



**The Athena Wellness Podcast**  
**Episode 145 – Full Heart Living with Tom Glaser**  
**August 21, 2022**

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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:** Today's episode is brought to you by The Athena Wellness Academy, your resource for wholehearted living.

The Academy's featured offering is an online course called, *From 'Type A' to 'Type Be,' How to Mindfully Descend the Corporate Ladder and Invite What's Next*. This course is perfect for you if you're contemplating or navigating a professional transition, and it's available as a self study or with a small cohort of students facilitated by me, Kathy Robinson.

To learn more, I invite you to go to [AthenaWellnessAcademy.teachable.com](https://AthenaWellnessAcademy.teachable.com) or click on the link in the show notes.

**[00:01:21] Kathy:** Hello and welcome. Thanks so much for joining me.



What I love about today's conversation is how balanced it is. It's uplifting in spirit and honest in the challenges we face in our everyday lives.

I'm joined today by Tom Glaser, who is a psychologist and coach. He's also the author of a wonderful book entitled, *Full Heart Living: Conversations With The Happiest People I Know*. Tom started his happiness research at a time in his life when he was feeling quite the opposite. In reading his book and speaking to him today, it's wonderful to witness his own shift, one that I'm sure you'll find inspiring.

Here's what we cover:

- What happiness is and what it's not;
- Four key themes embodied by happy people;
- The connection between risk-taking and happiness;
- How self-acceptance and embracing difference lead to happiness; and
- How happiness can be a wellness practice.

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

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

**[00:02:56] Kathy:** Tom, welcome to *The Athena Wellness Podcast*. Thank you so much for being here today.

**[00:03:01] Tom Glaser:** Thank you, Kathy. I'm really excited for our conversation.



**[00:03:05] Kathy:** So please share a bit about who you are and what you do.

**[00:03:08] Tom:** Sure, you got it. By trade, I'm a shrink [chuckles], I'm a licensed psychologist. I've been doing psychotherapy really my whole career, mostly for individuals. I've also done group psychotherapy, couples. I'm an author, my book is *Full Heart Living: Conversations With The Happiest People I Know*.

And, gosh, what else? I love gardening. Just before hitting record, we were talking about our mutual love for nature. I love going outside, walking around the lake or in the woods or both, preferably with my amazing dog. I love being with people I love. That's a big one right there.

**[00:03:50] Kathy:** Sounds like full heart living to me.

[laughter]

**[00:03:55] Kathy:** A man who practices what he preaches. I love that.

**[00:03:57] Tom:** Pretty important in my book to do that, yes.

**[00:04:00] Kathy:** So what brought you to do the work that you do today?

**[00:04:04] Tom:** Gosh, from way back, Kathy, I remember in high school, just loving deep conversations. I loved my high school psychology teacher. The study of human behavior to me is infinitely fascinating. Everyone has a story, and when you dig deep enough, there's really good reasons that we make the choices we make.



So my work is infinitely interesting and challenging. It's really stimulating. And I knew it would inspire me to continue to do my own personal development work. So speaking of walking the talk, I knew that being in this profession would be a motivator for me to work on my own stuff my whole life. And it has. So those elements really drew me and have maintained really steadily, I would say.

**[00:05:02] Kathy:** Well we're going to get into the book in a bit, but it's really about happiness and those themes and what it is that makes people live a happy life or not.

So before we get into that, let's start at a macro level. From your perspective, what is happiness?

**[00:05:21] Tom:** It's such a hard term to define, right? There actually is no agreed-upon scientific definition, is the truth, interestingly enough.

So I always go back to the work of Gretchen Rubin for this question, who wrote *The Happiness Project*, a really phenomenal, best-selling book. What I remember her saying about this very question is that it's kinda like art. Do we have an agreed-upon definition of art? No. Do we know when we experience art? Absolutely! We feel it.

Same thing with a subjective term like happiness. We know it when we experience it. And she says it doesn't really matter that we don't have an agreed-upon definition. What does matter is this human drive to become happier. And I love that perspective and that rings really deeply true to me.



It's what I see in myself and so many others, that we have this drive to be happier, to do more as humans, to create. So what makes us happy or happier shifts over time, but there's something to be said for that going for it that I think sustains our spirits.

