

EPISODE 341

10 Daily Habits That Will Make You Smarter & More Successful

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.

And I really do mean that. Just today as I was driving into the studio, I was just kind of feeling this intense sense of gratitude for being able to do this work.

And I know that through this work, and through information like what you're going to learn today specifically, it really enables all of us to truly give our gifts, for us to show up better in the world, for us to really cultivate and to bring out the very best in us, and that just really excites me because that's how we really transform the world for the better.

So I'm just feeling so grateful to be able to do this. And listen, this episode, this is one you're going to want to take some notes. We're going to go through a lot of game changing information today.

And even this applies to my life as well. You know, we've got so much going on in our lives today a lot of times, and being able to maximize our ability to learn and to use our incredible brains.

My youngest son Braden actually has come home recently and he was just telling me how we only use 10% of our brain. We only use 10% of our brain.

I know the teachers are telling you this. We do use the majority of our brain, we just don't use it very well, and we don't tend to use it all at one time.

It's very compartmentalized and we want to really work on more whole brain learning and to be able to access all of these capacities that our brain has.

And so today we're going to go through ten daily habits that'll make you smarter and more successful, because that's what it's really about at the end of the day. How does this translate?

An example for me yesterday, I was doing a ton of research in the morning, in the afternoon I was doing an in-studio interview with *The Model Health Show*, and then from there I had to race over to a talk I was doing at MasterCard headquarters.

And just big shout-out to those guys and everybody who came out to see me there. Their campus was so cool. It's such a cool place. But let me tell you about the security there. My goodness.

First of all, they've got like seventeen gates just to get in, and when I pulled up to the security, he checked me out, checked my ID and all this stuff, and then he gave me a couple of tokens.

Like what are these tokens? And it was for opening these proceeding gates I was going to come to. But you know when somebody puts tokens in your hand, you know it's going to be fun, right?

You've had that experience as a kid, you go to Chuck E. Cheese, "I want those tokens." But today apparently they've got cards for everything. But let's bring back-
 #BringBackTheTokens.

So when he put those tokens in my hand, I just felt like, "Oh, we're going to have a good time." So I proceeded on, dropped tokens in, got inside, then the security-security, had to go through that.

It was like multiple gates, they got the whole like TSA vibe to it, but we got in, had a good time, and I wasn't done yet.

From there I was doing an interview for another person's show, a friend of mine, and then family time, and getting ready for today. It's just there's a lot going on.

But how do we accomplish these things and not just go through the motions? Because I'm not a fan of the statement that the majority of success is just showing up.

I used to believe that, because it is a big part of it. We definitely need to show up. But I'm a big proponent of showing up and bringing our best when we show up, right? Because that's where magic really happens.

And so some of the stuff you're going to be learning about today really enables me personally in my own life to be able to perform and execute on the things that I'm doing.

And I've seen this permeate through the work that I'm doing personally, and also all of my clients I've worked with over the years, and it's just some really, really powerful tangible actionable things you're going to learn about, so make sure to be ready for that.

Now we can't talk about this without talking about that thing that gives you that little bit of edge, right? Because you can be in the game, hit that 95%.

We want to get to that 100%, we want to get to that 120%. And today more than ever, what people are really leaning on for that extra mental boost, there's this big category of nootropics that is being talked about now.

You know, these supplements that have these- supplements and drugs that have these cognitive enhancement abilities. Right? It's even seen in movies now, right?

You got that movie Limitless. Shout-out to Bradley Cooper. He's got an incredible story, by the way.

But for me, it's looking at okay, so what are the things that actually have some documented science and a history of use?

Because I'm not a big believer in the new stuff that's just recently invented as far as our nutrition. I want something that's more time tested, because I'd rather not be a guinea pig if I don't got to be.

And so for me, I'm a big fan of lion's mane because University of Malaya confirmed the neuroregenerative potential of lion's mane mushroom.

It's a medicinal mushroom, it's been used for centuries, and now we have all of this fascinating data to show how powerful it is.

And it was recently discovered that lion's mane promotes nerve growth factor synthesis in the human brain, and this is essential for the hippocampus plasticity, which underlies a big role in our memory and in learning. Right?

We're going to talk about the hippocampus quite a bit throughout this episode, but lion's mane actually has some influence on that part of our brain, which is really, really fascinating.

And we've got to go with the things that society is already doing a lot of times. And so this why love Four Sigmatic, because they're taking some of the mediums that are popular in our culture and infusing it with something upgraded, something better.

So instead of having that typical pesticide, herbicide sprayed coffee bean, they're getting organic coffee, and they're infusing it with things like lion's mane mushroom, creating these incredible formulas.

It tastes amazing. Put a little bit of some healthy fats in there, whether it's ghee or grass-fed butter, coconut oil, blend that together, maybe a little bit of some Stevia if you want to get fancy.

I love it with cinnamon and maybe a little bit of MCT oil. You can make it as fancy as you want or just take it straight. I want that cup of Joe, that straight Joe, you can get that as well.

But it's that radically improved version of coffee, and that's what we really want. And so that's what I had, I've been up for several hours today, already doing a lot.

You know, getting my kids ready and getting prepared for today, and kind of just going through the research and just executing on the things that I needed to get done.

And so I have my medicinal mushroom coffee from Four Sigmatic, but also one of the things that they have recently done; our culture is very, very big on these Five Hour Energies, and products that are similar to that.

You know, we're talking from overnight truck drivers to hard-charging entrepreneurs, and Four Sigmatic really gets that, and they're not trying to fight with it and just force everybody like, "Here, just take this medicinal mushroom elixir, or coffee even."

But let's go ahead, and now they've got these really awesome mushroom focused shot, which is in the same kind of packaging and bottle like that Five Hour Energy, but they're upgrading it. Right?

So this is something you could have on hand. And so it's got the lion's mane mushroom, which we already talked about how powerful that is, for a little bit of natural caffeine.

Not synthetic vitamins and the like that you see in something like Five Hour Energy, and artificial sweeteners, and all that crazy stuff.

We've got a little bit of guayusa. Guayusa. Alright? So Amazon super food. Alright? Got a little bit of caffeine in there for you.

And rhodiola as well is in the formula for supporting areas of your brain responsible for managing stress.

And then they've got a little pineapple juice to cut it a little bit, give you a little bit- you know, there's something about that pineapple. It just gives you a little bit of warmth in your soul.

And so that's what I just had as well. So I'm a big fan of Four Sigmatic. Definitely check them out.

And this is stuff- this is brain food. This is great for your brain and your cognitive performance. Head over, check them out, it's www.FourSigmatic.com/model for 15% off.

That's www.FourSigmatic.com/model, 15% off everything that they carry; mushroom coffees, the brand new mushroom Focus Shot, mushroom hot chocolates, all the elixirs.

Amazing stuff. I have my cabinets stocked full of Four Sigmatic. Head over there, check them out, and on that note let's get to the Apple Podcasts review of the week.

iTunes Review: Another five-star review titled, 'Discover Your Inner Hero,' by UnexpectedAthlete.

"This podcast is so packed with information that if you could eat it, it would probably be a superfood. I really appreciate the deep research that goes into each topic. It's obviously a labor of love.

I've been listening for about two years and it has inspired me to take control of my nutrition, begin meditating, and look for new challenges in fitness and beyond.

I also shared Shawn's book, 'Sleep Smarter' with my sister, a lifelong insomniac, and she sleeps much better now after implementing his suggestions.

Of all the podcasts I have found on health and wellness, this is the one I rely on for the latest research packaged in a fun, easily understood way.

Thank you, Shawn, for this podcast. It's really helped me discover my inner hero and want to inspire others to do the same."

Shawn Stevenson: That is absolutely incredible. Thank you so much for sharing that. And he said that it's so packed with information, that if you could eat it, it would be a superfood.

That is powerful. I like that a lot, and I appreciate you taking the time to share that, and also sharing the story about your sister as well. Just big shout-out to you guys, and I appreciate you so much for allowing me to be a part of your story and your transformation.

And everybody, thank you for heading over to Apple Podcasts and leaving reviews for the show. If you've yet to do so, you can actually pause this and head over and do it. I appreciate that so very much.

And listen guys, this really does mean a lot to me. Again, like I started the day just really in a deep sense of gratitude, so hearing stories like this really just fuels me.

And please know that the best is still yet to come, and we're going to start today with this episode, so get ready to have your mind blown. Alright?

