



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 071 – Remembering Who You Are with Rachel Astarte
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00:05

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 71. Thanks so much for joining me.

Today's show feels like a deep exhale. It revolves around this idea that self development does not have to come from a feeling that something is wrong with us. Rather, it can be born from a remembrance of who we are. I can't tell you how much I love that.

I'm joined today by Rachel Astarte, who is a transpersonal psychotherapist and life coach. Rachel is the author of *Celebrating Solitude: How to Develop and Honor Your Highest Self*. And she's also the host of the podcast *Self-Talk with Rachel Astarte*.

We cover a range of topics including:

- Transpersonal psychotherapy as a holistic approach to treat the mind, body and spirit;
- The importance and benefits of having a solitude practice;
- How the pandemic shifted our relationship with ourselves and others; and



- How the natural world can help connect and ground us.

We end this episode with our Dose of Inspiration segment where Rachel shares some of the things that are lighting her up these days. And as always, I'll put links to those items and Rachel's website in the show notes.

And now onto the show. I hope you enjoy the conversation.

02:01 Kathy

Rachel, welcome to the Athena Wellness podcast. Thanks so much for being here today.

Rachel

Thank you, Kathy.

Kathy

So you have had quite an interesting professional journey. Please share a bit about who you are and what you do.

02:15 Rachel

Well, I originally started as a writer and an actor, very young, I started writing at four and I was on stage five. And I thought that's what I was going to be doing the rest of my life. And to some extent, that's true. I'm still a writer and I do voice overs. So I guess you could call that acting but I'm not doing so much theatre and film anymore.

My whole purpose in life, I think, was to communicate with people. And so I thought acting and writing were a great way to do that. But after a certain point, I felt like I wasn't



reaching the kind of audience or that, you know, I wasn't making as broad a reach as I could.

So shortly after my son was born, I got certified as a transformational life coach and a clinical hypnotherapist thinking, *Okay, so now I can do some real healing work.* And as I started doing life coaching, I realized I was slipping dangerously into doing talk therapy, which is illegal for me to do.

So I thought, *I guess I'd better go back and get my master's in therapy.* And I got a master's in marriage and family therapy and then went through all the rigmarole to get licensed, which I did. So now I'm licensed in New York State. But I brought my spirituality into my practice and my creative aspects into my practice. So I refer to it more as holistic psychotherapy and transformational life coaching. That's where I am today.

03:55 Kathy

Hmm, I get this sense of this deepening. There's two things that I really appreciate. One is that there's this holistic approach to treat the mind, body and spirit, which I think is really critical. And then the second is this focus on the foundation of self, of how we show up in the world.

So to frame our conversation, my question is, who typically reaches out to you and what types of treatments do you offer?

04:23 Rachel

Yeah, it's a wonderful question. When people have seen my website and see what I'm all about, oftentimes I have people contact me who are in the middle of some kind of life transition. Either they're changing jobs or they're, you know, getting either into or out of a



relationship. I work with people who are in some sort of sexual orientation transformation, spiritual transformations, you know, moving from one belief system to another. So usually people who are shifting in some beautiful way.

And because, as you rightly mentioned, my niche area is self development, that's basically how we approach it. I look at each individual. We work together collaboratively. There's a lot of intimacy in the work that I do, because every human being is unique and wonderful. And I love to get to know each soul. And from there we work on, you know, where do you want to be? And what are the obstacles preventing you from getting there? And a lot of it is belief systems that just don't work for them anymore or patterning or societal pressure or whatever it might be. So we work together collaboratively to find out what path they need to be on that feels comfortable for them.

05:53 Kathy

Mm hmm. This idea of what path - I think sometimes when we start to work through these transitions, we think that the path is going to magically appear, actually, that the whole path is going to magically appear rather than that first step. So how do you support your clients as they're going through it? I mean, these are big life changes that you just outlined. And it's not something that happens overnight, although we wanted to. How do you support them through that process?

06:25 Rachel

Yeah, that's so important. First of all, it's really important for all of us to remember that the path is not separate from any place that you are right now, you're already on the path, you're on the path. The moment that you say, I need to do something here, I need the moment I call it, the moment you wake up, right? And you realize, wow, something needs to shift. There you are, you're on your path, look down, you're on it, you know?