**[00:06:48] Kathy:** I love that you're defining this in a way that is feeling-based because like Gretchen Rubin, both you and she were not feeling very happy when you set out on your respective projects. In your case, it was this absence of feeling, and you were trying to find out, "Well what is this?"

So can you talk a little bit about that journey? What led you to the people that you interviewed in the book? What was it about their lives that made you think, "You know what, this might be a good person for this project"?

**[00:07:22] Tom:** You've read my book, so you know it's interview-based, at least that's where I started from. And I'll say a little bit more, you alluded to my unhappiness, actually depression in my own adult life.

So here I am a psychologist, I lost my dream job, and I was really attached to that job. I was working as a counselor in a college, so I got to do a ton of the individual psychotherapy work that I adore and I got to teach really fun-- like wellness promotion topics. This job had my name written all over it. All my passions were there in this one job. But it changed, and I left and I was really down because my identity was wrapped up in this - and I thought I was going to retire there, like this was my deal. And I got really sad.



And I noticed happier people all around me and I wanted to be happier. So I just started watching and getting curious, "What do they do that I'm not doing? What are they not doing that I am doing?" And then I got braver and I started asking them questions. And it snowballed into this video project. I sat down with 9 or 10 of them and formally interviewed them.

How did I find them, though? How did I choose those people? That was, at least, part of your question. This is a really interesting thing, too, because sometimes I was wrong. I thought I saw happiness in people, so I approached several people who said, "Oh, you have no idea what's going on in my life right now. I'm actually really down, but you should talk to so and so." This happened several times.

So these people appeared on the outside, really happy, engaged, friendly, smiling, but there was that shadow side that I didn't have access to. Then some of the people they referred to me, one in particular did not look very happy to me from the outside. This was someone I was in a play with. And I was so wrong.

We want to always be really careful of our assumptions. And I'll tell you a quick story on this one, too. A family member I'll be careful not to identify, complains, complains, complains. My experience of this person is, they complain a lot. The service at the restaurant wasn't right, the food wasn't right. There's always something.

And that person said to me at one point, "I am so happy right now." I'm like, "What?" [laughter] I just said, "Oh, tell me more." I was just really curious. They couldn't really be very specific, but I realized they had gone through a big change. A



relationship had shifted and they weren't in a relationship that wasn't a very happy one any longer. I was like, "Oh, right." So we have to be really careful of our assumptions.

That said, I look for laughter. I look for engagement. How do I feel in someone's presence? If my mood goes up when I'm in someone's presence, I assume they're happy. Most of the time, I was right. There were those exceptions which are very worth mentioning, I think.

**[00:10:48] Kathy:** Yeah, I love this idea of appearances aren't always what they seem to be. Sometimes even when you're looking at people in relationships, sometimes those who get everything off their chest and always seem like they're fighting, it's just like, no, they're getting everything off their chest. It's a healthy way for them in some cases. And then those that look like it's a match made in heaven, you don't know what's going on behind the scenes there. So I think that's incredibly astute because the grass is always greener as we're looking, especially if we're unhappy.

The other thing that I found fascinating in what you said was you experienced a loss of identity, which really led to this level, it sounds like, of unprecedented unhappiness. Because this person who you thought you were wasn't there anymore and there's this idea of this disconnect. Yet, when you were looking at people, you were looking for the people who were engaged. It feels like it's this journey of finding these missing pieces.

**[00:11:47] Tom:** Totally.



**[00:11:48] Kathy:** Which I think is just so beautiful. And what came out of this project was this wonderful book, as you mentioned, *Full Heart Living: Conversations With The Happiest People I Know*.

What I loved about it is it's not broken up into, "Well, here are interviews," you have your videos, but then you were able to take these learnings and come up with themes and really explore some of these themes.

Can you talk a bit about the book-writing process, how you settled in? Was it trial and error? Did you always have a feeling it was going to turn out this way? What was that process like?

**[00:12:25] Tom:** No, that's the thing with creativity, right? The project speaks to us. When we keep showing up for whatever our creative process is, it shows us what it needs to be.

So no, I totally thought initially going into it that I would devote a chapter per person and just go into their story and really go deep with it. But I noticed and realized they were saying so many of the same things that it didn't make any sense, that it only made sense to go with a topical approach. So it's 20 chapters by topic. Things like taking risks, happier people take more risks. Self care is a chapter early on. Gratitude is a chapter. Aligning with values is a chapter.

