

EPISODE 322

How to Beat Anxiety & Become Unstoppable – With Guest Craig Ballantyne

Shawn Stevenson: 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.

Right now I am in San Diego, sunny San Diego. We just finished the Take Control Conference. It's the last city on the tour. We've been to various places all over the country, and I just want to first give a big shout-out to everybody that came out to the event.

You know what it was. It was beyond words experience, and I just wanted to also give a special shout-out of course to everybody in SD, but also the folks that were coming from all over the world.

People dropping in from other countries just to be a part of that event and definitely left with strategies, first of all, very actionable things to employ, but also with their spirit filled.

And so I'm just very grateful to be a part of it. The rest of our team; Eric Thomas, CJ, Carl, and again a big shout-out to everybody that came out, and thank you for all the love, and the hugs, and the great energy.

And while I'm here, I wanted to make sure that I get some epic episodes of *The Model Health Show* in. And some of my friends who just happen to be in the area at this pristine time.

And today I've got the man himself, the living legend, the Godfather on this episode, and he's just going to blow your mind because it's an incredibly important and timely topic because this is one of those silent epidemics going on that a lot of folks-number one aren't talking about, but also aren't getting real solutions for.

And so listen to this; anxiety disorders affect approximately 18.1% of adults in the United States, and this is right around forty million people, which our guest today is the first person to tell me about this.

Currently estimates put this number much higher, so we're talking approximately 30% but a lot of folks aren't talking about it, and they're not seeking help, and they're suffering silently. Again, this is a very silent epidemic going on.

Now listen to this; according to the Economic Burden of Anxiety Disorders, and this was a study commissioned by the ADAA, based on data gathered by the association and published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, anxiety disorders cost the United States more than \$42 billion, that's with a B, billion dollars a year, and this is about one third of the \$148 billion total mental health bill for the United States.

It's not just a personal issue. This is an economic issue, this is a social issue, this is a huge challenge right now for our community, and we need to do something about it.

We need to talk about it, we need to have open conversations, and there can be many different causes - causative factors behind anxiety and anxiety disorders, and it's going to vary from person to person.

But the most important thing is to have a conversation and to look at what's going on behind the scenes, what some of the science could possibly be, what could be something connected to our diet potentially that could be causing issues with anxiety? Alright?

So we want to work to remove the root cause so we're not just treating symptoms and throwing a pill at it to try to mask what's really going on. Alright?

So stay tuned, be ready for that. It's going to blow your mind.

Another thing I want to share though is that when I'm on the road, I generally miss three things. I've shared this before.

I miss my wife, I miss my kids, and I brought them with me this time so I don't miss them. Alright? They're in the other room right now.

They're here at the studio actually hanging out, doing their school work, because I pulled them out for the week to hang out and to travel, and actually we got some secret stuff going on behind the scenes as well that I'll share with you guys soon.

But having them with me, there's only one thing I miss. I miss my sheets. Alright? I miss my sheets. You don't know what it's like until you've experienced sleeping on Ettitude sheets.

You know that I'm somebody who's a very big advocate of sleep wellness, and these are the number one sleep wellness sheets.

They're thermoregulating so these help to ensure that your body is not over-heating. This is one of the biggest challenges that we see.

There's literally a clinically proven issue that we see with folks with sleep disturbances and insomnia, is that they tend to run too hot on average.

And these sheets will not trap in, and insulate, and cause your body to over-heat because with thermoregulation, if you're running too hot during your sleep cycles, this can literally prevent or even increase the secretion of the wrong neurotransmitters, the wrong hormones, and prevent the right ones from doing their thing. Alright?

Just from that one thing, because there's a natural drop in our core body temperature at night to facilitate the process of sleep, alright? So this can support that process and not over-heating.

Also they're moisture wicking so you're not getting all sweaty and nasty. You know how that is as well. First of all, it doesn't feel good being hot period when you're sleeping.

True story. My mother, when I was a kid, they wouldn't turn the AC on, and I lived in St. Louis. So we get that 100. Alright? We get that triple digit, but it's with humidity, alright?

So it's like 100 degrees, plus an attitude problem. So it was like 100 degrees, plus the heat will put you in a little miniature suplex or the DDT. Do you remember Jake 'The Snake' Roberts? Right? He did the DDT and he'd throw the snake on you. Why did he do that?

And by the way, where's the lobbyist for the snake's well-being? But anyways.

For me having that experience through the summers, and my bedroom was upstairs, and you know heat rises. And she wouldn't turn it on until like there was a heat stroke warning. Right?

I was like, "Mom, I'm literally dying upstairs." "No, I'm not paying that bill. Are you going to pay the bill?" And I'm like, "Mom, I'm twelve." Right?

And so I would literally- I would spray myself with a water bottle before bed, I'd spray myself down, put the fan in the window which is just blowing hot air anyways, and then I'd lay there buck naked. Alright? Buck naked.

And I'd put a sheet over my nether regions, like do the toga thing, just in case my little brother came in the room. I didn't want to change his life, alright?

And so I'm like sixteen at this point, by the way. And so I know what it's like. We all do when we're running too hot, alright? So this is just one of the reasons that I love the Ettitude sheets, and also they're anti-microbial.

This is another big issue that folks don't pay attention to with their bedding, is that there are a lot of microbes and bacteria feed on these different compounds.

And so you can literally end up with different skin irritations, and things of that nature, all resulting from this microbial activity.

So these are anti-microbial sheets, and also these are free of chemicals, irritants, allergens, and self-deodorizing sheets. And I've got several sets because I just don't want to sleep on anything else when I'm at home.

So I highly recommend you get yourself a set of these Ettitude sheets. Treat yourself, alright? This is taking just getting into bed into slipping into a love ballad. Alright?

Have you ever slept in a love song? Have you? Have you slept in a Miguel song? Try these Ettitude sheets out. Get yourself a set, and Christmas. Christmas is right around the corner.

You can get yourself this gift, or for somebody that you love. I'm talking about if you love them, get them these sheets, alright?

And by the way, this is affordable luxury because the Ettitude sheets, this is organic bamboo lyocell, and this is literally as fine as 1,000 count Egyptian cotton.

But growing the bamboo lyocell, the bamboo itself that's used for the sheets, uses one third of the water and no chemicals. So it's better for you, better for your sleep, better for the environment.

Head over, check them out. It's www.Ettitude.com/model. That's www.Ettitude.com/model and you get 10% off all of their sets of sheets, but also they have pajama jammy jams as well.

They've got new pajamas so you can get that smilky smooth- not silky, smilky smooth with the same incredible material that's used for the sheets. So I think you'll really love them.

Alright? And by the way, 100-night trial. Sleep on them, dream on them, if you don't love them, you get to send them back for a refund. Alright? You have nothing to lose, everything to gain, www.Ettitude.com/model.

Check them out for your special discount, and now let's get to the iTunes review of the week.

iTunes Review: Another five-star review titled, 'Best Yet' by JudyChooseDontExcuse.

"I was introduced to Shawn through listening to Eric Thomas' podcast, 'The Secret to Success.' He was a guest and I was intrigued by his knowledge about health and wellness.

Shawn delivers his inspiring message with not only solid research but with the intent to help and serve others. You can really feel the sincerity through his voice.

I'm especially grateful for his latest podcast with JP Sears. That dialogue spoke to my soul. Thank you, Shawn. Please keep delivering and uplifting."

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. Thank you so much, Judy. I appreciate that so very much. And wow, that's just so powerful. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Everybody, thank you for heading over to Apple Podcasts and leaving reviews for the show. It means everything, and please keep them coming. If you've yet to do so, please pop over and leave a review.

