



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 121 – The Antidote for Burnout with Lauren Bell
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[00:00:05] Kathy Robinson: 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.

[00:00:30] Kathy: Hello and welcome to Episode 121. Thanks so much for joining me.

I'm joined today by coach Lauren Bell. After 30-plus years as a registered nurse and more than 15 years as a holistic therapist, Lauren now focuses her coaching practice on caring professionals and heart-centered entrepreneurs, helping them clear inner blocks to self-worth, wealth, and health.

This is a conversation that flowed like water and we followed its current. In the end, we covered a lot of territory, focusing on self-acceptance and spiritual connectivity.

Here's what we cover:

- How Lauren turned burnout into vitality and a coaching practice;
- The surprising root cause of burnout and exhaustion;
- Five keys to working through personal and professional transition;
- How mindset impacts well-being; and
- A practice for connecting with the heart.



We end this episode with our Dose of Inspiration segment where Lauren shares some of the things that are lighting her up these days. And as always, I'll put links in the show notes to those items and Lauren's website, where you can learn more about her work and download a free chapter from her book.

And now onto the show. It was a beautiful conversation and I hope you enjoy it.

[00:01:57] Kathy: Lauren, welcome to the *Athena Wellness Podcast*. Thank you so much for being here today.

[00:02:02] Lauren Bell: Thank you, it's such a pleasure to be here.

[00:02:05] Kathy: Please say a bit about who you are and what you do.

[00:02:09] Lauren: I am a wealth mindset mentor, or I like to think of it as a worth coach, which is really about how to really start to value who you are, just because you're you, not because of anything you do, but just knowing that you are worthy. And by doing that, actually, we can open up to abundance and all of the things that are actually available in our life instead of doubting ourselves and thinking that actually, it's not really available for us that life's hard. It's all about mindset and changing how we look at the world and that's what I help people with.

[00:02:49] Kathy: How did you come to the work that you do today? You have a very diverse background of disciplines. Maybe you can share a little bit about your career journey.

[00:02:59] Lauren: I am a registered nurse and have been for over 30 years, but I've always been interested in wellness. And I guess from a very young age, I've known that we are more than just our body. So, my initial attraction to nursing was actually studying anatomy and physiology. And as I mastered that, through various trainings and things like that, I started to become a lot more interested in the emotional side of things.



I'm also very spiritual. As I said, from a young age, I really learned that actually, I'm a spiritual being having a human experience. That has always really, I guess, colored my life in that I want to be as well as I can be and live the best life that I can. And I've always been drawn to learning as much as I can about doing that and sharing everything that I know. So, I've always been very passionate to learn but very passionate to teach at the same time.

Alongside my nursing, I went on to study an energy modality called BodyTalk, also Emotional Freedom Technique, and then I'm also a qualified counselor. And just because I was seeing clients for all their emotional stuff, and a lot of people talk about a lot of the different traumatic experiences that they've had in their life, and I'm talking about-- some of them have big traumas, and some of them have traumas that we call with a little T, but ultimately, they affect people and how they're operating in the world.

They were sharing all of this with me and I really wanted to make sure that I was doing the best that I could with them. Yeah, lots of learning, lots of training. And in the end, after finishing as a counselor, I decided that nursing and counseling are helping a person from not being as well as they could be just to being normal, and I wanted to expand that.

So, I moved into the wealth mindset coaching, which is really tapping into your potential. And really, that one area in your life that seems to be always sticking and holding you back is often the thing that's going to be the part that launches you into the world and makes you feel really like everything you have arrived in a way.

[00:05:23] Kathy: It's like the doorway.

[00:05:24] Lauren: Yeah.

[00:05:26] Kathy: There's so much I'm curious about just in that introduction. Because it made me think, when I was starting my career on Wall Street, I had this



spiritual side that I never showed anybody because that's just not what you did in the professional world in the 1980s, right? Was it something that you kept to the side or was it something that you were able to incorporate into your work?

Because it's quite a range, it's incredibly impressive, from registered nursing to there's a spiritual side, there's a more psychological side, you have all of these elements working together. How did you carry that through your days?

