

EPISODE 343

The Paradox of Progress & The Life-Changing Laws of Emotion – With Guest Mark Manson

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

I'm on the road in NYC right now working on a couple of special projects which I want you keep your eyes and ears out for.

And one of the crazy things is that Amazon, the Amazon reached out to me a couple weeks ago and invited me to come out and to film a show for Amazon Prime.

And I know you're thinking like, "It's Shawn going to be an actor?" No, I'm not talking about that kind of show.

It was more of a value add and kind of a documentary dictation of some of the content from 'Sleep Smarter.'

So over the last few years, and I'm very grateful to say this, we're actually coming up here now on the three-year anniversary of 'Sleep Smarter' coming out.

It seems like it's maybe been a year, but time has just flown by and it's created an absolute movement. I'm very grateful for that.

And it's been the most reviewed, highest rated book on sleep wellness, and so I guess that got their attention and they reached out and wanted to have me come in.

So that was fun, and keep an eye out for that. I'll definitely share some information on that.

And while I'm here, I want to hook up with my friends, and this guy that I have on the show for you today, I met him a couple of years ago at an event.

He didn't know who I was, I didn't know who he was. I just knew he was a really awesome person, and we just clicked. You know?

We had a great time and talked about probably way too many crazy things. I think we even talked about Game of Thrones maybe, which we'll get to in a second.

But man, this episode I'm so excited for, because his new book is one of the best books of the year by far. You definitely, definitely are going to want to check it out.

And before we get to it, being on the road and traveling, I just came back from literally another country, then I came home for two days, then I bounced over to another time zone here in NYC.

And so me being somebody who's put so much information out and dedicated to my own sleep wellness, I need to have those strategies in place beforehand.

And so one of the big things, and something so simple that so many people are missing out on, is taking advantage of specific supplementation when you're traveling.

For me, I kind of reserve a lot of the stuff for when I'm traveling, but the thing that I brought with me, I do pretty much every day, 365, because of how valuable it is.

And it's simply making sure that my magnesium levels are up to par. And so check this out.

There's a double blind placebo controlled study, and this was published in the Journal of Research in Medical Sciences. And again, double blind placebo controlled is the gold standard of study.

And they looked at the placebo group, and then a group who was taking magnesium, and all these folks had chronic sleep issues, AKA insomnia.

And here's what happened when they did the magnesium supplementation. Number one, they dramatically- and this is what the researchers said.

Statistically significant increases in sleep onset, so that means they fall asleep faster, overall sleep time improved, sleep efficiency, so their sleep cycles were more efficient, and they also had improvement in objective measures.

So they actually were objectively testing their melatonin improved, and reduced serum cortisol, all from magnesium. Alright?

Something so simple. And guess what the number one mineral deficiency is in our country? Magnesium. Alright?

So for me, I do employ food first, magnesium-rich foods, anything green is going to be helpful, but magnesium is responsible for so many things, about 325 biochemical processes.

It can get zapped from your system pretty quickly, and so I look to oral supplementation. So there's great products out there for that.

But here's the problem, and I want you to be aware of this because I don't want any surprises.

You do the oral supplementation, little magnesium powder, and you take a little bit too much, and then you've got disaster pants, AKA you poop yourself, AKA it causes diarrhea. So you've got to be careful about that.

But for some people could help to nudge things along a little bit. But just be aware, it pulls water to your bowels, so you have to be careful about that.

This is why it's so difficult to get your magnesium levels up via oral supplementation, and why I use a topical magnesium. Alright?

I use a sprayable magnesium from Ease Magnesium from Activation Products, and I've been using it for at least half a decade.

I absolutely love that stuff. Helps with recovery, obviously helps improve sleep quality, and I travel with it.

It's a little bottle, I throw it into my- what is it, the toiletries bag? I throw it in there and I even travel with it.

And I definitely, definitely recommend it. I just get so many stories about people that start using it, about how it's improved their sleep or improved their recovery.

For some folks, it even gives them energy throughout the day, just getting their magnesium levels up.

But it's a calm natural energy just because your system is working right. So definitely check it out. It's www.EaseMagnesium.com/model.

That's www.EaseMagnesium.com/model, and you get 15% off of the Ease Magnesium. Alright? So definitely head over there, check it out.

It's one of my favorite things for sure, travel with it, definitely helps with sleep wellness. Alright? So pop over, check it out, and on that note, let's get to the Apple Podcasts review of the week.

Apple Podcasts Review: Another five-star review titled 'Addicting,' by SierraSikash.

"This podcast was recently recommended to me by a friend, and I cannot stop listening to it. The episode with Dr. Jolene Brighton and the episode on heart disease were so informative and eye opening.

I was healthy before, but I am learning as I listen, and implementing the knowledge into my own life and my children's lives as I go."

Shawn Stevenson: Wow. Thank you so very much for sharing that review with me over on Apple Podcasts and for sharing with everybody.

And also, that's an incredible story, and that's really why we do what we do, is to not just impact our own lives, but the lives of the people that we care about.

So thank you so very much, and everybody, if you've yet to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcasts, leave a review for the show, or whatever platform you're listening on.

Leave a review. Even if you're watching, hanging out in the studio with us, leave a comment. Subscribe. Alright? And I appreciate it so very much.

And on that note, let's get to our special guest and our topic of the day.

Our guest today is Mark Manson, and he is a writer, entrepreneur, and self-help author that takes an entirely different perspective on life advice.

His mega hit New York Times bestselling book, 'The Subtle Art of Not Giving A Fuck' took the world by storm, and has impacted the lives of countless people around the world.

And he's just a really great guy, and when I met him, I was like, "But he does give a fuck," you know? I didn't understand the connection, but it's a subtle art to it.

And that book has just been a game changer, but his new book, oh my goodness, I'm just loving it so much.

And it's called, 'Everything Is Fucked' and it's subtitled 'A Book About Hope.' And I'd like to welcome to *The Model Health Show*, my man, Mark Manson. What's up, man?

Mark Manson: Thanks for having me, dude.

Shawn Stevenson: It's my pleasure, man.

Mark Manson: It's good to be here.

Shawn Stevenson: Very, very happy to have you. So are you from NYC?

Mark Manson: Originally, no. I grew up in Texas. Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: So what brought you here?

Mark Manson: Getting out of Texas. I mean, no offense to anybody in Texas.

Shawn Stevenson: No offense. I love many places in Texas.

Mark Manson: Yeah, it just wasn't the right fit. I'm an East Coast guy.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. Like I just kind of felt that you fit here. You know what I'm saying? You have that vibe.

Mark Manson: Yeah. I went to school in Boston, and probably like the first week, just this young Texas kid, I'm walking around Boston, everybody's like, "Hey, what's your problem?" You know? And I'm like, "I like this place."

