

EPISODE 308

## Transforming Your Body, Mind & the Health Coaching Industry - With Cynthia Garcia

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**Shawn Stevenson:** You are now listening to The Model Health Show with Shawn Stevenson. For more, visit [www.themodelhealthshow.com](http://www.themodelhealthshow.com).

Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in with me today.

Listen, it's a pretty special day. Today is actually my birthday when this is being recorded and there's no place that I'd rather be in the world than here in the studio making this for you. Today, when I woke up, you know I really don't make a big deal about my birthday at this point, to be honest. I'm more dedicated to bringing joy and inspiration to other people. I just kind of don't see myself as a big deal sometimes. But, that all changed today thanks to my oldest son. When I woke up this morning, I kind of didn't even realize it was my birthday until my wife said, "Happy Birthday!" I said, "Oh yeah, that's right!" I was very surprised. My oldest son Jordan, who is a senior in high school, waited around for me this morning as I was doing my morning ritual. When I came out he was waiting by the door and he had written me a letter that he read for me today.

It really took me back to understanding that I matter. And that's something I really want to communicate to you as well, is that you matter. He went through and it kind of made me think about my own personal transformation when he articulated the story because he was there when I was dealing with this so-called incurable spinal condition. I shared with him a couple years ago that he was a big catalyst in my transformation. A lot of times it's the people in our lives that can help to kind of contribute and be that spark for us. He knew that I wanted to be able to play catch with him, to teach him how to play, and to play sports, and to run around with him. It was kind of like a big bright light that was shining for me to really take action and to take control of my health.

So, it was a really special moment. We basically spent the morning crying together, but of course I was sweating from my eyes. It wasn't actually crying. I cry on the inside. I'm just kidding. So, it was a really special moment and I'm just grateful to be able to share this moment with you as well.

Speaking of special, my guest today... oh my goodness! To have her here in the studio with me is also like the biggest gift. I'm so, so very grateful! It's going to be something really powerful for you today.

Speaking of powerful, I've got it in my veins. I've got that hitter in my veins today. For years, I mean literally since I was five years old, I had a sip of my grandmother's coffee. It was Folgers. It was not the good stuff. I had a sip and I was like, I will never drink coffee again. And I didn't. This was until about a year and half ago. My wife just kept raving about Four Sigmatic coffee. I was using their elixirs... their Lions Mane, and the Reishi, and the Chaga.... in love with them! The cordyceps... but, I didn't try the coffee. And when I did, it changed everything. So, they have the coffee organic, so we're not dealing with any pesticide or herbicides. A hot piping cup of fungicides to start your day.

Instead we've got organic coffee, but also, they have it blended with medicinal mushrooms. So, today I had the Lion's Mane formula and this is because it's that mental edge. University of Malaya found out, and they did some really interesting studies, that Lion's Mane is one of the very few substances ever discovered that can actually cause something called neurogenesis. That literally means 'creation of brain cells'. Folger's can't do that! I promise you. It's probably going to kill a few hundred thousand brain cells, alright?

It's a totally different ballgame when rolling with Four Sigmatic. So, if you're not on the Four Sigmatic yet, what are you doing? Take action and get it in your cup. Start your day with their elixirs. Whether you're a coffee fan, hot chocolate, or just the general elixir can add so much value to your life. I'm feeling amazing! Head over and check them out. It's [FourSigmatic.com/model](http://FourSigmatic.com/model). F – O – U – R – S – I – G – M – A – T – I – C.com/model. You get 15 percent off everything. So, head over and check them out. [FourSigmatic.com/model](http://FourSigmatic.com/model) for 15 percent off. And now let's get to the iTunes review of the week.

**iTunes Review:** Another five star review titled A True Father and Model for All by Solomon Brazen.

Shawn Stevenson is a true model for everyone on their journey to be their best self. Nearly every time I listen to The Model Health Show, I get chills. This is good because I know I'm on the right direction when I get chills running through my body. Shawn is so genuine on his show that all of his words are heard so purely and they resonate wholesomely. It's a sheer boost to put some action into your life. Especially for a young adult like myself. He'll even respond to my direct messages (lol).

**Shawn Stevenson:** Thank you so very much for leaving me that review. It means everything to me. And thank you for making me a part of your story. I promise you the best is yet to come. So stay tuned. Everybody, if you have yet to leave a review, please head over to Apple Podcast and leave a review. It would mean so much to me. I appreciate it so very much.

And on that note, let's get to our special guest and our topic of the day. Our guest for today is Cynthia Pasquella Garcia. She's the Founder and CEO of The Institute of

Transformational Nutrition, which is a highly respected and accredited school that makes it easy for people to become certified as health coaches by using a personalized coaching and business building system that works for everyone, everywhere, every time, with zero guess work. This one-of-a-kind approach leaves coaches confident and credible, so that they can be the powerful force in the world that they are called to be.

Cynthia's books have sold over a million copies worldwide, and over one million people have been impacted by transformational nutrition, a method of personalized nutrition that moves beyond food and physical symptoms to explore and uncover root causes of dis-ease and unhappiness so people can live fuller, more fulfilled lives. With her southern charm and empowering approach Cynthia is a contributor for several publications and media outlets, and is the official nutritionist for Revenge with Khloe Kardashian and she has also guest starred on The Doctors, The Dr. Phil Show, The Today Show, Access Hollywood, E!, E! News Live, and other popular shows as well.

Through years of drive, strength, study, and devotion to her calling, Cynthia is now one of the most influential personalities in the mind, body and spiritual transformation world today. Cynthia knows that her life and her purpose is that she's called to continue uncovering her own past pains and deep truth, so that she can live a life where she is seeking the truth of transformation, and sharing it with others so they can be the powerful force in the world that they are called to be. I'd like to welcome to The Model Health Show, my friend, Cynthia Pasquella-Garcia. How are you doing today?

**Cynthia Garcia:** I am so good. And I have to say, I am... first of all, I am so excited. It's so hard to just sit in this seat right now. It really is! We've been talking about this for a while, and then, to do this on your birthday?

**Shawn Stevenson:** It was meant to be.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Lucky me! Seriously! Thank you so much for having me. It's so special, Shawn.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That's so awesome! And by... your birthday is in two days alright? We're super close. We're gonna celebrate together tomorrow.

**Cynthia Garcia:** We are! We are! We're gonna do it right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** We'll do the sandwich technique.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Oh, I like it! I like it!

**Shawn Stevenson:** So, you're so many things I want to talk with you about and I want to start a little bit different. I want to talk about Dr. Phil. So, I was just going

through and looking at some of your older stuff. You've been in the game helping people for a long time and you're like this incredible secret that celebrities are calling out. But Dr. Phil... He was hand-picked by Oprah. He's one of those guys like Dr. Oz, Dr. Phil...

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And he kind of hand-picked you.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And your approach really spoke to him. What do you think it is about you and what you're doing that really spoke to him?

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's a really great question. And so great working with those guys, with him and his entire team. They are just really tremendous people to work with. I think the thing that really resonated was that what I practice is Transformational Nutrition. So, it's not just about the food. Food is critically important and you know this. But what I found out a long time ago, after going through my own health struggle, was that food alone will never fix us. So, you see people who struggle with weight loss, or struggle with their health, but they know what to do and they know how to do it, but why aren't they? So, I think the thing that really resonated with him, because this is his work too, is the why. Why do we know what to do and still won't do it?

So, I think it was that combination of the physical, the science, the food, the biological, with the mental, the psychological aspect, and the spiritual which isn't religion per se, although it could be for you if that's your thing. But it's really about figuring out what you are really hungry for. Feeding your deeper hungers and your deeper desires and feeling validated. Feeling like you're seen, and heard and matter, kind of like you felt today when Jordon shared that letter with you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. It's so important.