And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. It's not often that we have a living legend on *The Model Health Show*, and this guy, he's referred to by lots of folks in the business- he's the Godfather. Alright?

He's been in the game for quite a while behind the scenes, helping people to transform their lives whether it's with their health and fitness, whether it's with their finances, relationships, just personal development in general.

Craig Ballantyne is the man. I first found out about him through his program 'Turbulence Training,' and I had been in the gym at that point, a strength and conditioning coach for a few years, and helping a lot of folks.

And I was teaching supersets training was kind of my modality because it was taught to me by a fellow that was teaching me how to get big and swole, alright? This was before I had all my health issues, and I was just putting on the size.

I wanted to be intimidating, and this was back when people were wearing the big white tee-shirts as well. So I'm walking around looking like a big 'ol swole ghost basically.

And I was using this personally and then I started to teach this to my clients, and once I kind of slimmed and trimmed down and transformed my health.

And then I came across Turbulence Training and was like, "Oh my God, this guy is recording videos and writing this stuff down," many of the things that I was doing, and I never even thought to do that; to distribute and share what I was learning and teaching in a bigger way.

So he was such a big catalyst for me, and such an inspiration early on. And today, he is the owner of five businesses - probably more actually - including Early to Rise, which is just such an incredible resource of daily inspiration, and just so many valuable insights and nuggets, and he's a curator of great content there as well.

And he's a bestselling author, and his story is just incredible, which we're going to get into today. And his advice on becoming a high performer in life has been featured in Men's Health, GQ, Maxim, National Geographic, and Prevention Magazine, Inc.com, Forbes, the list goes on and on.

Today he coaches high performing CEOs, and this is one of the things right now that I really respect and admire him about. And the people who are doing really amazing things, the men and women out there, like high level- I'm talking about the most successful people in the game are coming to Craig to take their business to another level.

And he's also a speaker and he teaches workshops all over the world, and he's just one of the most incredible, smartest people that I know, and I'd like to welcome back to *The Model Health Show*, my man, Craig Ballantyne. What's going on, man?

Craig Ballantyne: Oh, thank you so much, man. I really appreciate that.

Shawn Stevenson: It's my pleasure, man. I'm glad we get to do this in person this time.

Craig Ballantyne: I know. I know, this is going to be absolutely amazing. I'll tell you something funny though, is when I do audio only interviews, my introverted tendencies creep out, and I answer all my questions with my eyes closed.

But you know what? That's when they're the best.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, oh my goodness. Should I close my eyes?

Craig Ballantyne: I may be closing my eyes on some of these.

Shawn Stevenson: It freaks people out on video, but it's going to be good anyways.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, right.

Shawn Stevenson: I love it, man. And speaking of which, this is really- I've been diving into your new book, and this is talking all about the huge epidemic with anxiety, and just kind of getting into your story.

I've been knowing you for a while, but you shared stuff in your story that I had no idea about. Because I know you as the world's most disciplined man.

Craig Ballantyne: Sure.

Shawn Stevenson: I didn't know you was like getting hammered, and just battling with anxiety at that level. So can you talk a little bit about that? Like where did this experience first kind of get initiated for you?

Craig Ballantyne: The anxiety itself?

Shawn Stevenson: Yes.

Craig Ballantyne: I remember the very first time I experienced something like it. I was about twenty-five years old, and I was going through a bit of a stressful time, and I realized- I was like, "Oh man, I'm not breathing properly here. I've got to go outside and walk around, and like take some deep breaths, and stuff like that."

Fortunately then it kind of went away, and then it wasn't until I was about twenty-nine years old when I had really, really bad anxiety attacks because I was living incongruently.

So back then I was the most disciplined man in the world five and a half days a week, and then about Saturday afternoon, me and my buddy would go to the pub, and then from the pub to the club, and then from the club back home and drinking more, and the next thing you know, twelve hours had gone by.

And doing that was, as I mentioned, hypocritical and therefore misalignment within myself, and that was one of the many factors then that led to the anxiety attacks.

So that's something that I work with people now; family life, professional life. We want to make sure things are aligned, because if they're not, you get in trouble.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, and at this time- so you already have a huge business at this point, and you're-

Craig Ballantyne: Too much money at a young age.

Shawn Stevenson: Yes, you can get into some trouble.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And the stories that you were sharing just kind of blew my mind. So I think that- and by the way, so you being in the fitness industry, and finding yourself going to the emergency room. So can you share that story?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, so I mean this happened twice, and the first time it happened was New Year's Day of January 2006. And so I had been at that time just working, working, working over the holidays, and then going out a lot over the holidays.

I mean it was twelve hours of work and twelve hours going out, and I couldn't keep up with that. Maybe when I was twenty-one, but not when I was twenty-nine.

And so on New Year's Day, I woke up and I started having a shower, and then that's when all of a sudden my heart started pounding, and I couldn't breathe, and I had tingling from the top of my head down to the end of my fingertips, and that went on all day long.

Eventually twelve hours later I gave up and went to the emergency room for the first time, and again that happened to me like a few months later.

Shawn Stevenson: But you went in, you were like thinking you were having a heart attack or something.

Craig Ballantyne: The first time I went in, I just- yeah, actually I did think I was having a heart attack because I paced around my apartment all day long, and then I realized, "I'm not having a heart attack, but this thing is not going away, and it's just like no mas, and I've got to go to the emergency room."

And so here are a couple really important take-aways for people that are struggling with anxiety. As soon as I stepped outside of my apartment, decreased like 20% to 30%.

Fresh air, getting outside, not staying inside and letting my wheels spin, but getting out. Getting out into the fresh air. Even though it was freezing cold, it was New Year's Day night now, it was like minus five degrees on the streets of Toronto.

Nobody was out there, so I grabbed a cab, and as soon as I got in the cab, and I started talking to the cab driver, another decrease. Another decrease of 10% or 20% because now again I'm getting out of my head.

And so things get worse when you sit there, when you sit and stew, that's the worst thing you can do. But if you get out, you get out of your own head, you get outside, you start talking to people; these are all things that can help calm the anxiety down.

So I go to the emergency room, and I walk in, and it's actually dead. The emergency room is dead the first time I go in there, and I walk in, and there's a guy like around my age working the front desk, and he looks at me and he's like, "Why are you bothering me? What are you doing here?"

And I walk up to him and I go, "I think I'm having a heart attack." And his face goes like crazy different, it's like he'd seen a ghost, and he gets me to the back right away.

So I always like to say if you ever sprain your ankle, and you go to like a really busy emergency room and you're like, "Man, I've got to be somewhere," just walk up and say, "I think I'm having a heart attack."

Shawn Stevenson: Hit that heart attack.

Craig Ballantyne: I mean, you get right to the front of the line, they take you to the back. Anyways, obviously don't do that.

But I went to the back, and this nurse asked me all these questions, and I had drank seven Red Bulls the night before.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh, seven? Wow, it gives you wings. Your wings had wings.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, and she was like, "You drank how many Red Bulls?" Like she could not believe it, and then obviously that was part of the problem, and then she basically like held my hand, and patted my stomach, and that human touch decreased the anxiety massively as well.

So in an hour, I was out of there. Because they came along, they were like, "There's nothing actually wrong with you." And I was like- I started feeling a little bit guilty, a little bit shameful.

So I went home and I turned my life around for two weeks, you know? It was January, right? Everybody's turning their life around for two weeks.