Shawn Stevenson: So we was just talking before the show. So man, just amazing what happened with your last book.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And you were sharing that something took place that we've kind of been talking a little bit about, which is people achieve this massive success that they've been working towards, and then they either get depressed or like a spiritual awakening or something takes place.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And you had something happen?

Mark Manson: Yeah, it messed with me. So to give a little context, I started writing online and marketing online probably like 2008.

And I was doing the same thing that a lot of people do; a lot of affiliate stuff, and blogging, and creating sales letters, and stuff like that.

And you know, kind of in the back of my mind, I always kind of had this dream of like, "I'd love to have a book, love to be like a real author one day."

And so I worked for years, and years, and years, and built this big following online, and then eventually like got my shot. Got a book deal.

And that book was 'Subtle Art.' And so when you're young, I was like twenty-nine, and when you're young and an aspiring author and it's your first book, you've got this whole list of like dreams and goals in your head.

You're like, "Yeah, one day I'd love to be like on The New York Times. And you know, one day I'm going to sell a million books. And one day I'm going to be on TV," and like all this stuff.

And the book came out, and basically that list of dreams in my head, I hit every single one in like three months.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow.

Mark Manson: Which is incredible. See, this is the thing that's so messed up about this, is like everything that happens to you is so incredible, but people don't realize that once you achieve all your dreams, you have no dreams anymore.

And so you wake up and you're like, "Well, why get out of bed? Like, I already accomplished everything since I was twenty that I dreamed about. Like there's nothing else for me to accomplish."

So I fell into this like really weird kind of depression or like malaise, but it's strange because you can't really tell people about it.

Because if you start telling people, you're like, "Yeah man, I'm having trouble getting out of bed in the morning." And they're like, "Dude, you just sold a million books. Like, what the hell are you talking about?"

And so that's just kind of- like you feel very- it feels very alienating for a while because people don't understand like what you're going through.

And so yeah, it messed me up. It messed me up for about a year, and I had to find new dreams, and new goals, and new projects, and really kind of just like re-discover myself, I suppose.

Shawn Stevenson: Man, you know what? And I'm assuming that this is kind of the seed of this new book.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: Because I know that- and hopefully there's going to be a third book in this series and genre. I mean, you've created a movement already.

Mark Manson: Yeah. Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: But you know, with this one, I think it was- is it a little bit more personal?

Mark Manson: Yeah. Well it's ironic because 'Subtle Art' was full of personal stories, you know? So I talked about my breakups, I talked about my family problems, I talked about my friend dying.

But I had been talking about those things for so long that it wasn't- it didn't feel like emotionally super vulnerable when I wrote it.

Whereas this book, I don't talk about my life at all, but it is super personal because it's kind of- the first chapter I talk about how hope is kind of like the fuel of our mind.

Like if you don't have hope for anything, then you literally feel no reason to do anything. You know? It's like hope is this vision of some better future for yourself.

And if you don't have that vision, then it's like, whatever. Just eat Cheetos and watch TV all day. Like it's nothing matters.

And so that kind of- that starting point, I wanted to write about it, because I felt that. You know?

It's like I was literally sitting around playing Zelda like twelve hours a day, and like every time I looked at my bank account, it's like just exploding with money.

And I'm like, "This is insane." Like what? I really didn't know what to do with myself.

Shawn Stevenson: And so people- a lot of people that would hear that would just be like, "That doesn't even sound right. Like I would be out doing such and such."

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: But every single person listening has experienced this, which is something you talk about in the book, is the paradox of progress.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: As we've grown as a society, everything has gotten better. Like if we really- there are so many shows about this stuff now.

There's a show on Netflix called The Last Kingdom, which me and my wife got into, and just like stuff was so brutal years ago.

Like you literally- your life was at stake every moment essentially, you know? Some invading tribe can come in.

And today we have so many creature comforts. Life is- even though it seems through the media crime is so bad, everything is down.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: There are so many things, problems that have been resolved, more people are getting fed around the world than ever before, and but yet there's this feeling that something's messed up.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: That everything is fucked, as you talk about.

Mark Manson: Yeah, and it's harder- the better things get, the harder it is to generate that hope.

Because when you're like fighting for survival, hope is easy. Just survive. Like just make it to the next day.

But when you're like really comfortable, have a great life, have no money problems, are healthy, it's what do you hope for?

It becomes a very difficult question, and I think that's one reason why before we went on air, you were talking about some of these guys who have this explosive success.

Like they find religion or they go back to religion, and I think that's one- it's actually something I talk about in the book, is that religion is like kind of a constant reservoir of hope for people.

And so when you experience that worldly success, and you're sitting around in your mansion, and it's like, "Well, what do I hope for?" Well, there's always Jesus, so you kind of go back to that.

The thing I'll say too about people like not relating or understanding, and I just want to say this, because I'm sure there are people out there like, "Oh, boo hoo! Like, dude sold millions of books and is sitting here talking about how depressed he is."

But the funny thing that I noticed when I was going through this too, is that I would have these heart-to-heart conversations with my friends, and they would think I was crazy.

They were like, "Dude, what's your problem, man? Like man, if that happened to me, like I'd be doing all sorts awesome stuff."

I'm like, "Okay, like what?" And they're like, "Oh man, I'd buy a new car, and go to Vegas, and like do this, and buy this for my mom."

And I was like, "Okay, so that's all the first two weeks. What do you do on week three?"

And it's like what you don't realize is that all your dreams, like all those dreams that you have of like, "Oh man, if one day I'm rich, I'm going to do that."

That doesn't even last you a month. Like you can knock out all those, like one after the other, and then after a month you just sitting around, you're like, "Okay, now what?"

You know, like it's just a never-ending thing, and you can either get sucked down into the trap of always needing more, or you can try to find your way out of it, but to find your way out of it, you need to find meaning and hope from something like outside of the material world.

Shawn Stevenson: And I want to get into that, and I just thought about this line, and I've said this before, it's from Kanye West. Shout-out to you if you're okay, Kanye.

But he said having money is not everything, not having it is.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: So when we don't have money and we're operating on their survival.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: Right? And it's just that's what gets you out of bed is to take care of your survival needs and the survival needs of your family.

But then we have this paradox take place and understand that money isn't everything. And again, everybody that's listening to this, the vast majority of people, your life conditions are pretty good compared to where they would have been 100 years ago, or even twenty years ago, for that matter.

You know, we have instant access to every answer, right? You're almost a cyborg, and we have access to information that can lift us out of our circumstances.

We don't need to pay six figures to go to the most pristine university to get whatever it is. You know?

