



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 004 – Wellness Wednesday: Future Self Letter
January 20, 2021

Welcome to the Athena wellness podcast, the show that invites you to take a seat around the community fire and listen to stories that inspire. I'm your host, Kathy Robinson, author, coach and founder of Athena Wellness, a company that helps women enhance their well-being and reimagine their current stage of life as a time of strength and reconnection with themselves.

Hello, and welcome to Episode Four. Thank you so much for joining me. Today is Wednesday and the plan for midweek episodes is to offer a little wellness boost, a shortened episode that shares an insight or an article or an exercise to keep your Warrior Vibe high.

Almost three weeks have passed since the New Year began. And I've been thinking about a saying that has had a number of iterations and has been attributed to numerous people. To paraphrase, it's the idea that we tend to overestimate what can be done in the short term, such as when we plan our day. But underestimate what can be done in the long term such as in one year or five.

If you're like me and have had a journaling practice for a while, you can see the truth in this. We often feel overwhelmed in the moment. But when we look back at our writing over a period of time, it's amazing how much we've learned how far, we've come, and how much we've grown.

It's in this spirit that I wanted to share an activity I did with my writers' group that focuses on envisioning the long term. Each morning, Monday through Friday, I write with a virtual group called The London Writers Salon. It's hosted by two wonderful writers who started the group when London went into lockdown last March. The daily gatherings were meant to be a short experiment, but ten months later, the group is still going strong. And it's been an incredibly supportive and connecting experience. I'll put a link in the show notes for the writers in the audience.



One of the things we did as part of the group a few weeks back was to write a letter to the future, a way of sharing some inspiring or comforting words with our future self. And we did it in a really fun way.

There's a website called futureme.org that has been around for close to 20 years, sending millions of letters to participants. It's free to register and there's a form on the homepage to write your letter that's easy to use. Once you're done, you get to choose the date that you want to receive the email letter back.

It took me all of 15 minutes to register and write the letter. I dated it for 12/31/21 and described how I was celebrating the dawn of 2022 and all that unfolded in 2021. It will be sent to my inbox on New Year's Eve.

So why do I love this exercise? I believe in the power of writing toward wellness, that is writing into our power. And this is a great way to practice dreaming big and feeling into your future. Putting those feelings into words and images help clarify your direction and the small steps that you can take to move in that way acts like an active visualization.

A 2019 article in Success magazine by researcher and author Shawn Achor quoted research on the impact of visualization. She wrote, "New research coming out of Oxford and Cambridge, for example, suggests that your ability to vividly imagine details about a bright future dramatically increases your energy and momentum, which leads, in turn, to constructive action. When our minds can picture exactly what that bright future looks like, it can orient itself in the direction of what we envision."

Writer and motivational speaker, Mike Dooley, likes to use a GPS analogy. He has often said, when we begin a trip we need to put in the destination and allow the mapping program to find the best way to get there, making adjustments along the way. But nothing can happen until we named the destination and then shift the car from park to drive.

Writing a letter to our future self is like programming the GPS so we can move in its general direction, updating our course during the year as needed.



I purposely didn't keep a copy of my letter when I wrote it because I want it to be a surprise come December. But I do remember how I felt when I read it over before I submitted it. I felt inspired by the vision, proud of the outcome, and motivated to show up every day and take action.

What about you? How do you envision your life one year from now? How about five? Ten? Can you jot down some phrases that describe where you are at that time, who you're with and what you're doing? What milestones did you celebrate over the years? What adventures and explorations made you smile? What did you learn?

Whether you use futureme.org or mail yourself a handwritten letter, find a way to memorialize your thoughts and when you plan to revisit them, perhaps on a birthday of significance. You will be amazed at your own foreshadowing, your insight and your wisdom.

Thank you so much for joining me today. I know there are many ways you can spend your time. Thank you for choosing to spend it with me. Until our paths cross again, be kind to yourself and show your Warrior Spirit some love.

If you enjoyed this episode and found it of value, please hit subscribe and perhaps even leave a review. That helps others find their way to our circle and ensures you'll never miss an episode. And if you'd like to access the show notes, have a question you'd like addressed on the show or would like a transcript of this episode, visit www.athenawellness.com/podcast.

Until next time, be well