[00:06:09] Lauren: (laughs) Yeah. Actually, that's a really good question because the truth is - I didn't. And I really felt like I had my feet in two camps. So I wasn't really honoring who I wanted to be and how I wanted to express, very censoring of myself. I had my Western medical side and I had my holistic-spiritual-energetic healing side. And I didn't let them really meet. I had a few close friends and things like that who knew that about me, but generally speaking, I put on two hats, and I walked two different--

I ultimately ended up going through burnout through the work that I was doing. As I've investigated that more and more, a lot of that came because I've always had this the ideal, this idea, and this idealism to make changes, to make people be the best that they can be but to love each other and to get along well. I was working in a healthcare system that I felt like it didn't care for its carers. And that was so disappointing and hard to be in, but I wanted to make the changes.

But then as I got into positions and took on more responsibility, I found that I couldn't do that. I think that really demoralized me and I ended up becoming very demotivated and resentful and lost all my energy. And the truth was I was really not just in my work. I'm a mom, I've got three kids, I was a single parent at the time, I started studying the counseling. I just took on too much, and really, I was putting everything out there for everyone else and not taking any responsibility for myself or my own needs or what I really wanted. I just didn't feel like I had any choice in the matter.



[00:08:09] Kathy: I want to get into the exhaustion and the burnout, but something came to mind as you were talking about all of these different disciplines that you were interested in. And I'm imagining this nurse going into work, even though you weren't practicing some of these other things because you were in a Western mode, I'm guessing - this may be a hard question for you to answer - but I'm guessing the people you were interacting with could feel it. That there was underlying healing energy.

Maybe I'm just projecting on that, but there's just a sense of empathy or compassion or there's a different level to certain practitioners that I think maybe comes from some of this. Is that fair? Is that a fair characterization?

[00:08:59] Lauren: Yeah, I think, definitely. I work with heart-centered caring professionals and entrepreneurs who want to make a difference in the world, and I think it's the heart-centeredness, the empathy. It's that part that does really want to make a difference because, well, they know that more as possible, and they're heart-centered and sensitive and leading really with love and wanting a different way of operating.

That comes at a cost until you firstly recognize that that's what's often operating, that there's sensitivity. And then what happens is I think so many people feel really over-responsible for everyone else. It's like you really need to help other people feel better. So you want to fix them and that actually is draining in itself. It's also not really possible. But you tell most carers out there, they really do feel obliged. They feel responsible to actually make a difference for these people.

I guess that's where a lot of my work rolls in is actually understanding what's really going on and how to navigate it, how to set boundaries and still be even a better carer, better practitioner through being loving, through being kind, through being empathic but just knowing that you have your boundaries and that actually, it doesn't help when you try to swoop in and save the day.



[00:10:35] Kathy: It's interesting because this idea of exhaustion and burnout - we think, especially in professions like I was, I experienced that when I was on Wall Street, and you don't think of that as a heart-centered place. And so maybe we can talk about some of the symptoms because it was my experience, it was something that snuck up on me.

I didn't really recognize the symptoms, which was this feeling of something's off, but you just-- especially in the profession that you're in, you've got patients, you've got rounds that you have to make. You can't really just fixate on, "Now something that's not quite right."

For people who are listening who may be sensing something's off a little bit, how would you describe how this starts to take root or how it starts to show itself before it takes root?

[00:11:29] Lauren: Yeah, I think from my experience was this starting to lose interest, starting to not really care, starting to feel resentful and unhappy and then that affected my-- Normally, I worked really hard, but I was just finding that I wasn't getting things done. And then my inner critic started that I wasn't doing a good job, and so it all just keeps spiraling and escalating.

But I agree with you, it's really hard when you're in it. I don't think you actually really do know and especially when you're so busy and you're doing everything for everyone else, perhaps in your work or just in your life but you're not actually putting any attention to yourself, without that reflection, you need to ask yourself, "Am I really happy? Is this what I really want to do?"

I went through burnout, but I didn't know it until I got to a point where something happened. I had to stop, and basically, I re-evaluated everything in my life and changed the way that I work. I went back to uni and finished my counseling degree and that's when the coaching came in and basically totally rearranged my life.