There are so many barriers have been broken down, and yet we are struggling more than ever with anxiety, and depression, and all of these different conditions of mental illness.

And you say it's because we largely are dealing with this paradox of progress.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And one of the things you talk about too, which is super fascinating, is that we all make up hope narratives, and in fact, we need hope

narratives in order for us to be a functional human being to get us out of bed in the morning. So let's talk about what that means.

Mark Manson: Sure. So those visions of a better future that I talked about, like each of those visions, it's accompanied with like a before and after story. You know?

So let's just take my hope narrative that kind of informed this whole mess, which is I had this dream in my head of like, "One day, I want to be a bestselling author. I want to be a successful author, and man, if I can just do that, my life will be amazing."

And so what I created in my head was this little narrative of like, "If I go from here to bestselling author, and then I get all the rewards, life's going to be amazing." You know?

All my problems today are going to be gone, I'm going to feel completely differently, I'm going to be a different person.

And it's such a little trap that our psychology plays on us because if you do achieve that, you come out the other side and you're like, "Wait. I don't feel different, I'm not a different person."

And then it's like, "Oh, crap. What was this all for? Like I just spent years of work and it's like I feel the same, my friends are the same, my relationships are the same. You know, like I still wake up with bad breath."

You know, so like the fundamental things don't actually change, and so you need to just to kind of psychologically keep going, you've got to spin up another narrative.

And you know, for a lot of people, the narrative becomes like, "Okay, well I need more. Maybe I need to sell even more books, or maybe I need to write a screenplay, or maybe I need to get into music."

And then that vision becomes the new narrative, and then you start working towards that.

And so what I eventually describe it as is that it's the psychological mirage that we keep building for ourselves.

I think it's evolutionarily designed to just keep us moving, and keep us pushing, and creating, and fighting.

Because if we didn't have these little visions and narratives in our head, we'd sit around and do nothing.

Like I think that's honestly, that is what depression is, is not having that narrative of meaning for your own life. You know?

The narrative creates the meaning of your life, so if you don't have that vision of hope, you don't have that narrative, you don't have the meaning in your life. You lay in bed all day wondering what the point is.

Shawn Stevenson: And you've got a formula in the book in looking at what exactly constitutes to create our hope.

To build and maintain hope, you say we need three things; a sense of control, a belief in the value of something, and a community. So let's talk about those three things.

Mark Manson: Sure. So first one, sense of control, is if you- well, let's actually start with the value one.

So the value one is you need to actually believe that something is worthwhile, something is worth pursuing, that there is such a thing as a better future. And without that vision, then you just- there's no reason to do anything.

Two, you need a sense of self-control, because if you don't feel as though you're in control of your own life, there's no way for you to get there.

And the sense of control, it can be anything from- it can be an out- external kind of oppression. You know?

Let's say you live in North Korea or something, and it's like you have no control over your own life. But it can also be an internal thing.

It's somebody who honestly feels like they can't get up in the morning, or they suffer from addiction, or have really bad habits, and they just can't break out of them.

And so that sense of not being able to control your own destiny eventually removes hope, you know? They see those visions of a better future and they're like, "I'm never going to make it. It's just too hard."

And then the third requisite is a sense of community. We need- ultimately, we're a social species, and we need to feel as though we have support from others in our pursuits, and in our values, and that we're able to support others in their pursuits and their values.

And so if you take away any of those three things, the other two fall. If you remove a community, then you look at your vision of what's important, and if nobody agrees with it, you're like, "Well, maybe I'm just crazy. What am I thinking?"

If you remove a sense of control, then it's like you just feel like you're never going to get there. And then if you remove that vision of value in the first place, then you just sit around eating Cheetos.

Shawn Stevenson: It's the second time Cheetos have come up.

Mark Manson: Hey, I've got a thing with Cheetos, man.

Shawn Stevenson: I'm thinking about the Flaming Hots. So here's the thing man, is that when you hear something like this, it's just like, "Just do those things," and it's not that simple.

Mark Manson: Oh no.

Shawn Stevenson: And this is why I love this book so much, is because you get into why it's not that simple.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And it's addressing something that is super fascinating and very real that is literally just hiding in plain sight, and this is the fact that we have these two brains.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And man, first let's talk about what the hell you mean by that, by these two brain, and then dive in deeper.

Mark Manson: Sure. Yeah, so I create this analogy early on in the book that I kind of use to explain the rest of the book.

I say we have two brains, we have a thinking brain and a feeling brain, and it's pretty self-explanatory.

The thinking brain is like our conscious thought, or being able to calculate, plan, reason, create a calendar or schedule.

Our feeling brain is our impulses, our emotions, maybe some of our subconscious baggage and crap that bubbles up sometimes.

But ultimately our conscious thinking, like our conscious perception of ourselves is our thinking brain.

And because our conscious perception of ourselves is our thinking brain, our thinking brain thinks it's in control of us.

And the analogy I use is that our consciousness is a car, and the thinking brain thinks- like we tend to think that the thinking brain is driving, and the feeling brain is sitting in the passenger seat like an obnoxious kid screaming like, "I want to go there, turn here, turn here."

And the thinking brain's like, "Shut up, shut up," and you have to like summon all this willpower to just keep going down your road of life.

But all the psychological research actually shows the opposite. The feeling brain is driving and it drives wherever the hell it wants to go.

And the thinking brain is basically stuck in the passenger seat drawing the map. So the thinking brain gets to decide what the lay of the land is, but if the feeling brain doesn't want to go there, it doesn't go there.

And so there is a very complex exercise of self-awareness, basically the thinking brain needs to learn how to talk to the feeling brain and listen to the feeling brain to be able to get the car to go in healthy directions essentially.

Directions that make sense, that are good for us long-term, that create good relationships, that aren't just pure indulgence all the time.

And that's really hard to do. Like it requires a lot of inner work essentially, and so if we don't do that inner work, like if we're very cut off from our feeling brain, and we feel like our feeling brain is just driving wherever the hell it wants to go, and we're just like stuck in the passenger seat without any control, that destroys our hope.

You know? And I think the most extreme example, that would be like an addiction, like alcoholism or something. It's like alcoholics feel completely out of control of their own lives.

They feel like the alcohol controls their life, and it's because it's just the feeling brain just keeps driving there.

And so any form of therapy is developing a process of getting those two brains synced up, talking to each other, listening to each other, removing judgment, removing shame, et cetera, et cetera.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. And this is just- you know, everybody listening right now, you know that you're capable of so much.

There are so many different things that you can do in your life, and we're aware of that. We're aware of the tactics, we're aware of the strategies, we know what we need to do generally to get there, but this speaks to why so many struggle with their relationship or with their finances.