So we're going to dive in right now. We're going to go through ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful. Alright?

So number one, we're going to start with what we're actually making our brain out of, and number one on this list is to get your nutritional security.

Alright? Secure the nutrition alert. That's a DJ Khaled. I don't know if you follow him on social media, but secure the nutrition. And how do we do this?

So I just wanted to share a couple of specific foods and nutrients that are of the utmost importance for your neurological health.

And the first one, this is derived from a study that was done in Chicago's Rush University Medical Center, that found that people who ate one to two servings of green leafy vegetables every day experience fewer memory problems and cognitive decline compared with people who rarely ate green vegetables.

What? Green vegetables are neuroprotective, enabling us to maintain a healthy memory and ability to learn longer in our lives, and we need that, and it's such a simple thing.

I'm not asking you to eliminate anything right now. I'm asking you to add something in. Make sure that every day, no matter what, you get your two. Get your two.

That's all I'm asking, get your two servings in. And for me, I'm always looking at creative ways to just make sure that I'm getting those greens in, especially for my family as well.

And so that's number one, is this really interesting study. This was, again, Chicago's Rush University Medical Center.

Now, participants in this study who ate two servings a day had brains that were roughly eleven years younger compared to those who consumed fewer greens. Alright?

Eleven years younger. You can ensure that your brain is eleven years younger by getting those two servings in.

Again, just layering the necessity to do this one simple thing.

So what greens are we talking about? This could be kale, spinach, collard, mustard greens, beet greens; so many to choose from. Bok choy. Have you tried bok choy? So many different ones to choose from.

So one of the things about our genes is that our genes really love variety, and we see that, and we've talked about this on past episodes about how even changes in seasons affect what our genes are doing.

And correlated with that is the nutrition that comes along with the change in seasons, and the more that we're mixing, and matching, and adding in different foods based on the season that we're in, we see different and better results with our genetic expression.

And we talked about that on an episode dedicated to fortifying the immune system, which we'll put in the show notes for you as well. Alright?

So get yourself a plethora of different greens, and get two servings in each day at minimum. Alright?

How do we do that? This is the strategy. Get it in for breakfast. That's a really simple way to go about this so that we can just kind of relax on it a little bit the rest of the day if we could just get it in in the morning.

And that's what I really want to encourage people to do, is to make sure we've got that breakfast handled, because in our culture, we see breakfast is really dessert.

Alright? Let's just be honest right now. Alright? Breakfast is really dessert. So a lot of us - and myself included as I was coming up - I would eat things like muffins, which is just cake.

What is a muffin? It's just a little cake. I'm eating cake for breakfast. If you were to tell somebody that I eat cake for breakfast, they would tell you that's very unhealthy.

But because we give it the name 'muffin,' we don't think about it. Right?

And so these are the things we accept as normal, of course these crazy cereals, and sugary cereals, and things like that. That's what I really grew up on.

So we're starting our day with this crazy amount of sugar, where this is an opportunity- it's just another meal, but this is an opportunity to get some green vegetables in.

You know, if we're doing the veggie omelet, and then we have maybe a side of some sautéed kale, and a little bit of avocado.

That's how we can do this and stack- there's so many- we can make a vegetable stir fry to start the day. You know?

Maybe a little bit of protein of choice that goes in there, and maybe a little bit of some rice, or some sprouted brown rice, or some cauliflower rice, or whatever it is in a sweet and sour sauce.

We can make this experience enjoyable, but we can make sure we're getting those vegetables in. And for me, it's really about I'm getting it in the morning whether it's through a green smoothie, or through a kind of conventional or traditional breakfast.

Get those greens in you. So that's number one with get your nutritional security. That's number one here.

Another thing I want to talk about, and how important this is for ensuring that you are smarter and more successful, these ten daily habits, is ensure we're getting in our Omega-3's. Alright?

This cannot be stressed enough. We've talked about this several times on the show, but I want to take it a step further today because fats make up the majority of the tissue in your brain outside of something we'll talk about later.

But fats, when we're talking about those macronutrients - fats, proteins, carbohydrates - fats tip the scale in the majority of what your brain is made of.

Now certain fats are particularly important because they're able to cross the BBB. Alright? The BBB.

I'm not talking about Big Baller Brand. Okay? Shout-out to the Ball family. I'm talking about the blood brain barrier. Alright?

So not all nutrients we take in are able to make its way to the brain. Not all fats are, alright?

Specifically- and we talked about this with Dr. Lisa Mosconi, who is the author of the incredible book 'Brain Foods.' She's a neuroscientist and also integrative nutritionist, which is an incredible pairing, and the episode was just powerhouse. We'll put that in the show notes for you as well.

But she shared in her research- she's actually in the lab and looking at can these things get into the brain? And Omega-3's are critically important, and here's why.

Omega-3's are one of the critical components of the fatty membranes that make up the neurons in your brain.

So your actual brain cells, you need Omega-3's to make up the membrane. The membrane is really how these cells are communicating with each other, so it's kind of important.

There was a landmark study of 6,000 people published in the Archives of Neurology, and it found that people who consumed low quantities of Omega-3's had a 70% greater risk of developing Alzheimer's. Alright?

This is the opposite direction of where we want to move. We want to make sure that we're on the other end of the spectrum.

Those who ate more than two grams a day of Omega-3's were unlikely in the study to develop a degenerative brain disease at all.

And something like that, you hear two grams, that's easily- if we're doing supplementation outside of food, a tablespoon of fish oil, you're covered. Right?

But let's take this a step further. We know that these Omega-3's are protective from mental decline, but can they actually make your brain work better?

And there was a notable five-year observational study that was published in the journal 'Neurology' in 2016, that found that older adults who ate at least one seafood meal per week performed better on cognitive skills test during the study period than people who ate less than one seafood meal a week. Just one.

Just get one in. Just get one in, and you get these benefits. Alright? Sustained cognitive performance. So let's talk a little bit about some of these sources when we hear about Omega-3's.

The big one that we know about is fatty fish. The top there, as far as the most dense source of these Omega-3's, is going to be mackerel. Alright?

Mackerel. You see how you've got to say it a little funny? Mackerel.

And mackerel and then right up there is going to be salmon. Lot of people- salmon is hot. It's hot, and it actually is cold because I think it's like a cold water- never mind.

And then it does- you know, it has that insulation. The fats keep the salmon able to do its salmon thing. Alright?

Now with that said, salmon also is a great source of astaxanthin, which supports the metabolism, or ensuring that the Omega-3's are not going rancid, which is a really cool aspect to the salmon.

And from there, we've got also sardines. Right? Sardines were thought to be, in some instances, like that's really kind of a low budget kind of deal. Well, it's actually one of the best sources of Omega-3's.

Also, anchovies as well. Now I don't know about you, but when I was growing up, why was anchovies an option on pizza ingredients?

Why was it even there? Please tell me. Okay? Who are these crazy people that are putting little fish on the pizza?

Matter of fact, outside of that, who's putting the pineapple on the pizza? Okay? Just be honest. If that's you, we just can't hang out.

I'm just kidding. We can totally hang out, but I'm not going to eat pizza with you. Alright? It is just- it's just not right.

But no disrespect. It's probably amazing for some people that have weird flavor inputs. But those are some great sources as well. Also obviously fish oil and fish oil supplementation.

Then we've got the plant sources. We've got walnuts, chia seeds, hemp seeds, flax seeds, and another source is egg yolks as well. It has a nice little bit of Omega-3's in there.

But just to take a note about the plant sources. This has to be clear right here, and plant Omega-3's do not function the same way that these animal sources of Omega-3's function in the human body.

Because when we're talking about Omega-3's in plant sources like hemp seeds, which I love, absolutely love, we're talking about ALA. Alright? What the brain really needs is DHA.

So we need EPA, DHA specifically. Here's the good news, is that your body can convert some of the ALA into DHA, but the bad news is that about 75% of the Omega-3's from the plant sources are lost in this process of conversion.

Alright? So it's just not the very best source. It's not an efficient source, so I want you to be mindful of that. Alright?

So for folks that are doing a vegetarian or vegan approach, a lot of folks are now using like algae oils, really concentrated algae oils or things like phytoplankton.

And as we move up to these microscopic shrimp, which is the krill oil, and like just kind of on your own ethical system and your belief system on where do you want to lie on that spectrum to make sure you're getting these Omega-3's because they're so important.