**Cynthia Garcia:** You know Shawn, most people never get that. You're so lucky in so many ways obviously, but just to have that validation is everything. The problem is we go outside of ourselves for that and so what we really focus on, what I really focus on, is finding that value within yourself so that you don't have to go outside of yourself. You don't have to compromise, right? So, when you put those three things together, the biological, the psychological, and the spiritual, in a proven system, it works. And I think that's really what brought it all together for him and made the work really stand out to where he latched onto it and wanted to do something bigger with it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely. And what you just described, that's the spark for real transformation. And that's why I love the name.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. Exactly!

**Shawn Stevenson:** First of all, the episode was way more inspirational than the catch-me-outside episode. But both are classic and just hearing that story and seeing why this is so important, those foundational things... you know, I shared today with everybody that even for me personally, at different levels you still need to feel like you matter.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I know I'm an intricate part in the lives of so many people, but just as a dad, because I'm so in it and I'm in the doing process, sometimes we don't take a moment to just acknowledge. And to have that community, to have some of that reciprocity and communication is so important. And just to bring you back to you is so important.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right. And you know one of the things I love about you and the work that you do, which by the way, I have no words truly for the impact and the transformation that you're making. But one of the things that I learned from you, and that I love that you do so well is you receive. You'll say, "I'm receiving that." And I learned that from you and it's been really powerful in my own life because we often don't receive. They'll be like, "Oh Shawn, what a great shirt," and you'll say, "Oh, this old thing?" Right? And we just brush it off.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Right.

**Cynthia Garcia:** But that's a big deal. Or "Oh my gosh, you did so great with that thing." "Oh, it was nothing." But it was, right? Sometimes we diminish our own value even when people are so clearly trying to give it to us. It's so hard because we don't always feel like we're worthy of receiving it, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely. And just to take a moment because even in that moment I just took a moment to really be present and to hear what he was communicating. Because it's very easy to brush stuff off. Even those beautiful moments. And especially today more than ever. They're so much distraction and so much going on, and so having those moments when we can just stop, be present, embrace the beautiful things that take place... it really helps to just kind of bring that level of good up a notch or two.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And of course like... and this is one of the things we're gonna talk about today. Life is gonna be full of ups and downs, but I really feel it's trending in an upward motion. I was just talking about this with your husband, Zak, because I asked him about this. Is there always going to be... because the concept of Yin and

Yang... there's this light and dark balance. So when we have these kind of negative things take place, in lieu of these great things, is it always going to be like that? And he believes what I believe which is we are trending towards good.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Life is really trying to grow and express itself through us. And with that said, in the ups and downs, I wanna talk about your superhero orator story. Alright? Because you are clearly a superhero and... but I'm really curious. So what got you interested in the first place in this health and wellness space?

**Cynthia Garcia:** So, I had no interest in health and wellness, if I'm been just super honest. I didn't know a protein from a carb, and I didn't care, until I got really sick. I think that's usually the turning point for a lot of us. I was diagnosed with chronic fatigue, I had horrible cystic acne breakouts on my face, my neck, my back, was exhausted from morning to night. I was about 25 pounds overweight and just really in a bad place. I was suffering from depression that I had suffered from my entire life. I grew up with severe mental health issues and suffered from short term memory loss so, I was in just a really bad place. I went to a lot of people for help, like we all do, right? And it wasn't working.

I really started off on this journey of healing myself. It's been a very long journey and I'm happy to go into detail of that whole story if you want, but it felt really good to feel empowered, which I had never felt before. I come from a less than ideal childhood and background and so, it was really about learning how to step into my own power, and heal my own body, and my own heart. So, it started very much with a personal journey very similar to yours.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. And I do want to go into that because I think your story is so important and it's going to resonate with a lot of people. A lot of these things again are just overlooked. So, the catalyst... so you were just going on about your life and something happened and really kind of brought you to your knees.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So can you talk a little bit about that?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah, sure. I was totally living my regularly scheduled life right on plan and I mentioned I got really, really sick, but this work really started... I'll kind of go back to the beginning. It was the place that I got that changed everything. So, 15 years ago I found myself on the floor of my little apartment in Los Angeles, California. Just the cold floor and it was the wee hours of the morning. I had a handful of pills and I was broken and I had decided that night that suicide was the only way out. I shared a little bit for months leading up to this, I was so sick, I was exhausted, I couldn't think straight, I had brain fog 24/7. Nothing that I ate really agreed with me. I was just suffering every single day. I went to doctors, and trainers,

and nutritionists, and healers. I mean I did energy balancing, and reiki, and I worked with crystals. I mean I popped the pills and I drank the shakes and nothing worked, Shawn. Nothing was working. And so, I got to this point where this morning that I have got up and I thought, “I think maybe today is the day. “

You know, I think when we go through struggles sometimes we get up, and it’s usually that Monday morning. And we’re like, “Today’s the day. I’m gonna turn it all around. “And we feel really good about that. There’s just something in us that we’re like, I can do this. Well that’s how I had felt that morning until I got in the shower and I found lumps in both of my breasts. And that was my breaking point. And I still get... all this time I still get so emotional.

**Shawn Stevenson:** That’s okay.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. It was a really tough time. That was my rock bottom. You know those old television sets, the ones that sit on the floor and they were like huge? I remember my grandparents had one. So you turn them off, and the screen is black and it just kind of goes to this little pinhole of light, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That’s what happened that day in the shower. And I remember I just sank to the ground and I put my arms around myself and I just started rocking back and forth. Just like you would rock a child that needed consoling. I don’t know how long I sat there, but the next thing I realized I was shivering because the water had gotten cold. I got out of the shower zombie-like walked into the living room and just sat down and stayed there and then somehow found myself in this dark corner, again with a handful of pills and my next step, which was checking out. I was completely resigned to my fate and I thought, you know what? They can’t say I haven’t tried.

And speaking of trying, it wasn’t like I had this health crisis and was like, “Oh, this is enough. I give up, I can’t do this. “My entire life had been a struggle. I was a survivor from the time I entered this world. And I sat there that night, again, completely okay with what I needed to do, but also angry. I kept saying, “Why me? “ Just thinking back over my life, going through the things that had happened in my life, and reviewing it all before I was about to depart, I kept saying, “Why me? Like why is it that these things have happened to me? “And I got so angry, Shawn. The tears are just streaming down my face and my heart is completely broken open. I am helpless, and I feel worthless, and I feel hopeless.

And in that moment, I heard this voice that said, “It’s not happened to you. It happened for you. “And I still again... I get emotional. I get chills because it changed everything and I heard it so clearly, Shawn. And then I heard, “You were meant for greatness. “

Look, for me, growing up hearing you're worthless, you'll ever amount to anything, you'll never do anything, you're just garbage... my entire life I'd heard that. I thought, I'm meant for greatness? And what I understood in that moment was that greatness is my birthright. And it's yours too. And it's everyone who's listening – it's their birthright. You were born worthy of the absolute best of everything that life has to offer. So, I realized in that moment, this is why I'm here. This has happened for me, not to me.

You know, I went through this period in my twenties where I thought, "What's my purpose? What's my mission? Why am I here? "Right? And it was so crystal clear that night. Because I completely surrendered. And so, I don't know if this is normal but I made a deal with God that night. And I said, "Okay, if you'll open the doors, I'll walk through them. "

And just to tell you a little bit about my childhood and kind of how that was, we grew up in extreme poverty. There was no running water in my house, there was no indoor plumbing, there was an outhouse that you had to walk out through the back yard and down to. I remember going hungry many nights because we didn't have money for food. As a matter of fact, I'm working on a new book and I was thinking about this the other day. I remembered a time when I was hungry and I went to the cupboard and opened it, and inside there was an onion skin, and a rotting potato. And that was all. And I just remember that so clearly.

My home was filled with drug and alcohol abuse, domestic abuse – my father tried to murder my mother numerous times. I was sexually abused for the first time at the age of 6, and so on and so forth. Like I could keep going. It was just tragedy after tragedy. So, my entire life I had been fighting. And that night I was just like, "I'm so sick of fighting. I'm so sick of fighting."