**[00:13:17] Kathy:** It seems like you came away with four learnings going through this discovery process. Can you talk about what those are? Let's dive into those a bit.





**[00:13:25] Tom:** Yeah, you got it. So, by far, the number one thing that everyone said is that happier people connect deeply with other people. So they have folks they love, they have folks they feel loved by. They spend tons of time with these really special people. One way I like to say it is they have a tribe. We're social beings. Human beings, we are social at our core. We must feel the presence of other people to be our best. I'm convinced of that.

Then number two is connection with self. That, to me, means several things. One is just knowing and honoring who we are. All of us have various rhythms. Some of us are early birds, some of us are night owls. When we honor those proclivities, we function better and we are better in the world.

It also, to me, means mindfulness or connection to one's self. Mindfulness, being in the present moment, not distracted by worries about what's to come or perseverating over what has happened before. There might be a time to do each of those, absolutely. I'm not saying we should never engage, there's a reason we have those possibilities. But happier people don't dwell there and get stuck. Less happy people can really get stuck in one of those with anxiety or depression, for instance. So, happier people are more in the present moment.

Number three, happier people engage in passion. You were picking up on that a moment ago, talking about engagement, which I never quite thought about before in the way you said it just a minute ago. When I was so unhappy, I was craving engagement because I was so engaged in my work and I lost that. So you're absolutely right. Now what? If I don't have that place to be engaged, now what?



Happier people have activities that they absolutely adore, and they do a ton of them. It's when they get into that, what we call flow state, where you lose all sense of space and time. You're just one with the activity, which of course is such a delicious [laughs] experience.

So connection with self, connection with others, connection with passions. And then I just like to always say, too, when we engage in those things with a spirit of giving back. Kathy, when we are contributing to making the world a better place, oh, look out.

And all of these things feed off of each other. When I engage more with other people, I tend to become more connected with myself. And I naturally want to lean into my passions and to give back more. They all are this infinite feedback system, you start in any one of those levels, and they're going to help increase the rest.

**[00:16:35] Kathy:** Mmm, there seems to be this sense of depth, of honoring, of witnessing. So, it's almost like there's a fluidity. I think about the times when I was more unhappy, I was feeling very boxed in. There was this set of expectations, I needed to perform, there were these times and dates.

**[00:16:56] Tom:** Few choices. You're talking about really not feeling like you had many choices, that's a terrible place. Yes.

**[00:17:03] Kathy:** Yeah, and repeating over and over and over again. That's the treadmill, that routine treadmill.

**[00:17:09] Tom:** Exactly.



**[00:17:10] Kathy:** Being able to step off with that. Because when you're on the treadmill and people are saying, "Oh, you really need to get out in nature," or "You need to do this," you're just like, "I don't have the capacity [laughs] for that."

But the way you describe it, there's a greater good to this, meaning a deeper connection with yourself to be able to figure out why is it that this treadmill running isn't serving me at the moment? Therefore, I can't serve others. Therefore, I can't serve the broader good of humanity. It takes it out of the, "Do these five wellness practices to this is the reasoning why it makes you feel good." Is that fair?

**[00:17:52] Tom:** Absolutely. And what comes to mind as I hear you describe it that way, Kathy, is because often when we're in a state like you described, without choices on the treadmill, there's so much we can't even see. And the way through that so often is through connection with another person.

So when you find someone you can trust, and you're honest, and you just say, "This is my experience. I feel so stuck right now. This is so heavy. I know I should get out in nature. Everyone tells me to get out in nature, I can't even do that. I don't know what's going on." To be vulnerable, really say your truth with another person.

You use the word *witnessing*, I'm not sure if this is what you were saying, but yes, when we have a witness, a trusting witness who can say, "Oh," who can hold it, who can hear it, and reflect back what you're saying and be there with you and validate your feelings. Then you can begin to unpack it or begin, maybe, to look at options. That's when I see people shifting.



When we just stay in our own world, which just think it through, think it through, think it through, people tend to stay more stuck. When they bring it out, when they share it with a trusted other, air comes in to these stuck places, or light gets in.