Like you know the tactics to having good health, but we struggle to do them. You know, it's just Cheetos and beer, you know? Or whatever, like you just- for me, it's the Funions, man.

But you know, so those things, even though you know the logical steps because the thinking brain is all about logic, this is why we fail, is because the feeling brain is controlling our decisions at the end of the day. It's doing what it wants.

Mark Manson: Yeah. And the tactics are like short-term. So a tactic, like let's say you sit down and create like a list of goals and a whole plan for yourself, and you get very excited about it.

You know, it's the excitement that actually gets you up in the morning and pursuing it. It's the excitement about the plan. It's not the plan itself.

And so a lot of what we talk about in our world about like-

Shawn Stevenson: Can you say that again, man? Say that again, it's the excitement. Please.

Mark Manson: So like if you sit down, let's say you go online and you find like the ultimate workout plan, and you're like, "Hell yeah, this is going to give me my six pack, like my biceps are going to be bulging, my butt's going to look amazing."

You know, and you set up a spreadsheet, and it's all color coded, and you plan everything out for the next six months.

What actually gets you up in the morning is the excitement about the spreadsheet. It's not the spreadsheet itself.

The spreadsheet is just the thinking brain thinking. What actually gets you to the gym is the excitement about that spreadsheet, and this is what happens to everybody, is that after the first week, the spreadsheet is not exciting anymore, and so you stop going.

It's like 90% or 95% of people drop off, and the only people that stay are the people that find a way to stay excited about it.

And so it's everything that we understand as these little tactics to like get yourself out of bed, or to sleep better, they are short-term thinking brain solutions that will work for a little while, but unless you emotionally get invested into it, unless you find a way to be excited about it, to love it, to appreciate it, it doesn't stick.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Mark Manson: It'll never stick.

Shawn Stevenson: But that emotion can be positive or negative as well, you know?

Mark Manson: Totally.

Shawn Stevenson: You could be doing this out of the excitement and joy of it, or you could be doing it out of a sense of hatred.

Mark Manson: Yes, absolutely.

Shawn Stevenson: Let's talk about that.

Mark Manson: And this is interesting, because a lot of people who have a lot of self-loathing, they're some of the most disciplined people on the planet, you know?

And it's because it's this- they perceive everything through the terms of like self-abuse. You know?

It's like, "I'm a piece of crap, so I need to get up at 5:00 AM and run ten miles every single day because I'm a piece of crap."

And it's actually that 'I'm a piece of crap' is what actually keeps them doing it. And so it's a real crazy kind of interaction that happens, and one of the things that I end up arguing in my book is that ultimately self-discipline is about self-acceptance.

It's basically about coming to terms and understanding your own emotions, and then learning how to leverage your emotions to go in positive directions.

It's essentially anything past like the very basic level, anything past the tactical level, it's emotional work. It's like getting your mind in order.

Shawn Stevenson: So fascinating, because what we tend to do, because it's the thinking brain, is that we see somebody who's not successful at their health or their relationship, we think it's a lack of character.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: But it's not that. It's not that. It's dealing with these brains and getting them to communicate.

So let's kind of get into a little bit. So the emotions, they're driving the car, and so what some scientists and physicians for a long time figured out to do, is that let's just get in there and actually slice out a little bit of that brain.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: That little bit of that emotional brain is causing all of this- just going here and there doing whatever, and this was a treatment for mental illness.

Mark Manson: Yeah, lobotomies.

Shawn Stevenson: Lobotomies for years. But that didn't go very well. I mean it worked, it worked to get the initial result, but the long-term results were not what people were thinking.

Mark Manson: It was disastrous.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Mark Manson: It was absolutely disastrous. So one thing I talk about in the book, I called the Classic Assumption, which it goes all the way back to the Greeks, and then it carries on.

Christian theology kind of borrowed it from Plato and Aristotle, and it's basically the basis of kind of Western cultures, this classic assumption that the thinking brain is driving, and if you cannot control your emotions, it is a failure of character.

Like you are weak, you are deficient, you are faulty. Basically, you need to beat your emotions and impulses into submission, and just become this like very unfeeling robotic type person.

And this assumption informed pretty much everything up until about 100 years ago. And I think one of the reasons it kind of stopped is once our science started getting good enough to actually kind of test these ideas, they realized how wrong they were, and the lobotomy is like the most disastrous example of that.

So back in the thirties, and this is true, like they found- what they would do is they would stick an ice pick up a patient's nose. They would take somebody with like manic depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, like all these things.

Shawn Stevenson: Eating disorders?

Mark Manson: Eating disorders, addiction. And then they would take an ice pick, they'd stick it up the patient's nose, and they found that if they scraped the frontal lobe- and what they were actually doing was they were cutting the connections between the two brains in the frontal lobe, that the patient would chill out and be like pretty sanguine and calm and like, "Hey man, everything's fine."

What they were essentially doing is they were just taking a club to the feeling brain, just knocking the feeling brain out, and so the person would stop freaking out, stop having depression, stop kind of being this emotional mess.

The problem is, is when you knock the feeling brain out, you can't drive anywhere. So what also happened is that these people just sat around all day and they didn't see the value of anything.

They didn't go to work anymore, they would lose their jobs, all their relationships would fall apart, because they basically just became these kind of emotionless zombies.

There's actually a quote in the book that I mention that- it's crazy, out of all the countries to ban the lobotomy, the Soviet Union was first.

Which is like you know you've got a problem when the Soviet Union is banning a procedure. And basically what a doctor in the Soviet Union said is that, "What we're doing, is we're taking people who are insane and we're turning them into idiots.

We're taking people who can't function because they're too emotive, and just removing any ability to function whatsoever."

And so by the sixties, the lobotomy was gone and psychologists and psychiatrists-

Shawn Stevenson: It wasn't that long ago.

Mark Manson: Dude, it's like my parents lived through this stuff, you know? Like apparently JFK's sister was one of the last lobotomy patients.

Shawn Stevenson: Unbelievable.

Mark Manson: And yeah, she basically just became a zombie. She just sat at home all day. So it really wasn't until about the seventies and the eighties that we started to discover that we're just totally irrational creatures, that we don't-

You know, and there's tons of great books out on this now. You know, like Daniel Kahneman's work, and there's a guy named Dan Ariely, Dan Gilbert. Lot of Dan's.

Shawn Stevenson: That's interesting.

Mark Manson: Yeah, but there's a lot of books out there about how we think we're making rational decisions, we're not being rational at all.

We think that our perceptions are true, and they're completely off base. That basically just our psychology is very flawed, and a lot of it comes down to the fact that we are fundamentally emotionally-based creatures.