But you do need to have a strategy for this if you're doing a vegan or vegetarian protocol. Alright? So that's number one, guys.

We just drove in, hit a couple of critical- those two simple things is all I want you to do, those two simple things as far as adding in for you your nutrition.

These are the daily habits. That's number one. So let's head on to number two, and number two on our list is to get your move on. Alright? Get your move on.

Incredible research from Dr. Wendy Suzuki and her team at NYU has revealed that aerobic exercise contributes to the creation and maintenance of brain cells in the hippocampus, and this is the brain region that has huge roles in learning and memory.

We had Dr. Suzuki on the show, and I met her at a conference that we spoke at, and she's just the best. We'll put that episode in the show notes.

Telling you, she's so, so cool. I love her so much, and her work was just really an inspiration for me to look in because aerobic exercise- okay, I get that.

What about these other forms? And so we did an episode, a masterclass on the muscle brain connection, and from that research I was able to pull some more data on other forms of exercise to get your move on that can contribute to your ability to actually be smarter.

We'll talk about that in a moment, but how does this actually translate for people? That's the question. We talk about research from folks like Dr. Wendy Suzuki. Well, here's how it translates.

Students who exercise before class in this particular study improved their test scores 17% and those who exercised for forty minutes prior to taking their tests improved an entire letter grade just by being active, letting kids play, letting them run around. Recess. Recess is the bad.

Now listen, this is a true story. I remember when recess left my life. Alright? It was seventh grade. You know so we started the day, and I'm going through the day, I've got my classes.

You know, this is where now you're going to different classes, instead of staying with your homeroom teacher.

And at one point during the day, 7th grade, and I'm walking through and I see my friend. I'm like, "When is recess?"

He's like, "There's no recess, bro. What are you talking about?" Do you understand my spirit sunk. But I kept the straight face, right?

I kept the face on that everything was okay. It was not okay. How are you just going to take recess like that?

We should get some kind of a going away party for recess or something, you know? It's an important part of my life and now it's just gone. So letting kids get out there and play.

What about us adults? What about us big kids? So another study found that employees who exercise regularly are 15% more efficient in their work than those who do not.

Which means, and this is for- what the researchers kind of- when they consolidated the data, here's what they found.

They found that fit employees only need to work 42.5 hours a week to do the same amount of work that the average employee does in 50.

You're saving almost eight hours. What can you do with that eight hours? You could build an empire, alright?

This is just- and I'm serious about that. If you learn from folks like past guest Jamaal King, and what he was able to do with his extra hours he was saving as a full-time police officer, and now he's probably the wealthiest police officer in the country.

But he's also very giving of his knowledge, and of his time, and really looking at generational wealth, and how can he contribute?

And he's making just such a huge impact in his community, but also just- man, I mean he's now created jobs for just countless people.

And wow, such a great story. We'll put that in the show notes for you as well, so definitely check that out.

Those eight hours just could be time spent investing in your relationship, investing with your children, learning like we're talking about today. So wow, that's incredibly powerful.

Now, there was another randomized controlled trial published in The Archives of Internal Medicine.

This found that resistance training specifically promotes cognitive and functional brain plasticity. Right?

Plasticity, when we talk about this, we're talking about the ability of the brain to continue to grow and evolve.

Because when I was in college, we were taught basically the brain cells that you develop once you hit your mid-20s, that's it. It's just a downhill go of it from there.

Everything's just going to go down because you're not really creating any new cells in your brain. Not true. Now we know we have this neuroplasticity.

We can continue to have the brain grow, create new connections, and that's what it's really all about.

But we need to be conscious about this, and to work at this, and this is why we're going through this today.

So lifting weights is one of the things that actually contributes to that neuroplasticity. How powerful is that?

And so the minimum effective dose that I'm going to just toss out there for you to catch; two strength training sessions a week appears to be the minimum. Alright? So make sure we're doing a little bit of strength training.

My biggest advice is to make sure we're doing the exercise that we love. That's the number one form of exercise to be doing because the best form of exercise truly is the one that you'll do.

But also make sure get two strength training sessions in there. And there are so many flavors of strength training today, but find a way to find some joy in the strength training because it has some really, really powerful effects with your brain plasticity.

Alright, so let's go to another study. This was published in 2014 conducted at Georgia Tech, revealed that strength training for as little as twenty minutes - just twenty minutes - can improve long-term memory.

What the researchers did was they had study participants train legs for twenty minutes versus the control group who did nothing.

Two days later they had them do an image recall test, and the strength training test subjects outperformed the non-lifters by 10%. Outperformed them simply by having this leg day.

So of course we know there's memes out there. Never skip leg day. Okay? Not only will you be shaped like one of those weird looking suckers when you were a kid, like they had some rectangle ones. Why would you do that? Right? Rectangle sucker.

Not only that, you're going to have that shape, but you'll also be missing out on some brain benefits as well.

So make sure that we're hitting that leg day up, specifically for improvement to our long-term memory. Really, really powerful stuff.

I'll share one more with you as far as- because this is something that I first heard from my friend Jim Kwik, who's been on the show many times, and the statement that as your body moves your brain grooves.

You're creating these new connections in your brain through movement. It's one of the most powerful things that really keeps your brain young and vital and on fire. Just alive.

Another way that we go about this, this was a 2007 study conducted by German researchers, found that daily walking can significantly improve working memory.

And a Stanford study found that walking increased creative inspiration by an average of 60% versus sitting. The effect was evident while and shortly after walking anywhere from five minutes - just five minutes - to sixteen minutes.

This enhanced performance was a specific flavor of creativity called divergent thinking. Right? Divergent thinking. This is so valuable today.

This is one of the major factors that makes you a linchpin in an organization, something that cannot just be pulled out and tossed away. It makes you invaluable.

And also, if you are just doing the entrepreneur thing, this is what gives you that competitive advantage, is divergent thinking.

Because we tend to get caught in a problem or a way of going about something, and we really just keep running into that wall.

Divergent thinking allows us to take like a meta perspective and to see all of the different options in finding a solution. All the different paths to the goal.

You start to see more of those more clearly. Go for a walk. Go for a walk. That is incredibly powerful.

So that's number two on our list in our ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

And specifically, walking is that number one. We want to do this daily. Absolutely daily, and then sprinkle in some strength training throughout the rest of the week.

So let's move on to number three here on our list of the ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

Number three is to go with your gut. Go with your gut. Your gut- and we'll also call this the nickname or the pet name 'microbiome.' My little microbiome.

So your microbiome and your gut is responsible for producing and storing many of the hormones and neurotransmitters that we relate to brain health and performance.

For example, there are cells in your- also let's just put in parentheses, your gut is often referred to as the second brain, and also it's known as the enteric nervous system.

And this part of your body has so much neural tissue. We're talking like it has more neuro tissue, which is brain-like tissue, than your spinal cord does.

And it's just amazing. It's amazing. And these specific cells are producing neurotransmitters like serotonin.

It's known as this feel good neurotransmitter associated with a positive mood, and it's something that is often attacked with our conventional medicine today, as this is the issue with a lot of depressive symptoms. Right?

So SSRIs, right? Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors strive to make sure that serotonin is not metabolized and it stays active in your system more frequently.

Now what about are we producing adequate amounts of serotonin in the first place via these cells? Because upwards of 80% or even more of your serotonin is produced in your guts. Alright? In your gut.

So please understand. Please understand, it's super important. So in order for us to get smarter, more successful, we've got to make sure we're optimizing our microbiome and taking care of that environment to optimize things like serotonin.

So also via the connection between your gut and your brain, they actually talk a lot, and one of the main ways is through the vagus nerve. Alright?

Now this is an easy spot to say this, that what happens in Vegas doesn't stay in Vegas. I had to do it. I felt compelled to do it. Let me stop. Alright.

But here's the reality. Here's the reality is that these two entities in our body, which is in the same body, they always- they're incredibly connected and always communicating.

But the vagus nerve, about 90% of the data is sending information and/or commands from your gut to your brain, and not the other way around.

So your gut is determining a lot of the things that are happening with your brain and cognitive function. Alright? And we know that specifically because of the activity that has been studied via the communication from the vagus nerve. Alright?

So we've got to take care of our microbiome. Take care of our gut health. How do we do that? I'll give you a couple simple strategies here.

Number one, we eliminate the things that cause our microbiome so much damage. Things like haphazard antibiotic use. We've talked about this multiple times on the show.

