



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 062 – The Beach as Medicine
August 11, 2021

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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's dedicated to supporting you on your journey to live more wholeheartedly.

Hello and welcome to Episode 62. Thanks so much for joining me for the shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

I took a few days off last week, my first vacation since leaving my corporate job two years ago. It was a much needed, long awaited mini-road trip to a favorite beach. I loved the drive out, time spent with family and friends, and long walks to hidden coves for some quiet time.

It's hard to disagree with Plato, who was quoted as saying, "The sea cures all ailments." The beach is the perfect setting to enhance our overall well-being.

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Here are nine ways that the combination of sun, sea and sand can act as natural medicine that nourishes our mind, body and spirit:



1. Days can be spent moving our bodies on the beach and in the ocean, interspersed with permission to relax and do nothing.
2. Natural substances for the body abound, such as vitamin D production stimulated by the sun, magnesium from sea water as a de-stressor, the antibacterial detoxifying properties of salt and the negative ions in the sea air to help us absorb more oxygen.
3. Natural elements, such as the blue-hued landscape, the sound of water, and the warmth of the sand combine to activate our parasympathetic nervous system to help us relax and release feel good endorphins.
4. A relaxed body paves the way for a reduction in anxiety and stress and an increase of mental ease.
5. There's an opportunity to deepen this emotional tranquility by unplugging and using techniques like mindfulness to be present.
6. This calm, positive mental state has science to back it up. Marine biologist and author, Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, calls this psychological state of less brain activity that's instilled by close proximity to water in nature "Blue Mind" in his book by the same title.
7. A relaxed body and calm mind is perfect for inviting insight and reflection.
8. The choice to expand the experience of true downtime without manufactured stimuli is easier in a beach environment.
9. This space made from a cognitive timeout is the perfect breeding ground for creativity and connection.

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I find the best way to settle into the beach landscape is with mindful awareness. Instead of directing my attention through focused meditation, mindful awareness is about deepening presence by welcoming our full experience moment by moment, observing how the mind, body and spirit feel.



Here's my favorite way to practice mindful awareness. It was so wonderful to do this last week. I hope you give it a try the next time you're beachside.

- First, fill a travel mug with your favorite morning beverage and begin your walk at sunrise to enjoy the empty beach.
- You may choose to walk alone or with your significant other or a good friend. If you're with someone, you may agree to walk in silence, or have some alone time at some point in the walk.
- As you walk, notice what you're finding most pleasing. Perhaps the colors in the sky, the sound of the ocean or the feeling of sand on your feet as you walk. Whatever you choose, just enjoy that feeling for a while.
- When it feels right, broaden your awareness to your five senses. Just notice how your senses are engaged. Here are some examples of what you can bring into your experience as you stroll:

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Sight: The endless horizon, wildlife, clouds, footprints and patterns in the sand, sun reflected on the water, boats and surfers, shells, sea and plant life.

Sound: Waves crashing, wind blowing, water receding over the pebbles and shells, seagulls.

Smell: Sea air, marine life on the beach, seaweed, tidal pools.

Touch: The beach spray, ocean breeze, sun, water lapping at your feet, wet sand, breath rhythm, body relaxing, the texture of pebbles or shells.

Taste: Salt on the lips, morning coffee.



- Find a spot to sit and face the ocean. Feel each of the natural elements such as the earth supporting you, the water relaxing you, the fire of the sun warming you and the air enfolding you.
- Slowly broaden your awareness by feeling what's around you. While sitting still use your senses to perceive what's farthest from you on the horizon? What's closest? What's behind you, below you, directly above you and on either side?
- In this expanded relaxed state, invite your mind to wander a bit. You may find yourself gently processing the past, dreaming of the future or discovering an insight.
- Mindfully bring your beach walk to a close. Feel yourself connected to the energy of the landscape. Feel the sun and the ocean radiating in your cells.

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As you leave the beach, remember that you can always tap into this aliveness. Even when you return home, know that the ocean tides are continually flowing, the sun is still rising and setting, and the earth is always renewing and revitalizing. As are you.

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 know anyone who could benefit from today's episode, please pass it on. And many thanks for supporting the show by subscribing and leaving a review. It means a lot and it helps others find their way to our circle.



If you'd like to access the show notes, have a question you'd like addressed on a future episode or would like a transcript of this episode, visit www.AthenaWellness.com/podcast.

Until next time, be well!