Shawn Stevenson: We've got to talk about that because in the book you talk about the fact that the feeling brain- and this is a direct quote from the book.

"The feeling brain drives our consciousness car, because ultimately we are moved to action only by emotion, because action is emotion."

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: What?

Mark Manson: So here's one of these kind of crazy things I came across when I was reading about like the neuroscience of emotion.

So various like thoughts and functions in our brain, you know, like if I raise my right arm, there are places in my brain that will like light up and kind of show that.

What's interesting though is that if I have like an emotion, if I start feeling kind of sad, there'll be some things in my brain that light up, but there's also like a fully physiological response, and we all know this intuitively, we just don't think about it.

You know, it's like when you're sad, you're not just- it's not just a thing that occurs up here.

Like you slump over, your limbs feel heavy, maybe you get kind of like feeling like there's a rock in your stomach.

If you're angry, there's like this momentum to your movement. You stand up straight, like your face contorts, you know?

And so what they find is that actually the whole nervous system gets involved with our emotions, and a lot of different- like our digestive tract gets involved with our emotions.

So it's a full body response. And what's fascinating is that for a long time, if you look at like NLP and some of like the old school self-help stuff, one of the things that you always find is they say that like if you want to change your emotion, change your action.

You know? So if you want to feel more active and happier, it's like you need to get up, and like jump up and down, and scream, and like you'll actually change your emotional state simply by just doing some physical actions.

And so there's this one-to-one relationship between our body and how we perceive our emotional states.

And so this is why I describe emotions as actions, because it's when you understand that the feeling brain is in charge, you start to understand that all these things- like if you if you have a problem with procrastination, that's an emotional problem.

If you have a problem with sleeping in too late, that's an emotional problem. If you have a problem of overeating, that's an emotional problem.

Like these are all- all of our actions that feel outside of our control, the reason they feel outside of our control is that there is an emotional issue going on.

The feeling brain is driving somewhere without us knowing or wanting it to, and that is fundamentally an emotional issue that needs to be investigated and resolved.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. And even on a just very simple biochemical level, your thoughts or your feelings are literally creating a cascade of chemicals in your body as well.

Mark Manson: Absolutely.

Shawn Stevenson: So physically changing your state like that. It's probably really difficult to like do jumping jacks and like being angry.

I mean, at least you'll feel kind of silly, but that literally changes that cascade of hormones and neurotransmitters, and they're just doing different stuff.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And so really understanding that even through the process of our thoughts and feelings are so connected, every thought has an associated feeling, and that feeling brain is giving you feedback on those thoughts.

Mark Manson: Yeah, absolutely.

Shawn Stevenson: And it's so powerful, but we just don't pay attention to it, and we're also feeling very disempowered.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: To even deal with any of that stuff. Like we just kind of either- for a lot of us, we just live in that thinking side, or we just live in that feeling side.

And getting this cohesive action going is really what the book is about, and it was so awesome to see it all come together.

Because this communication- so it's asking the question, how do we get our feeling brain to start listening maybe a little bit to the thinking brain?

And how does the thinking brain actually communicate effectively with the feeling brain? And we're going to talk about that right after this quick break. So sit tight, we'll be right back.

Alright, we're back and we're talking with New York Times bestselling author, Mark Manson, and before the break we were getting into how in the world can we actually get our thinking brain to communicate effectively with our emotional feeling brain?

Mark Manson: So first, I want to kind of- you actually mentioned it in passing, and I think it's really important.

You said that a lot of people just live in the feeling brain. They're all impulse all the time, they don't really think through her actions.

And then there are some people who are all thinking brain all the time, which is that they feel- they ruminate a lot, they overanalyze things, but they feel like they can never take action.

And so the goal to be kind of like an integrated and healthy person psychologically is to get the two brains fully communicating with one another.

So the first thing I kind of say is that the first step is that the thinking brain needs to- you just need to recognize that you're not in charge.

Like you've got all these feelings and impulses and habits that come from a whole lifetime of experience, a lot of crap from your childhood, a lot of assumptions that you're not even aware of, and that's what's driving most of your desires and your behavior.

And so just coming to terms with that is kind of the first step.

The next step is like let's say you want to build a basic habit of let's say meditation. Let's say you want to start like a meditation habit.

Most people, what they do, is they're like, "Alright, I want to get into meditating." So they go to their calendar and they're like, "Alright, thirty minutes every morning first thing when I wake up," or whatever. Twenty minutes every day after work.

And they put it on their calendar, and then the first day comes, and they go to do it, and they sit down, and they're like, "Damn, this is hard."

And then after like minute four or five, they're like, "Wow, I'm really bored. Well, alright yeah, I guess I screwed that up."

And then they get up and they go do something else, and then they miss the next day, and they're like, "Oh well, this is so hard. Maybe it's not for me," and they start thinking all these things.

And the problem is, is that they never- the thinking brain has this understanding and desire. "Meditation is healthy, it's helpful, it's a good habit, and I'd like to implement it into my life."

The feeling brain hates being bored. So the feeling brain's like "We're not doing that." So if you actually want to create a meditation habit, the first- you basically have to start bargaining with your feeling brain with options to the point where the feeling brain will get on board.

So what you can do is kind of have this dialogue with yourself. The thinking brain will throw out an idea or a thought, and then you sit there and just wait for a feeling to come in response.

Shawn Stevenson: That's important because the thinking brain thinks the feelings will come back in words. That's just the thinking brain talking to itself.

Mark Manson: There's no- yeah, exactly. They're nowhere- the feeling brain does not communicate in words, it communicates in feeling, sensations, impulses.

So what you would do is you'd say, "Okay, feeling brain. I want to implement a meditation habit. Meditation is super healthy, it's going to make us feel better. That's good, right?"

And the feeling brain will be like, "Yeah. It's good." Like there'll be a positive feeling. And you're like, "Okay, twenty minutes a day," and then you'll notice like some anxiety will come up, maybe a little bit of resistance, a little bit of fear of like, "Oh shit, that's a lot. Like twenty minutes, man."

It's like, "Okay, maybe not twenty minutes. How about ten?" Feeling brain is like, "Maybe."

It's like, "Okay, how about this? How about we start with three? Three minutes?" The feeling brain is like, "That's easy. Hell yeah, let's do that."

And then you go sit for three minutes, and you get up and you're like, "Damn, that was easy," and then you feel good about it. You feel good about what you just did.

And then you do the next day, you're like, "Hey, remember we did that three minutes? Remember how good that felt?"

Feeling brain will be like, "Yeah, yeah. Felt pretty good," and you do it again, and then you slowly build up from there.

And it's funny because what I just described is like habit forming 101. You know? There's nothing new about it. All I'm doing is I'm simply describing it from the emotional point of view.