**[00:19:21] Kathy:** Yeah. That's a great way of describing it. I wrote down the word *opening*. And it's something as simple as naming it and having somebody reflect back what it is that they're hearing, right? So that can take five minutes.

**[00:19:37] Tom:** It's so simple. Correct.

**[00:19:39] Kathy:** It doesn't need to be a week in the Sierra Nevadas.

[laughter]

**[00:19:44] Tom:** It could be if you need to go on a retreat.

**[00:19:45] Kathy:** It could be.

**[00:19:45] Tom:** Sometimes that works. You know, if it works, no problem.

**[00:19:52] Kathy:** You mentioned something before, one of the chapters, and it was actually one of my favorite ones on taking risk. Because that seems counterintuitive to some. What does taking risks have to do with happiness. What is it that you found when you dug into that?

**[00:20:07] Tom:** So even if we just look statistically, right? Again, if we're back on the treadmill, blinders are on, we see fewer options. We tend to stay in these familiar patterns even if they're not super happy, they're not feeding us, we stay



with them. There's statistically fewer chances that we'll discover something new [laughs] because we're not being exposed to new things.

Whereas happier people - and I'm not talking about jumping out of a plane by the way without a parachute. No, I'm not talking about overwhelming yourself. I'm talking about taking small risks that you feel comfortable doing. So I just always feel that's really important to emphasize.

We don't want to push ourselves too far and get overwhelmed because that sends people back on the treadmill too much. I've seen that happen. Just statistically, if we are sticking our neck out just enough, taking more risks, we're more likely, just surely statistically speaking, to have more wins.

**[00:21:18] Kathy:** Got it, got it, yeah. It's coming out of that comfort zone. Even in the way we just said, finding somebody that you trust to name what it is that's going on, that vulnerability can be a big risk.

**[00:21:33] Tom:** Absolutely, absolutely. So here, I talk a lot about the term *support*. And answering this question, "What do I need to do to support myself?" So risks are often-- we're most afraid of things we most want. Often that happens when there's a risk. Something I really want, but it's scary for whatever reason.

So answering that question becomes 'fill in the blank.' What I need or what do I need to do, so emphasis on action, to support myself. So what does that mean? When there's a risk, when we're afraid, almost always, there's something we could use that isn't fully supporting ourselves. What might that mean?



You're pointing out a really good one - just talk to someone, admit, "Hey, there's this thing. It scares the crap out of me. I really want to do it." Talk to a beloved, a trusted other, "Oh, you can do that, Tom. [laughs] You'll be alright. If you're not, I'm here for you, you're going to be fine either way. Try it, see what happens." Or maybe they'll help you figure out how to break it down into smaller steps.

**[00:22:39] Kathy:** I love that. What we're most afraid of are sometimes the things that we really want. What would success look like? That's a beautiful question just to hold of what are those things that scare me most. It's probably things that I want the most. Especially, and I'm talking as one who was on the treadmill, it's that fear of failure.

**[00:23:02] Tom:** You left your corporate career.

**[00:23:03] Kathy:** Exactly.

**[00:23:05] Tom:** Yeah, I didn't mean to interrupt you. I just wanted to get the context. Go ahead.

**[00:23:09] Kathy:** So yeah, I was in corporate for three and a half decades and voluntarily left. And even that - you mentioned this loss of identity, even though this was a choice. And I can only imagine and empathize with you when it wasn't a choice. I mean, you did choose to leave, but it wouldn't have been what you had wanted to do.

**[00:23:27] Tom:** No.



**[00:23:28] Kathy:** I can't even imagine, like your game changed. My game didn't change. I changed, and it was time for me to change my walls and do something different. I knew that, but that being said, you're leaving something that very-- talk about routine, right?

**[00:23:44] Tom:** Yes.

**[00:23:44] Kathy:** But on the other side of that, there really is that sense of freedom and possibility and it comes with a whole bunch of other stuff.

**[00:23:52] Tom:** Yeah and here's the thing. We wouldn't be having this conversation right now, right? I wouldn't have written the book, at least not when I did, maybe never, without this particular combination of events. I feel like on a more spiritual level, if this sounds woo-woo, to people, whatever,

**[00:24:13] Kathy:** Bring it on, Tom!

**[00:24:15] Tom:** [laughs] The Universe had another plan for me. It wasn't my plan. There were other things I feel like, now in retrospect, I needed to do. I wasn't going to leave that job because I was so attached without something big to get my attention.