But what I realized that had happened for me, and I realized this was my path, and I made that deal with God. I thought, "Alright God, let's do this." I went to Google. I was very grateful in that moment for Google, and I didn't know what I didn't know, but what I did know was that I needed to understand nutrition, and food, and how to heal. And so, I enrolled in a certification program. I put it on three credit cards because I was broke. But I was investing in me, Shawn. And that's all I had left to invest in.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Cynthia Garcia:** So, I did that. I learned a lot. I went on to enroll in a lot of other programs. I totally went back to school and pieced together what I was learning. I started using it with clients. I started my own journey back to health, back to healing, and was able to overcome all of those things that I had suffered from through this work of Transformational Nutrition, which is what I called it at the time because that's what it was. I was really feeding myself for the first time body, mind, and soul. And that's why I founded ITN, Institute of Transformational Nutrition because I thought, I'm one person. It's a certification program that quite literally saved my life. But



when I looked around, there wasn't anything that made it simple for people that had a system. And I had that. And I thought, I could offer this to others. And so, it's kind of a long story, but that's why we're sitting here today and how ITN came to be.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm just... it's so powerful. I'm so grateful that you listened because I really feel like that voice, that information is always present, you know? It's just a matter of us listening. Not only that, but taking action. You did something. You checked out Dr. Google and it kind of set you on that path, but it's also a process of really taking ownership.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Because even in that time when you're trying to figure out what's wrong with me... you're passing your wellness off onto these other people. And what you teach with your coaches is to help to empower people so they become their own doctor.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And also, of course we have wonderful doctors and can have people in our network who are coaches and resources, but ultimately it's really about you becoming the best you possible. So, I want to talk about that because switching from really transforming your own health and well-being, what was the inspiration for you to want to help other people? Where did that come from?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Well, I mean, that was my deal, right? That's the deal I made with God. I knew that's why I was here. I knew that I hadn't gone through all of those things in my life just so they can be self-serving. I knew better. I felt it. I knew that part of my healing... it was almost for me, I really felt like it was contingent. I feel like living my life, I feel like that's why I'm here. There are no extra humans. If you're here you have a purpose. And I knew it wasn't just to heal and then just to go on about my business. I knew that it was to give back. I heard it so clearly that night. And this is what feeds me. It feeds my deepest hunger is when I see students coming through ITN and then going on to build their own businesses, to heal their own health, and their own hearts, and their families. It's just... I couldn't ask for any better reward. It's just so powerful.

And you mentioned, I'm glad you listened. I'm glad you heard that and I'm glad you listened. We do hear that voice a lot and what I realized... and again, I'm doing a lot of soul searching lately with this new book. And what I realized is, you know I told you I'd been a survivor my whole life. I love to control things. Crazy, I know. But the thing was, it wasn't like I like to control because I can be the boss. My home was so volatile that I realized if I could control the situation, it meant I was safe. Right? And so I went through my entire life just trying to control everything, every one, like the entire world. And that's hard, you know? It's a lot. But what I had never done before was just completely surrender to what is and what's meant to be. I was always

fighting it. And so I would sort of hear the voices, but I would just block them out. You know, I got this! I got this. I don't need anyone. I've got this together. And it wasn't until I hit rock bottom and did fully surrender and I wasn't trying to control it, and I wasn't trying to fight back. And I just opened to receiving that that message really came through. Does that make sense?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Of course, yeah. And you know, when people see us, they would see two people that couldn't be more different maybe on the surface, you know? But our stories are so similar. We laugh about this all the time.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Oh my gosh!

**Shawn Stevenson:** From my childhood to even how we kind of took this transitional period of trying to figure this stuff out.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Going through different certifications. You know, I went to a traditional university and I was kind of... it was like the mis-education of Shawn Stevenson – shout out to Lauryn Hill – but in coming out of the gates with just... I think truly, and I've said this many times, that if you take some of the smartest people in the world, and you teach them the wrong thing, they're going to be world class at doing the wrong thing for our conventional medical system right now.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And so, in looking for solutions, and taking these different programs, I really didn't find anything that wasn't massively dogmatic in saying this is the way and the only way. It was really frustrating for me. And so, I kind of made it a mandate myself at some point to create a certification program to help to train people the right way and in a way that everybody's 'right' might be a little bit different.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And that's really the big key. Paying attention to the patient and the client. And so, in my practice people would come in and initially, when I began, it was all about whatever I'm into, you're gonna do, right? Because this is what's working.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And so, if it was vegan, you're gonna be vegan. If it's Paleo, you're gonna be Paleo. If it's South Beach... whatever it is. And eventually, thank goodness, I had the audacity to say, "Wait a minute. I have to do what's right for this person right now at this time."

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And that might change. I need to equip them with the tools so that they can find that flexibility and be able to move and pivot in their own lives. And now, I just ran into one of my clients from years ago. He just rode his bike from Texas to Missouri and his wife did it as well. And it's just amazing to see the impact... the trickledown effect of it.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** He's telling me about... when I ran into him, it was like, "I just thought about you today!" I just saw my hemp seeds in my cabinet and... you know. That really sparked... it kind of marked in history that change for me and seeing how it lasted folks a long time. And also, they didn't become dependent on me.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And so, with that said, it's a lot creating an institute like you have.

**Cynthia Garcia:** It is.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I keep putting it off. People asked me literally every day, people are asking me about certification programs, what do I think, and school... it was difficult for many years. I just couldn't give them an answer in good consciousness because nothing really met my standards. And also, there's a huge missing component. Even if you're passionate about health and you want to help people, but you don't have the business acumen, right? That really would frustrate me because I know a lot of people went through certification programs for nutrition and health coaching, but they're struggling with their finances and they're cutting corners. Maybe they're like, "Well, you know, I'm a health coach, but I also drive a bus."

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Whatever it is, you know? And that's okay, but is that really what you want to do? Because in school, I don't know about you, but I wasn't taught how to be successful. I was taught arithmetic and how to write, but not actually how to be successful. Blending those two things together, which is what you've done with ITN, is so powerful. And that's what really attracted me to you and what you're doing.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Thank you. I appreciate that. It means so much coming from you because I know you, and I know how high your standards are so, it feels good to hear that. And you're right. Everything that you said. We do get on... we think, "Oh would this work for me? Then it'll work for everyone." It's a very traditional approach

and it's between that and cookie-cutter coaching scripts, and cookie-cutter meal plans.

It's all perfect for a world that no longer exists because we know better now. We know that it has to be personalized. Personalized based on the health issues you're experiencing. Your stage and phase of life. Your nutrient requirements... if you just had surgery, or if you're pregnant, or post-menopausal are gonna be very different than if you're a teenager, or if you have a broken bone, or whatever the case might be. And so, personalization is huge and it is a must-have. And it's tough. I see, like you, I see schools teaching just the ancestral diet, or just a Paleo diet, or just vegan. And that's not going to work. We have to meet people where they are and empower them to take care of their own health.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes!

**Cynthia Garcia:** To take their health back and take back control of that. Because here's the thing that I've learned in, again, over 15 years of doing this, I'm an expert in a lot of things. So are you, right? But every single one of your clients, they're the expert on them. And if you don't work with them to co-create a protocol, something that they can follow that they are invested in, they're not going to do it. It's why diets last on average, 13 seconds. Now that's an exaggeration, but it's true, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Cynthia Garcia:** And it kind of goes back to that control thing that I mentioned earlier. I mean we're grown adults here. We pay taxes, we gotta show up on –

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm a growin' man!

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's what I'm sayin'! But it's true. And so, when someone takes away your control, you don't like that. Right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** You rebel actually.

**Cynthia Garcia:** You do rebel. Because for so many of us, control is safety. If I can control it, and I know how it's gonna go down, then I feel okay. It's that unknown that scares us. Even if that unknown could be something great. We still don't know. We'd rather just stay where we are and be miserable, because at least we know that, right?

So, when you take away someone's power and you just give them, again, cookie-cutter diets and what have you, they'll follow it for that 13 seconds, and then they'll stop. But if you involve them in the process using a structured, proven process, you make them the expert on their own health, then they are invested. They are in. They will transform. They will stick to it. They will teach everyone they know about it.