Because the reason that these habit formation strategies work is because you're basically working with you're feeling brain instead of against it. You know?

If you just try to brute force your feeling brain, if you're just like, "Screw it, I'm running a marathon next month," you know, it's like going to backfire.

So you have to find the actions that generate more positive emotion, and then slowly keep working up from there.

Shawn Stevenson: Oh man. One of the other really blatant- it's so blatantly obvious, but we don't think about it, and that's why I love books and insights like that.

It's just like that makes total sense, is that the thinking brain, when we come to this realization that it's not in control, our feeling brain is controlling our lives, but the thinking brain has control over meaning.

Mark Manson: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: And you talked about that in the book, and I just thought that that was so profound because we are meaning-making machines.

Mark Manson: Yes.

Shawn Stevenson: You know? And I think attaching- having that meaning helps to communicate with the feeling brain in a sense.

Mark Manson: Absolutely. Yeah, so the feeling brain's power is action. The thinking brain's power is meaning.

And this is also kind of just classic self-help stuff. But let's say you're trying to build an exercise habit, and you miss a day. Well, there's a lot of different ways you can interpret missing that day.

You can judge yourself. You can say like, "Man, I'm such a screw up, I always mess this up," and that will create a certain response in the feeling brain.

You can say, "Well hey, it's understandable. I deserve a day off." That will create a sensation in the feeling brain.

Or you could say, "You know, missing a day is understandable, but I want to look at my behavior and my patterns to make sure I don't do this again," and then that will create a response in the feeling brain.

And what's interesting is that people who fail to create new habits, it's because the meaning that- like anybody who tries to adopt a new habit, you're going to screw up.

Like that's just life. You're going to screw up, you're going to fail, it's going to take a few tries, but a lot of what determines whether you're able to get back on the horse or not, is that mean that you create around that failure.

Is that an indictment on you as a person? Is that the classic assumption of like, "Oh, you failed because you're a weak person"? Well, if you do that, your feeling brain's going to feel awful, and you're just disempowering yourself.

Are you going to justify it with like- are you going to create a meaning of like entitlement of like, "Oh, well I worked so hard today, so I deserve to not go to the gym"?

Well, that might make your feeling brain feel good, but it's not going to get you to go to the gym again. You know, so you have to find the meaning that is going to create the proper emotions that are going to keep propelling you forward.

Shawn Stevenson: Right.

Mark Manson: And that's essentially what emotional intelligence is, is creating meaning from your experiences that create helpful emotions, and it just kind of becomes this cycle that just- it's a virtuous cycle that just starts spinning up.

But it takes a lot of self-awareness and a lot of work to get to that point.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, or we end up with the clown car. Let's talk about that clown car.

Mark Manson: The clown car, man. So the clown car, it's actually a really good point. I completely forgot about it.

So what we- our natural state or our natural tendency just as humans is to- I guess you could call this the path of least resistance, is the feeling brain drives wherever it wants to drive, and the thinking brain will just start justifying where the feeling brain wants to drive.

So let's say the feeling brain is just careening all over the place, driving to Dunkin Donuts three times a day, and the feeling brain will say like, "Oh, well I deserve this, and oh yeah, well that's a good decision, and yeah, let's have some more ice cream."

Shawn Stevenson: The thinking brain will do that.

Mark Manson: Yeah, the thinking brain will do that. So the thinking brain is justifying all the impulses and urges of the feeling brain.

Shawn Stevenson: And that keeps a state of kind of cohesiveness in a sense, but it's not self-serving.

Mark Manson: No, no. You basically turn into a narcissist. You turn into somebody who is completely self-indulgent, and not just with like- you know, we've been using health examples because of this podcast, but this is true with like relationships.

You know? So you know, we've all known a person in our lives who is completely selfish and is able to rationalize their behavior no matter what they do.

They're able to make everything about them all the time, and essentially what they're doing is that their thinking brain is just constantly justifying what their feeling brain wants.

Because their feeling brain is just this- it's the animal side of ourselves. Like it's just ravenous, and selfish, and just very indulgent.

And it's our thinking brain that has to kind of temper that and direct that, but if the thinking brain just falls in line and does whatever the feeling brain wants, then we just turn into just this very self-indulgent person.

So I call that the clown car just because I like silly metaphors.

Shawn Stevenson: It was clear, too. You know, some of us are rolling through life. We're rolling up with the nose, jumping out with the floppy shoes, like we're on the set.

Like yeah, you are taking the attention, but it's not for good reason.

Mark Manson: Exactly.

Shawn Stevenson: You know what I'm saying? And you're creepy. No disrespect to any clowns that are listening, no disrespect, but just personally.

And I think that a really great example that you talked about is a breakup, and somebody having that really emotional- especially if it was something really negative that happened, you know?

A good example would be a guy just cheats on the girl, breaks up with her, and she just doesn't understand why.

And this just- she creates- has this terrible feeling and then attaches the meaning to justify, which is all guys suck.

Mark Manson: Yeah, men are shit.

Shawn Stevenson: They can't be trusted. Or you can create another story, which is you suck.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And you talk about that as well, and both of them are going to probably lead you in an unhealthy direction, but then you get into another relationship and the guy's amazing, but you still have that idea that all guys suck. They're terrible.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: And it's just a matter of time, and then you start self-sabotaging and digging and finding problems.

Like getting super microscopic to find problems with this really good guy. And sometimes we set ourselves up for failure like that.

And I've seen that firsthand in my life, because when I met my now wife, we've been together for about fifteen years now.

Mark Manson: Oh wow.

Shawn Stevenson: And when we first got together, she didn't have nobody like me, you know? Before.

Prior, she had somebody who really broke her down or whatever. And you see, I said or whatever, because it's nothing. I'm sorry.

But so she came into the relationship with me with all of these strange beliefs about guys, in general, and even about me, and I just wasn't that guy because I chose not to be at that point in my life, by the way.

Because I could have been that guy. That's the thing. All of us can be all of these things.

And we were together for a couple of years, just like crazy in love. Like, I want to be with her forever. And you know, I proposed her, we were going to get married, and then once we got married, we were talking one day, and she thought I was going to break up with her when we were getting engaged.

And I was like, "Why? How?"

Mark Manson: Talk about the feeling brain taking over. The whole point of marriage is you don't break up.

Shawn Stevenson: Man, she was so surprised that I proposed to her because she thought I was going to break up with her at some point. Like it was just coming.

Mark Manson: Wow.

Shawn Stevenson: You know, and we carry those things, and the crazy thing is it creates little pieces of actions that we do that can be detrimental at any point.

Like, you've really got to be able to work on your own stuff to deal with that stuff as well.