**[00:24:32] Kathy:** So, the Tom thought that it was the dream job has obviously morphed over time. Would you still call that your dream job, or do you feel what you're doing now is more in line with who you are today?



**[00:24:49] Tom:** [pause] Oh, it's a tough question. [pause] Oh, that's a hard one. I'm glad it happened. I'm glad I'm not at that job now. It's my majority truth. There are still things I miss about that job. I loved it. I loved so many parts of that job. And I've had these great opportunities. I don't really regret it. But it's really a "both/and" to be totally honest with you, right?

**[00:25:20] Kathy:** Yeah, sure.

**[00:25:22] Tom:** It's not a black or white for me.

**[00:25:24] Kathy:** Let me ask it another way. Do you feel you would have experienced the level of growth you've had if you stayed?

**[00:25:31] Tom:** Great question. Thank you for clarifying. [chuckles] No. I got so much from that.

And the number of people who come up to me and say I can relate to your story, because it was a toxic coworker who showed up. So many people come to me now and say, "Oh my gosh, I had the same thing. How do we let one person disrupt a system so much?" That alone, those moments where people feel free then to tell their story to me and we connect on that level, that's pretty cool.

**[00:26:07] Kathy:** Yeah, definitely. Wow, that's lovely. And I think that's very inspiring for people who are listening because it's not a black and white answer, as you say, there's pros and cons in everything that we do. In the research that you've done to be happy, it's not about things going your way all the time. It's about growth and connection and going deeper in your own journey.





**[00:26:35] Tom:** Yeah. So let me take that as an opportunity to talk about this piece, why I called it *Full Heart Living*. Because happier people, it's not that they have fewer hardships than anybody else. They have the same amount of hardships and challenges and obstacles. It's that they don't fight it, they don't avoid it, they don't suppress it. They approach everything with their full heart. So when they're sad, when they're down, they know they're sad and down. They know it's temporary, too. They know they'll get through it.

**[00:27:07] Kathy:** Yeah. The image that comes to mind is the difference between being on a surface in the ocean and having to dodge all the waves and having the wherewithal to know, "Oh, I can dive, I can jump over, I can float." I have options to be able to navigate, the waves keep coming, but you have different ways of dealing with them. Because I think sometimes people equate happiness with pleasure, happiness is more not being tossed by what's coming your way.

**[00:27:40] Tom:** Right. There is an element of acceptance, of going with the flow. And I'm not talking about that passive giving up thing. It's, "Oh, here's what's happening right now. I'm not giving up my direction where I'm going necessarily." [laughs] But yeah, and this, too, and this, too.

**[00:28:04] Kathy:** Yeah. Beautiful. Another interesting point I thought, you have three separate chapters on... one is on accepting yourself, the second is on embracing differences and the third is on overcoming shame. And it felt like there was quite a correlation there. Again, when people are thinking of happiness, these things may not come to mind of being able to work through this. So can you speak to that and what you found in those areas?



**[00:28:33] Tom:** Oh, gosh. What comes to mind is my figuring out that I'm a highly sensitive person. So what does that mean? I have a nervous system that reacts more than a non-HSP to stimuli of all kinds, so to light and sound and overwhelm and to-do lists and hunger. And this makes up about 15%, some researchers now believe up to 20%, of the population.

Before I knew that about myself, I just thought I was neurotic and needy. There's a way I kept judging myself for it. When I finally came across the work of Elaine Aron who wrote a number of books, the first one of which is *The Highly Sensitive Person* and looked at the strengths and the gifts of this trait.

It's not a diagnosis. It's a trait, like having brown eyes or a second toe that's longer than the big toe. [laughs] These are just genetic gifts. So I embrace, "Oh, I'm highly sensitive. I've got to be careful with my schedule, I've got to make sure I've got snacks." It doesn't mean that I'm so screwed up. That I'm just never going to be okay enough. "Oh, this is what I got. This is what I came into the world with. All right. Now what? Ah, there's the stuff I want to do, okay."

**[00:30:03] Kathy:** So do you feel that self-acceptance then is almost a permission? It relates back to that feeling of depth of knowing yourself. Is that fair?