And that means being gentle with yourself and saying this is going to be quite an adventure. And it really is the hero's journey or heroine's journey. And the way that I try to help is to normalize everything that a patient is going through. Because there's nothing wrong with any of us, you know what I mean?

So when they encounter obstacles on the path, these are lessons, that's all. They're not actually obstacles that are trying to trip you up, unless you allow them to do that, right? So it's like, okay, so what can we learn from this? What can we learn from my abusive childhood? What can we learn from my low self esteem? What can I learn from, you know, my stagnant relationship or my discomfort with how I show up in the world, whatever the obstacles might be. These are all opportunities.

So the other important aspect that addresses your question is, we have to stop thinking that there is some person over there that we want to be. There's this goal person and if I could just be that person, I will win, you know? And I make it very clear that you are already the person you want to be. That doesn't sound very good, does it? But it's like, well, you know, less than what's all the work about? Well, once you accept the fact that where you are is exactly right for you in this moment, every step unfolds much more smoothly.

08:33 Kathy

When you said that, you know, look down, you're on the path, I got a complete body chill, for whatever it's worth, it's certainly resonating. But what a refreshing way to think about it right? Because normally when somebody feels like they want to do some sort of therapy, they want to do some sort of self development, it starts from this place of what's wrong with us. And what you're saying is, no we're going to help you remember who you are. That's incredibly powerful because we're all kind of conditioned that way, right, of there's



something I need to fix. Or, many times, I need to fix somebody else. How do we start to remember who we are? What are some of the things that we can do to help with that remembrance?

09:20 Rachel

What a beautiful question. Part of it is getting quiet with yourself, dropping into your body. We always forget the body, right? Mind and spirit, we love those. I meditate to clear my mind, to feel good, you know, I get to see God, maybe some colorful lights or something. But what about your body, right? So dropping into the body and being able to align mind, body and spirit in that way. Just being - that is your core self.

I talked to a lot of people about, you know, when they say "I don't know who I am. I'm not sure, I just don't know and it's all a jumble." So I say, "Well, when you're alone and you're doing something that you enjoy, and that could be anything, could be reading a book, it could be taking a shower, it could be playing with your cat, it could be whatever it is. How do you feel in your body?"

"I don't know."

"Well, let's try it. Let's just remember what it's like to do something that you love."

And then there's this peace that comes over them, you know, and that's who you are, when you are in alignment. And then sometimes even just looking at early life, you know, we're born without all of the trauma and the patterning and the societal pressure. We're born perfect, right? That's why we all love babies. Because they're so connected to spirit.



And I remind my patients that yet we were all of that way. All of us, not one baby is born consciously tripped up in the tangles of patterning. So you had it. And I love how you're talking about remembering who we are. And that's right.

And who we are is much bigger than who we are. That's the other part of it is we are just one facet, and so much life around us. You know, I'm looking out my window at the trees and the grass and the birds. They're all lives, too - perfect, beautiful lives. And we are part of that family..

11:40 Kathy

Yeah, I think about all of my fellow Type A's, you know, and we intellectually understand that, but until we try it... And I love your exercise, of when you're doing something you love - how does that feel? I think it was Martha Beck that says it's either shackles on or shackles off. Do you feel yourself constricting? Or do you feel yourself expanding?

It's a big lesson because there's no immediate shift. It's more of an unfolding, going back to that journey, of being on this path, what's the next step? So I think that's wonderful advice for the next time you're doing something that you love or doing something you love with the intent of how you feel, what a huge clue.

12:29 Rachel

Yeah, and you can use that as a guide. We all have to face quandaries or difficult decisions to make. And my work with patients is always, well, let's look at each one. Let's look at all of your options and drop into the body. What's closing you and what's open when? What allows the flow to happen? To go, "Yeah, that sits right in my belly." Okay, well, then that's a good idea, that's a step you want to take. The other ones, "No, there's too much tangley stuff over there." Okay, so maybe that's not the right decision.



So when we get into the practice of dropping into the body and listening and feeling, letting that inform our mind and our spirit, it's a great practice to get into and it gets easier the more you do it.