Things like a diet that is even slightly high in processed foods, processed sugar, because these kind of low-level 'bad bacteria' or pathogenic bacteria, and viruses, and molds love, love these fake foods, and processed sugars, and things like that.

They love it. It helps them to stay in power. Contributing to this huge wave today that we're seeing in gut dysbiosis, and Crohn's disease, and colitis, and the list goes on and on and on, and just general IBS.

And it's partially over the years of feeding those opportunistic pathogenic bacteria. So removing a lot of the processed food out of our diet.

And another thing is even the water that we're drinking, being mindful of that, that here in this country for the vast majority of us, we have water coming through our faucet that is treated with chlorine, which is a very strong antibiotic. It kills bacteria.

You think it's picking which bacteria to kill in your gut if it's good or not? Absolutely not. Absolutely not.

So just be mindful of that. We definitely want to, if we can, get yourself a water filter, and not just one that says it eliminates the taste and smell of chlorine, because it actually says that on some of these.

But something like a reverse osmosis system, where we are basically making like a clean slate with the water, and making it pure H₂O. Which I want to be clear, that's not what we want to drink though. Okay?

H₂O doesn't exist in nature by itself. It just doesn't. Water is known as a universal solvent, and so it's really the water that we would find in nature.

As we've evolved, the best water for us is going to be H₂O with other things dissolved into it. So, minerals. So we want to re-mineralize that water if you have an RO system. Get yourself some well water, or spring water, that kind of thing.

So just thinking differently about that so we can avoid damaging our microbiome, because water is one of the biggest things going in your gut.

Alright, so there's a couple of things to avoid so that we can really help to support the optimal function of our microbiome. That's number one.

Now what do we add in? We want to feed the good bacteria. So this could include eating fermented foods, and I recommend having one serving daily, or at least every other day, of a fermented food or beverage to keep supporting and bringing in that friendly flora into your gut.

So this could be anything from fermented veggies like sauerkraut and pickles, kimchi, to fermented beverages like kefir, and yogurts, and things of that nature. So whether it's dairy or non-dairy.

And these are just some simple things to be done for a very long time, and there's like the kefir, kombuchas, and those kind of things as well.

But you just want to be mindful about the sugar content because we don't want to be bringing that in and then also a nice dose of sugar for the bad guys to have party, too. Okay?

So I hope that makes sense. And in some instances, we might want to look at taking a high quality probiotic as well. So those are some tips and strategies to support the microbiome.

Eliminate the things that are hurting it, add in some things that support it, and we've got to make sure as well that we're consuming some resistant starch. Incredibly important because that is like the major food for your healthy bacteria.

So this could come in the form of certain types of beans. This can come in the form of things like Jerusalem artichoke and Tigernuts (this is not the nuts of tigers. It's the actual type of- never mind).

So Tigernuts, this could be even simple things, things we see on a daily basis like garlic and onions are supportive of healthy bacteria as well.

So making sure that we're getting some prebiotic resistant starch specifically, and this could even come from some certain types of grains.

I know that grains get a pretty bad rap today, and we've done masterclass episodes talking about some of the negative effects of a lot of the grains we consume, but there are some that are great for some people for supporting their microbiome.

So keep that in mind. We've got to do the right thing for you right now. So that's number three on our list of the ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful. Let's move on to number four.

Number four is to sidestep sugar. This is one of the most important things that's going to help you to become smarter and more successful, as you'll see.

Now, even though the brain itself- because first of all, sugar (i.e. glucose, what is going to get converted to our bodies), your brain needs some of that in order to function.

There are certain parts of the brain that cannot run on ketones. It needs glucose. And so even though the brain only accounts for about 2% of your bodyweight, is gobbling up over 20% of your daily caloric intake to keep it running.

And it's because the brain is so rich in nerve cells, and it's the most energy demanding organ, using one half of all of the glucose that you're bringing in, if you're bringing in a 'normal' amount, or sugar that you're bringing in.

And brain functions such as thinking, memory, learning are closely linked to glucose levels, and how efficiently the brain uses this fuel source. You don't need a lot.

You need some, and you want to make sure that it is efficient sources of this. Now according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average American consumes - listen to this - 156 pounds of added sugar every year. What?

That is mind-blowing. Mind-blowing. 156 pounds average American consumes of added sugar. This is not- I want to be clear because the keyword here is 'added.'

A healthy nutritional approach is going to incorporate a significant amount of naturally occurring sugar / carbohydrates in the form of fruits, certain types of legumes, and grains, and things of that nature. Vegetables as well is a source of carbohydrates. They're carbohydrate dominant as well.

The problem is that we're chronically consuming so much added sugar. That's really the issue, and this can really do a number on your brain, and here's why.

A study published in the journal Neuroscience uncovered that a diet high in added sugar reduces levels of BDNF - that's brain-derived neurotrophic factor - and reduces those levels specifically in the hippocampus, which again, this is the part of the brain that is largely involved in your memory and learning.

You do damage to that with this added sugar. And on top of that, BDNF is involved in memory formation itself. It's involved in growth and differentiation of your nerve cells, and a whole lot more.

It's often referred to as like 'miracle grow' for the brain because it's so supportive of the growth and development, and even the differentiation.

So making sure that these brain cells are able to become different things as well. So BDNF is important in that, and low levels of BDNF are associated with dementia, depression, and Alzheimer's as well.

Now this whole conversation we had recently with Dr. David Perlmutter, and he brought forth this understanding that there is a big connection between belly fat and the size of our brains.

There was a brand new study that was published last month in the journal Neurology that sought to find out the connection between our waist size and the size of our brains.

The researchers found that as the size of our waist gets bigger, our brains get smaller. As the size of our waist gets bigger, our brains get smaller. Direct correlation.

Specifically they found it was the grey matter of our brains, which is responsible for things like executive functions, muscle control, sensory perception; all these things are going to be involved with that grey matter, and you're losing it as our belly is increasing.

And the number one contributing factor to that today is added sugars. That's the number one thing. That's the number one thing.

It's a survival mechanism because your bodies create- our body fat is an organ. It's an organ that's producing hormones, that's communicating with the rest of our body, and this is something that your body is doing to protect you in a sense.

It's putting it in the least harmful spot that it can by putting it around your waistline essentially as a storage place.

It's not that your body wants to do that as an optimal ideal thing for your survival and your fitness - not just surviving, but thriving - but it's a survival response that your body's trying to do to support you.

And the big issue with that of course is it can lead to insulin resistance, and diabetes, and heart disease, and cancer, but also dementia and Alzheimer's.

And literally we know now that your brain is going to shrink as your waist gets bigger. So what do we do? This is where we get to the action part of this.

It's not that we're not going to have some added sugars here and there, but if that's the basis of our diet, that's a problem.

Because 156 pounds- there are people who are consuming maybe ten pounds, and then there's people who are consuming hundreds and hundreds, 300-400 pounds. Alright?

So if you're in the camp of somewhere on that spectrum, we just need to be mindful of just continuing to take a step back. Let's take a step back and work to eliminate these processed foods. Alright?

If it comes in a package, we just need to be a little bit more cautious. Eat more real foods and create amazing meals out of that.

And even shopping and buying from people and companies that are creating meals that are using real food as well. Alright? So let's do that.

But here's the biggest thing. The number one contributing factor to these added sugars, and thus our growing waistline, and thus our shrinking brains, is liquid sugar. Liquid sugar.

What's the number one form of liquid sugar that folks are consuming? You know it. It's soda, right? Soda. It's soda, okay?

We did an episode. If you've not listened to this episode, or you should re-listen to this one. You're going to love it. You're going to love it.

It's the story of soda. Listen to that episode. It's got the whole deal about the sodas from the very beginning to where we are today. And I would recommend checking out that episode right after this one.

I really, really love that episode and put a lot into it for you. So the story of soda, and you find out that we're talking for an average soda, fifteen teaspoons are going into a regular size soda. Right?

And then we think that, "Okay, I'll do a little better and I'll have my Naked Juice," and we find out that these bottled juices and smoothies, that we're looking at fifty plus grams of sugar in these beverages. Right?

So we've got to be mindful of that and start paying attention because that liquid sugar, guess what? It just hits your system harder and faster than anything else because there's no barrier.

It's literally just going right into your system. It's going to get into your blood within a matter minutes. Alright? And that cannot be good.

So that's what I want you to do, be mindful of consuming liquid sugar specifically. So even if you're doing the healthy thing, making your green smoothies, be cautious about that and make sure that we're erring on the side- when we say green smoothie, that means green. Like focus on the green.