**[00:30:16] Tom:** Absolutely. Yeah, being who we are, embracing who we are, not trying to fight it.

**[00:30:23] Kathy:** Yeah, I think there's a lightness, too. We get to put down that baggage and not lug it all around with us.



**[00:30:28] Tom:** Yes. Then we draw people to us who are similar, then they start showing up. As soon as I start naming the HSP thing, people, their eyes light up, and they lean in and they go, "I'm an HSP, too." You start to compare notes.

Or "I live with an HSP," people will tell me, "How do I do this?" That's a great question. I'm like, "Yeah, yeah, let's talk about that." That's a great thing. Because, yeah, it can be hard to live with an HSP. It can be hard to live with a non-HSP if you're an HSP.

**[00:31:00] Kathy:** Sure, sure.

**[00:31:01] Tom:** So now my family, most of which aren't HSPs, they accommodate me. They accept me more, too. They're like, "Oh, yeah, you just got to eat, Dad." My son will say, "Just have a snack and then we'll talk," stuff like that. It's awesome.

**[00:31:16] Kathy:** Yeah. You know you mentioned something that made me think, do happy people draw other happy people to themselves?

**[00:31:23] Tom:** Oh, yeah, The Contagion Effect! It's huge. Absolutely, yes.

**[00:31:30] Kathy:** And do you think it's because of what they're putting out or is it more of who they want to be with?

**[00:31:41] Tom:** Oh, a chicken or the egg question there, huh? I don't know! Probably a little bit of each, I would guess.

**[00:31:49] Kathy:** That's what I'm thinking. Yeah, that there's an uplifted vibe that people can kinda sense.



Well, here's a question. You were drawn to these folks, but from more of a curiosity standpoint, I'm guessing that when you were at your most depressed, to use your word, you probably didn't want to be in the company - you were curious about happy people because you wanted to be that - but did you want to spend time with them-

**[00:32:21] Tom:** I did.

**[00:32:22] Kathy:** -when you weren't feeling great?

**[00:32:23] Tom:** I was drawn to them then, for sure, because they lifted-

**[00:32:25] Kathy:** Really?

**[00:32:25] Tom:** -my spirits. Sure.

**[00:32:27] Kathy:** Interesting. Interesting. So, let's talk, you mentioned wellness before, the happiness-wellness link. Do you think happiness is a wellness practice, and if so, what are some things that folks can incorporate in their daily activities?

**[00:32:44] Tom:** I, of course, think it falls under the wellness umbrella. Absolutely. Happier people, generally speaking, of course, there are exceptions, but on many measures, research shows they do tend to be healthier physically.

For instance, happier people give back more, they donate more money. They help other people feel happier as we've already established. How could that not be a wellness [laughs] contribution right there. Happier people both tend to be more resilient, and they work on their resilience more. Resilience is huge for wellness.



Then in terms of specific steps, I would say number one is that social thing that I talked about. And it's why I always start with-- What I learned is that happier people connect more deeply with others. So hang with your people. Spend more time with people you love.

If you feel like you're limited, go volunteer, maybe with children, or with the elderly, or with whatever population you're drawn to. Maybe it's athletes. Go coach golfing. Whatever your thing is. Do your thing. Get out there. Bring your thing to other people. You're going to feel better.

So starting there. And then honoring yourself, noticing, looking at, "Hey, how do I fail to honor my rhythms?" and do the reverse. Honor your rhythms. Do experiments. See how it feels. Many Americans have activities they loved as children that they no longer do or don't do as much. If you loved to sing, and singing is so accessible, just sing in the shower, in the car, as you're doing the dishes. I almost always sing as I'm folding laundry. I just find myself singing.

**[00:34:54] Kathy:** Nice. I love it.

**[00:34:55] Tom:** So those are some concrete examples.

**[00:34:58] Kathy:** What I love about that is that it's almost like it's this interconnected hub of you're finding something you feel passionate about, which is one of the things, one of the elements. You're being of service, especially if you're volunteering or coaching or you're doing something out into the community. Then you're allowing yourself to grow as a result of being in the situation.



It's almost like this all encompassing way of keeping that spiral going up versus down. So it feels much like our wellness practices, it's not one and done. This is something that we continuously work at.

**[00:35:34] Tom:** Yeah, you got it, our whole lives, yes.

**[00:35:36] Kathy:** Yeah, it's wonderful. Is there anything about the book or the work that you've done that you'd like to share before we move on to our Dose of Inspiration segment?