13:18 Kathy

And that's incredibly practical. It's one thing to do something I love and see how I feel. But the point in doing that is, so when you're veering off that path, that's a clue that you can take that step. But do you want to? Do you truly want to do that? Is it serving you?

13:35 Rachel

Yeah, how often do you want to feel that yucky feeling in your stomach? You know what I mean? It's like, "Oh, I didn't even realize that was just my is body telling me no, no, no."

13:45 Kathy

Yeah. And you know, I think that part of the reason why we don't remember is that just the way our society and our culture is, it's the next thing, the next thing, the next thing. And I know that you've written a wonderful book, it's called *Celebrating Solitude, How to Celebrate and Honor your Highest Self*, which I just think is a phenomenal title. But that's getting to this stillpoint, this place where we can kind of feel that difference. So can you tell us a little bit about the book and why you decided to write it?

14:17

Yeah. So it's, it's *How to Discover and Honor your Highest Self*. It's really important, a lot of people who pick up the book might not know how to find that person. And so solitude is a beautiful way to do it.



How it came about was that I was in my mid to late 30s. I had just come back from a long trip to India. And I was single, and I was thinking to myself, “Wow, I travel the world. I meet a lot of people, you know, I can't seem to find a partner. And I don't feel particularly bad about that. But society is expecting that I'm going to hook up at some point and find a partner and do the things that everyone else does. But what would it be like for me to just make peace with being on my own?”

And I began to really look back at my life and how comfortable I was in solitude. And I thought, “I wonder if there are other people who could benefit from creating a solitude practice,” because it certainly did help me to get my stuff together, spending extensive amounts of time alone.

But not everybody's the same. So there are even chapters in the book about how to create a solitude practice when you're in relationship or when you have children or when there are people who don't understand what a solitude practice is.

But the main purpose of solitude is basically what we were just talking about, which is getting to know your true self better. And you do that by playing, by doing things that you love. You know, a solitude practice can be meditation, mine includes meditation, but it could also be knitting, or reading a book, or journaling, or taking a walk in nature, something that you do alone, that allows you to just shut out all the other voices that we hear pretty much 24/7.

16:25 Kathy

Yeah, and that can be a hard conversation when you're in relationship, of why this time is needed? Or for those who find themselves dating in midlife, and suddenly there's this 24/7 device that's by our size, where people are wanting to text with the best of intentions. So



what's some advice for someone who's trying to have that conversation but doesn't quite know how?

16:54 Rachel

Yeah, it's a great question. Well, the main purpose of having a solitude practice, as we said, is to get in touch with and become and be your true self, right? When we are our true self, then when we do enter the world without all the baggage, without all the trying to fit into roles and conform to certain ways of being that may not align with our true nature. We actually are much more effective in the world - in business, in relationships, even in our interactions with strangers.

So when we talk to a loved one, or even a friend, you know, this is a tricky one, right? So I'm not in a relationship. But I do have friends who say, "Hey, let's go out and do this." How do we do that? Well, one of the main ways is to say, "I do this for us. I do this for both of us." If you're in a relationship and you say, "Listen, I need an hour a day to myself, so that I can recharge my battery, so that I can give myself enough love to fill that again."

And what happens with love? Do we ever stop? Is there a cut off point for love? No, of course not. Once we have filled our own cup with love, our own being with love, it just flows out, right? It's when we don't do that, that we're snippy with our partner. We, you know, we're passive aggressive and we start pointing fingers at everyone else saying, "You're the reason I'm not happy, because all I want is peace." You know, go get it, go get it. And what you're doing is, you're actually nurturing all of your other relationships with every other living being on the planet.

18:43 Kathy

I love that - "I'm doing this for us. I do this for us." That's beautiful.



Well, we've been through quite a shift with the pandemic. How has that impacted relationship from what you're seeing with your clients and just in your general sphere?

19:02 Rachel

Yeah. So specifically with my patients I've found that it's been both sides of the coin. So I have some patients who say, "My relationship has gotten so much better because we've been forced to deal with our stuff together. And we found more time to do family things and we found more time to connect and not be distracted with commuting and other business outside of our relationship."

I've also seen couples who have said, "We're burnt out, we just can't stand the sight of each other anymore." (laughs) And so it really does depend on the people, on the individuals involved. But yeah, it's very interesting how there is quite a spectrum of how people have received this quarantine time.