And the sweet part, the sugar part, even if it's a better quality sugar, be it some fruit, be mindful of that. We don't want to just be consuming a lot of liquid sugar. So that is the action step for that one. Alright?

So these are our ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful. So this one is we're throwing the stiff arm to the sugar, right? We're throwing the- hitting with the stiff arm.

We walk by the company that's got the doughnuts out, hit the stiff arm. But the thing is, we won't even be attracted to it if we're making sure that we are nourished and we're eating real incredible foods that give us joy. Right?

So you've got to give yourself permission to do that. And even some of these things, we upgrade them. Right?

So even if you're just super into brownies, you're super into brownies, like brownies are your thing. We've got some sweet potato brownies for you, right?

We can get some high quality carbohydrate source in there along with the texture and the flavor sensations that you're really looking for.

And it's not- of course you're not going to do the brownie every day, every day, but these are something that you can add in and get some benefit along with the deliciousness. Right?

We've got to have the driving force be joy. Alright? So I hope that makes sense, and that is number four on our list. Let's move on to number five.

Number five on a list of ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful, number five is to be mindful of social media.

This is a pervasive thing in our world today that we've never experienced throughout human history. It's very new and we're just starting to get some preliminary and early studies on what is this doing to our brains?

What is this doing to our ability to perform at a high level? There was a recent study conducted at the University of Copenhagen that found that many people suffer from what they call Facebook envy.

With these people who are abstaining from using the popular site reporting that they actually feel more satisfied in their lives.

Now what happens when we derive our sense of value based on how we're doing relative to other people who are just showing the highlights, the very best things of their life, every day. What does that do to our sense of value?

It starts to create this very interesting schism where we are not really understanding our innate value because we're comparing ourselves to something- some kind of artificial ideal of what we should be doing, and not really looking within for our joy, for our understanding, for our sense of purpose and value.

Another study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology assessed over 5,000 test subjects and found that overall regular use of Facebook had a negative impact on the test subjects well-being. Alright?

Now I'm not picking on Facebook. Facebook is Facebook, I like Facebook, but we've got to keep this stuff in proper perspective.

Yet another study carried out at the University of Pennsylvania and published in The Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology found that using social media less often than you normally would leads to significant decreases in both depression and feelings of loneliness.

Study participants were asked to either continue their normal use of Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram, or to limit each one to ten minutes per day, which was thirty minutes total, and they were also using an app usage tracker.

The test subjects who limited their use experienced less anxiety, less depression, and less of this new term that's out there in the Interwebs is FOMO. So they experience less FOMO, which is this fear of missing out, after they became more conscious of their social media usage.

There it is, and this is just the beginning. We do not know the long-term effects because some folks out there are literally just living through social media, and some of us are casual users that have found ourselves progressively using it more and more and more, and just getting caught up and lost in that world, and not understanding what is it doing to your brain and your performance?

And I want you to take back control. I want you to be free; free to use it, but also free from it, because it's got some grips in you that I don't think that you're quite aware of right now.

And the more information comes out, we're really going to start to see some things changing.

But let's start with this, and talk about the connection because I've talked about this before. We've got to admit something before we even get into this. Alright?

Now again, I like Instagram, I like Facebook, Twitter, all that good stuff. But I've seen it even in my own life that it can really start to kind of put its hooks in you and you don't even realize it.

And why this happens is the dopamine and opioid connection. Alright? now dopamine is this big driver of seeking reward. It drives us to seek and to look for things, and it's a big part of human evolution.

Like if dopamine wasn't present, we wouldn't be pressing, we wouldn't be pushing ourselves and searching and looking for better.

Now the issue is that today we've got pretty comfortable life structures, and these parts of the brain still are very, very strong, and the Internet is a perfect trap for the dopamine driven human brain.

Because there's always something to look for, always forever, social media specifically, because we can constantly keep searching and looking for things, and looking for things.

But if you don't find something, you'll go crazy, right? You have to find- you need the reward. You have to find it. You have to find something.

And so when you do find something, you get a little hit from your opioid system. It's like that little slow drip of morphine, make you feel a bit good, a little bit more stimulated and happy.

It's so subtle though, but social media is a perfect trap for that because every time you look for something, you find something.

You scroll, seek, find, seek, find, seek, find. And for a lot of us, instead of us getting the six pack abs, like our thumbs, they're like doing this workout, right? Your thumb's got a six pack on it. Right? Look, my thumb has a nine pack. My thumb is Batman.

Alright? Shout-out to all the people who've watched the Lego movie, the Batman Lego Movie. My man Batman has nine abs apparently.

So please understand that this is something that's going on for all of us every day. We cannot help it. It's how our brains are hardwired.

So we seek, find, seek, find, it's creating this very powerful feedback loop that keeps us wanting to come back for more because we're getting this pleasure, we're getting this reward, and it's very subtle but it's very addictive.

So that's one of the parts that we're up against, but also you've got to understand this, and there's been these incredible exposes on what's going on at these some of these organizations, these social media companies.

And I'll put one of them that I watched recently in the show notes for you, but basically they've got hundreds of engineers working right now, right at this very

minute, to make sure you stay on their app. They're working day and night to make sure you do not leave their app.

They're trying to figure out everything they can to make sure you spend as much time as possible in their world. Alright? And you think you're free?

'It's not a big deal, I use it when I want to.' No, it's probably not the case.

Because what tends to happen is- and here's how we get into some of the research, and again, these are ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

We've got to improve our attention span because today more than ever our attention is the most valuable commodity in the market. Alright?

And what happens with social media and our addiction to our devices is these 'just checks.' We start having a lot- this condition where we have these 'just checks,' right?

I'll just check my phone real quick. Supposed to be writing, or doing something for work, 'Let me- I'll just check my phone.' We don't even think about it. You just grab your phone and take a look.

A lot of times we grab our phone, scroll to an app, boom, hit it. You're there before you know it. Right? These 'just checks.'

Now here's the issue. Research from the University of California Irvine observed knowledge workers in real offices and found that an interruption, even if short, even if short, we're talking like a matter of seconds, this interruption delays the total time required to get back on track and to complete the task by a significant amount. Alright?

It's something called attention residue. When you get distracted by your devices, it's not that you just go right back to what you're doing.

It takes time to get back into that mental pattern where you're doing your work efficiently. Okay? There's this attention residue. Alright?

It's something also referred to as a switching cost that takes place when you go from one thing to the other.

So we're coming out with a net loss in our work. We can be accomplishing so much more with so much more flow if we have some parameters for us and our social media.

So that's what I want to provide you with today because I think it's one of the biggest things today to ensure these daily habits that make you smarter and more successful, because I want you to free yourself.

And we talked about this with Cal Newport and his phenomenal book 'Deep Work.' We'll put that episode in the show notes for you.

But we live in an information economy today that is becoming increasingly complex, and to remain valuable in this economy today, the ability to focus and to learn is of the utmost importance.

And this deep work also enables us to create work that is more valuable and meaningful. That's something that's incredibly valuable today versus work that is mediocre.

People want greatness. Mediocrity is what's going to happen when we're hyper distracted. So how do we do this? Some simple parameters?

Number one, set aside time for undistracted deep work so you can execute. So set aside that time where your phone is just not around.

And let's actually dive in and talk about what that looks like. Alarms and chimes. We're like Pavlov's dog. Right? The chime goes off, the alarm goes off, the bell goes off, 'Is that my phone? Is that your phone?'

We're trained. You think you're controlling your phone and your phone controls you.

And so if you've got chimes and alerts for Instagram, and for your e-mail, and for Facebook Messenger, all of that has trained you to be distracted.

So to take back control, take the notifications off of these apps, and even your email.

You go to your email and check your email on your time rather than when someone else wants your time. Take back dominion. Free yourself. Alright? Turn those notifications off.

And I'm just going to tell you, these apps when you do that, they're very aggressive in trying to get you to turn the notifications on.

They'll keep throwing it at you but just, 'No, no, no, no thank you. No thank you, I'll do it on my time. Not your time.' Alright? So do that.

Also if you've really got it bad, you and the phone just like you guys can't be apart and you want to reduce your attention residues and these 'just checks' and be able to do deep work, when you're needing to focus, keep your phone away from you.

Alright? Literally when I come into my office, I put my phone across the room on a bookshelf, and I'm several feet from it.