That's how you change the world letting each person be an expert on themselves just one at a time.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It sounds actually so obvious, but the issue is that a lot of times the most obvious thing... it's not flashy enough.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** There's so many different programs out there and so-called experts who are over complicating things. It's another thing that made me really passionate about doing what I'm doing, is to take these complex ideas... and sometimes they are, but to simplify them. This quote from Einstein really, really resonated with me when I heard it and essentially he said that if you can't explain it simply, then you don't know it well enough. And I really kind of base my approach to things off of that. And that takes work, you know? So, even as I'm learning, I'm thinking how can I teach this? How can I simplify this? Because what it all really boils down to it this stuff is, in many ways, ridiculously simple. For the most part it's eating good food... real food, moving our body some, getting some sleep, having some beneficial relationships. But the real issue is why don't we do these things? What's stopping us?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And how can we help a person to choose that for themselves?

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Not forcing somebody, because as you said, when you force somebody to get on this particular diet program, our human inclination is to rebel. We really are driven towards freedom. Like it's a natural human desire for free will. And when you take that away... if you tell somebody here's your diet program. I know you love fettuccine, but I'm sorry you can't ever have it. It's off the table. Right?

But you know, five, ten, twenty years from now, you might be with your friends vacationing in Italy or whatever... no, matter fact you're just... it's somebody's graduation at the pasta house and it just hits you like, "I kow Shawn told me the fettuccine, but this is my life!" And you just go face-deep into some shrimp fettuccine pasta.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah! I'll show him!

**Shawn Stevenson:** So, this is the thing, when we tell ourselves we can't or don't do something, even when... this is a great example when I'm telling everybody listening right now. Don't think about Kobe Bryant dunking on a five-year-old. You think about Kobe disrespectfully dunking on a small child. Like it pops into your mind. But you

say don't do, it's still there in the context. So, with that said, just providing people a way that they can help to make the choices. You said that earlier.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's so beautiful for them to be a part of the process. And so that's what I want everybody listening right now to be a part of your own process.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right! And process that works, right? That's the other thing. And that's something that, again, I spent a lot of time learning and figuring out. And just really quickly, before we go into that, what you said really resonated with me. Like you can't have this and don't eat that. I can't have that? What do you mean I can't have that? So, this became really clear to me. I hadn't been working with clients very long and I made a lot of mistakes when I was first learning because my training is in clinical nutrition. So, I made a lot of mistakes because I wasn't taking into account the psychological aspects, the spiritual aspects. But I learned and that's how the process was created.

But I remember I was coaching this woman one time. Shawn, it was the same thing every single week. She would come in, I would talk to her, what's going right, what's going wrong, what worked, what didn't, we'd lay out her meal plan, she'd come back the next week and hadn't followed it at all. This went on for weeks. So, one day I was just in the right mood because I'm passionate and I'm here to help you. Why won't you help me help you? And she came in and the same thing. But here was her thing: Snickers bars. She'd eat them all day. She'd eat them for breakfast.

**Shawn Stevenson:** The Snickers...

**Cynthia Garcia:** She didn't lie about it. She wrote it down every week. Kudos to her. She completely owned up to it. And I said, "Look. I don't get it. Every week you come in. Every week we do that same old song and dance. Every week you go eat some candy bars. You've got to stop eating the candy bars. "And I think this is what a lot of us... you have to stop. Especially if it's people we care about: mom, dad, brother, sister... you can't eat that anymore. You have to stop.

And she did something that no client before or since has ever done. She stood up out of the chair and she started screaming at me. And here's her story: when she was a little girl, her mom was a single mom and she started dating this guy who didn't like children. But the mom liked the guy. She was seeking that external validation. So, when he would come over she would go out to Blockbuster and she would get her daughter all of these movies, my client, and she would get all of these candy bars. And she'd put the daughter in her room so that she could do her own thing, and eat her candy bars and watch her movies but not disturb the mom and her boyfriend when he would come over.

So, that was her way of showing love. That was her way of validating her and telling her that she mattered. So, what my client had said to me that day was, “You’re trying to take away the only friends I’ve ever had and I won’t let you do that.” And I was speechless. What do you say to that? And that’s when I realized, it’s not about the food. It’s just not. It’s about those deeper hungers that we all have inside. And you can try and fill them with food, sex, drugs, gambling, shopping - just name it. It’s never going to work, right?

So, once I understood that I was like oh, I get it. But then back to that process. You’ve got to have a process that works. So, I did a lot of things wrong when I first started. And that’s unfortunate, however, I learned from them in a really big way. And that’s what led to creating this... it’s the first and only health coaching system that no matter where you’re from, what your education, what your background, what you know and don’t know about nutrition and health, it doesn’t matter. If you have a big heart and you want to do something in the world that truly matters, we can show you how. Because unlike what people think health coaching is, which is you go into a session and it’s like, again, when I just said. What went right? What went wrong? Let’s set some goals. That’s not health coaching. That’s being a consultant, right? It’s maybe being a cheerleader at most.

But when you have a proven process that every session is mapped out and you can personalize it for every single client so that you ensure that no matter whether they met their goals or not, whether they eat the candy bars... it doesn’t matter. Every session they’re leaving with transformation. They are experiencing profound shifts in every single session. The candy bars will go. They will because they are finding that deeper value in themselves.

But that’s how you create transformation, right? It was Krishna Murti who said, “When you begin to understand what you are without trying to change it, then what you are undergoes a transformation. “ You see? So you have to understand, why am I doing this? Why am I eating the Snickers bar? Why is Shawn giving me a meal plan, but I’m not following it? What am I really hungry for? And so once you have that in a proven system you just show up.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. And these are some of the things that set ITN in a totally different universe and what you’ve created and it’s so... you know how we mesh. It’s the approach that I found myself at. And to replicate that and build that out into an institute and to train all these students, this is something that I kept pushing off as a five-year goal, five-year goal, every year... I’ll get around to it. Because with somebody like myself, I really want to do things the right way like from the ground up and make sure that the result is imminent as much as possible to help stack conditions in people’s favor. And this is a tremendous amount of work and you’ve done the work.

**Cynthia Garcia:** It’s a lot of work.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And it just made me so happy when I started to go through everything and connect with you. So let's talk about another thing. Nationally accredited.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So, let's talk a little bit about that. Why does that matter?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Well, it matters a lot. There's a lot of programs out there, online programs where they'll certify you to become a health coach, or they'll certify you in functional nutrition, or whatever the case might be. Functional Health Coaching I think is the new term that's being used. And the problem with that is these schools aren't actually approved or licensed to operate. So, any time you're running a school, you have to have that approval from the state that you practice everything that you're teaching, right? So what that means is that if you go to a school that doesn't have that, first of all it's not going to be credible, right? Second of all, if that school goes out of business, or the person running it just says, "It's not really for me anymore", then the credentials that you had, and the money that you spent are just gone. And there's nothing you can do about that. There aren't a standards in place to regulate what you're learning, so it could be right but it might not be. You just don't know because nothing has been vetted.

So, yes we are licensed and approved as an actual school to operate for the state of Washington which is super exciting and a very long road to get there, but completely worth it. And because of that we're able to do things like partner with major universities like Carnegie Mellon University, which provides additional ongoing education at no cost to our students so that they can continue going deeper. So that feels really good.

And then in addition to that, yes we have accreditations all over the globe so whether you're in Canada or Australia or Europe it doesn't matter. We have you covered. Where accredited in all of those countries through various programs. One of the ones I'm most proud of is we're an approved school through the National Association of Nutrition Professionals or the NANP. These guys do such a tremendous amount of work on all of our behalves. They are the ones out there fighting and lobbying for holistic health practitioners to do what they do in the world. And standing up against R.D.'s and legislature that say you can't call yourself a nutritionist, and that kind of thing which is really powerful. They do a lot. And so, I'm really excited to be an approved school because they went through all of our courses and vetted them.

What it ultimately means is that once you graduate from ITN, you can go on to be Board Certified in Holistic Nutrition which is a big deal. People are looking for that credibility. So, this is why our coaches are so successful. This is why they make more money. It's why they get more clients. It's why their clients see results and keep sending people back. It's really exciting.