19:58 Kathy

Yeah, and I would guess that it's the same for relationship with the self as well?

Rachel

Yeah.

Kathy

Yeah. It's the range of spectrum. Are you seeing alignment with folks that tend to be more introverted and extroverted? I mean, is it that simple to categorize and say, "Well, for folks who are more introverted, they had a little bit easier time with this?" Or how does that shake out?



20:23 Rachel

Yeah, it's really interesting. Yes, introverts have been like a hog in mud. It's been fantastic. I am a self-professed introvert. So you know, this has been fantastic for me. But I do hear that a lot. I hear "Thank God I had this time."

The more extroverted of my patients, interestingly, were surprised by how much they learned about themselves. And yes, they get antsy. What's interesting, what's really interesting to me is I would get this, you know, we talked about this. And then as soon as things started opening back up again, like I'm out of here, I'm not doing any more solitude stuff, I'm, you know, I gotta get out, I gotta get out. And so it's very, it's very, it's very interesting.

But it was a wonderful opportunity, this time, for those who chose to do the inner work, to do it. And just to be present in the uncertainty and the sorrow of what was going on all over the world. And I think also bringing our interconnectivity as human beings together. We were, we are, all suffering in one way or another.

So, it was almost like a gathering time for those of us who went inside and did some work to say, "What tools do I have to contribute? What tools do I have to manage my own pain, my own grief and my anxiety?" So it was a beautiful opportunity.

So yeah, I mean, extroverts are extroverts, they need people and that's fine. And introverts can have - I mean I enjoy spending time with my loved ones. It's the fuse is shorter, right? So it's like, I need more, I can do like an hour and then I gotta boot. And more time to recharge. So everybody's different. And there are those who suffered through this time as



well, you know, who really didn't want to do any of that work. And we're just gritting their teeth waiting for it to be over. And that happens, too.

22:32 Kathy

I read a study earlier this week about participants who had a choice whether they could self administer a low grade shock, you know, like a typical science experiment, or sit in a room by themselves. And the majority would rather take the shock and get out, then sit for a period of time alone. What is it about solitude that can be so scary for some people?

23:04 Rachel

Yeah. So I always like, maybe it's my therapist head, but I like to take things to the beginning. When do we first hear about being alone when we're children? It's a punishment.

Kathy

Mmmmm.

Rachel

Go to your room, be by yourself, think about what you've done. So we're trained from childhood to think of solitude as a punishment. And, on top of that, implied in that punishment, is consider the awful thing you have done to cause you to be ostracized.

So being alone with our thoughts then becomes really frightening. Because again, it's this hamster wheel of what did I do wrong? How do I fix it next time? Do I feel like it, was it even a just punishment, you know, this kind of thing. So a lot of us spend our time distracting ourselves by interacting with others, by watching television, going to the movies, you know, whatever it is. So the idea of being alone feels terribly, terribly isolating.



Also, predominantly, human beings are social animals and need some kind of connection with other life forms, you know, whether they're human or not. So implied ancestrally is this idea of solitude means you have been removed from the community. And that, obviously, is not the case by any stretch. In fact, spending time as a shamanic practitioner, we talk about vision quests or going off by yourself to work with the spirits of nature. You're never alone, really, if you think about it.

I mean, if you want to get really into it, I'm a quantum physics geek. And so I love the idea of everything in the Universe being connected. We talk about Einstein's spooky action at a distance, or quantum entanglement where two things, whatever they may be, very far apart, do communicate. They've done these tests. And if that's the case, then everything around us is our sibling. And that means things that we might not consider to be sentient beings are also our siblings. So if you're sitting in a room with nothing but a chair and a table, those are siblings. They're just vibrating light, just like you are vibrating. And they just vibrate slower, which is why they feel solid.

25:45 Kathy

We may have to have you come back on because I'm just learning now about particles and how they move and so we can get into it.

25:55 Rachel

That's awesome. Yeah, yeah. I am not a physicist by any stretch, but it is fascinating.

26:00 Kathy

It is fascinating. It really expands your understanding of consciousness and of being here and purpose. And the unlimited infinite possibilities that we create.