**[00:35:48] Tom:** I feel we really covered it well.

**[00:35:50] Kathy:** Good, awesome, good. It makes me feel good. It makes me feel happy, Tom.

[laughter]

**[00:35:58] Tom:** Doesn't take much, right? Come on, that was pretty simple.

**[00:36:01] Kathy:** Exactly, exactly right. We do tend to overcomplicate things.

**[00:36:04] Tom:** Yes. Well, you're doing it all right now. As we do this, this is part of your passion. This podcast is part of your passion.

**[00:36:13] Kathy:** Yeah, oh without a doubt.

**[00:36:14] Tom:** I'm sure of it. I'm sure of it.



**[00:36:16] Kathy:** It wasn't even a thought in my mind when I was on the treadmill, which is interesting, right?

**[00:36:21] Tom:** Ah, there you go.

**[00:36:23] Kathy:** So, I'm curious of what you've read or listened to lately that you've enjoyed.

**[00:36:30] Tom:** Just today, I listened to a podcast from the Joy Lab. Dr. Henry Emmons and an associate of his, Amy, whose last name is escaping me right now. Forgive me, Amy. And they were talking about how do we maintain ourselves in the midst of tragedy.

And right now, there's so much going on in our world. We're still in a worldwide pandemic. There's a war, a number of wars, but there's a new one in Ukraine brought about from the Russians. Women's rights are under attack. Gay and trans rights are under attack. Shootings, people are being killed by guns. How do we maintain resilience and joy in the midst of all this?

And they talked about some of the things we touched on earlier in our talk, Kathy, like starting with where you are. They talked about, "Okay, I'm angry, I'm upset. I'm feeling despondent," whatever it is, fill in the blank. Naming it, sharing it with other people, having the feelings, and identifying what is in our control. "What is a concrete step I could take today? Is there someone I want to reach out to? Is there a petition I want to sign? Is there a march I want to go to? Is there a legislature I want to contact?"



And I love that. Concrete action. Oh, and, and – they talked about love. And I loved this. And it goes back to what we were talking about too, about relationships in our own lives. No matter what's going on, I can continue to show up in a loving way with those around me.

**[00:38:26] Kathy:** Wow, perfect. Envision the perfect road trip. Where do you go? What do you do?

**[00:38:33] Tom:** Oh, California, hands down. There's so many places to go, but I have a particular adoration for the desert of Southern California and the mountains out there. So that's where I would go and do go. Winters, we've been spending in Palm Springs, and it is pretty darn good.

**[00:38:56] Kathy:** All right, that's great. And then lastly, what has you optimistic about the future?

**[00:39:03] Tom:** I think people are awakening, Kathy. It's a very arduous, hard process. There's signs of a lot of chaos out there. And there's a lot of good signs, too. So much good is happening in the world.

There are lots of smart people who want good things for all. Call me Pollyannaish, I believe the statement that-- and I think it was the Dalai Lama who said this-- that human rights, in the end, always win out. So I'm, most days, able to hold onto that. I believe it. I started with a lot of conviction in my voice. [laughs]

**[00:39:59] Kathy:** I'm with you, my brotha.





**[00:40:01] Tom:** Yeah?

**[00:40:03] Kathy:** For sure, absolutely. Believing the other side of that is just too much. So, I have to stay positive and I applaud you for doing the same.

So, I'm sure our listeners would love to not only read your book, which I will link up in the show notes, but to get in touch. So how might somebody find you?

**[00:40:24] Tom:** FullHeartLiving.com is the best way. There's a contact form right there. There are links to my book. There's a link to this other product that we didn't have time to talk about, my relationship-enhancing game, Full Heart Living Conversation Sparks, and there's also events on my website, upcoming classes that I'm teaching on self-compassion and resilience and other topics coming up are all on there.

**[00:40:52] Kathy:** Perfect, alright. I'll link that all up. I really appreciate it, what a lovely uplifting conversation, Tom. I can't thank you enough. Thank you so much for being here today.

**[00:41:02] Tom:** Thank you, Kathy.

[music]

**[00:41:07] 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 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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Until next time, be well!

[music]

**[00:42:09] [END OF AUDIO]**