And understood that, yeah, what I was doing was really just soul-destroying in lots of ways. So it's a lot of soul-searching questions. In fact, I created my Soaring Free Formula, which is basically how to turn back to self and be self-kind and compassionate and caring.

It goes on, really, because once we're really focusing on all of those things, that kindness, that compassion, that caring. Sometimes it's forgiveness that we need to give to ourself, that self-acceptance of where you're at and what's going on. To then be able to really start being honest, "What's happening? How do I feel? Is this what I want?"

And then understanding that you can't be responsible for everybody else, that they have their journey and yeah, you can be loving and kind and compassionate and do your care, but it's not for you to fix them or save them or rescue them. They are going through their stuff and you, as I said, can be compassionate to that. But who knows, their stuff might be the very thing that wakes them up and changes their life. And if you try to do that for somebody else, well, then you might be robbing them of that very thing.

So, the responsibility then becomes not being so responsible for everybody else but actually being responsible for me and my life and what am I doing and how am I caring for myself? And then from that, we can create boundaries, healthy boundaries, and be firm.

The boundaries, really, so much of this for me is that when I really value myself, I know that I am important. I know that my needs need to be met, just like everybody else's. If I go too far and cross the line, then I'm exhausted. I'm depleted, I can't operate, and so I'm not doing the best for the person on the receiving end or myself. Boundaries are a really beautiful way of actually showing how I can be the best in the world and give the best and how other people can love and accept me, too.



Then the next part that I worked through was, okay, I have all these, obviously, limiting beliefs. Because I was believing that I had to work in a full-time job, I had to work, and my work involved overtime and on-call hours. And so, it was more than just full-time hours, it was everything and over and beyond, and that was the only way I could see that I could earn money or the most amount of money.

The only way I could get ahead was to do more and work harder. And I already felt like I was at the end, so what was next? And I was already struggling with meeting all of my bills and all of my costs and all of my responsibilities. So that's when I chose to do wealth mindset coaching, which totally transformed my way of thinking. All of those beliefs were able to be looked at and analyzed and say, "Okay, these aren't empowering at all. Let's change them, let's make them empowering," And so I was able to do that.

Then the very last part of my Soaring Free Model is knowledge, and really, that points to the tools that you use. For me, that very much was EFT. EFT is Emotional Freedom Technique, and that's what I use in my wealth mindset coaching. It's basically the thing that allows you to reduce all the stress in your body, look at what's going on and accept it and release all the emotion.

By releasing the emotion and releasing the stress, we can then actually start to see it from a new position. And we have different opportunities and ways of looking at it, and so we can problem-solve in a way that's calm and open and see opportunities that previously we were blinded to.

[00:16:52] Kathy: I think it's so amazing that this journey started with what just felt like atypical behavior, that feeling of being frustrated or unhappy. And it turned into a practice that you can offer others and you're able to recognize some of these elements in them as they're trying to put their finger on "I'm not quite sure what's right." You're able to guide them through that, which I think is wonderful.



There was one thing that I just wanted to go back to that I just think is really interesting and I didn't want to gloss over it, but this sense of bifurcation at the root of this.

There were things that you wanted to bring into your work that you felt you were unable to, and that had this spiraling effect of not taking responsibility, having this inner critic, not having great boundaries. But that really felt like it was the root cause, that you weren't able to bring yourself into all elements of your life.

And I highlight that because regardless of the profession, there's this sense of wholeness, or, what I call in my work, wholeheartedness, bringing your whole self to work. So, could you speak to that a bit of what it felt like before and how your life has changed as a result of that?

[00:18:18] Lauren: Yeah, that was the part for me that was the turning inwards, turning to myself and actually, I guess, valuing myself and seeing my worthiness. But doing that acceptance, the self-kindness, the self-compassion, the forgiveness, and then what actually happens is the confidence that comes through, which allows you to be authentic and to speak and be expressive of who you really are.