26:15 Rachel

And you know, even just the idea of science, don't let me geek out for too long. I promise I'll pull it back. But the funny thing about science is, you know, what is science about? It's about answering the great questions. What else is spirituality about? Answering the questions. So I do believe that pretty soon, spirit and science are going to, you know, that they're starting to dovetail a bit. But I think that whatever that great mystery is, science will figure out that there is this great question mark, this beautiful entity that creates and destroys and creates and destroys and, and I'm looking forward to that day, I'm not sure I'll be alive. But yeah, at least not in this form. (laughs)

27:05 Kathy

Yeah, exactly. And, you know, from a spiritual standpoint, we seem to be, this is just my sense, I'd love to get your thoughts, at this great turn. We're in a very messy place of upended ways, of being, of not being together. It feels like the very beginnings of what I would term like a global healing, maybe that's just my optimism. But that's kind of the way, you always get that messy, you know, you're in that messy place before it gets better. And it feels like we're in that place. What are you seeing in your work and with your clients from a spiritual perspective of where we are in these times?

27:50 Rachel

Well, just the fact that I'm having more and more people reach out to me for therapy with an interest in expanding their spirituality says a lot. And that means that growth is important, you know, on all those levels, mind body spirit. That is very promising to me.

And being ushered into an age where it's no longer just about what can I get out of this life, but what can I do? How can I make myself more efficient and better and healthier, so



that I can give back to the world around me. That's a shift that I'm seeing. And that is extremely promising. It gives me a lot of hope.

There's a lot of, you know, nasty stuff going on, too. This is a great shakedown that's kind of, you know, the Earth is shaking us down. And we're shaking each other down. And that's why it's so important to be doing this work now. So that we can, we can really rally together. And it's not even just to save the human race, because it's more about the energy that we're generating, just by being alive. What are you putting out there? Yeah.

29:08 Kathy

And just to follow that up, you do a lot of work in the natural world. What kinds of practices might be helpful for our listeners in these times?

29:18 Rachel

Yeah, that's a great question, too. It's easy to say go out in nature, go out in nature. My way of dropping into nature is to just do it wherever you are, wherever you are. I lived in New York City for 22 years, you have to walk a few blocks to see a tree, but they're there. You know what I mean? You can find patches of nature everywhere. So let nature connect with you as you connect with it.

If we look at nature as something we do as an event, it separates us from what's so close to us all the time. So one of the practices that I do that I highly recommend - it's referred to as earthing or grounding, where you put your bare feet on the ground. I do it every day. I've been doing it every day for almost three years, even in the dead of winter. I will shovel a little patch of snow away till I hit grass.

Kathy



Wow.

Rachel

And that's where I put my feet.

Kathy

Wow.

Rachel

Yeah. And you do it for as long as you can stand it. But you know, just stop and let the earth come through your feet and move through your body and just give thanks in that way. Be in nature just by looking at what's outside your house right now or your apartment right now. Is there a tree? Is there a patch of grass? That counts.

So go hang out, you know, have a conversation. These are living beings, fascinating living beings. And another reason why I maintain that we're never alone. Because we have all this energy around us all the time. So yes, go on a hike. But make sure that you understand that you're in communion with nature, as opposed to it being some kind of special event that you do, you see?

31:19 Kathy

Yeah, absolutely. And I know you do some creative writing as a practice. Can you talk a little bit about that?

31:27 Rachel



Yeah. Well, as I said, I've always been a writer since I could write. And so I started in poetry. And then I moved to fiction, screenwriting, and that kind of thing, journalism, and nonfiction, because obviously, this solitude book is one of those.

Creative writing is such a wonderful place to be because you're using your imagination. A lot of times we feel stuck in our life, not in the best relationship, or we're feeling lonely, or our work isn't going the way we want it to. There's nothing better than creating a world for yourself in writing that you can go and visit whenever you want and tell the stories that you want to tell.

And no one has to read it. It's not all about writing the great American novel. It's about playing. There's so much that our minds are capable of, and we don't even really try. Because again, that's breaking out of the box of what's my role as a colleague, as a partner, as a friend, as a daughter, as a son, as a parent. We forget that we're much, much richer than that. So creative writing is a beautiful way to play.