Mark Manson: Yeah. And this brings it back to the hope piece. So let's take that example. Let's say a woman- there's a guy, cheats on girl, just breaks her heart, just destroys her.

Her thinking brain now needs to justify that destruction. Like we have to create meaning out of our emotions, that's just what we do.

And so she has a few options. And let's say that, yeah she picks that option, she's like, "Men are just lying garbage. All men. They only want-" it's like that meme from that girl on Twitter.

It's like all men want one thing, and it's disgusting. She adopts- that's her explanation for her heart being broken, for all those emotions.

What's crazy is that that little narrative, that my heart was broken because all men are trash, that becomes a hope narrative. That's what maintains her hope in the world.

Because now it's, "If I can just stay away from men, and not get wrapped up with them, my life will be good."

And so people- and then we protect our hope narratives because it's what gives our lives meaning. And so it's hard to dislodge that.

And then what happens is she meets a good guy like you, and it creates this dissonance within her.

She's like, "Well, men are garbage, but this guy treats me really well, and he's really nice, and there's just something doesn't sit right."

And so she's got to- she either needs to let go of her narrative and trust the guy, or she needs to hold onto the narrative and distrust the guy.

And so what often happens in these situations is that we will sabotage good relationships because of our fear, because basically of our previous trauma, and maintaining our hope narratives.

Because it's easier to experience the pain of another breakup that justifies the meaning we've created in our lives, than to give up our meaning and just go with a good relationship.

Shawn Stevenson: This is why we've got to work on that communication. You know, once you become aware of these patterns, that's the thing, is like that statement awareness trumps everything.

When you start to become aware, because a lot of this stuff we're just doing and we're not paying attention to how we feel sometimes, or we're not paying attention to the meaning we're attaching to other things.

And so to become aware and start to self-assess is really the key. This is like Captain Obvious stuff, but not so much. You know what I'm saying?

Mark Manson: I mean, it's obvious, but it's difficult, right?

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah. It's work, man.

Mark Manson: One thing I always say about this stuff is it's like- and I call these, I think in 'Subtle Art,' I call them VCR questions because there's a whole story behind it.

But it's like I get e-mails all the time. People are like- they'll come to me and they're like, "Man, I just really want to move to another city, but my parents don't want me to. But I really want to do it. How do I do it?"

I'm like, "Well, it's easy. You just like, pack your shit, and drive to the other city."

Shawn Stevenson: Show the deuces.

Mark Manson: It's like people- what is emotionally painful we misinterpret as being logically complicated.

So it's like it hurts our feeling brain to do it, and so our thinking brain decides that it must be very complicated and complex, and so we need to devise all these plans and come up with a step-by-step solution.

It's like, "No, dude. You just pack your crap, get in the car, drive to the next city. That's it. That's it. It's not complicated." But it's hard, it hurts, and so we avoid it.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah, man. This is just so profound. And for us to understand that those feelings matter and it's not that they're bad.

Like we label them because you feel that sadness, or you might feel angry, or whatever the case might be.

All these feelings are valuable and they give us valuable feedback, and again, it really boils down to the meaning we attach to it, man.

So listen, there's so much I want to talk to you about.

Mark Manson: We're still in Chapter 2.

Shawn Stevenson: Right? Man, I want to jump ahead a little bit actually.

Mark Manson: Sure.

Shawn Stevenson: I don't know how far ahead actually. There are so many things I want to talk to you about.

But you know what? Let's do this. I've got to ask you about a couple of these laws.

Mark Manson: Okay.

Shawn Stevenson: If we have time, we'll do one or two of them.

Mark Manson: Sure.

Shawn Stevenson: And just to give a really brief context, this was like parallel universe of Isaac Newton, but the way you put it together, it created a vessel for this to make sense, you know?

And so let's hit a couple of these laws, if we can. So the first law is what?

Mark Manson: Is every action creates an equal and opposite emotional reaction. And just to give listeners context, so chapter three of the book is kind of a- it's a playful historical fiction of Isaac Newton and his three laws of motion.

But I take his three laws of motion and write them as the three laws of emotion.

So the first one is, is every action creates an equal and opposite emotional reaction. And the idea is that whenever we experience something positive, like let's say Shawn just reaches over and hits me in the face, which he seems prone to do at any moment.

Shawn Stevenson: I've thought about it.

Mark Manson: Let's say he reaches over and just smacks me in the face. You know, what happens, my natural inclination, my natural reaction is going to be to hit you back.

You know, essentially you caused me pain, a negative emotion results, whether it's anger, sadness, whatever, and that emotion is going to impel me to what- I call it equalization.

So it's like if you hit me, I'm going to feel bad until I hit you back, or until you apologize, or until like I screw you over in some way.

You know, it's basically there needs to be a sense of parity and equality between us before that negative emotion will go away.

And the same is true with a positive emotion. Like let's say you buy me a really nice gift. And I'm like, "Oh damn, dude. Like you didn't have to do that. Oh shit."

And then I'm going to feel like, "Man, I need to do something nice for him." And I'm going to have that feeling until I do, you know?

And so either way you go, whether you create a negative experience for me or a positive experience for me, there's this emotional push towards reaching parity again.

And this is hugely important because if we don't equalize, it lingers. So let's say when I'm a kid, I get bullied because I'm like skinny, or small, or whatever, and I get bullied, and bullied, and bullied, as a kid.

And I never- and I have all these negative emotions towards these the bullies, and towards myself for being so scrawny, and like I just feel a lot of shame and guilt, and I never equalize.

I never confront my bullies, I never get them back, I never prove something to them. That stays with me and eventually it becomes unconscious.

The feeling brain remember. The thinking brain will forget it, but the feeling brain holds onto it.

And decades later, I could be in my thirties or forties, I've still got this messed up self-image issue, or maybe this deep insecurity around people who are bigger than me, or people who can see me, or whatever, that is essentially this lingering equalization issue. Does that make sense?

Shawn Stevenson: Absolutely. And again, these are things that are happening for a lot of us.

Mark Manson: Everybody.

Shawn Stevenson: Yeah.

Mark Manson: Everybody. We've all got it in some form or another. And I even talk about like even if you're like some rich, obnoxious trust fund kid, and your daddy just gives you everything.

You know, you got a Lamborghini on your 16th birthday or whatever, you're like one of those kids on MTV.

Like what happens is that all these good things keep happening to you, but you're never able to equalize, you're never able to give back, you're never able to return favors.

And so you develop a sense of entitlement. You're like, "Oh, well this is just how it's supposed to be. Like I deserve something from everybody around me."

And so you develop this sense of entitlement, and then that harms your relationships going through your life.