It has been a journey, and it's still being a journey. I think it'll be a journey forever. Because being authentic and expressing ourselves and just who we are without apology, without censorship, that's what makes you joyful. That's uncovering the inner truth of who you are. I believe we all have this within us. We are all unique. We're all gifted. It doesn't matter what we're doing in the world, that's our gift, that's our spiritual gift.

Even though we might have gone on and trained and trained and trained, we have this innate truth of who it is that we are. I guess we've all learned to conform and to be and to act certain ways, but actually, that breaks our heart.



[00:19:40] Kathy: Mmmmm. That's a beautiful way of putting it. It's bringing back a lot of memories of times long ago.

I also want to make sure that it was clear. You have this five-part model that you took us through, as you were telling your story of honesty, responsibility, boundaries, belief, and knowledge that you work through with your clients. You, like me, work with clients that are in some sort of transition.

My question is, as we're helping people move through these changes, why is inviting change at those times so frightening for some folks? We would think that we get to this point and we just want that relief of change, but that's not always the case. Can you speak to the change management element of the work that you do and how you help your clients?

[00:20:34] Lauren: So much of this is about accepting just exactly what's going on and where you are now. If that means that you're not happy and you want to make changes in your life, to actually have the courage and the ability to be able to look at that. I think it's scary. I think people feel fear and it's that's a whole thing about "the devil you know than the devil you don't," sort of thing or the comfort zone.

It's like, "I know I want that, but that feels too scary." It just pushes all of those sensitive parts inside us, those resistance parts that will cause us to procrastinate or to feel the fear, to criticize ourselves and to hold ourselves back, to play small and to not go for what we really want.

And so, all of the work that I do is really, once again, is about uncovering these parts and helping us to recognize that things like the inner critic and fear and anxiety and those sorts of emotions, they're just feelings and they're not necessarily based in truth.

But when we explore them, we can actually start to see them and have compassion for those parts and instead of... you know, a lot of people talk about,



"Oh, you've got rid your fear, or you've got to get rid of the inner critic." And we can't. They're actually with us, they've been online with us from a very young age. The critic often comes on in early childhood or in school years. All of these parts inside us in some respects come on board through our formative years. They're just part of who we are. We don't actually recognize them until we start to look.

So having the tools, what I found was suddenly I was able to be courageous about it. Because before that, it felt like I would go down a rabbit hole and worried I would never come out. It was like, what was I going to find? It would be too scary. Actually having tools that support you, that means that you can look, you can look at it with compassion. And those parts, they just really want more love and more understanding and more acknowledgment.

It's like in a way they're a bit misguided and a bit immature. By giving the love and perhaps parenting ourselves the way that we wanted it to be done, maybe or needed it. Sometimes we had a sensitive part inside us that maybe made some idea that I wasn't important. All of these beliefs come on board and we believe them to be completely true about ourselves until we start to be able to look at them and decide, actually, that's not really a truth, that was just something that happened.

That's where the tools like EFT come in. Because when we release the emotional charge around some of these beliefs, we actually, sometimes... the hippocampus is lit up as well. So what happens is, as we reduce the stress in our body, we get blood flow back into our brain. And we're really able to see things through the prefrontal cortex, which is the higher-order thinking of our brain. And then also the hippocampus is involved, which is where our memories are stored. So there might be a memory, but it's just like, "Oh, I made that mean that I'm not important," whatever the beliefs that came up with.



[00:24:19] Kathy: I'm smiling because I never really made the connection of the inner critic being a rambunctious adolescent and that's the way it can talk sometimes. (laughs) It's a fun characterization to give it.

There's one other point that I just want to talk a bit more about. And that is we use the term "dropping into the heart" and how important that is. For folks who haven't experienced that, it's hard to help them see exactly what that is and why it's so important. Can you maybe share an example of how this is helpful or maybe a practice to help us to connect more deeply with our heart center?

[00:25:03] Lauren: Yeah, definitely. I always say drop into your heart. It came about, really, for me, it was one of those a-ha moments when I saw Dr. Shawn Stephenson speaking at an event, an amazing, amazing man, amazing speaker, and very inspirational.

