



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 074 – Open Hand, Open Heart
September 22, 2021

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.

00:30

Hello and welcome to Episode 74. Thanks so much for joining me for this shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

When I was doing research for Episode 73 on right timing, I rewatched a video clip of a talk given by Chris Heeter, who is the founder of the Wild Institute, a company she started in 2001 to encourage people to live wild.

Chris defines wild living as: "To have the courage to bring all of who you are to all of what you do." I love that. "To have the courage to bring all of who you are to all of what you do." That's wholehearted living, don't you think?

Chris has been a wilderness guide for more than 30 years and leads groups into the deep wilderness on both dog sled and canoes. She has said that everything she's learned about humanity comes from dogs and rivers. A mix of storytelling, humor and wisdom has helped her become an award winning speaker who addresses corporate audiences on how to bring their wild to work.

I'd like to share a story that Chris told in one of her speech clips. I'll put a link to Chris' website and the YouTube video in the show notes. I haven't met Chris yet, but I enjoy and appreciate the much needed work she's doing at the Wild Institute. And I recommend you check out her work and her offerings.



Here's the story that impacted me so much and I've worked a lot with it over the past year.

Chris is a dog lover and found herself dogless for a period of time. It was springtime and she was about to head into her busy season as a wilderness guide. Rather than taking a fixed approach to finding a new dog by listing all the qualifications that the dog needed to be, for example, a specific breed, its temperament, and so on, Chris found herself relaxing her tense body, opening her clenched fist, and looking at her open palm while saying, "I wonder."

Throughout the spring and summer, from time to time, when she found herself thinking about the dog, she would open her hand and say, "I wonder."

"I wonder if it's going to be a male or female. I wonder if its ears will be floppy or stand up straight. Even if it's a puppy, it's been born by now, all I have to do is find it." And this went on for months.

When her busy season was over, she sat down and began scrolling through petfinder.com, searching and scrolling until she came upon a particular picture and said, "There she is!"

It was a long drive to another state to pick up this rescue dog who had a difficult life to that point. For the drive home, Chris put the car seats down and laid in the back with the dog giving her plenty of space. Within minutes, the dog nestled her way over to Chris and put her paws around her. And Chris responded by putting her arms around the dog. And so this soulmate connection was born.

Chris named her dog Tuuweh, spelled T-U-U-W-E-H, the Lakota name for Sweet One. And when you watch this video, you'll see she was well named.

04:36

Tuuweh passed in 2019, which makes the story all the more impactful. And Chris shares it with corporate audiences to draw a parallel to leadership. "What would it be like to hold an open hand and wonder what's possible for your team?"



I've adopted this beautiful practice in the 18 months since I first saw that video clip. When I find myself in a place of wanting or trying to make something happen, I stop and pause. I glance down at my open left palm and say, "I wonder."

Whether I'm envisioning something new in my business, in my personal life, or just dreaming big, it's a wonderful way to start that conversation, because it comes from a place of open heartedness, and it's born out of curiosity and possibility.

The energy around this approach is one of ease of trust, of belief. It takes us out of the conversation and leaves our ego behind. It beckons what we desire to come forward. And it allows for right timing. That's what this practice does.

It's been said that when you stop chasing the wrong things, you give the right things a chance to catch you.

So the next time you're looking to invite something new into your life, give this a try. Bring what you desire to mind. Feel the excitement and the enthusiasm around this new situation. Then open your left hand, turn it upward so you can see your open palm, and with a sense of curiosity, say, "I wonder" and complete the sentence in a way that feels right for you.

Make it a practice and pause during your days from time to time, and just say, "I wonder." And when you least expect it, don't be surprised when you hear yourself say, "There she is!"

07:01

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!