So I did. Probably two weeks, maybe it was three, and then I went back to some of my old ways. They started creeping in. Creeping in, and then it was the middle of March that I had another bender weekend.

Another bender Saturday night, and I remember I left some girl's house at like 6:00 in the morning, threw up on her lawn, and grabbed a cab home. I was that guy, you know?

Shawn Stevenson: That is just like-

Craig Ballantyne: I know.

Shawn Stevenson: I can't believe that that's you. Or was you.

Craig Ballantyne: I know, so I swung the pendulum way far away from that. And so anyways, that was on a Sunday morning I left, got home and then I crashed hard Sunday night.

And I had a really disturbing dream that night, and I woke up with a sense of impending doom. That's the only way I can describe it; sense of impending doom. It was just dark, a dark cloud over my head.

But the thing is, it was like you live in St. Louis, I live in Toronto, you wait all winter long for a day like the day that I woke up on. It was like ten degrees Celsius, so it was like fifties, and it was sunny out, and you're like, "Oh my gosh, spring is coming."

But I couldn't shake that feeling. The fire alarm goes off in my condo, I've got to go outside. I'm sitting out on a park bench.

I mean, Toronto is a city of a few million people. A few million people would love to have traded places with me at that time, because I'm sitting on a park bench on a beautiful Monday morning, and I can't shake that feeling.

And all of a sudden it gets worse, and worse, and worse, and that started what I call my literal six-week heart attack, because that's when I had twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, I had tingling from the top of my head down to the end of my fingertips, tight chest, elevated heart rate, couldn't breathe properly, and that just would not go away, and I tried everything.

So the first time, way back in January, I did some yoga, I did a little bit of meditation, and it was gone. I was like, "Okay, I'm cured of this thing."

And I tried- for those six weeks, I tried everything. So I did the yoga again, nothing. I did the meditation, nothing. I tried Qigong which is standing yoga or standing meditation, hated it.

I tried all these things - Tai chi - all these things and I couldn't beat it. And then so it was finally- I was doing a little bit of personal training still, and it was a Monday morning in May.

So we're six weeks past now, and I had tried everything. I actually even went and bought a dog, right? So I bought a dog because I read like about the pet effect.

You pet a dog, it gets rid of depression and anxiety. So I mean, among the 101 reasons I wanted a dog, I figured this would be like the last one.

So I went out to the country, and I went to this breeder, and I bought this chocolate lab, this amazing dog, and then I put him in a cage in my car, and I drove him home.

So I mean, that's obviously the great first step to owning a dog. You put a dog in a cage, take it away from its parents, and just drive it two hours away, right?

So I take him back into the city, and I try to take him for a walk, but he didn't want to walk. He was just really stubborn, so I was like trying to drag him around, all these people in Toronto were looking at me, take him back inside.

The next morning I take him to the park. He's a Labrador retriever, right? Keyword, 'retriever.'

Shawn Stevenson: Retrieve.

Craig Ballantyne: So I throw the ball, he just looks at me. I go get the ball, I come back. I throw the ball again, nothing. Okay, alright so we go back to the apartment.

Third day I've got to go to meetings, I leave him in the apartment for a couple hours. I come back, there's all these nasty notes on the door because he was crying because he had separation anxiety, and I realized about the dog version of me, right?

Shawn Stevenson: Right, oh wow.

Craig Ballantyne: But overall, he was like the greatest thing in my life, but for those six weeks, all that stuff- like tried the dog, tried yoga, tried meditation, Qigong, Tai chi, all these things.

And then that day that I was training this guy. 5'3", 310 pounds, fifty-three year old obese lawyer. I'm training this guy in the gym, and I say to him halfway through his workout- and again, beautiful sunny Monday morning, amazing spring day, and I say to this guy, "Richard, I think I need you to take me to the hospital."

Could you imagine? Like you're in the middle of a set of pushups, and some guy says, "Take me to the hospital." Right? And I'm like twenty-nine years old, I look fit as heck, and I'm asking him to take me to the emergency room.

He looked at me like I had two heads because I describe anxiety as a black box. So anybody that's out there that's suffering from it, first of all it's a black box to you. You can't explain it. Like what is this feeling? Why am I feeling like this? Why can't I get rid of it?

And I totally understand that, but you can't explain it to somebody else. Right? Like if I got a broken arm, you're like, "I get it. I understand this."

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Craig Ballantyne: "No, I've got anxiety, man. I'm freaking out here." "You look totally fine."

Shawn Stevenson: Why don't you just calm down?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, you'll be okay. No, I will not be okay. We've got to get out of here.

So he drops me off at the emergency room. We never really connected that well after that, but that's when I walked in this time to a busy emergency room.

Like Toronto is like a trauma hospital, and they were like, "Yeah, just go sit over there." And so they knew I was fine.

They did a chest x-ray that day, they gave me a heart rate monitor and told me to come back in twenty-four hours. And when I dropped it off they said, "Hey listen, if there's anything wrong from the data, we'll give you a call in the next twenty-four hours."

And I watched the clock, and as soon as that twenty-four hours was over and I realized they didn't call me, man, the weight of the world lifted off my shoulders.

That was huge for me, and at the same time very coincidentally, same day as the clock ticks back these twenty-four hours, I buy this book on the Internet called 'Panic Away.'

And I read it, and I get to chapter two, and the first five words, as soon as I read those five words, that's it, no more, I'm done. No more anxiety attacks for the rest of my life.

Shawn Stevenson: Those five words, man. I need them.

Craig Ballantyne: 'There's nothing wrong with you.' There's nothing wrong with you. As soon as I read that, I shut it down and never looked at it again.

And it was like, 'Okay there is nothing physically wrong with me. It means that I kind of put myself in this position.'

Now, I will not say for everybody that has anxiety that they have the same triggers as I did. Mine was self-induced. Mine was like a stupid young kid- I wasn't even young.

It was a stupid grown man who lived a hypocritical lifestyle that got himself into a lot of trouble. But the structure, the systems, everything that I put into place after, I know will help other people because it helped me and brought me to where I am today I guess.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Awesome, awesome and of course I've been diving in, and checking out the book, and it's something that you made a study as well, you know?

I think that at some point you realized that there's a lot of other folks experiencing what you experienced.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah. Forty million Americans these days.

Shawn Stevenson: That's what I want to ask you about. Forty million Americans.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, that's like 12% or 15% and the thing is, the younger you go, the worse it is.

Shawn Stevenson: Right exactly. This is what I really want to talk about is why now? What's going on now that's creating such a sense and experience of anxiety?

Craig Ballantyne: Well, I think you've got a lot of stuff. So first of all, one, now people will admit they have anxiety. I mean, fifteen years ago, twenty years ago, thirty years ago, were not in this day in age where you can say you have anxiety and people won't say- what did you say before? Like just calm down?

Shawn Stevenson: Right, right.

Craig Ballantyne: Right? Like people will actually be open to helping you. So maybe that's one reason. That's not going to explain it all.

Social media is probably like the thing that everyone is going to point the finger at, and I agree it's probably not helpful. A lot of people consider Facebook a negative to what it's brought to the world, and I can understand that.

I can also say though that Facebook can be part of the solution, and that social media can be part of the solution as well. It certainly has been for me, so it's not evil, but certainly it has a negative impact on a lot of- especially the young folks.

And so then also, I mean everything you talk about on the show, right? Sleep, diet, not enough exercise, the chemicals, everything. Right?

So who knows why exactly, but there's a million and one reasons in this environment these days.

Shawn Stevenson: I haven't really shared this before, but there was a phase of my life- this was probably, I'd say I was maybe twenty-eight, around the same period actually, and I was experiencing a pretty consistent feeling of anxiety.