His quote was "Drop into your heart. The mind doesn't have any answers. The heart doesn't have any questions." So that's why it's so important.

Really, the mind, we're not meant to navigate our world through our mind, but that's the way we've been being taught. We actually have become very logical, and we've moved into where we're thinking all the time, we're busy, busy, busy. And we actually are not even very conscious of our body.

So one of the techniques, there's a few techniques that we can do, but firstly, just try to imagine just feeling your body. And if it means you are sitting on a chair, feel your legs on the chair. If you're standing on the ground, feel your feet on the ground. Feel into your chest area, take a breath and notice. Just the sensations.

We're not talking about analyzing or doing anything here. There's nothing, no right, no wrong, but feeling just your body, what is your body? How does it feel? As we become better at doing that, we can just start to become aware of our body at



the same time as where we're actually thinking, so we're becoming a witness to how we're feeling as well as what we're thinking.

Really, this witness is the center of us. This idea of "drop into your heart" is coming back to center, coming back to the core of who we are, which is, in lots of ways, the very still, the very peaceful, the very loving part of ourselves.

Another practical way of doing it is just closing your eyes and visualizing a staircase from your head. Imagine yourself walking down the staircase down, down, down. Keep going down, down, down until you get to the heart. And you might need to open a door, or really, it's your imagination, your subconscious mind. Just allow it to paint the picture of what it is, but basically, you're opening, your heart is welcoming you into that area.

So, that's just a couple of ways that we can focus. Breathing, of course, is another way of actually being able to center ourselves and bring ourselves back into the body. Of course, our lungs are right around our heart area. When we want to breathe very deeply, we're activating that area, too. That's another way of actually being able to come back to body, come back to heart.

[00:28:11] Kathy: Beautiful. I think one of the practices that I have when I was first trying to connect, is just trying to feel some heat, just trying to feel some energy. Just hand over heart, what does it feel like when there's energy that's radiating and then practicing radiating it out. To me, that was the easiest. Sometimes you can visualize a color, but most times it was just trying to feel that heat.

Something really interesting just came to mind, though, as you were chatting. You were talking about the witness coming from the heart center. I was just having a conversation with a friend of mine. I said, "I'm finding more and more when I'm in situations, that it's almost as if I'm witnessing this from a vantage point. I'm very present in the moment, but I also feel like I'm witnessing whatever it is that's going on."



From the way you're describing it, it's really being in a situation coming from a logical place but also having the heart bearing witness. Is that a fair way to think about that?

[00:29:19] Lauren: To me, this is probably the spiritual soul or whatever words you want to call it, this higher self, this higher part of us that is always present. It's not our thoughts, it's not our emotions. As we attune to this part of ourselves more and more, we can start to see, how am I acting? How am I reacting? How am I feeling? It's all happening at once. And really, it is a higher state of awareness.

I really do believe that the world is evolving and that people are becoming a lot more aware and awake. As we do this, we do have this multidimensionality operating where we can see that we are our physical and our emotional and our spiritual and we're in relationship with all of these other things. Which takes me way back to what I was interested in, the beginning, which drew me into my holistic therapies, which is knowing that all of this is operating at once, that we are not just one thing or the other.

[00:30:33] Kathy: Yeah, it's so interesting, the way you speak about that. You can feel sometimes where there is this sense of higher self. It starts with a pause, to be able to pause before you react and be very mindful of that. But now suddenly it's like, there's somebody else in the room with you, and it's you! (laughter) It's a strange sensation.

[00:30:59] Lauren: Yeah, it's beautiful. Then, do you know what, that just as you're talking, really, what that is is that's that self-acceptance, that's honoring who you are. Just knowing that no matter what, you are worthy, you are valuable, you are loved, and you are loving. And it's all happening while this is going on as well.

[00:31:21] Kathy: Yeah, and I think my mindset in that situation was making sure the other person felt that way as well. Wow. You're going to have me thinking about this now. (laughter)



We've talked a bit about mindset. How does mindset impact our overall well-being? What role does that play in how we take good care of ourselves?