And so if you're coming from that end of the spectrum, like a very privileged end of the spectrum, reaching a state of emotional health is all about letting go of these assumptions of what you deserve and what you don't deserve.

Just like the victim of being bullied needs to let go of his assumptions of what he deserves or doesn't deserve.

Shawn Stevenson: Wow. And this is in parallel with this increase in wealth is coincided with an increase in mental health issues and depression and suicide.

And the great thing as well with your book, there's so many references that you're pulling in, and statistics that people could check out in the back of the book as well.

And it's just really, really well done. So I really, really want to- before I let you go, we've got to talk about this hedonic treadmill, and this experiment you talk about with psychologists handing people pagers, and then they're tracking their happiness, and the drama ensues from there. So let's talk about that.

Mark Manson: So back in the day, for most of psychology's history, they really studied just kind of how people were screwed up. You know, mental disorders and things like that.

And then a movement started in the late seventies, early eighties, and today it's called positive psychology.

But basically a bunch of psychologists got together and they were like, "Man, this is a downer. Like, let's study what makes people happy. Like, let's study how to make life better instead of just studying how people get screwed up."

And so a group of psychologists started, and one of the first things they wanted to understand logically is just what makes people happy and what doesn't.

And so they ran a bunch of like really large experiments where- I remember this back in the eighties.

So they gave people pagers, and basically all the experiment was, was go about your life and then at random times, you'll get- the psychologist will page you, and then whenever you're paged, you have a little notebook and you write down what you're doing, and then on a scale from one to ten, how happy are you?

And they collected this from hundreds or thousands of people, and crunched all the data, and what they found was that pretty much everybody's a seven all the time.

Now, that doesn't mean people don't deviate from seven, but what that means is that people would be like shopping for groceries, seven. You know, putting my kid to bed, seven.

And then maybe something good would happen. You know, it's like they have a birthday, and so they go up to a nine for a day.

But then the day after the birthday, they're back to a seven. Or they have a fight with their boss, so they're down to five, but then a couple of days later, they're back to a seven.

And even like extreme events in life, people get in car accidents, or they get a huge raise at work, or they get married, it's like you'd see it jump up or jump down for a few days or a week or two, but it always comes back to seven.

And so what they started calling this was people's baseline of happiness. And now everybody deviates a little.

You know, some people are more like a 7.5, some people are more like a 6.5, but generally everybody's kind of around the seven territory.

And you're constantly, no matter what happens to you in life, or what you do in life, you're constantly kind of slingshot back to that seven.

Shawn Stevenson: It's like a thermostat.

Mark Manson: Yes, exactly. And so this gets back to- kind of brings it full circle to kind of how we started the podcast, because one of the things I talked about is that

our psychology is kind of built in a way to constantly make us have these visions of hope in our future, that it's going to make everything great.

So what I talk about, and what they found, is that essentially we all carry around these visions of what our ten is. You know?

We think to ourselves like, "Man, if I could just get a raise at work, I'd be a ten. Or if I could buy a new car, man that would put me at a ten."

And what happens is we accomplish these things, and sure, yeah we're a ten for a day, a week, but then we go back to seven, and we have to find a new vision of a ten.

And psychologists call this the hedonic treadmill, because essentially what happens is the better and better our life gets, the harder we have to run to stay at the same happiness level.

Like the more we gain, the more we have to lose, and so it creates more anxiety and more stress.

And so if you- and this is kind of what I was saying earlier about eventually what you realize, especially when you've had kind of like a crazy rise in success like I did, is I realized that like you have to get off the hedonic treadmill at some point.

Like you can't- if you live your life just chasing these imaginary tens constantly, you're just going to be running, and running, and running, and not getting anywhere.

And so ultimately, kind of what the book is driving towards, is looking at how do we get off that hedonic treadmill?

How do we let go of these visions of hope but still live a healthy and fulfilling life? And it's hard. It's hard and I think it's a question that's not being asked a whole lot these days, but judging by how developed, and wealthy, and comfortable the world is getting, I think it's going to be a bigger and bigger discussion in years to come.

Shawn Stevenson: Absolutely. And thank you for putting this together, because I think that it's going to be around a long time as we are going through this process of becoming more successful and comfortable in our lives, and having so much access to all these things.

Like we already have so much as a society, but we need to have these tools to guide us towards this inner work, because the real action is happening inside of us.

Mark Manson: Yeah.

Shawn Stevenson: You know? So man, I'm just pumped and grateful to have you on, and could you let everybody know, number one, where they can pick up the book? And also, let them know where they can check you out online on social media, all that good stuff.

Mark Manson: Yeah, absolutely. So the book is called 'Everything is Fucked: A Book About Hope.' It's available everywhere in the English language.

It comes out May 14th, I assume this is coming out after that, so it's going to be in every bookstore, on Amazon, everywhere.

And then my website is www.MarkManson.net. I post there every few weeks, every month or so, and then I'm on all the social media as well.

Shawn Stevenson: Perfect. @MarkManson on social media?

Mark Manson: @MarkMansonNet on social media.

Shawn Stevenson: Boom. Man, thank you so much for coming to hang out with me today.

Mark Manson: Thanks for having me, it's good seeing you again.

Shawn Stevenson: Awesome. Everybody, thank you so much for tuning into the show today. Man, these are just- like my brain feels like it's on a treadmill right now, and just learning so much.

I've been diving into this, fortunately getting access to an early copy of the book, and just really asking questions within myself, and I think it's so important because another thing that kind of fuels us, and that communication between our thinking brain and our feeling brain, is the questions we ask, and getting that feedback, and I think that questions are the answer, in a sense.

And so beginning to ask questions of ourselves, listening in the feeling language to that feedback, and also in many instances, asking more empowering questions.

Instead of asking so often, "What's wrong with me?" asking, "What is it that I need to learn from this situation? Or what is this trying to teach me?" And kind of listening to that inner guidance system as well.

So man, this is just super fascinating stuff, and it's a big part of the work that I've been doing over the years because, again, the tactics for being healthy and having great relationships, those things are relatively simple, but it's getting ourselves to the place where we actually do them.

That's where the real work lies, and we have access to that within ourselves, and doing this inner work.

So just very grateful to have Mark on, and definitely check out the book. This is airing prior to the book release. Make sure to pick it up. Pre-order it.

I'm not going to say it's going to sell out, but it might, and you want to be one of the first people to get it.

So I just thank you so much for tuning into the show, and I know that you've got a big mission, a big vision, and it's just about getting more clear on what that is, and utilizing these tools so that you can take the action steps to really tapping into your own unique gifts, and talents, and capacities, and enjoying the process along the way as much as possible.

Alright? I appreciate you so much tuning in. 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.

And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much.

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