**Shawn Stevenson:** Definitely! I'm so excited as well because I realize, and I'm pretty sure you've gone through this as well, but I had the Lone Wolf Syndrome. Like I'm trying to change the world by myself. Like I got this.

**Cynthia Garcia:** I got this! Yeah!

**Shawn Stevenson:** And I didn't know that I was really isolating myself. Yes I was helping a lot of people, but it was not scalable. And I knew eventually, it just kind of hit me, and even how we came together, that if I'm going to really make the impact that I'm capable of making, it's gonna be with and through other amazing people. And there are so many amazing people listening right now that are part of this community that are in the health space. Some are not, but they're passionate about it. And all of us together collectively are how we're really going to make an impact and change the world and change this paradigm. And that's why we're really working together now to create this Transformation Generation. And I'm just so stoked about it.

And this is actually the first time that I'm sharing this, but I fully endorse what you're doing and what we're doing now. I've come on board as a teacher and as an adviser for ITN and I'm an active part of this Transformation Generation. So, I'm just very, very happy and excited and so excited for the people... the students that are coming on board as well.

**Cynthia Garcia:** I'm so excited too. If I weren't sitting I would be doing a happy dance. Like I feel the need to just kind of move right now. We are so honored to have you. After you and I met and we just found we were in such alignment... first of all we've lived the same life almost which is crazy.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Crazy! Some of these things... oh my goodness! We'll share them. We'll share them as we go along.

**Cynthia Garcia:** You can't make it up. But then just realizing like who you are and really what... I mean you're so clear on your purpose and your mission. And you are so clear. You said look, I have people emailing me, and reaching out on social media... they need an education. They want to go to school. They want to do this work and I don't have anywhere to send them. And so, I thought well, I can fix that. I can help you out with that. And you know, you went through the program. You were a student and went through the programs and you're a graduate which is so cool! Congratulations!

**Shawn Stevenson:** Thank you.

**Cynthia Garcia:** But it feels really good and I know our students will be super excited. And yeah, Transformation Generation... that's what we're creating. We don't have to do it alone and I'm so excited to partner with you on this. And I don't do this... I don't partner... this is not my thing. We talked about this before.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Same here because our standards are high. This is about real people with real situations, real goals and aspirations, and real potential. And it matters a lot to me.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And I know... oh my goodness. There are so many people that have just so much possibility in front of them. And if they can just get connected to the right thing, it can change everything.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Not just for themselves, for their family, for their communities. I've shared this a couple of times here and there, but a big part of the reason that I do what I do is it moved beyond just helping people to potentially reverse a chronic illness, or helping people to finally become empowered in their own body and to, maybe they're in a condition where they need to lose weight for their health, or whatever the case might be. It's just been something they've been struggling with their whole life. There's been different levels of things that I've worked with and I've seen some amazing things happen. A lot of times, because of my situation I was told by my physician that... when I was 20 years old I was told that I had the spine of an 80-year-old man. My spine was so degenerated... and not a healthy 80-year-old by the way. There's like healthy 80-year-olds who are doing muscle ups.

**Cynthia Garcia:** This is not that.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm talking about what you would automatically think. And when I asked him what can I do, like how do we fix this? He looked me right in my eyes and said there's nothing you can do. And to tell that to a young man, it's negligent. It's very dangerous. And I believed him. And I shared this as well with everybody, but it's something called a Nocebo Effect.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's the opposite of a positive injunction like a placebo, which by the way, placebos, when you get a sham operation or a fake pill... you think it's for blood pressure, or for depression, or for even chemotherapy. On average, placebos on average, are 33 percent effective. Just the belief that this surgery is happening.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** They put up a picture so you can watch your surgery now... you know, your knee surgery. And they're showing somebody else's video or a different video, and you see the patient improve. And they heal. And all of this stuff is documented. Blood pressure will go down. People even ... there's studies where

people's hair actually falls out because they believe they're taking a chemotherapy drug. The power of our mind. And so, having a Nocebo Effect, where this negative thing is going to take place, and I believed him because he's an authority figure who indoctrinated me with this idea. And I proceeded to have this kind of nuisance of a pain to over the course of a couple of weeks, chronic debilitating pain that I struggled with for two years of my life. Every day I was literally in fear of standing up. I would lay down, and you can ask Ann about this couch, but this couch was like the worst thing ever. My little college apartment couch. It was made of like, I don't know... made of like, I don't know... Muppet skin like Oscar the Grouch... like he's been in that trash can and he's comin' out and it's just like, "Oscar, let me get some of that hair." This couch was so terrible.

But I would just sit there and play video games or try to distract myself. And I would be in fear of getting up and just going to the kitchen where I would go to consume food that was partially creating the problem. Making me out of straight up... shout out to Oscar the Grouch, garbage. But because this pain would happen I would have to experience it if I was going to walk normally.

And from that place, and going through that experience, and being in fear, and not moving... becoming so docile. I gained all this weight and I lost track of purpose, my identity. I saw myself like I was the cool person. And now I'm just wearing a back brace, I'm sitting up here just so disconnected from reality. And all of that changed when I actually decided... I decided that I'm going to get well. I stopped putting the responsibility of my health, which I'm sure they had good intentions... my physicians. But if they're telling me, "You cannot get better" and I'm believing them, what choice do I have? I might as well phone it in and just give up.

And so I had a choice to make. And I decided I'm going to get well. Most people never really do that. It's more like wishful thinking like I hope this works, or I wish that this would work or I'll give this a shot. But I decided no matter what, I'm going to get better. And that eventually led me... and this is why I'm bringing this up. There's levels to this. And meeting people where they are, which is what we're doing with ITN. My first step, for me being uneducated was, "Okay, I need to get some of this fat off my body. So, I'm gonna do Slim Fast."

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. Oh my gosh, I did the same thing!

**Shawn Stevenson:** Alright. I'm doing the strawberry.... which flavor did you do?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Chocolate.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Of course.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Chocolate all the way!

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm doing this strawberry shake. It was nasty. It was like Pepto Bismol with a little bit of like vanilla extract and maybe like a few drops of some strawberry juice or whatever. It was so nasty. I would try to do it cold or... it was terrible. But that's the level I was out. Eventually of course within a couple of weeks I realized, this isn't working. I lost a couple pounds but it was such a struggle.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I was hungry all the time... suffering. And that was the inception of my eventual belief which is suffering does not equal health. I really feel that in life there are going to be moments when you are struggling and you're suffering and you're going through things. But ultimately what's going to sustain you is happiness and joy and things that become a part of who you are because they feel good. And so, with that said, that experience of ultimately asking the right questions, which is another thing. When you're asking, "Why? Why me?" "Sometimes you might not get the right answer. And for you it's like "Why me?" " Because this is happening for you.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And so, for me I began to ask what is this trying to teach me? What lesson am I supposed to be learning from this experience? And the human mind is really wired up to answer questions. That's what it does. It's always going to seek to answer the questions that you ask. But most of the time we're asking disempowering questions and telling ourselves disempowering things. I can't do this because... or when you asked why me, it's because you suck or whatever.

So when I started to ask I started to realize things would just come up. When you talk about hearing this voice it's because of the way that I'm living my life. Not the food, but how I'm showing up in relationships. My character because my grandmother raised me much better than I was showing up in the world. And my son who was two years old at the time, he needs a real role model. He needs somebody who's going to show him how to be a great man even though you didn't have that role model. It's your responsibility.

And all these things started to come up. And they fueled me. They fueled that transformation. And eventually, it started with Slim Fast, but I started to ask better questions with nutrition. What is my spine made of? They're telling me that my bones are degenerating, which my bones were so brittle I broke my hip from running when I was 16. I asked, "What are my bones actually made of?" And of course, like we think calcium because of marketing.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right. Milk...