And everything was good, but I just couldn't really shake this feeling.

Craig Ballantyne: Sorry to interrupt, but that's one thing I just want to add, is that this was the best point in my life. Like I was as free as you could be, and I had it. I was feeling great, and you were too.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, and you know, same thing. Outwardly healthy, and I'm reaching a lot of people. This was kind of when things really started to change in my career, and I remember that there were certain times when it was not there.

And usually it was when I was with other people, but even that started to creep in a little bit, and for me- and everybody's different. We're going to talk about these different things, and I want to go back and talk about the social media component as well.

But for me, and this was very much diet related funny enough, I was going hardcore raw food, and I was missing out on a lot of dietary fats in the way that kind of my genes were really expecting and desiring.

Like just through evolution, my genes were like, "Why am I not getting these things all of a sudden?" And so fats for your nervous system.

And also I felt sensitive. I felt very sensitive to the environment all the time, I felt sensitive going different places, I was a lot colder than I used to be, and our skin even is kind of like the outer most part of our nervous system, always monitoring our environment.

I just felt very sensitive to everything, and dietary fats are kind of like insulation over those nerves, and it's just kind of like the cords on our microphones.

If they're not coated or insulated, those wires are exposed, and they're going to be a lot more sensitive to anything happening in the environment. Get a little water on it, it gets too cold or too hot could influence those wires.

And so once I started adding some of the right kinds of- for me it was eggs and things of that nature back into my diet, like it went away relatively quickly.

But also, and this is what I wanted to ask you about next, that dietary part was a component. The other part was I was living in the future so much.

I was future casting and there were so many things, so many doors open for me, so many opportunities, and I was living there and not really living where I was at presently, and just kind of taking steps in the direction.

I was just kind of overwhelmed but not aware of it of all the stuff going on that's creating this anxiety as well.

So is that something in your experience as well that you've seen? It's just like people have so much going on and so many opportunities and they're not really being here now?

Craig Ballantyne: Oh yeah, absolutely. I mean, the thing is, the more successful you were experiencing is the entrepreneurial anxiety of being overwhelmed and intoxicated with opportunity.

The more successful you become, the more opportunities you're going to get. You know, you're going to get all these people saying, "Hey, we'd love to sponsor your podcast." "Hey, we'd love to have you on this show." "Hey, we'd love to have you fly across the world and speak here." "We'd love to have you do this."

But you can only do so much, but most people when we walk around- now I use this analogy. We're walking around with like somebody took one of those old school jigsaw puzzles, and just poured the box in your head, and none of those pieces are put together, and it's just this jumbled mess in your head.

And unless you get that out, whether it's through talking to people, or whether it's through some of the exercises I teach in the book, just to get that clarity. Man, you're just walking around with so much clutter in your head, and you're going to end up in a world of hurt someday no matter how calm of a person you are for sure.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Man, that's important. That's important. So I want to take a step back and talk about the social media, because there's this- is it comparison syndrome?

Craig Ballantyne: I'm sure that is a huge, huge part of it. Yeah, it's that keeping up. And here's the thing, is that if you have a social media problem, it is not your fault.

You have to understand that Instagram alone, there are 150 engineers, which is not actually that many people- many engineers you'd think for Instagram, considering how big it is.

But there's 150 engineers working all day long. These guys have like PhDs from MIT probably. They're working to make you addicted to that phone.

Everybody at Facebook is working all day long to making you addicted to your phone. Every single other program that is out there- so there's thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of very, very smart people whose entire job, much like the food industry-

You know, all those people at the potato chip companies, they were tasked with making these things addictive to you. So like you against the world basically, so it's not your fault if you spend a little bit of time on those devices.

The thing is, is we have to circumvent that and we have to make sure that you're using it properly, you're using it in a good way.

I mean, you can use Facebook and only see positive stuff. I don't see a single negative thing on Facebook. To me, when I actually go on Facebook- and I don't use Facebook very much. I use Instagram quite a bit, but not Facebook.

I mean, I see a couple pictures that make me happy, a couple messages from friends, and that's it. You know? So Facebook doesn't have to be bad, but it's hard to control it and put those boundaries around it.

Shawn Stevenson: Absolutely. And this is something I've talked about many times is curating your feed. Putting up a positive perimeter around the social media.

And also in that same kind of guild with social media- and I had Dr. Robert Lustig on the show, and I'll put that episode in the show notes if folks missed it.

He wrote a book called 'The Hacking of the American Mind,' and he's like the forward most guy in this field in talking about the brain, the connection with sugar, and the connection with things like social media, because we're like dopamine driven individuals.

Like this is something- it's not just about pleasure though. That's where we get it wrong. It's also about drive. That dopamine helps us as an evolutionary thing to go and get better, to seek, to find, to discover.

If we didn't have that, we would just be little amoebas, like sitting on a rock somewhere or something.

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

Shawn Stevenson: But it's driven us, but here's the thing, if you keep searching and looking for things, looking for that reward but you never find it, you'll go insane.

And so when you find something, you get a little hit from that opioid system. You get like this little drop of morphine in your system.

Now the Internet is hardwired for that because every time you look for something, you find it, right? You scroll. Especially those scrollers, right?

Craig Ballantyne: And the red circles. The Instagram red circle is killer.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh man, you see it. You seek, you find. Seek, find, and it creates this kind of addictive feedback loop. And being aware of it is one thing, but as far as anxiety is concerned, I think that we're unknowingly sucking away a lot of our time that could be devoted to that desire and that mission and that goal that we have within us.

And we feel like, "I should be doing this." Like subconsciously or unconsciously, "I should be working on creating this brand, or helping these people, but I'm spending all this time on social media."

And that will inherently create some anxiety. Also that comparison. Let's talk a little bit more about comparison syndrome. Like why would that create anxiety if we're just comparing ourselves to other people?

Craig Ballantyne: Well first, before I go into that, I will say, like my anxiety attacks were well before I started using any social media. So it's not like it's the only thing.

But the comparison syndrome, it's been around since the dawn of time too. I mean, that's-

Shawn Stevenson: He's got more goats than me.

Craig Ballantyne: Right, right. Right, he's got everything more than me, and it's just like I've got to go and get more. So we are driven but we need to harness in ambition in the right positive direction for things.

And so for me, what I found was so much of my anxiety was rooted from anytime it was internally focused.

Whether the drive was internally focused, whether the worry was internally focused, whether my thoughts were internally focused, that caused the problem.

That was like the wheels are spinning in your head, the anxiety engine is revving. Anytime I got out of my head, things were better. So the problem was solved.

So instead of me thinking, 'I want. I want to have as much as Shawn.' No, 'How can I go and help Shawn have more?'

I mean, that is hard to do because envy- for me, envy is even stronger than comparison syndrome. Like envy- actually in the book I think I mention, and definitely in my workshops, I teach about how I have a black heart of envy.

And it is embarrassing, it is shameful, I hate telling people this, but back in the day, back in my anxiety days when a friend of mine would come to me and say, "Hey, I've had success with this," I'd be like, "Man, I wish that was me. That should be me. I'm the old guy, I'm the Godfather. It should be me."

And you know, it's ridiculous so I flip the script. As soon as I start feeling that, I write that person a thank you letter. That exact person.

So it's little things like that, that you can stop this stuff from bothering you, and flip it around.

So it goes from internal, 'I want, I want, I'm comparing myself to other people.' No, no I'm going to flip it around and I'm going to make that person better because at the end of the day, the person you are comparing yourself to, the person you are envious to, if they have more, your life is not going to be worse, your life is not going to be better if they have less.