[00:31:47] Lauren: Really, everything that we're thinking about is what we're putting our attention on. If I'm noticing that my back feels uncomfortable, then I'm really putting all my attention on my uncomfortable back, and I'm going to see more and more of that in my life. It's like we almost draw it to ourselves as well. But really what's happening, it's that same part of the brain, the reticular activating system, it's called, or the RAS, which is, you know you're going to buy a new red car, and suddenly, on the road, everywhere is a red car.

The idea of that is that there's billions of bits of information that we are limiting ourselves from actually receiving because we couldn't cope, we'd probably explode if we received all of the input, the sensory input, and everything else that's around us. And so this reticular activating system acts like a filter. "Okay, what are you interested in? What are you putting your attention on?" Then it allows you to just notice more of those things because you couldn't notice everything else.

That's why, when we're only seeing that we can work in a particular way, that we have to earn our money a certain way, that we have to work full-time, or that we have to have that security, et cetera, we can't see other opportunities or other possibilities that are available to us. Mindset is all about, what are you putting your attention on? That's why gratitude and being in the present and noticing the abundance, et cetera, that's all around you is so important.

People talk a lot about writing gratitude journals, but see, the thing is when you are grateful for what's going on, even if it's the sun on your face, or the cool breeze through your hair, or the crisp snow that looks beautiful outside the window, which we don't have here in Australia, but-- [laughs]

[00:33:55] Kathy: She said to the woman who's sitting in 30-degree Fahrenheit weather.



[laughter]

[00:34:03] Lauren: Exactly. But being grateful for everything, for our senses, for our body. We're so judgmental of our bodies. And yet our body is with us from the moment we start our life until we leave this life. We should be loving our body and accepting our body. It's from that place that we will start to choose better food and to exercise it because it feels good. Not because, "Oh, I have to, I need to look this certain way." Because that's all, once again, not allowing you to just be you and loving who you are. That's all censorship and needing to fit in to conform.

[00:34:48] Kathy: It's amazing how it informs our choices. To your point, you're talking about where we put our attention, where our focus is, and then how it drives the choices that we make, and we naturally make better choices because we want to feel more of what they give us, rather than something that we have to do.

[00:35:09] Lauren: Yeah, that's right. So our mindset is drawing attention to, what are you really focusing on? The other part of this, of course, is that most of it's running subconsciously.

And that's where the wealth mindset work that I do is helping us to just see what's really going on at really a subconscious level. So we use visualization to activate what's operating at a subconscious level and then really see it. And then use tapping to release the stress and to change the way that we think about it, remove the emotions that are negative and charged, so that we can start to move back to this place of acceptance and compassion and all the other things that we've talked about already.

[00:35:58] Kathy: I'm thinking of the listener who is spiritually curious, but maybe some of the topics seem a little New Agey. I don't even know if that's a word anymore (laughs). I don't know what it's called anymore. I'm probably dating myself.



But where would you suggest they start? Is there anything that you can share that might make it seem less esoteric and more helpful in daily life, being able to expand your spiritual view? Perhaps there's something on your own spiritual journey that would be helpful for the listeners to know?

[00:36:39] Lauren: It's funny. I don't know whether you've ever done the Gallup Strengths. The number one strength for me is connectedness, which used to be called spirituality. It's just who I am. I have always known at some level that we're all connected, that we're connected to the earth, that everything... I guess, it's this oneness where people talk about this oneness. Actually, as I've grown up, I've really understood that that's true. So that impinges everything.

I guess the question for me is a bit tricky because it was always there, but the thing that happened to me when I was a child, well I was a teenager, I was 16 and had a beautiful cat called Simon. And Simon got sick and we thought Simon just had cat flu or something. Dad and I took Simon to the vet, and Dad went in. I was going to go in, but I was trying to put on heavy hiking boots and I couldn't get them on.

Anyway, basically, I didn't end up going in. And then Dad came out and he was upset and crying. Simon had been put to sleep because he actually had leukemia. I was devastated. And I was devastated because I didn't get to say goodbye.