**Shawn Stevenson:** And I was guzzling milk like I was getting paid for it. But it actually turned out to be... there was like 200 other things. Most of them, arguably more important than calcium. Calcium is an end product of biological transmutation,

but you know silica, and phosphorus, and vitamin K2, and sulfur bearing amino acids, and all this stuff I'd never heard of. And I'm just like, okay cool. Let me take supplements. So I went through that phase. And I became like a natural pill popper because of allopathic thinking. A pill for every ill.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Ultimately I realized, this isn't the... this seems wrong. I was already taking all these pills, I just swapped them out from the doctors' pills. And so, I just... basic, obvious thing but not so obvious at the time. What foods are these things in? That's when everything changed. Because that food brought a level of intelligence along with it and it's in my body. I feel that for me personally, that was part of my bridge to get from where I was to the person I ultimately became, was through food. And that can be something that's available for everybody.

**Cynthia Garcia:** I love that story and I love especially when you talk about the mindset, right? Because you can either be the victim or you can be the victor. It's really up to you. But it's not always... it's that simple, but it's not that easy because we have grown up most of us... I mean I don't know anyone who hasn't experienced trauma. If you were born you've experienced trauma. And so, that affects you and you carry that with you. You know this. You carry it in your body. It's in your mind. It influences your behaviors and its conditioning.

Your neurological pathways are formed around these ways of thinking and so, you have to really hone in on that. And so obviously the food is critically important, but you have to understand the deeper triggers. You talked earlier about going to the pasta celebration. I'm gonna have this. What is it that's triggering that? I like to play the I Wonder game. I wonder when else you felt that way, you felt like somebody told you you couldn't do something and you just really fought back against that. I wonder. Well, it was this time when I was eight years old and my dad did this, or my mom did this, or my brother did this and I thought, I'll show them.

And so there's always this trauma like my client with the Snickers bars. There's always something that these things are triggering. So, the key is to understand how to safely get to those dark places. How to let go of shame that you felt around this for so long. Like I used to be so ashamed to tell my story. I thought if they hear this they're not gonna like me. They're not like me. They're different. I'm different than they are. And I was very ashamed. I lived with that for a really, really long time and it just ate away at me. It held me back in so many areas, Shawn. You talked about business... you've got to be able to run a business if you're a coach or any kind of healthcare practitioner which is so true. But I would self-sabotage because I'm just that little girl from the Appalachian Mountains who didn't have running water. So, getting over that trauma, getting through the trauma... and we teach this at ITN.

We teach the Transformational Trauma Technique that helps you to go back and really uncover what those... where that shame comes from and what the traumatic

events were that led to that, so that what you can do is transform your deepest pain and your darkest shame into your greatest power. And then you can use that to leverage you forward in every area of your life. Talk about relationships, that's huge, right? I always say if you want to understand how someone's health is, take a look at their relationships. That's a direct correlation every single time.

This earth suit that we are in... Like somehow I got in here and you got in there. I look at little animals sometimes and I'm like how did you get in there? How did that soul get in there? It's such a trip, right? But we all have had these journeys. And I think when you can get to the root of some of these things and release and let go, it can power you forward because now you're not a victim. And now when you're at the dinner and the pasta is presented and you're like I wanna eat that pasta, you can step back and almost become an observer. You can say, "This is me doing that thing again and here's why. " And now you know.

And whether you eat the pasta or you don't, that's not the point. The point is you're developing an awareness so that you can break those old habits. You can create new neurological pathways. That's how you create change and transformation. It's understanding what you are without trying to change it. Like Krishna Murti said, because when you understand it, then what you are undergoes a complete transformation. And you'll eat the right foods just as a byproduct of the person that you are transforming into. Does that make sense?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely. Absolutely. There's so much connection and contrast with what you just said with me. I felt so much guilt and shame prior to. This was kind of a catalyst for me to change. But outside of that, when I began to change my life... transform... there was nothing that I was afraid of sharing. I was the opposite. I was like I'm about to tell everybody. You don't have to go through this guys. And I'm setting out and I'm communicating with all these people and I did have a level of authority, simply because I had gone from an incurable situation to walking in this power. And having seen my before and after scans of my spine. I was like wait a minute. This story is not complete. And so... but here's the issue. I was able to help some people, but not all of those who I'd talked to. And those numbers were probably staggeringly low in the beginning because I didn't understand how to communicate my passion. I didn't understand how to communicate for this specific person and this situation. This is one thing that a lot of people do when they want to help somebody with their health, they tell them their thing instead of listening and finding out those answers that the person already has. And so this is a big part of what we're doing with ITN as well. And learning these things from me. How do I go about teaching?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah.

**Shawn Stevenson:** How do I think? Because I've never really detailed that before. And these are the types of things that students get access to. And we can create that onramp to be a much smoother transition than what we had to go through in

figuring all this stuff out. And also so the impact is there. You know the level of impact in people's lives as individuals, but also the scalability and being able to impact the lives. Literally we have impacted the lives of millions of people with our sorry butts. You know and how we started off.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Little ol' us.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Today it's such a beautiful thing because now we have something where folks have access. And so, let's talk about what we're doing with ITN and what people are gonna have access to.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. Let's talk about it. So, I'm so excited about this and I love what you're bringing to the table. I mean obviously you're a student, now you're an instructor, and you're part of the company now which is super exciting. I love that you're bringing your experience in as well and that you're training our students now with your own life experience. Because like you said, we have gone through some stuff, right? And so we have this great proven coaching process. But one of the other things I want to mention... you said this early on and I meant to come back to it and now is probably a good time. But building a business, and being successful, and being successful on your own terms.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Because I hear, oh be a six figure business! Be a seven figure health coaching business! And that's great! If you want to do that and that's your goal, by all means. We can show you how to do that because we've both done it. But that may not be your thing. And so, don't let someone else's highlight reel, which I've heard you say on the show before, don't let that be yours unless you want that.

So, the first thing that we do at ITN is really help you get clear on what business you want, which means what life do you want? What do you want your life to look like? And what would that mean in terms of your income? What would that mean in terms of your time freedom to spend with your kids, or travel, or just have for your own self-healing? We're teaching people how to build businesses because we've done it. And this is another thing I'm so excited to partner with you on. How do you build a podcast like this one? Well, you're gonna tell them, right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Cynthia Garcia:** It's like how do you write bestselling books, and put on live events, and host high-end retreats, and do group coaching? We're teaching people that because we've done it. And we've done a lot of stuff that didn't work. So, one of my big goals when starting this school and now with you coming on board, was to really save people the headache, the heartache, the heartbreak, and the financial disasters that I went through when I was building my business. And I think it's one of the things that really makes is unique is because me, you, all of our instructors, we're not just teaching this. It's not theory to us. This is real. It really works because we've

done it. And again, just like the coaching, there's a business building system. You do this first, then you do this, then you do this, and it's all scalable around what your idea of success means. Because as much as we want to help people, you can't help anyone if you can't pay your rent. Right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes. Totally.

**Cynthia Garcia:** So, what you said earlier, oh my gosh. Like yeah, I'm a health coach but I drive a truck on the side. Nothing against driving a truck by the way, we need truck drivers. They're important.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Bring that package man!

**Cynthia Garcia:** Bring my Amazon package! That's what I'm saying! Nothing against that, but here's the thing. If you are that brave soul, that brave, brave soul that's so courageous to step up and to step out and to have this huge heart to where you want to help the world. Where you want to help people feel better, live a little longer, feel a little better, and see a few more sunsets, you should be able to do that. I get so angry truly, I do, at the people who step forward and they're so brave and then they're not taught how to make money. They're not taught how to be successful. We need those people. Part of this idea about this Transformation Generation that we're creating is that you don't have to drive the truck anymore. You can do the work in the world that you're passionate about and we'll make that simple.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Absolutely.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right?

**Shawn Stevenson:** And with that said, in creating your own structure and framework and what that looks like. So, some people don't want to have a podcast.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So, what is your modality because it could be through just coaching and helping people, it could be through writing books, creating programs, courses. And like you said, we've done all of this stuff at the highest level. And you get to learn directly from us if that's what you're passionate about. So, really mapping out and creating, but also we have to get through the psychological barriers of I can't do that.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Shawn is whatever, that's why. No. I'm... this is so hard to even say. When I really just stop to think about it, I'm from St. Louis, Missouri. You know right in the heartland and I grew up in some pretty difficult circumstances. Like we are literally... this studio, which, by the way our studio is awesome.



