



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 008 – Living a Mosaic Life
February 3, 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 you live well and live long, so you can do the things that light you up with the people you love.

Hello, and welcome to Episode Eight. Thank you so much for joining me for this shortened Wellness Wednesday episode to help keep your Warrior Vibe high. In Episode Seven, we explored creating a value-aligned work portfolio with Kristie McLean.

We talked about a sticky note brainstorming exercise she did a number of years ago to find the themes running through her many passions. One of the questions she asked herself was: "Are there ways that you can connect your passions in unusual and creative ways so you don't walk around feeling splintered and fractured, but instead make a beautiful mosaic of all of these different things."

I love the idea of a mosaic career. In fact, I love the idea of a mosaic life. The word mosaic traditionally means to use tiny parts to create a whole image or object. But the word originates from a Greek term meaning "to muse." In other words, to reflect or meditate, to be absorbed in thought, to wonder and to dream.



And that's exactly what this exercise helps you do, especially if you're feeling stuck. Playing with these concepts will help you think creatively and invite positive change.

So here's a way to adapt the exercise for further exploration using a three part process that I've used, and you can feel free to use any or all of the suggestions. The three steps are: Gather, Curate and Connect.

Step one is Gather. This is the fun part. You can use poster boards and sticky notes like Kristie did. Or you can use a journal as I have, or even work digitally with a multimedia program or app if you prefer. You just need a dedicated space to collect anything that calls to you.

I encourage you to think broadly. You can write down words, explore values, collect images, capture sayings or lyrics or poems, or maybe inspirational quotes. You can recall times when you felt a sense of meaning and when you got lost in time. There may be favorite books or blogs, movies, podcasts, or just times when you felt moved by something or someone.

Cast a wide net of people, places or things that make you feel inspired or motivated in some way, or anything that ignites a little flicker, and jot them all down. And I suggest taking your time with this, spreading it out over a period of time. The things you collect don't need to make sense nor do they need to have potential to earn money. They just need to be something that stirs you for some reason.

You don't need to make the list perfect or complete it before going on to the next step. In fact, you may find, as I do, that this list is ever evolving.



The second step is Curate. Once you've gathered a healthy list, you can begin to re-sort and categorize your activities and interests. The purpose of this step is to review all you've collected and begin to remove or set aside those things that don't fully engage you at this moment. The word curate usually brings the image of an art gallery or museum to mind with exhibits that have been professionally crafted to honor the space around the pieces so the artwork can be fully appreciated. And we're trying to do something similar in this step of our process to create the space so we can begin to work with the things that are most enticing.

I'd suggest making three piles. The first are those things that for whatever reason, you feel completely drawn toward. The third are the things that are least appealing. And the middle pile is for those things that hold interest but feel more neutral. You can rearrange your sticky notes or digital images. And if you're writing in a notebook or on your computer, you can use highlighting.

Begin by working with the items in the first pile and start to categorize. You don't have to name the groupings and as you go about categorizing them, they may not even make logical sense. And that's okay. In fact, that's preferable. Just do what feels right.

Once you have your initial groupings, scan through the other two piles to see if you'd like to include anything from those items, and then set groups two and three aside for now. You can even rename your current list of items to anything you'd like. For our purposes, I'll call it the Passions List.

Step three: Connect. Now that you've had some time to gather what lights you up and given these activities some curated space, ask yourself this question: "If money, time and family support were no object, how would I enjoy spending my time each day?"



I'd suggest writing this at the top of a journal page or make it a note on your phone and jotting down things over time as they come to you. You may find as I did, the answer to this question is the connective tissue that gives some of the items on your list form over time.

While that question is percolating, select something from your Passions List and take a small step toward it. You can do some research or schedule a bit of time to be in that space with all your heart. The idea is to spend time doing something that increases your energy, allows you to lose yourself for a bit, and makes you feel great once you're done.

I'll give you a brief example using a personal experience of connecting long forgotten interests in a new way. And some of the things that were on my Passions List the last time I did this exercise were photography, micro memoir, and road trips. Related activities I've tried to connect with that energy include taking an online art class, combing through my photos and writing archives for raw materials, playing with combining words and images into finished pieces, and planning for future road trips for more images and writing.

I do these activities in my normal course of life. In fact, they are the things that I look forward to in my non-working hours. And I hold a longer term vision, the goal of someday having an online gallery of my work.

You may find as I do that, if you do this routinely, your mood will elevate and you'll naturally begin to spend more time doing the things you love. It's good to keep it fresh by checking in with how you're feeling and making adjustments as you need. And it's



great to experiment with different things. It doesn't happen overnight, but the more you enjoy this time, the more this sacred space you're creating will expand.

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.

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Until next time, be well!