So if I want to check my phone, I literally have to physically stop what I'm doing, walk over, and go get it. And in that amount of time, you can realize rather than this unconscious pattern of just picking your phone up. Alright?

So I hope that makes sense. Just physically put it away from you so you can engage in your deep work. Alright? I promise the world's going to be all right.

You're not going to miss anything that is critically important. 99.9999% chance everything's going to be all right, the world's not going to end if you put the phone away from you for a small amount of time to focus and do your deep work. Alright?

Also last thing is in this particular one for number five on our list, and this is an actual strategy to employ, and this is having morning and evening phone-free time.

Morning and evening phone-free time. I want you to choose execution first. Execute on your goals, accomplish the things that you want to get accomplished before you even pick up your phone. Right?

Now if you're like me, that phone is very attractive in the morning, you know? And so until you break this pattern.

So take care of your morning success routine first. Do the things that set you up for health and success in the day and getting great work done. Get yourself set up. It just might be thirty minutes before you pick your phone up. Right?

You go, and you drink your morning water, you do your meditation, you do your reading, whatever it is, your success ritual, then go to your phone. Do you first.

Don't start your day taking care of everybody else's agenda for you who's come into your inbox, because you pick your phone up, or you see your texts or whatever, and you start responding to that to start your day.

Now a lot of successful people I know, the majority don't do that. They don't pick up their phone first thing. There are some who do, alright?

You might be an anomaly that can do that and still create the life of your dreams. Today I would recommend not trying to do that, not putting yourself in that camp, because it's very, very difficult to do. Alright?

Take care of you first so you can show up better for everybody else. Alright? So morning free time and also in the evening.

We know that there's a huge impact with our devices and our sleep quality, so have a little bit of phone-free time before you go to bed as well.

So those are some daily strategies, daily tactics and habits to make you smarter and more successful. And let's move on to number six.

Number six on our list is to invest in real connections. In real connections. Social media can give the facade that we're connecting, and we are, we absolutely are on some levels, but there's a human need that is not being met there.

There's a little bit of a block or a barrier, something that we require, and that is real personal intimate connection.

The hippocampus that we've talked about is particularly vulnerable to chronic stress. It's particularly vulnerable to chronic stress. That can damage your hippocampus.

There was a study published in Scientific Reports that found that oxytocin - this is a hormone we produce - oxytocin protects the hippocampus, specifically hippocampal memory and plasticity.

That's powerful oxytocin. I like that. I like that. Thank you. Now here's something really interesting. Connection is critical to our brain development and maintenance of a healthy brain. We know this.

Oxytocin, which is also referred to as the 'love hormone,' or the 'cuddle hormone.' This promotes bonding between people and it's released when we're in close connection with friends and family.

That's how we produce more of it. Alright? We're not going to get that without investing in real connections.

There was another study, and this was published in the journal Regulatory Peptides that revealed that oxytocin has a calming effect on the brain and our nervous system, and it helps to reduce cortisol levels, and it even helps to promote better sleep.

All of those things when we release more oxytocin. You want a little bit of a hack here to boost your oxytocin? Give me a hug. Alright? Hug it out, alright?

A twenty-second hug has been found to provide a nice boost of oxytocin. Right? A twenty-second hug with somebody that you love. Right?

Hug your kid, hug your significant other, your best friend, your mom, whoever it is. That twenty-second hug, nice boost of oxytocin from that. Alright?

Now beyond that, beyond that touch itself, and in particular sex is one of the strongest ways to fortify your oxytocin levels.

And we just did a masterclass episode dedicated to the impact that sex has on your lifespan. And if you missed that one, what? We'll put it in the show notes for you. Make sure to check that one out as well.

And so what we were looking at in this episode- well one of the areas because we talked about the connection to heart health, to cancer prevention, and the list goes on and on.

But specifically in relationship to our brain power, there was a study done by a team of researchers at the University of Maryland that found that regular sexual activity not only triggers neurogenesis, which is the creation of new brain cells, but it also improves cognitive function, and you are literally creating new brain cells via having a healthy sex life.

Really, really interesting. There was another study that I talked about, and this was done by researchers at Rutgers University, who've been studying female orgasms for a quarter of a century, twenty-five years looking into this particular area of health.

And they recently concluded via a study using an fMRI, actually looking at what's happening in the brain, that for women, when women have an orgasm, there are about thirty areas of the brain that are lighting up, which that's correlating with an increase in blood flow, and nutrients, and oxygen reaching these different levels in areas of the brain.

And so just keeping this in context, I want you to understand that things like that are touted for improving blood flow, and circulation, and developing the brain like crossword puzzles, like Sudoku, and memory games.

Those things generally light up localized regions, right? Five, ten, maybe fifteen- maybe areas of the brain, whereas orgasm, wow.

So again, this is a part of this connection, and this is a big part of our daily habits is to connect. Not necessarily having sex, but we have to have connection. We need that, we require that in order to be at our very best. Alright? So invest in that.

Invest in it. Invest in the connection with your family members, with your friends, with your community, your extended family. Invest in those connections because that is one of the keys to making yourself smarter and more successful in many, many ways.

We've got number seven here. Number seven our list of the ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

Number seven is to sleep like you're getting paid for it. Alright? I'm doing the money hands right here if you can't see me on the video. Money hands. Maybe you can hear it, alright? Money hands.

Sleep like you're getting paid for it because you kind of are, because this is affecting your performance in whatever it is you're doing as your vocation.

So let's look at what's happening in the brain when we're sleep-deprived, and the abnormal things that take place that lead to less success, and that literally turn us into the Lloyd Christmas version of ourselves.

Alright. Shout-out to Dumb and Dumber. Alright? Hopefully you saw this classic. The new one? If you haven't seen it yet, don't. Don't see it, it's not a big deal.

I don't know if you saw, they did like a prequel to Dumb and Dumber. Now I don't know who gave the green light for that movie to get made, but you know, anyways.

Here's what they discovered. Researchers at UC Berkeley did brain imaging scans and they looked at what happens in the sleep-deprived brain versus a well-rested brain.

What they discovered was that just a short sleep debt resulted in hyper activity in the parts of the brain known as the amygdala and the limbic brain.

This part of the brain that is really more related to survival. Like this part of the brain was just lit up on fire.

It's not really concerned about much else than eating and having its way. Alright? So that part of the brain is lit up.

They also found that there was reduced- significantly reduced activity in the prefrontal cortex. So this is the part of the brain that is the more evolved 'human' part of our brain that really makes us who we are.

That's responsible for executive functions, and distinguishing between right and wrong, and social control, and so many aspects of things that we need in order to be successful today. That part of the brain shuts down. Alright?

So that can diminish your ability to make healthy choices in your communication, in your food choices, in your relationships, and the list goes on, and on, and on, and on, all because of being sleep-deprived.

Another thing that we want to be aware of when we're working to ensure the health and function of our brains is to be aware of this new thing, this new phenomenon that's being labeled cyberloafing. Alright? Cyberloafing.

There was a study published in The Journal of Applied Psychology that found that the less quality sleep people got the night before, the more they were likely to wander off from their assigned tasks.

And this is where the cyberloafing is. Instead of doing the thing that we're supposed to be doing, to execute on, whether it's your schoolwork or your work-work, instead getting on technology.

You know, spending time on YouTube and Facebook and all that stuff, and just surfing. Surfing the web. Surf. That's such an interesting thing. Have you ever thought about that? Surfing the web. Right?

Surfing is this interesting phenomena. We've got a board, we're out there on the water, got the wetsuit. How's that- how is surfing related to being on Internet? Am I missing something? Because I didn't get a board. I didn't get that.

Anyways. Now here's the number that they actually found, was that each hour of disturbed sleep, or not sleeping, each hour would result on average in cyberloafing during 20% of the assigned task.

So if they have an extra hour of disturbed sleep, then that would be 40% more incidents of cyberloafing. Alright?

So each hour correlated with 20% more cyberloafing. Really interesting, and I've experienced this. You've probably experienced too. You might not have paid attention to it, but we have a greater propensity to get off task when we're sleep-deprived, and that is not something that's going to lead you to being more successful.

This habit of being sleep-deprived and not getting the optimal sleep for our bodies is one of those things that we've really got to address today more than ever.

There was also a physician study, and this was published in The Lancet, that took physicians and they had them to complete a task, and then they sleep-deprived the physicians for just 24 hours, which is not abnormal in any measure.