So how can you in your mind switch it, flip the script every single day anytime you feel down, anytime you have a negative emotion, how can you flip the script? That's one thing I try and help people with.

Shawn Stevenson: Love it. I almost cried, man. That's some real stuff right there.

So one of the things that you said in the book, and this is a direct quote from the book, 'Anxiety attacks are like cockroaches. If you've got one, there are a lot more hiding in your attic.'

This is- first of all, you shared that this was a process for you, like a six-week heart attack.

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

Shawn Stevenson: And we need to get ahead of this, and one of the things that you talk about, and you've shared with me, is that this isn't just a result of kind of things that are going on with our lifestyle necessarily, but also how we label ourselves.

And the labels of being introverted or extroverted or situational introversion. So let's talk a little bit about that.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, so I call these label lies, alright? We've been putting label lies on ourselves. "Oh, I can never be on time." "I'm not good at sales." "I can't lose weight."

Okay, great. You're saying that, and words matter. Words matter so much. So for a long time, I didn't know the word 'introvert' until I went to college, and then one of my girlfriends was like, "You're introverted, right?"

And I go, "I don't know what that means." She goes, "You think about what you say before you say it." I was like, "Doesn't everybody think about what they say before they say it?"

Shawn Stevenson: Right.

Craig Ballantyne: I'm like, "That's how I am." So then I knew what it was, and then when I learned more about it, it's like, "Oh now I can use the introvert label to kind of like not live my best life."

So I would go to seminars, Shawn, and I would ask- I would ask the hotel person, "I need a hotel room on a low floor," so that I didn't have to get in an elevator with strangers, so I could take the stairs.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow.

Craig Ballantyne: I know, isn't that terrible? So I'm using that, and then, "Oh, I don't go to big social events, and I don't like to talk to people." And so now I'm using all

these excuses, all these label lies to kind of live my lowest self. And it just put me in a box.

So if you're always late, you say you're always late, you're putting yourself in the 'I'm late' box. And that doesn't serve you, that doesn't serve other people.

So being an introvert did not serve me, it did not serve other people, and then being an introvert meant I kept all the thoughts in my head, I didn't express them to other people, and then it was just like an attic, right?

Getting full, and full, and full of clutter, and junk, and what's going to happen? You know? Nothing good is going to happen from that.

So that was a huge part of my anxiety attacks, was that plus the alcohol plus the way that I was living, exhaustion, that sort of stuff all crept up on me, and it just compounded over time.

Because go back to that saying from the book, the first one I had was like almost ten years before I had the real full-blown one on New Year's Day, and then that was three months later that I had another full-blown one.

I haven't had one since because I've figured out all these systems to overcome it, and now I can have more caffeine- not seven Red Bulls' worth of caffeine.

But I can have- back then, like if I had fifty milligrams of caffeine in a day- fifty milligrams, like that's all back then would just like be- I'd be really anxious by the end of the day. Now I can have 100 milligrams of caffeine in a day and it doesn't bother me.

Which is still not very much compared to most people, but I've just- I know what's going on in my body, I've broken open the black box, and that's what I want to help people with.

Shawn Stevenson: There's so much good stuff here, and first of all, the elevator thing, that is like the weirdest thing I've ever heard. It's amazing.

Craig Ballantyne: Oh, really? Weirder than the eyes closed thing?

Shawn Stevenson: Well, it's close. But man, and what's so crazy is when you said that and you shared that, I thought about the story in your book when you went into the elevator and you were eating I think a chocolate bar, and-

Craig Ballantyne: Oh right, in the anxiety attacks.

Shawn Stevenson: So I want to talk about this because your anxiety-

Craig Ballantyne: Well, can I say one thing before that?

Shawn Stevenson: Sure.

Craig Ballantyne: Now when I go on an elevator, I greet every single person that comes in the elevator. I remember I was in Santa Monica the other month visiting our friend Jason Ferruggia, and I was telling a joke to nine strangers in the elevator.

And that just shows you like you are not meant to be in a box for life. You can break out of that box, or you can destroy those walls, you can destroy the handcuffs that you've mentally put on yourself.

Yeah, I understand there's value to being an introvert, but if you label yourself just as an introvert for the rest of your life, you're holding yourself back.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Man, that's so powerful. So you were talking about also how the anxiety- you being in the fitness space, and being somebody who's a leader in the space, and having this persona, but yet the anxiety was affecting your diet, thus eating this candy bar on the elevator super early in the morning.

Craig Ballantyne: Oh, I couldn't eat. I couldn't eat.

Shawn Stevenson: Tell that story about this guy seeing you eating the candy bar.

Craig Ballantyne: Sure, so this was during the six-week heart attack, right? The six-week heart attack, and I could sleep from about 11:00 at night until 3:00 in the morning.

And then at 3:00 in the morning, the anxiety would wake me up. Now I would sit there for like an hour in bed playing classical music trying to fall asleep, and eventually I did out of exhaustion.

And then I woke up about 3:00 in the morning and I was like, "Okay, I've at least got to go outside for a walk."

But the anxiety, it's like there's adrenaline rushing through your body, and if anybody knows anything about appetite suppressants, a lot of it is related to the adrenaline and the receptors.

So you've got adrenaline rushing through your body, you're not hungry, and I was like you back in the day, right?

I liked lifting weights, I wanted to gain muscle. I'm like, "Man I've got nothing going on. I'm losing weight. Like if I don't eat a meal now, I lose two pounds."

And so I was like, "Okay, I've got to eat some junk here. I'm going to give myself a pass." Which didn't help obviously, but that was all I was doing.

So it was 3:00 in the morning, I went out for a walk, I came back at like 5:00 in the morning, and I was going up. I had a chocolate bar, I also had a banana.

So I had a banana and a chocolate bar, and this guy who had just come in from a run, he looks over at me and he goes, "Breakfast of champions."

He was mocking me because I was eating a chocolate bar at 6:00 in the morning. But you know, I wanted to punch him in the head at that time.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Craig Ballantyne: I was hoping like maybe if I punch him in the head that would cure my anxiety, but probably would not. So yeah, I mean that was- it just makes you do all these funny things because I was in black box stage.

I didn't know what was going on, I didn't know how long this was going to go on for. And we've all heard somebody, usually a little bit older than us say, "Hey, if you don't have your health, you don't have anything."

And I will say this, there was never a point during those six weeks where it was like I was suicidal, but I was like- I would do anything to get rid of this.

And so that's why I tried everything. I like to say I turned over every rock. I turned over the Qigong, the yoga, meditation, all this stuff. I was doing all of it because I would do anything to get rid of that feeling.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Craig Ballantyne: And that's why I want to, again, help people get rid of that feeling.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Man, and I know a lot of people have been there or they're there right now.

Craig Ballantyne: Oh yeah, and the thing is now that everybody knows that I've gone through it, I get so many messages at 2:00 in the morning.

"I'm in the emergency room now, Craig. I know what you're going through." It feels like someone was sitting on my chest when I woke up at 2:00 in the morning.

And these are people- I mean, the one guy, he spent time in Iraq, he was a police officer. I mean, this is bringing the biggest guys and the strongest women to their knees. It attacks everybody.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. So let's talk a little bit about the stigma behind it, because people haven't been talking about it. And now there's a big movement taking place, and folks are more openly talking about mental health issues, and it's because there's a big stigma also because it's very internal.