**Cynthia Garcia:** It's amazing!

**Shawn Stevenson:** And the city is now kind of having a transformation in this part of town. Three blocks from here I used to live there next to a crack house and I had a close family member of mine go into that crack house and get high. It really started like a crumbling of a family structure. And that's just a small thing.

The gangs... like my idol was somebody who's like in a gang. That's what I wanted because that's what I saw as success. Having all of those pieces and also being ridiculously unhealthy... I was fit. I was a fit little kid as a young guy and even as a teenager, but ultimately from that place that I'm from, creating the No. 1 health podcast in the country. It's been featured as the No. 1 health podcast in the entire United States and you have a story that you can't? I'm telling you there is a way. I didn't have the connections. I didn't even... so many people... you know we kind of throw this out like people have these advantages. Those are just excuses.

Where there's a will, there's 10,000 ways and a big part of that though, and what really helped to transform my life was getting connected to people who had already been there before. Who were laying out pieces for me. But I also have to stay true to my own story and my integrity along the way. Nobody told me that piece either. And it's easy to lose yourself. Because I don't want you to become a cookie-cutter print out of Cynthia.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I want you to become the very best you possible. And that's what people are gonna connect with. That's what people are gonna connect with because they're not going to buy your book. They're buying you.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And us helping you to do that. Getting that world-class training in nutrition, absolutely. But also, how do you structure things so that you can make the impact that you want in the way that you want.

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right. And that's so important. And those are the people who embody health coaching, they embody transformation. Those are the people that end up with the best-selling books, with the great podcast because they're leading from the heart. It's just within them. Like transformation isn't what I do, that's who I am you understand.

And I hear you. And so many times it's so easy though Shawn to think, oh, yeah, they did but I can't. And that's just you holding yourself back for a bigger reason. It's all about safety. It's about protecting yourself because what if I try and fail, what will they say? What if I try and I succeed? What will they say? Will I lose friends who

think that I'm not like them anymore? Will my family pull away because they think that I'm better than they are, or that I think I'm better than they are? That actually happened to me. I had people who said that.

But like you, again, you've heard my story. I had no advantage, I knew no one, I didn't have anyone to connect me. I just had this drive and this desire. You don't have to know how to do this. You just have to want to. And you have to show up every day. So again, coming from where I came from to be handpicked by Dr. Phil, to work with Khloe Kardashian and those people and the show... I mean never in a million years... there's no reason in the world we should be sitting here. You or I. Having this conversation, talking to all of these... there's no reason. That doesn't make any sense. It's the craziest thing when you stop and think about it.

But it's because I followed my heart, and so did you. And I just showed up. And I learned from those people who have gone before me. And if I'm successful at all today, it is because I've stood on the shoulders of giants. And now, that's what you and I are joining forces to help people do. To stand on our shoulders. Let us lift you up. Let us make this easy. Follow your heart. You can do this. And we'll show you how.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yes. Yes. So, let's talk about what we're actually going to be doing because it's something really special.

**Cynthia Garcia:** It's so special!

**Shawn Stevenson:** Because I don't want... that's another story we'll tell ourselves. When we have access to something like this and to be a part of creating an army of transformation and wellness to our society.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Transformation Generation.

**Shawn Stevenson:** And finances to be one of the stories we tell ourselves. I can't because... fill in the blank. And again, where there's a will there's 10,000 ways, but I also wanted to ensure that we're giving people a little bit of a leg up and helping with that part because ultimately, I really do believe this. We should never use money as a reason that we don't do something that our hearts feel called to do. And there have been so many times throughout my life where it looked like I really can't or even shouldn't be able to do something like whatever it is... like go to this particular event, but if I feel called to do it, I find a way. Most of the time we find a way only when our backs are against the wall. Not for something to elevate us. But like I said, so we wanted to do something really special and you agreed to it, so can you talk about what we're doing?

**Cynthia Garcia:** I did! Yeah. So, and it's your birthday! So, this is such perfect timing.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Let's go!

**Cynthia Garcia:** We didn't plan this! So, yes. And I understand the finances. You know again, I put my own education across three credit cards because I didn't have enough limit on one of them. I literally had to use three. But as I said, I was investing in myself. And you know when you and I connected, you said I get this request all the time. I have nowhere to send people. They're good people. They have big hearts. They want to help. We have to show them how and we have to make it really special for them.

So, what we've done is because of you and because of your amazing audience, is we are giving your listeners a \$2,000 scholarship in your name on your behalf. So, it's a huge gift. It's your birthday, but I love that you're giving this huge gift to all of these amazing people. I keep hearing about how amazing your audience is and how great they are, and you really love them all of your heart. So, it's my honor to be able to partner with you and to do this in your name. It's really special.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I'm just smiling so big. I didn't think about the fact of it being my birthday. It's such a great gift. That's what I really want for everybody to have access to it and to be able to give this gift today is important. And by the way, so this will be, even if you're listening to this later, but we won't have this available forever. But this is something that we worked together to do to create the scholarship fund for \$2,000 for the new students coming in. And so I just want you to take action on it. But even prior to that, if you still have questions, if you feel like I want to see if this is even the right thing for me or the right thing for me right now, or if you already are a health coach, or you have... or you're in a program, or maybe you're a physician and you're just not doing the work that you really want to do and you wanna find out the business side of things a little bit more and how to structure it. Maybe you want to start a podcast, or write a book, or create a course and scale yourself and help more people because you know you have a gift. Whatever level you're at, there's a tremendous amount of value to find here. And to find out where you are, we actually have an assessment that people can take.

**Cynthia Garcia:** We do.

**Shawn Stevenson:** So, you can get access to that for free. Can you tell people how to get that?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. We wanted to make sure it was right for everyone in that it matched their needs. And you're right. We have everyone from people who don't know, like me, the difference between a protein and a carb, to Ph.D's. We have dentists, we have doctors, psychiatrists... it really runs the gamut for students in our school. And the great thing is, we have this powerful community, the transformation generation that really come together and they support each other, and they educate each other, and they lift each other up. It's honestly my favorite part of the school is just getting to see that. Just humans coming together in love and service and helping

each other, collaborating, not competing. It is so powerful. They all go on each other's podcast and they promote each other's books. It's so amazing.

But you're right, one of the things that we're known for is personalization and personalized nutrition. That's what our coaching system allows you to do. And so, we really wanted to personalize your experience from the very getgo. And like you said, I have different people in my audience at different levels so we have to find exactly what works for them. So, we've built this assessment where you go and you answer a few questions and we see where you are on the journey. And then based on that we give you exactly what you need to help you go to that next step.

We'll find out if it's the right fit, not the right fit, which program is the right fit because if you're new and just starting out, we have our Year One program. If you're already a coach and you have a certification, or you're a doctor or whatever, you can come into our Year Two course which is our Master in Certified Health Coach program. But either way, you go, you take the assessment, and if you don't qualify we'll tell you. But if you do then you get this \$2,000 scholarship which is so amazing! And then we'll personalize your journey. We'll tell you, in order to be successful do this, then do this, then do this. And you're well on your way.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Can you tell them where they can get our free guide?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yeah. So if you go to [TransformationalNutrition.com/model](https://TransformationalNutrition.com/model), that's where you answer a few questions and then we'll personalize your journey from there. We brought on a lot of people to help. We've hand-picked coaches to work with you through the process so that you're defining success on your terms, you understand exactly what you need, and then we can give that to you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** You know what? This is like the frickin' Avengers! Because you mentioned earlier about instructors for ITN, just drop a few of the instructors. Let people know who some of the instructors are.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Well, we have a Shawn Stevenson. Have you ever heard of that guy?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Because he's kind of a big deal! He's alright.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Do you like him?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Yes, obviously you. We have Katie Wells from [WellnessMama.com](https://WellnessMama.com). We have Dave Asprey from [BulletProof](https://BulletProof.com). We have J.J. Virgin, a four-time New York Times best selling author. There's so many people. Dr. Terry Wahls, Dr. Tom O'Brien. I mean, the list goes on and on. We really hand-picked the best of the absolute best when it comes to business, science, and coaching. We

really put together the whole package. And now we're excited to add you to that list. And, we're doing something else really special for this kickoff if you will, speaking of instructors. Do you want to talk about it or shall I?