The next night I was crying on my bed, crying in bed, I was under the blankets and all of a sudden, I just felt this weight between my legs, which is where Simon used to always sleep. It was warm and it was heavy. And I just knew that Simon had come to visit me and to let me know that he was okay. And I stopped crying and I lay there for probably 10 minutes or so feeling very comforted. Eventually, my curiosity got to me, I thought, "Okay," so I turned on the light, and of course, as I turned on the light, the feeling went away. But I never cried for him again.

That was the piece to me that I knew that there's more to us here. That we are, and I really believe it, that we are spiritual beings having a human experience. And that



when we do pass over, we're just returning back into the truth, the love, and the wholeness. You hear people talk about near-death experiences and they can't talk about or can't describe how loving the presence was, how supportive the lovingness was.

But as we open up to more and more of these ideas, I think we can start seeing more of how we're supported. Maybe the signs, maybe the synchronicities. The things that happen that you can't explain. It's like all the cogs lined up together and suddenly, something seems miraculous. And it might be just so really small.

I talk about a little story that helps me, too, and helps me to explain it. But it's like when we're looking for signs, so this idea of starting to be aware that there are signs, there is support always out there, and once again, what are we putting our attention on. So noticing them, so we're gathering evidence for all the synchronicities and all the amazing amazing things that happen.

So one day I was at work. I work in operating theater and we were getting ready for the afternoon list and we were running behind, so I was very quickly trying to get the theater cleaned up so that I could get on with the afternoon list. I had a lead apron that I needed to put away, and I was working at a hospital that I'm not familiar with. I picked it up, and I walked out thinking, "I don't know where I'm going."

As I did, another person walked out of another theater carrying a lead apron. I thought, "Oh, beautiful!" So I followed them down the hallway and when I got there, I'm already excited, like "Great. Here, I've got the answer immediately." And she said to me, "Oh, here, I'll hang that up for you." And I'm like, "Oh, thank you. Thank you so much." I ditched that with her and got back to my work, but as I'm going back, I'm going, "Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. That's amazing. I love it!" And so this idea of seeing the signs and being happy about it and gathering all the evidence about what is showing up for you.

You can ask for signs. It could be they talk often about white feathers or it could be a butterfly that goes past you or it could be certain numbers that you see



repetitively or anything that you can actually make it a sign for you. So you can actually ask for a sign and then put your attention on receiving the signs.

But don't be so-- this moves into that idea of "Let it go" where it's like, "Okay, I'm putting the intention out there and now I'm just going to move into a place of just trusting that it's going to come."

It's just being open to it and just allowing it. And I guess that's what I teach about, too. It's like, allow, attract and enjoy. That's what we're really here for.

[00:41:46] Kathy: Yeah, there seems to be a playful quality. And I think of everything that we've talked about, this sense of connectedness and acceptance of what is. Acceptance and acknowledgment of what is with the idea that we can shape what may be on the horizon by focusing the direction that we want to go in. So it's wonderful, beautiful.

I'm curious. We end these episodes with something we call a Dose of Inspiration for our listeners to get new ideas. I would love to know, given all the topics that we talked about, what you've read or listened to lately that you'd like to share with us?

[00:42:29] Lauren: Yeah. I've just read, well, I listen to it because I do listen to my books mostly, *Wolfpack* by Abby Wambach, amazing. It's a really short book, beautiful. But it's about, once again, owning who you are and knowing you deserve more and that you're worthy and to claim it, to actually ask for it. And to be the team person and the leader.

I really believe that we need to lead by example. So, we do our own inner work and from that place, we can be loving, kind, compassionate, caring, and we are the leaders of our own lives. But actually, we're showing other people and giving them permission to do the same.

[00:43:17] Kathy: That's wonderfully said, wonderfully put. What new thing or experience are you looking forward to trying?



[00:43:26] Lauren: Well, I did try it once, but I'm going to explore it even more. I've just started looking at a drumming circle, which I had done that once before in a-- yeah, it was a seminar, and it was a lot on and just banging on different drums. Recently, I was inspired to join a very small group of other women. It was a Friday evening and we got together for about an hour and a half, and we were led by a person who's very, very skilled in it.