Journaling is also wonderful. Being able to just write your thoughts down is a beautiful way to tie in your spirit. So your spirit is in that which surrounds you and permeates you. But then you get your mind engaged, because you have to formulate the words, and then you get your body engaged, because you've got your hand, I like to write by hand. And so it's like all three of these elements come together to create, which is a really beautiful thing.

33:27 Kathy

Yeah, I love that. It is very compact. You can take it anywhere. And for those, again, that really operate at that logical side, you can't help but have your right brain engaged. So it's a lovely practice.



We like to wrap up these episodes with what we call a Dose of Inspiration, because our listeners really like to hear what's lighting you up. And I put all the links in the show notes. So I'd like to give you a couple of questions.

Rachel

Sure.

Kathy

First, from a wellness perspective, what's a favorite wellness practice or recent wellness win for you?

34:02 Rachel

Oh, it's great one. Well, as I mentioned, my shamanic practice is extremely important. I also practice Kundalini Yoga, which has been life changing. And I guess my recent wellness win is that in April, I completed a full year of daily Kundalini practice without missing a day.

Kathy

Wow.

Rachel

And I was very proud of myself for making time for that. And I have to say, it has changed my life. You know, I've always practiced what we might call traditional types of yoga, like Hatha yoga and things like that. Those styles of yoga didn't really speak to me as much. And I kept taking it. I started at 27. I would take it for a while and it would stop and take me out and try Iyengar, I'd try Vinyasa, you know, and all these things. And nothing really stuck until I found Kundalini and then I'm like, I'm home, this is my jam.



35:00 Kathy

I'm smiling because the next podcast that's about to be released is with the Kundalini Yoga practitioner.

Rachel

Wonderful.

Kathy

He's actually a teacher. So, yeah. What about a struggle or an area that you've been focusing your wellness efforts?

35:16 Rachel

Hmm. For me, a lot of it has been around stepping into my Crone-dom. (laughs) I am now menopausal, fully menopausal. And it's been a very interesting shift. And sort of this transition of saying goodbye to the younger parts of myself, but not really letting them go, because I don't want to just become an old fuddy duddy.

But to be able to step into what it means to be a Crone, what does it mean to be a wisdom keeper? What does it mean to be a mentor? To be an elder? And doing that the best way that I can. And so that's, for me, that's required a lot of introspection, which this pandemic certainly allowed me to drop in and really think, "What am I doing? What am I doing here? And what can I do better?"

36:18 Kathy

Mmmhmm. Wow, those are big questions, big shifts, and it sounds like it may be a book in the making?



36:22 Rachel

I think it is. (laughs) It may be.

36:25 Kathy

It hit me that way. What have you read or listened to lately that you enjoyed?

36:32 Rachel

Right now I actually am reading a beautiful book called *Braiding Sweetgrass*, and that's by Robin Wall Kimmerer. And it's absolutely, stunningly beautifully written. It's about Native American traditions in nature. Yes, it talks about sweet grass, but she also talks about other trees, plants, even animal life, or, you know, our non-human people, I think she calls them. And how, it's kind of what we were speaking about, how we are all interacting with one another, and how we are connected. And we need to be able to work reciprocally with nature and not see it as separate from us in any way. That these are our beings that are our family. So I highly recommend that.

Kathy

I'm smiling because it's actually on my reading list.

Rachel

Nice. Yeah, I just told my mom about it. She's going on a road trip so she's gonna pop that in and listen to it. So I think the audio book is read by the author, which is even better.

37:45 Kathy

Oh, that's great. What new thing or experience are you looking forward to trying?



37:52 Rachel

Death. I am, I am, it's been an obsession of mine since I was about seven. And I'm not looking to do it anytime soon. But I am certainly looking to prepare myself for it, to find out what all this is about. And that I think has been my whole purpose in my life is to move gracefully toward death, is to really figure out what can I get out of this life? It's a paradox, really. I'd like to experience what death is like, but I'd like to experience it feeling like I got life right.

I honestly believe that death is a subject that we should be teaching children about in school in the right way. Instead of it being this dark, scary, macabre thing that we do not talk about. That's what I think is a real problem in our psyches, you know? I'm not looking to practice that anytime soon or get into that anytime soon. But at the same time, I think, keeping it close, and keeping it nestled nearby, so that we're friends by the time it happens would be a great idea.