They had them come back and complete the same exact task again to track their metrics of doing it while sleep-deprived.

First of all, they made 20% more mistakes doing the same exact thing, and it also took them 14% longer to do the same exact thing.

So we lost massive efficiency because when you're making mistakes, you've got to fix them.

And just think about that, how often we try to 'burn the midnight oil' and just keep hammering, and working, and grinding, and grinding, and not understanding we're

sacrificing the quality of our work and creating more time that we have to be spending on fixing problems and trying to come up with the right solution.

Things like divergent thinking we're missing out on because we're sleep-deprived. We just need to go to sleep. There's this term sleep on it. Sleep on it. Right?

And your brain, your subconscious is able to solve a lot more problems than we can sometimes consciously. But even more than that, it's just the overall function of your brain and really supporting that.

So how do we do this? We've done so many masterclasses on improving your sleep quality, and of course there's 21 clinically proven strategies in 'Sleep Smarter,' so if you haven't read 'Sleep Smarter,' you can also get it on audio book as well.

And I'm just very grateful to say even since the book has come out a couple of years ago, it's still regularly in the top ten best sellers in the health space on platforms like Audible.

So it's just super, super powerful, and grateful, and just so happy to see that it's changed the conversation out there in such a big way.

So definitely check that out, but just a really quick couple of tips is number one, the screen time with your evening routine. Create a- we know about the morning success routine, that's big in our culture.

Let's create an evening success routine, because a great morning and a great day starts the night before, because that's the determinant of your energy and your brain function the next day.

So have that screen-free time, that thirty minutes. Give yourself a 30-minute screen-free time before you go to bed.

Because according to Harvard researchers, what they found was that every hour you're on your device at night, you suppress melatonin for about thirty minutes.

And so even if you're unconscious, it doesn't mean you're getting high quality sleep and going through your sleep cycles efficiently, and making sure that your brain is actually being able to do things like short-term memory formation via your REM sleep, and the glymphatic working and eliminating waste products from your brain, and on, and on, and on, these processes that support your intelligence the next day if you're sleep-deprived.

So give yourself a little bit time, just thirty minutes, alright? Thirty-minute screen-free time, and fill that up with something that is of greater or equal value, because we're addicted to our devices.

Don't just sit there. This is a good time to quote 'unwind.' You could read if that really fills you up, journal, talk.

Actually talk to another person. You know, talk to your significant other. That might sound just like rogue. It might sound like a really cutting edge idea, but you could talk to somebody; your significant other, your kids.

Relax and even we talked earlier about the benefits of sex. You can get it in. Get off your device, get off social media, and connect. Alright?

So another tip here is to make sure that we're getting adequate sunlight. So innovations in clinical neuroscience found that getting sunlight in the morning was able to reduce cortisol levels in the evening.

Super powerful. Super powerful because cortisol is one of the things that if it's elevated, it has a suppressive effect on melatonin.

We need melatonin to regulate our sleep cycles. Alright? So getting access to natural light if at all possible during the day, it really sets the tone, because a great night of sleep starts when you wake up in the morning. So that's another little important thing.

And also for a lot of people, a lot of their sleep problems are related to the mattress that they're sleeping on. It's related to their bed, and we spend about a third of our lives in our bed.

If you think about it, that's crazy. That's a lot of time. Your bed matters. And we've talked about in the past the different issues with off-gassing from synthetic flame retardants and all these things that are used on conventional mattresses that have been found to- many of them have cancer forming properties. Alright?

So many of them are carcinogenic, including ones that are still used today, but some of them have been banned, like as early as even just in the 2000s, like 2003.

There was research published in Environmental Health Perspectives that revealed that PBDEs were found in alarming levels in U.S. mothers' breast milk.

And these were actually outlawed. They were banned in mattress use because they were used in mattress production for years.

So in mattresses that were produced before 2004. So they were eventually phased out, but some of those mattresses are still out there in circulation, which is just crazy to know that.

But the industry has just not been doing a good job of making sure that the things that are used to treat these mattresses are safe for humans.

Because what they found out in this research was that these chemicals are toxic to the liver, thyroid, nervous system. Again, banned. Alright?

There are still some issues with those things, but that's just a small part of this because a bigger conversation is we're talking about millions of people every single year are seeing their physician for sleep-related pain.

Sleep-related pain, a lot of times low back and hip pain specifically, because of something called mattress resiliency failing with their mattress.

They're getting the most fancy memory foams that degrade around 20% on average just within the first two years of having the mattress.

And your hips are the heaviest part of your body when you lay down, and it's causing people pain in their waking hours, not knowing that it's related to their mattress surface.

And so this is why for me, and I've been- it's been half a decade now that I've been sleeping on an Intellibed, and I got Intellibeds for the rest of my family as well.

Number one, none of those crazy toxic synthetic chemicals. So that in and of itself helps me to sleep better at night ironically, knowing that my kids are not being exposed to this stuff.

But more important than that- because especially when kids are smaller and developing, they're just more sensitive to those things than we are.

But for me, the Intellibed versus these fancypants memory foams, it's utilizing this patented Intelligel that has the industry leading mattress resiliency.

This is the number one wellness bed out there, and so much so that they have a 20-year warranty on the bed. 20-year warranty.

That's how much they believe in what they're doing. They've just been incredible. Just the customer service and taking care.

They've got awesome sleep specialists that you can talk to, and that's what I recommend for you to do.

Actually talk to one of their specialists so you can find out what is the right mattress for you rather than just like you just do something.

Find out which mattress is actually what your body needs right now. And you can check them out, it's www.Intellibed.com/modelhealth. That's www.Intellibed.com/modelhealth together as one word, model health.

And you get an exclusive discount only here at *The Model Health Show*, and you get free delivery of your mattress. Alright?

So the days of that whole industry, just the things that have been done these past few decades without question, those days are over. There's a big shift taking place now because we spend so much time in our beds, and this really does matter. Alright?

So head over there, check them out, www.Intellibed.com/modelhealth. Alright? Oh and one more thing. The Intelligel sleeps cool.

This is super important. It sleeps cool, it's thermoregulating. So whereas memory foams actually conduct heat, generate more heat, and we know how important thermoregulation is for our sleep quality, which we've talked about multiple times in the show.

Alright so again, check them out, www.Intellibed.com/modelhealth. Now let's jump into number eight here on our list of ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

Number eight is be hydrated or be devastated. Alright? Be hydrated or be devastated. This is one of the biggest devastating factors to our brains is dehydration, because in fact, your brain is mostly water.

So I'm not talking about the physical structure with the macro nutrients; the fats, and the carbohydrates, and the proteins. It's mostly water.

It is the largest portion of what your brain- the volume of your brain is made of. Alright? So in essence, you're a water head. You're a big water head.

That was a diss when I was a kid, but we are. You know? We all are water heads.

And what I want you to understand is that a part of the brain's cellular makeup itself is dependent and made from water. It helps to make the structure.

So your neurons, water-based. Neurotransmitters, water-based. Hormones, water-based.

And also their ability to move and communicate is all done throughout a water medium. This is how important it is for your brain health. Plus your brain's ability to communicate with the rest of your body.

So your brain communicating with the rest of your body depends most on water. Not some fancy nutrient, not some mystical thing that you're going to find in some pyramid somewhere. Water. Water.

A recent study that was published in *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* found that just a moderate level of dehydration in healthy test subjects led to impairment in task requiring attention, motor coordination, and executive function, which includes things like map recognition, grammatical reasoning, mental math, and things along those lines.

All of those things were impaired when folks were just moderately dehydrated. Bottom line: drink water. Your brain needs it. Super simple, but are you doing it?

We've got to make sure we're doing it. How much? How often? For me, I really love the ratio, just kind of setting that bar at take your body weight, divide that number in half, and that's the amount of ounces that you want to consume.

So if it's a 150-pound person, divide that number in half, seventy-five. Seventy-five ounces as that kind of just on ramp. Alright?

I really want to get to a place, and want you to get to a place where you listen to your body and your body's cries for water.

But for some of us, just that that signaling is a little bit off. So kind of setting a bar like that.

And I love the idea of getting water in first thing in the morning so that other things don't get in the way. Right?

You get yourself- especially when you wake up, you're dehydrated. It's one of the longest times you go without water, and your body's doing so many incredible processes, and there's a lot of metabolic waste accumulation.

And you'll know, even your urine is more concentrated because there's less water in your system, or clean water coming in.

