation literally improves concentrations of serum renin, and renin is basically a marker of shifts in your sleep stages. So it lets you know you're going in and out of sleep stages efficiently.

Magnesium helps your body to optimize melatonin and serum cortisol were lowered. All of these things were improved just from magnesium supplementation. This is the number one mineral deficiency in our world today, and it has so many influences.

Over 320 enzymatic processes magnesium is responsible for. So basically there's over 300 things your body cannot do or cannot do efficiently if magnesium is not present. It's also known as this kind of anti-stress mineral, and we are exposed to a very abnormal amount of stress today.

Even if we lived a pretty 'stress-free' life, just the air quality, the food quality; we're not- for the most part, most of us are not out foraging for our food. Like we are getting

deficient food. Things are different today and we need things to help us to adapt, and to buffer. Magnesium is one of these critical compounds.

And so for that, this is what I use because taking an oral supplement for this, and trying to get it in orally, you're probably not going to be able to get your magnesium levels up to where you need to, because if you take even a little bit more than your bowel tolerance- right you have a certain bowel tolerance for magnesium.

If you take even a little bit more you'll create disaster pants. Okay? You'll create diarrhea. So this is- and that's not- like now we're like flushing out our body, like now you've created a flush. Right? And you're going to lose minerals and things like that kind of abnormally.

So the most efficient way to do this is through a transdermal application, through a topical treatment rubbing magnesium in through your skin. Over 99.9% absorbable from this magnesium. Not from stuff you'll find out there in the stores, and I've tried- like we're talking maybe 20% absorbable, and it's lower quality, and you're wasting your money.

This is why I use EASE and I've been using it for so long, and after the stories that I've heard from it, it might not just be for somebody improving their sleep quality, or for relaxing their muscles or things like that, but just getting people out of pain, the stories that I've heard.

And we had one of those stories actually recently on The Model Health Show when we did the live episode in Washington D.C., and I had no idea that somebody was sharing a story, and they shared a story about their mom who was the grandma, and grandma happened to be there, so we passed the mic to her and she shared her experience and how she's just walking around trying to spray people. Like, 'Have you heard?' because of the benefits that it had for her. And it was just such a cute story but also was very, very heartwarming and makes me proud, and makes me so grateful that we have these things available to us.

So make sure if you don't have this already, get yours. Make sure that you have this and use it, put it next to your nightstand, put it in your bathroom, EASE Magnesium. So this is E-A-S-E Magnesium, so it's www.EASEMagnesium.com/model. Go there now, make sure to pick up your EASE Magnesium. So it's www.EASEMagnesium.com/model. There's an exclusive discount there for The Model Health Show listeners, you will not find that anywhere else, alright?

So make sure you head over there, get yourself some EASE Magnesium if you have not done so already. This stuff is- everything that I do has a purpose, and I've been using this every night for many years. Maybe I've skipped one or two nights a year, but this is something I do on a consistent basis because it just works.

So after that for somebody they can- especially if you have more of an inner chatter, you could do some breathing exercises as well. It's something else that you can add in here. I cited studies in 'Sleep Smarter' that found how meditation can help to improve your sleep quality, and there are so many studies.

The American Association of Sleep Medicine have given the big thumbs up and endorsed meditation as being a treatment for insomnia, alright? And there's lots of different forms of meditation; there's mindfulness meditation, there's specific breathing exercises, there's guided mediations.

So just experiment, add this piece in if it feels good to you. But also specifically the study I'm thinking about and I cited in 'Sleep Smarter' is that meditation in the morning helps you to sleep better at night as well.

Next up obviously is get into bed.

Get into bed.

You want to make sure that your sleeping sanctuary, your sleep environment is set up nicely. We did an entire episode dedicated to creating a sleep sanctuary, so make sure to check that one out, we'll put it in the show notes if you haven't done so already.

And let go, that's what sleep really is, is the practice of letting go.

And if you're stacking these conditions for yourself, that sleep latency, that sleep consistency, the quality of your sleep is going to be so yummy. It's going to be so good but it really takes for us to wake up to the fact- get it? Wake up to the-? Yeah. Wake up to the fact that our evening routine matters and how it's setting up our brain, creating this neuro-association for sleep.

It's getting every single cell in your body the cue that it's time to shut down. How often have we fought with that by doing all of these other random things that I promise you could be done other times?

Now really quick to close out the show, there's obviously plenty of variants that you can create with this routine, but following this format that I've shared can be game changing, and using the pieces that I've shared with you today.

Now obviously there could be times when you occasionally choose to deviate from your consistent nightly routine, but we want to make that the exception and not the rule, right?

It's the exception, not the rule.

So you might go out with friends who are in from out of town, you might stay up and watch a movie with your significant other, you might be traveling, you might have a deadline at work, you might have family over for a holiday, and there's all kinds of different curveball reasons, different things that can come into play, but in truth all of these things can generally be done earlier in the day or on the weekend.

It's just what we tell ourselves, like there's no other time to do this. Like 'I don't have any other time to watch a movie with my significant other,' right?

So for my wife and I, it can be- like before my youngest son came into the picture, we could just get up and go to the movies. That's one of the things that kids bring into your life; you no longer have full spontaneity control.

So we can set up some parameters so that we have a date day instead of going out for a date night, when we don't have anybody to keep our son, right? We can set things up and plan ahead so that we can go and do some of the things that we are adulting, right? That we want to do as well.

There's always a way to move things around, to be more creative in our schedule, so that I don't interrupt my consistent sleep schedule, right? And also for me, a lot of my variety and spontaneity and uncertainty happens during the day.

I allot time for that, I've kind of like- especially after work for me. I'm open, like let's go, whatever you want to do, you know?

Like for my son, if he wants to play some games, if he wants to go outside, whatever it is I kind of open myself up for variety and uncertainty, right? And the conversations that we have as well over the dinner table. And I also did mention traveling.

When traveling I do implement many of the same structures which helps me to sleep better when I'm on the road just by having some of these mental triggers, some of these neuro-associations, these patterns, helping those things to fire so that I can get right into a routine when I'm on the road.

But none of this is about being perfect, it's just about progress. That's what it's really about because there's no reason that structure has to be oppressive. There's no reason that structure has to be oppressive.

You want to think of structure as your friend who's offering these little routines and traditions that make life both easier and cozier. That's what structure is for us if we can flip that switch and begin to see it for that what it is.

And there's this wonderful quote, and it's from poet and novelist May Sarton and she said that, "Routine is not a prison, but the way to freedom from time." That's the key.

It actually creates more freedom for us to live our lives and to become the greatest version of ourselves, to achieve our goals when we have some structure added in. Especially at the tippy top of our day in the morning and the tail-end, those two places, and there's all of this space in between where you get to write an amazing story.

So please take advantage of these important fundamental strategies for creating your own healthy, health-giving, empowering evening routine. And I hope that you got a lot of value out of this today.

If you did, make sure that you share this with your friends over on social media. You can share it on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, wherever you hang out, share it with the people that you care about. And I care about you, and I'm very grateful for you being with me here today.

Alright much more good stuff to come, we've got some amazing guests coming up so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

And make sure for more after the show, you head over to www.TheModelHealthShow.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.

Jade Harrell: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And you're loving it.

Jade Harrell: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And I read all the comments, so please leave me a comment there, and take care everybody. I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.