39:06 Kathy

I think it's a great answer. And I can't agree with you more about teaching our children but also being the ones to have the conversations with our elders. And so facilitating those conversations as people are transitioning, I find that somehow that's become a default role of mine as well, unanticipated but there we are. And then how do you hold that space? How do you hold that conversation? So yeah, I love that answer. Not what I was expecting, but a great answer.

Envision your perfect road trip. Where do you go? What do you do?

39:42 Rachel



I love that, too, because I love to drive. I love road tripping. So I did a road trip from New Mexico to New York when I was moving back from New Mexico. I want to do it in reverse. I'm in New York now and eventually I want to take that road trip back to New Mexico. It's a beautiful ride. And what I do is I stop anywhere there's a hot spring. (laughs) Anywhere I can get naked in the outdoors, I will stop there. And you know, I really just enjoy looking at this amazing countryside. So yeah, I would definitely like to take that trip again.

40:22 Kathy

I love it. It's such a great reminder of how beautiful this country is, when you just get out on the road.

40:27 Rachel

My gosh, there's so much here, there's just everything you could want. But having said that, I do love to travel to the rest of the world, as well. When we can do that again more easily, I will get back on that. But this country has some pretty amazing landscapes.

40:45 Kathy

Absolutely. What has you feeling inspired these days, what's lighting you up?

40:51 Rachel

What's lighting me up is... activism is lighting me up a lot. I'm really jazzed about it. Especially two areas in particular, the LGBTQ+ movement is rocking my world right now. I've always been active since the 80s, when I was doing AIDS research activism. And now when I'm seeing so many people being able to step into their true selves and be accepted. It gives me so much happiness, it gives me so much happiness.



And, of course, unfortunately, the flip side of I'm happy is that there's activism around it, but climate change is a really serious issue that I'm glad to see some kind of, maybe glacial pace, movement. But you know, I'm hoping that that's going to amp up, especially as we start to really experience the effects of climate change. So when I see people, and I certainly do my part as well, but when I see people stepping into taking care of themselves and our planet, it gives me great joy.

42:05 Kathy

Excellent. And then lastly, what has you optimistic about the future?

42:10 Rachel

Children. I have an 11 year old son, he's got a number of friends. So I get to be around some kids. But what I see and what I hear is that they're tapped into what's going on. And I think particularly this younger generation, hopefully, has moved past the anger of the Millennials, and now into whatever Gen, what is it, Gen Z now?

Kathy

GenZ, yeah.

Rachel

Thank you. You know, I think that we're moving toward, like an attitude of enough of this already. Let's just get this work done. And let's take care of each other.

I, again, since the LGBTQ+ movement is very important to me, I can't tell you how happy it makes me when I go to an action and I see so many children around. And I see kids in elementary school and middle school, high school that are coming out and being



accepted. So I really think that with all of this awareness, the children are starting to really wake up.

Now I grew up in the 70s and there was a lot of activism done there at that time, as well. But then we moved into the 80s and everybody became selfish (laughs) and it was all about money. And it was all about status. And it was all about, you know, aerobicizing and all that, you know, surface stuff. So I think we need to try again. (laughs) But I really do have faith in children and in helping us move forward.

43:55 Kathy

Yeah, it's a very mature, level-headed generation.

43:59 Rachel

Yeah. They're not afraid to play, too, you know, and I think that's important.

44:04 Kathy

I think they remind us of how far we actually have come. I think we see that we had opportunities that we didn't have just a decade before. And then this time reminds us, I think, of how, it's easy to say how much we still don't have, but it does remind us even in our lifetimes, a lot has changed.

Rachel

Yeah, absolutely.

Kathy

What is the best way for our listeners to get in touch with you because I'm sure they're gonna want to know more.



44:33 Rachel

They can go to my website, which is RachelAstarteTherapy.com. And my own podcast is TheSelfTalkPodcast.com. But if they want to reach me, you can totally reach me through my website – so RachelAstarteTherapy.com.

44:51 Kathy

Perfect. Well Rachel, I really enjoyed this conversation. Thank you so much for being here today. I think it's really gonna help a lot of folks.

Rachel

Oh, I hope so. I had a blast. Thank you for having me.

45:03 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.

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