And like you mentioned, if somebody has a broken arm, or somebody has- they're doing the insulin shots. Like you can see there's a physical thing going on.

But this is- there's a lot of internal turmoil, but it matters because our brains are the most powerful pharmacy in the universe, and so now that this is kind of opening up- but there's been a big stigma.

So let's talk a little bit about that.

Craig Ballantyne: Well, I'll be honest. If I'm talking about anxiety attacks, I can laugh, I can joke, but as soon as- like when you said 'mental health,' I don't like that.

Because I feel like, "Man, there's something wrong with me. I'm crazy." I mean, that's how it felt, but even just those words to a guy like me who talks about it all the time, it gives me a little twinge in the stomach.

I'm okay with it, but I mean that's really what it is. But you can imagine someone who doesn't feel comfortable, like they don't want to talk about it.

You've got a job, you don't want to tell your boss you have anxiety. I can totally understand that. And if you don't feel comfortable sharing it, then it's only going to get worse.

Because again, wheels spin, anxiety engine revs, things get worse if you don't get out of your head so that's why you have to find an outlet for it. Talk therapy is so important.

Shawn Stevenson: I love that. You know, something that came up while you were talking is that I don't like the word either- those two words together. I don't like the word 'diet.'

There are certain things that are just like there's so much negative connotation behind it.

Craig Ballantyne: Sure. For me, it's weakness. It's like, 'I am weak.' But I'm not. I mean, everybody's weak.

Shawn Stevenson: One of the things that I want to really kind of breakthrough- help people to break through is these labels because even if somebody gets the label- you know, you have diabetes.

It's a very big blanket statement, because your diabetes is not like anybody else's diabetes on the planet. We're giving somebody a very blanket statement; depression, anxiety.

Your depression is different from the next person, but we use it as a way to kind of cookie cutter treatment basically, you know?

You have this category of depression, or this category of anxiety. When you are unique, you're different. Everything about you in your life, there's something that is askew or off that is different from other people.

Craig Ballantyne: Right, your anxiety was diet related, mine had nothing to do with diet, because my diet was actually pretty well on point back in the day with healthy fats.

I mean, I was probably eating as well as I ever had in my life. So you're right, it's not the same for everybody. Absolutely.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, and so just starting to realize that, to be more empowered, and knowing that that label does not define me as well. Because you know, it's an experience of certain symptoms.

But as soon as we say- you grab onto it and we say, "I have depression," or "I'm a diabetic." We're really owning it, which is good to admit that we have an issue, but some people own it to the degree that it defines who they are, and they start to operate from their life out of that label.

Craig Ballantyne: Absolutely. And even with like the, "I'm always late." "I'm always this." I used to say that I have a right angle obsession.

So if you go in my hotel room, you will find everything lined up at right angles. I do like it, but I would often do events at a round table, and I would be like freaking out. I wouldn't know how to line up my binder at a right angle on a round table.

And then I was like, "Man, just think of how much energy you're wasting on this." And everybody has these OCD things, so it's just- I just changed the wording.

Because again, the words matter. I used to have a right angle obsession, I used to really care, and I used to be an introvert.

Now I let myself out of the introvert box, you know? I'm not anything in particular, I just have some of these tendencies, but I also have other tendencies too.

So it's just, like you said, the labels, oftentimes they just don't really serve us.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, absolutely. And right angles are the bomb, you know? Real talk. That ninety degrees, baby.

Craig Ballantyne: It's so neat.

Shawn Stevenson: So I want to talk about now this concept that you mentioned a little bit earlier, and you mentioned about misalignment, right? That this could be a big causative factor for many people, resulting in them experiencing anxiety, is not being aligned. So let's talk about that.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, absolutely. So we can use so many different misalignments here. So weight loss world. Mrs. Jones comes to me and says, "Craig, I want to lose twenty pounds."

"Great, Mrs. Jones. Show me what you're eating." You know? She's going one direction with her goals and her dreams, and her diet is going the opposite.

"I go to Starbucks, I get a Unicorn Frappuccino and Espresso Brownie." Obviously those things are misaligned. They are not lined up, and you're always going to be wasting energy, frustrated, not having success.

Me, back in the day, I was during the day telling people how to live, I was living very healthy, and then Saturday came along and my actions were totally misaligned with my goals.

And then you have the entrepreneur. "Oh, I want to raise well-adjusted kids. It's my number one priority and my number one value in life."

You work twelve hours a day and you have a two-hour commute each way. How can you tell me that your kids are your number one priority if that is how you act?

So for so many people in life, their actions are misaligned with their goals, and when that happens, we just feel it in the stomach. Right? We feel it inside, we have that anxiety about it.

And you know, some people's are small, some people's are extreme, and the bigger that misalignment is, the bigger the blow up is going to be.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Man, that's so good. And it's just asking yourself the question, "Are my actions in alignment with the goals that I have?"

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: Very simple thing.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, I use- so when I do my workshops, and when I wrote the book, I have a very large section in each of them about your values and your vision, because I say your values and your vision drive every decision.

Because for me, one of my values in life, my health value is I want to feel like I'm seventeen forever. I want to move great, I want to be able to run, jump, play.

So that value dictates the fact that I do this stupid fifteen-minute old man warm-up before every one of my workouts. But it also means that I eat right, that I exercise regularly, that I do some of the stuff I don't want to do because that's an important thing to me, and that means it dictates my daily behavior.

So you need to look at what the most important values are- the most important things for your values are in life.

So think about your most important value for your family, your health, your wealth, what experiences do you want to have?

Narrow it down to the most important ones, and then look at how you are living your life, and the more misaligned they are, first of all, the less success you're going to have because you can't say you want something and act in total opposite from it and expect success.

But also, it's going to be more stressful when you're misaligned, and that's the thing you've got to fix.

Shawn Stevenson: Absolutely. So good. So I want to talk about some strategies, some specific tangible things that folks can do, and we're going to do that right after this quick break. So sit tight, we'll be right back.

Alright, we are back and we're talking with the legend himself, the living legend, the Godfather, Craig Ballantyne. And before the break, we were going to get into some tactics, some specific strategies.

What are some things that we can do to take into our lives today to help to reverse this issue, this epidemic that's happening with anxiety? And again, this is a very real issue that millions of people are dealing with.

And so we're cultivating today a level of understanding, a level of compassion for others but also for ourselves. And so let's dive back in, man. So what's the first one that you have for us?

Craig Ballantyne: Well, something that you actually struggled with is one of the solutions for a lot of other people. So you were talking earlier about you were always living in the future. You were future casting everything.

Most people though, Shawn, don't future cast anything. So they have, as I mentioned before, that jumble of jigsaw puzzle pieces in their head.

What we need to do is get that out and spread it out over the table. Simply doing that through journaling- I mean free form journaling, just writing, man that is going to be great for you. Gratitude journaling.

But what I actually have people do is create what I call a vision for your life. And a vision for your life gives you a very clear dream destination for where you want to get to.

And when we know where we want to get to, we can build a straight line to success.

So I ask a few questions about where you want to be in the next three years, where you want to be living, who you want to be celebrating an experience with, and what three big accomplishments do you want to achieve in the next couple of years? And what does your family do? What are some of your rituals and routines?

And now you write this out, and I call writing this, this is the movie script for your life, so that when you write it, you write it in such detail that I can see.

Like you tell me like, "Hey, we're going to be living in California. My son is going to be at this college. My other son is going to be in this school. Me and my wife are going to be doing these things, and these are the three things that *The Model Health Show* is going to allow me to do this, I'm going to write another book."