And so I have this strategy that I've been talking about for many years of taking an inner bath.

So the first thing I've been doing for like fifteen years is I get up and I drink somewhere between- we'll say twenty and thirty ounces of water to start my day.

So if you want to, you can take that. Take this strategy. It's yours, and wake up, and do that.

Maybe you enjoy hot water with lemon instead, but get yourself hydrated first thing in the morning.

And the second thing is just keep the bottle with you. Look, I've got my bottle right here. Okay? I keeps it with me.

Just by being around, I'm going to have a tendency to drink more water. If I don't have my bottle, chances are I'm not going to drink more water. So keep the bottle with you, okay? Stay strapped with that bottle.

Now those are a couple of strategies for you to employ in our ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

We've got our last two right here and these are powerful. Powerful.

Number nine on our list is to enrich your environment. This is a daily habit to employ that will make you smarter and more successful.

A Princeton study found that when two individuals are in rapport, even if they don't know each other and they start to communicate, and just within a number of minutes, their brain waves literally start to sync up.

The brain subconsciously- this incredible thing behind the scenes that we don't fully understand yet, because we think we're so separate from nature.

We see the geese flying in this perfect triangle, and like this communication with bees, and all of these different things, and we think that we're not a part of that.

We have a connection as the human species that is unsaid, and now we're able to look at the brain and see what happens, and it's really fascinating.

So be mindful of the people that you're around because your brains are going to sync up, and you will inherently absorb the brain food from your environment.

Because it's not just you are what you eat. It's you are what you eat, drink, breathe, and what you think as well, because thoughts literally have physical structure.

They have physical substance that's created with the thoughts that are in your brain, and the things that you're allowing into your brain become physical. Super, super powerful.

And so knowing this, you want to get yourself around- if we want to be smarter and more successful, get yourself around smart people.

Get yourself around successful people. You will just be feeding on- it feeds your brain. It feeds your brain.

I love the statement that if you're the smartest person in the room, then you're in the wrong room. You're in the wrong room.

You've got to continue to stretch yourself and get yourself around things that continuously lift you up and provide more for you for your brain, because your brain is always looking for a way to evolve, to become more.

I think that's why we're here. It's a part of reason why we're here, and that's just my belief.

So if you're the smartest person in the room, you're in the wrong room. Another great statement that I love, and this is from Bill Waterson, and he says that experience is food for the brain. Experience is food for the brain.

So enrich your environment, get yourself around people that feed you positivity and good information.

And this might not necessarily be physical, but ideally we do a lot of that as well. So going to events as frequently as we can, meet-ups in your area, Mastermind groups, hopping on conference calls, webinars.

Whatever you can do to get yourself in a positive environment for your brain. Alright? And doing that on a daily basis. Okay?

So enrich your environment and even your work space, the place that's around you. Enrich your environment with things that keep your brain stimulated with positivity.

So that's number nine on our list. And finally number ten on our list of ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

Number ten is to learn something new. Learn something new every single day. Now one of the ways we can go about that is reading, and it's something that I do daily, and also audio books count, podcasts count as well.

But there's something really special about reading. Stanford University researchers have found that close literary reading, or this is for the purpose of study and intentional learning.

In particular, this form of reading gives your brain a workout in multiple complex cognitive functions, while pleasure reading increases blood flow to different areas of the brain.

So based on the type of reading, even if we're just reading a novel just because it's something that we're into, we're going to stimulate different areas of the brain than what we're doing for this kind of brain workout when it's for study and intentional learning.

Both matter, so let's employ some of that. Let's employ some of that. So whether you're reading or experiencing it, this was what the researchers said, the same

neurological regions of the brain are stimulated whether you actually experience it in real life or if you're just reading it.

That's why we get connected. We get connected to the books that we read. Same thing with movies and the things in our environment.

You know, there's a part of our brain that is basically simulating us being the character in the things that we're witnessing. Alright?

Books are incredibly powerful, and audio books, and things like that because you get put in the position, into the story, and it's just one of those things to take advantage of, to learn something new every day.

And this goes back for me to an experience that I had a couple of years ago. I spoke at an event that was put together by my friend, Jim Kwik, and it was really about learning and optimizing our brain health.

And one of the speakers- it's just crazy that I'm saying this. I shared the stage with Dr. Mark Hyman, and Jack Canfield, and Dr. Daniel Amen, and Quincy Jones. Quincy frickin' Jones.

Quincy Jones. Who is Quincy Jones? What? Who said that? You've got to know who Quincy Jones is. Just an absolute legend. Legendary producer.

He has a record eighty Grammy nominations. Alright? Thriller. Thriller. He worked with Michael Jackson. Thriller.

We Are the World. The list goes on and on, on that side, but also a lot of folks don't know about the movie side. Alright? Iconic.

I mean he- if you talk to them - Oprah, Will Smith - they would tell you that he was a major reason - Quincy Jones was - that they are the people they are today.

The Color Purple. Oprah's first movie, and what she went through to get that role, and that changed the trajectory of her life because from there, The Oprah Show exploded. It exploded.

The Fresh Prince of Bel Air. Alright? Will Smith is arguably the biggest movie star at certain times on the planet, and Quincy Jones recruited him.

He's the one that told him, "You are the person for this. We're going to build something around you," and look at what happened with that.

So anyways, to hear him speak, it just was so riveting. Every single word is just- there's so much wisdom coming off of that.

He knows like over like twenty languages because of the places he's lived for music, right? Not to mention all the albums that he's created himself for his own music.

But just very intelligent and inspirational and wise. And here's a couple of things that I learned from him. And this is, again, about learn something new daily.

This was one of the things that he taught me. Number one. He said to keep learning. Keep learning, because that's how you keep your mind young. Right?

He's been on the planet many decades, and for him, this is something that he strives to do daily, is to keep learning, and he feels that that is what's keeping him and his mind young.

Another thing that he shared was to create things. Create things. This is important for us to do daily because this keeps our mind engaged and sharp because as you're creating things, you are learning. It's like a mental gym for us as we're creating.

So this could be you're writing things, you're creating music, you're creating programs, you're creating foods in different recipes. Right?

Find ways to create something. You're creating projects, you're building things out of metal or wood. Create things. Create things. He shared that and I really- when he said it, it like really hit me.

Another thing that he shared was to strive to be better and to be a better person.

He felt this was critical for his success over the years. It's not just being better at being a producer of movies, and films, and as a philanthropist, but being a better person.

Being a better person was a big part of the recipe. In fact, at the end there was a Q & A session, and somebody in the audience asked him what has made him so successful working with all these different artists ranging from Aretha Franklin, to Michael Jackson, to Paul McCartney, and the list goes on and on.

And he said, "Love, baby." That was my Quincy Jones, he said, "Love, baby."

And he said love and respect. Love and respect, and when he said it again, like I felt it. This is the secret that shouldn't be a secret.

It's just having that love and respect for the people that you're working with because in many senses, we a lot of times don't even have that same level of respect for our significant other that we might have for somebody who's getting your coffee, and we expect this to be successful.

So love and respect. That's a secret ingredient to be able to work with so many people and make magic happen, so employ that.

And one other thing that he shared that really just floored me, really blew my mind, was this statement that he shared, and he learned this from a mentor himself.

And he said that your music can never be less or more than you are as a human being. Your music can never be less or more than you are as a human being.

So it's about developing yourself as a human being. It's about developing yourself as a person and becoming a better you.

That's going to enable all of the higher level things to come from you. So that's what it's really about.

And so in closing today, I really want to make sure that you are employing these things and becoming committed to being a life-long learner.

Never feel that you've got everything figured out, continue to be curious, continue to be optimistic, ask questions, and continue learning. Make it a daily part of your life.

Alright? So I hope you enjoyed this episode, ten daily habits that will make you smarter and more successful.

And if you did enjoy, please share this out with the people that you care about on social media, and of course you could tag me and let me know what you thought of the episode.

And listen, I appreciate you so very much. I started this with appreciation and I'm going to end this with appreciation because I do this for you.

I do this for you, and I want to see you win. I want to see you being the best version of yourself so that you can get out there and create the incredible things that you're here to create.

Alright? That's what it's really all about; you uncovering your unique gifts, and talents, and capacities, and a big part of that is going to be derived from the things that we talked about today, and really optimizing your brain and optimizing your health.

So thank you so much for hanging out with me. I appreciate it immensely. 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.