**Shawn Stevenson:** Go ahead! I'm enthralled!

**Cynthia Garcia:** You've got the ball! Let's see you run with it! So, one of the things too that was really important to you, and it's important to me, is that people can truly learn from the best. And that we do hold their hands and we make sure that they're successful when they come through our program. This isn't money you're just throwing away on an education and then you're driving the bus.

So, what we've done is we've called up 12 good friends of ours who are really at the top of their game. Just the best of the absolute best. The most successful people in the world at what they do. And so, when you enroll at ITN, we're putting you into an incubator. And so for 12 months Shawn and I are gonna be there personally coaching you. In addition, every month we're gonna bring on one of these world-renowned experts. They're gonna teach you what they are great at. You can ask them your questions, you can get direct coaching from them. We've never done this before. And it's live and we'll go through this for 12 months to make sure that when you finish, that you are the best of the best as well. Because that's what we're interested in creating.

**Shawn Stevenson:** It's so awesome! And that 12 month incubator kicks off in just a few weeks after this is released. So if you register a little bit later you might miss some of these bonus sessions but you'll still get everything else that ITN has to offer which is just phenomenal. I think it's just a really great opportunity right now in getting started in being able to ask questions directly to some of the most successful people in this field. So, [TransformationalNutrition.com/model](http://TransformationalNutrition.com/model).

**Cynthia Garcia:** That's right.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Head over there now. You get some really incredible information period regardless of anything just about this field. There's so many misconceptions and things are just... they're really missing the mark and it kind of frustrated me over the years in seeing that and things just being so dogmatic and separating us when we really need to be working together. And that's why I'm so passionate about this, and so grateful for you and how you carry yourself, and the work that you've put in to make this possible for everybody.

And also for agreeing to the \$2,000 scholarships as well. That was kind of like one of the big things for me coming on board. That was really like okay, yeah, this is something special. And so, there are so many things I want to ask you about, but I know we're gonna wrap up here with time. I think that what I want to know, and I've asked this before but I'm really, really curious to see what your answer is. What is the model that you are here to set with how you live your life personally?

**Cynthia Garcia:** I thought you might ask that question. For me it's so clear and it goes back to that night in the dark on the cold floor. I know without a doubt Shawn, that my life's purpose is to continue my own path of transformation, continue to heal my own self, and to share what I'm learning with others. It's to use my own life to educate and to inspire other people to discover those deepest hungers, to overcome their past pains, and to turn that darkest shame into your greatest power through Transformational Nutrition. I believe in this with my whole heart. It has impacted over a million people across the globe. We've certified over 10,000 coaches in this. This is again, not what I do, it's who I am. So, if I can be truly, and I know people say this, but it's so true for me. I feel it so deeply. If I can just be that model for one person to transform, it's all worth it.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Yeah. It's moving. Cynthia, you're the best and I'm so grateful for you being, and also being here with me. I'm so grateful that things aligned for us to just kind of intersect at that moment that we did when I was just starting to come out of my Lone Wolf Syndrome and seeing other people who are doing amazing things and collaborating to help to really spark this Transformation Generation. And can you let everyone know where they can connect with you personally online?

**Cynthia Garcia:** Sure! So, my personal website is CynthiaGarcia.com. So you can head over there. I am @IamCynthiaGarcia on social media, so we can connect there. And of course on TransformationalNutrition.com. I'm in all of our communities every day just connecting with people and hearing their stories and it just warms my heart. So, that's where I am.

**Shawn Stevenson:** Awesome! Again, I appreciate you so much. I know your heart and I'm just really grateful for you. So, thank you.

**Cynthia Garcia:** Well, the feeling is mutual and thank you for... thanks for going on this crazy journey with me. We're just getting started but I know it's just going to be tremendous. I'm so excited and thank you for seeing me, Shawn. I think from the moment we met, you saw me, and that really made a big difference in how I saw you. And thank you for the work that you do in the world. Thanks for having me on your show. Thanks for allowing me to extend this opportunity and gifts to all of your listeners. It's such a privilege and such an honor. And on your birthday, of all days, what I really want to say to you, Shawn, is just thank you for being you.

**Shawn Stevenson:** I receive that. Thank you. Cynthia Garcia everybody! Thank you so much for tuning into the show today. Listen, one of the most powerful things that took place when I came on board, the very first training that I did for ITN, I was blown away at the engagement of the students and how helpful they were for each other and so passionate about learning. And everybody's at different levels. And that's okay because there are levels to this. The greatest way that we can transition these levels, is by learning from people who have already done it. And then also having

the audacity to reach back and extend a hand to lift somebody else up with you. And that's what it's really all about.

Cynthia's story is just incredible. She's done the work and she's created something really special. Everybody has this opportunity in front of them. I know that you are here for something special and I think there's an innate feeling that we all feel but we can kind of conceal it a little bit. Water it down and tell ourselves a story that I'm not capable because... fill in the blank. Where I'm from, the situation that I'm in, I have fill-in-the-blank kids, I have no kids, an education... these are all stories.

You have the pen in your hand to write out how the rest of the story is gonna go. And that's what this is all about today. It's to understand how powerful you are and to affect change in your life.

Alright, so with that said, [TransformationalNutrition.com/model](http://TransformationalNutrition.com/model). Take action. Head over there. Check out this free guide and assessment and just get involved. Find a way to make a difference even just for yourself in transforming your own health and well-being. You get to learn from the very best people in the world and direct access to ask your questions. And there's really nothing like this that's available out there.

Listen, we've got some incredible, incredible things in store for you. So, just make sure that you got your socks wrapped around your ankles. Just the other day my son Jordan, who actually... and I've shared this on the show before but, he broke his leg the final game of the year last year in football. Final game. His best game. He had like four solo tackles, a sack, and it was just one of those freak random things where his toe got caught in the turf and he broke his leg.

He's back at it like stronger, faster, better... everything. But he went through a process. It was more of a mental process. When he first got his cast off and he got back to doing normal things, he was really upset and frustrated that his body just wouldn't turn over or respond the way that he knew it could. The way it's supposed to. And he sat with it, we talked, and he just changed his mindset and knew that this was a process. And so, he's back stronger than ever, but he's getting his ankle wrapped. It's just a little psychological thing.

The other day he came home and the trainer was supposed to put a little piece of this like cushioned tape in between the actual tape being on your skin. And we got hair in our DNA. We've got the hairy legs a little, and he's trying to take it off, and oh my god, it was one of the funniest things I've ever witnessed. He was like wiggling it and shaking a little bit to try and pull it off. And he asked me to do it. And I was like, "No, you've got to man up. You've gotta do it yourself."

But that went on watching him wiggle with this tape for like 10 minutes. We're just cracking up. I put it on Instagram by the way. Follow me! @ShawnModel Instagram. And ultimately I said, "Okay" and I ripped it off. To hear the sound that came out of his mouth was no less than poetic and terrorizing at the same time.

But again, this is all a part of the process. And we go through different levels. We might self-inflict pain on ourselves or even unintentionally do this to other people. But ultimately by getting educated, by having these experiences, we learn from them. So now, in this context, he'll tell the trainer, "Make sure you put that little tapey thingy so that you don't put it on my skin. " And you have to learn.

And coming together as this community, we're all learning from each other. And I'm just very excited about it. And let's go! Take action!

TransformationalNutrition.com/model. More great stuff is to come. We've got some incredible, incredible show topics and guests coming up. We're gonna blow your mind. Have those socks taped on... but not too tight. Because we're gonna blow your socks off. So be ready, take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.

And for more after the show, make sure to head over to TheModelHealthShow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you've got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome. And I appreciate that so much. And take care. I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.