But basically, the idea is, once again, to be able to explore what wants to come through you without censorship, without worrying about, "Am I keeping time?" Believe me, there was times when it sounded great, what I was doing, and other times it was like, "Ugh, that's [crosstalk/laughter]" Then she also was asking us to vocalize. And I want to explore my voice and to not be holding myself back to restricting and worrying about what other people think and how I express myself. So I'm going to explore that a lot more.

And I think the other part of it that's really beautiful actually is the connectedness. Because you're all together making music, and you're in, sometimes, harmony, but you're mainly in time with each other. And so that connectedness is really special, too. And I think the support and the acceptance because no one was looking at me and saying, "Well, she didn't hit that very well or [crosstalk/laughter]"

[00:45:00] Kathy: They were worried about their own, right?

[00:45:03] Lauren: Yeah, totally.

[laughter]

[00:45:06] Kathy: Totally focused on their own thing. I love asking this question of envisioning your perfect road trip. Where would you go? What would you do? It could be anywhere in the world. You can magically transport yourself anywhere.

[00:45:19] Lauren: Okay. Well, if I can magically transport myself... I have wanted to go to Greece and to the Greek islands since I was probably a student nurse, so



back when I was like 18. I heard people talking about it and I still haven't been, I haven't been to Europe. My partner is Greek and he grew up in Greece and came out over to Australia when he was 7, and he went back the last time, I think he was 29. So he hasn't been for a long, long time.

We were going to go and then, of course, everything changed, the world changed. And so I would go to Greece and explore the tavernas and the beaches and just the Mediterranean. I'd love to go sailing on the Mediterranean and just all of that.

[00:46:11] Kathy: It sounds like a pretty good road trip. (laughter) I love it, love it. What has you feeling inspired these days? What's lighting you up?

[00:46:21] Lauren: I'm just enjoying life. I'm enjoying being me. I'm enjoying who I am and what I share and the wisdom that is coming through. You know, the lack of censorship, the owning of all of me. I have lots of different spiritual teachers and guides and that really helps me. I love listening to music that makes me want to dance and sing and I like it to be loud so I know that no one can really hear.

I do choose to do things really that I want to do and with people that I want to be with. I love my work, and I guess part of it, really-- this might answer a question from earlier, but when I really understood that I can be who I want to be, no matter what work I'm doing, that's when I got freedom. Because I used to judge myself that my business wasn't as far along and that I was still nursing, but I understood then that actually, I love being wise. I love sharing what I know, I love learning, I love being caring and kind and helpful and all of those things.

And I can do that, whether I'm nursing or whether I'm coaching or whether I'm at the supermarket. It doesn't matter, I can just be that person all the time. Once I understood that, then that was when my life completely changed as well. Because I can just be that right here right now and not be waiting for something in the distant future.



[00:47:59] Kathy: I think that's the perfect place to tie a bow on this. That's the message right there: loving who you are and getting to be that regardless of the role. That's beautiful.

So tell me, Lauren, how can folks get in touch with you? What's the best way to find you?

[00:48:17] Lauren: Yes, my website is LaurenBell.com.au. So that's Lauren, L-A-U-R-E-N-B-E-L-L.com.au. And I have a free chapter. I wrote a chapter in a book called the *Anxiety Relief Handbook* and my chapter is called Release Professional Anxiety and Unleash Your Greatness. I guess it was talking about all of those limiting beliefs, all of those perfectionisms and procrastination, and it highlights my burnout journey.

But it also does go into the Soaring Free Method, which is the honesty and, well, starting with self but then the honesty, the responsibility, boundaries and beliefs, and knowledge. That's all displayed in there and explained a little bit more. So, that's actually free on my website, it's a free-download chapter. People are welcome to, if they want to know a bit more, read that and connect through that way.

[00:49:24] Kathy: That's perfect, wonderful. Well, such a wonderful conversation. Thank you so much for being so open and sharing. I really appreciate your time. Thank you so much.

[00:49:34] Lauren: Thank you. It's been beautiful.

[music]

[00:49:38] Kathy: 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'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!

[music]

[00:50:41] [END OF AUDIO]