I'm like, "Okay great, I totally see your life." I mean, everybody listening has painted a picture, right? They've painted a picture of you like down in Malibu or something, the waves are coming in.

They see you doing these shows with all these celebrities and they're like, "Oh man, I can hardly wait. Shawn's life is going to be so good."

Now most people, they don't even think about what they're doing next week, tomorrow. They don't get this stuff out of their head, so they've got all that clutter trapped up in there.

So it's like having a yard sale. We're going to have a yard sale of all our ideas, and we're going to chop away some of them, and we're going to refine it, and now you've got this beautiful, beautiful movie of your life that gives you clarity.

So clarity is the thing. We go from clutter, all the thoughts running through your head, to the clarity through that vision exercise. And now you go, "Okay, I see what's important, and now I can align my actions with this vision."

And then it's like the weight of the world is going to be off your shoulders.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow.

Craig Ballantyne: I love it so much. Like I do this for so many people, and I just see their eyes light up when we do this because they're like all of a sudden like, "Oh, I get it. I see what matters." And like, "Oh my gosh, I can't believe I'm doing that if this is what's important to me."

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Craig Ballantyne: And that, that's everything to me.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. There can be a lot of just this inner turmoil because we're not taking ownership of that vision that's inside of us, you know? And just kind of taking the time to get clear, and you talked about as well how important just this taking time to have introspection is.

Craig Ballantyne: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: So let's talk about that a little bit.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, so most people don't spend any time in introspection. Introspection, self-reflection, meditation, that sort of stuff.

I mean, we're so busy. We're addicted to the phones, right? We're addicted to the dopamine hits, and it's always go, go, go. "Man, I just didn't have time to think about stuff."

So I love people to get some big self-reflection and introspection through exercises like the vision.

And one more thing about the vision is not only does the vision help you understand what you're going to do, it helps you understand what you are not going to do. Right?

Because there's a million things we want to do in the next three years. Listen, you can do anything you want in life. You can do anything, but you can't do everything.

You can't do everything, okay? If you want to do great things, you have to do fewer things. So that's one of the things we do with the vision.

It's like, "Okay, we're only allowed to do this many things, but we're going to do them great."

Now we go back to that introspection and self-reflection, that's on the big picture. What I want everybody to do is this little exercise every single day, and I call this watching the movie of your day.

So we just built our movie script for our life, now we're going to watch the movie of our day. And so this is where Shawn sits down at maybe 5:00 or 7:00 before or after dinner, and you sit there and you look at, 'Here's what Shawn wanted to do today.'

He wanted to get up, he wanted to have a workout, he wanted to have time with the kids before they went to school, then he wanted to record a couple shows, then he wanted to have some good meetings in the afternoon.

Great, that was the plan. Right? So he got up, he did a great workout, he had time with the kids, but he was like goofing around on Instagram with his kids, and then he was like rushed, and he went rushed into a podcast, and his guest could feel it and he was like, "Oh man, never again."

So you catch those things, and it's the same way that I improved in my speaking. Because if you go back and watch my videos that are on YouTube from 2007, I sound like a boring robot, monotone robot, and now I have a little bit more energy and I'm a little bit better.

And so- but it was by me watching those videos and realizing, "Okay, here's a point where I can improve. Here's a point where I can improve." And it's the same thing with our day.

Spending a little bit of introspection time, watching the movie of our day, we find out, "Why did I fly off the handle in that meeting?" Or, "Why did I talk badly? Why was I involved in gossip? Why didn't I get out of that?"

"You know what? Here's what I'm going to do next time in that situation." 1% better every day, just think of how good your habits can be if you do that every day, that little bit of introspection. This is like a thirty or sixty-second exercise.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, and also you're the guy who wrote 'The Perfect Day Formula.'

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

Shawn Stevenson: And so another part of that is not just the reflection on what has happened, reviewing the movie, reviewing the game film, but also writing the script for the next one.

And so when does that come into play? Is it something the night before or the day of?

Craig Ballantyne: It's something that definitely should be done around the same time, because if you're doing your to-do list in the morning, you're already too late.

Because that's like- you're already into your game time. It's like the Eagles and the Patriots coming up with their game plan in the middle of the game. No, you don't do that. You do the planning well ahead.

So what I've discovered working with thousands of high performers - entrepreneurs, executives, athletes - is that the more and better planned they are from the night before, the better the next day is going to go. The better the next day is going to go.

Like no Broadway play- they don't go up there and wing it, you know? They've rehearsed this stuff for a long time. So you've got to script it out.

Shawn Stevenson: Consistent thing. The 10X Question; what is this 10x capacity, the thing that's going to help people to improve on their clarity and their focus?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, so this is a question that I asked a mutual friend of ours, Isabel De Los Rios.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, I love her. Shout-out, she should be listening right now. I love her so much.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, she's amazing. She's amazing. She's been a client of mine since 2009, and like me she came from very, very modest means.

Shawn Stevenson: I think that's how we met actually.

Craig Ballantyne: Through me?

Shawn Stevenson: Through her.

Craig Ballantyne: Oh yeah, yeah she introduced us. That's right, yeah she's the best. She is the best. Very giving, right? Very giving.

And so she had achieved great success, helped a lot of people, and it's something that happens to a lot of people. Especially like I came from nothing, and I thought if I ever made \$100,000 in a year like, "Oh my gosh, this would be the best and I'd have the best life ever."

You eventually kind of get used to things, and you get complacent. And so she was suffering from a little bit of complacency, and we were doing a one-on-one coaching session, and she has a strong faith, and so I asked this 10X question to her and I said, "Isabel, what is God's 10X plan for you? What is God's 10X plan for you?"

Anyhow, her jaw dropped on her, and for people that have a different spiritual background, I just say, "What's the universe's 10X plan for you? What's the universe's 10X plan for you?"

And the reason why I ask that, and the reason why it hits so many people is because they're playing a little bit small, and the question can be re-worded as, "Where are you thinking too small? Where are you acting too small?"

Because you are really capable of so much more. I think all of us deep down know that we're capable of so much more. We've got so much more in us.

And so asking that question can get us out of the complacency and also make us realize, "Oh my gosh, I was meant to go write this book. And I've been putting it off, putting it off, and there's this internal misalignment and anxiety because I'm not writing this book. But that's what I was put here for."

I had a good career in the fitness industry, but I wasn't put here to be in the fitness industry. I was put here to do what I'm doing now.

That 'Perfect Day Formula,' that was my life's work. The 'Unstoppable' book, that's my life's work. And so that's the thing. That's the question I ask everybody, and it doesn't matter where you are in life, it doesn't matter if you're just starting out, it doesn't matter if you're making a second career change going into your second act. What's the 10X plan for you?

That's the question I want everybody to sit there with a pen and paper and their favorite caffeinated beverage, and sit there in a place- not their regular work environment because your brain thinks better outside of it.

And sit there, and really think about that. Do some introspection. That's your third introspection exercise, and that'll be another game changer for you.

Shawn Stevenson: That's so powerful, man. Can we get into maybe just one or two more actionable things for folks today?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, absolutely. And I think this is probably the most actionable is one of the themes in any of the coaching that I do is first steps. First steps.

What is the first step that you can take right now at the end of listening to this show? What's the first step that you can take? Because first steps are so important.

Because man, I meet with so many people, "Oh, I want to write a book." "I want to do this." "I want to do that."

I see them six months later, "Oh, I want to write a book." You know, they haven't made any first steps, and that causes anxiety. Again, it's the misalignment, it's knowing that you're unfulfilled, that you're capable of so much more, and you're not doing anything about it.

But the problem is like writing a book is a big, big thing, and it's also an abstract thing. So we want to get a concrete first step. What can you do right now? Because when we make a first step we get a little bit of progress, we get a little victory, we get a little momentum, and we get motivation to come back and do it again.

And when you build on that every single day, it spirals into a good thing. You know, a lot of things spiral out of control, this spirals in your control to success.

So think about something that you want to change, you know? Go back to those values that you talked about.

This is really important for my health and I'm not doing it. What's the first step I can take? Can you buy the book? Watch the video? Get the supplement? Drink more water? Whatever it is. Hire the trainer.

Do that one thing that you can do like in the snap of your fingers that gives you a victory. That is really key.

Shawn Stevenson: I love that because you can't do the fifth step until you do the first step.

Craig Ballantyne: No, you cannot. That's a great point.

Shawn Stevenson: I love that, man. So if you've got one more to share?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, and that fits into this other one that's really, really big with me, is the first step is one of the things that I teach in this ninety-day planning thing.

So I help people- listen, we've got a lot of things we want to do in our future, we've got a lot of things we want to do in the next year.

Listen again, we need to take that first step and get the victory. So we dial out and plan out a very specific quarterly plan for somebody's business, for somebody's personal life, and it goes like this.

We start with an outcome goal, a numbers-based outcome goal. So if you want to do a health one, "I want to lose twenty pounds in ninety days."

Great, that's a numbers-based outcome goal. The thing is, you don't fully control the outcome goal, but what you do control are the process goals, the action steps.

So if you want to lose twenty pounds in ninety days, well you don't control what the scale is going to say, but you do control that you go to Fit Body Bootcamp four times a week, that you go and follow this nutrition program 90% of the time, and that you drink three liters of water per day.

If you do those three things, if you hit those process goals, then you'll get as close as possible to your outcome goal as you can. And then from there, now we know what the big rocks are, we can start breaking it down.

What's the first step? What's that initial victory? "Oh, I can sign up for Fit Body Bootcamp, and I can fill that water jug up, and start drinking tomorrow."

And then what can you do in seventy-two hours? What can you do in seven days? Fourteen days? And we break this down.

Like I make people fill out these forms. We actually got the form in the book so that people can fill this out and plan it out. Personal and professional, you know?

Maybe it's a relationship you need to repair. Maybe it's something- you want to go and write that book that's a personal thing for you. We can break it down into actionable steps.

And again, it's very much like getting the clutter out of your head because you're like, "I want to write this book, I don't know where to start," and it causes a lot of stress.

But if you write it down on paper, it's like, "Oh okay, I see how simple it is. It's not going to be easy, but it's simple."

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, it's broken down into steps. Love that so much, man. Craig, you're just- man, I love talking with you, and I always learn something new.

Like I've had some serious ah-ha moments just sitting here, just like things that I want to employ. And man, first of all, can you let everybody know where they can pick up a copy of the new book?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, sure. So go to www.CraigBallantyne.com/unstoppable and you'll be put on the list to get the book. It's going to be amazing.

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect. Perfect, and we'll put that in the show notes for folks as well. And final question, I'm interested what you'll say today. But what is the model that you're here to set for other people with the way that you live your life personally?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, it's a great question. So I am here to live by extreme example. So I do things to the extreme, I get up at 3:57 AM every day, but not because I expect or suggest that people get up that early in the morning, but I get up that early in the morning.

I live my life the way that I live it so that I inspire people to do a little bit, you know? Get up five minutes earlier. You get up five minutes earlier, you're going to have less stress, more success, less anxiety because you'll have a little bit more time for you to prepare for the day, and you won't be chasing the world.

So I do that stuff, live by extreme example, live my best self so that other people can do that too.

Shawn Stevenson: My man, you are setting a great model, and I love that because we need folks that are setting those extreme examples for sure, and something to aspire towards.

So man, I just appreciate you so much. Thank you for coming to hang out with me. I know you've got a lot going on, you've got one of your workshops coming up here in San Diego.

Craig Ballantyne: It's going to be amazing.

Shawn Stevenson: Of course I'm going to be there too. So where can folks get more information about the workshops that you do?

Craig Ballantyne: They can go to www.PerfectLifeWorkshop.com and then if they want to hit me up on Instagram, which is one of my favorite social media, is @RealCraigBallantyne.

Shawn Stevenson: Boom, there it is. My man, Craig, I appreciate you so much. Thanks for coming to hang out with me.

Craig Ballantyne: No problem.

Shawn Stevenson: Everybody, thank you so much for tuning into the show today. I hope you got a lot of value out of this. I got so many huge take-aways.

He shared something so phenomenal when he talked about black heart of envy, that he carries this black heart of envy.

It takes a lot of courage to share something like that because if we're honest, we all carry that thread of desiring what other people have.

It's kind of one of those things that pushes humanity forward, but we can catch it, we can evolve beyond it, and I like to share this statement.

Because he said that he will actually catch himself, send the person a thank you note when he's seeing that, "I'm having envy. That could have been me, should have been me."

And he doesn't know this probably, but I shared that specific example for myself on the show before, and what I do is I immediately stop and give thanks for that person and their opportunity because I know this really important fundamental law of the universe is that what you appreciate appreciates.

And so when we're having this feeling tone of, 'I don't have it, not enough, I missed the opportunity,' you're hardwiring yourself and you're informing the entire universe that you don't have it, you're not enough, you missed the mark.

And the universe is going to continue to answer lawfully to those beliefs that you carry about yourself.

A lot of times it's not going to inspire us to action, it's going to debilitate us when we're carrying this envy. And so what you appreciate appreciates, and so I give thanks, and I know that there is more than enough to go around for all of us.

And so I highly encourage that we start to- especially in this social media world, which it's only going to become more, is to start to carry that trait.

And also make sure that you have that positive perimeter, you hit that ninety degree angle on your Instagram feed, in your Twitter feed, in your Facebook feed, so that you have positive people that inspire you to right action and to gratitude, and not folks that tend to- just you know when it doesn't feel right.

And so that's one thing. Also this quote from Zig Ziglar, this was in Craig's new book, "You cannot consistently perform in a manner which is inconsistent with the way that you see yourself."

The greatest driving force of the human psyche is to stay congruent with the ideas that it carries of itself. And so if you are carrying ideas of yourself or belief system about yourself that you are somebody who is always late, or you are somebody who doesn't exercise, or you struggle to lose weight, and you haven't worked on changing your perception of yourself, you're going to continue to revert back to those behavior patterns that put you in that position in the first place.

You have to change your mind before you change your results. You have to change your mind before you change your body.

And this is a big kind of hallmark statement that really resonated with me because consistently perform in a manner which is inconsistent with the way you see yourself.

This is where the real work takes place, is aligning your actions with the way that you say you are, or aligning your actions with the person that you believe yourself to be.

So number one, changing the belief about who you see yourself to be, and then giving it legs by taking actions congruent with that. Alright?

So you don't just say, "I'm a person who's always on time." You start showing up early for the next ten things that are on your calendar, and you start to give that belief legs, alright? It's not just going to happen on its own.

So guys, if you got some value out of this episode, please make sure to share it out on social media ironically, and share it with the people that you care about to add some positive information to their day, and tag me, tag Craig as well, and let us know what you thought about the show.

Alright? I appreciate that so much. Tag us on Instagram, that's probably where we both kind of hang out the most in that atmosphere, Twitter, Facebook, all that good stuff.

And I've got some incredible episodes coming up for you, so make sure to 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 www.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.

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And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.