



**The Athena Wellness Podcast**  
**Episode 146 – How Happy People Handle Adversity with Tom Glaser**  
**August 24, 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://www.athenawellness.com) or click on the link in the show notes.



**[00:01:21] Kathy:** Hello and welcome. Thanks so much for joining me for this shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

Today I'm joined, once again, by Tom Glaser, psychologist and author of *Full Heart Living, Conversations with the Happiest People I Know*. During this discussion, Tom shares some insights on how happy people handle adversity and navigate through difficult times.

And now onto the show. I hope you find this conversation helpful.

**[00:02:00] Kathy:** Once again, I'm joined by coach and psychologist, Tom Glaser, who is the author of *Full Heart Living*. Welcome back, Tom.

**[00:02:08] Tom Glaser:** Thanks, Kathy. Good to be here.

**[00:02:10] Kathy:** I'd love to get your take on how happy people handle difficult situations. In particular, I'm thinking about, in just these last two years, between the pandemic and our social, political and economic upheaval that we've been experiencing. From your perspective, how do happy people handle these times?

**[00:02:33] Tom:** Such times we have been through, yeah. So here's the thing, happier people, and I'll back up for one second. This is why I titled the book as I did *Full Heart Living*. Happier people live with their whole heart. Our hearts are not happy all the time, that's just not part of the human experience on this plane. So happier people don't suppress or avoid harder times or harder emotions. They embrace them. They go with it.



So yeah, I've had moments of despondency. Just two weeks ago, before Memorial Day weekend, I was feeling pretty darn blue and not so sure we were going to pull ourselves out of all this stuff we got going on in our world right now.

So, it's noticing, "Oh, this is coming up. Hopelessness, I'm at the edge of hopelessness. I'm really sad." Knowing that that's true, not suppressing it, not avoiding it, speaking my truth. Finding people I can admit that to who will support me, who will understand, who won't say things like "You wrote a book on happiness, how could you say that?" Or "You're a psychologist, shouldn't psychologists have skills?" People get into that judgment crap. No, no, no I'm looking for safe people who know I'm just a human being first, who also have lots of skills, who can be there for me and say "I'm with you, Tom. I feel the same things."

Ultimately, it's through that acknowledgment that I'm able to allow such feelings to eventually metabolize in my system and my nervous system to calm down. And I know it's going to pass. And then I can begin to look at, "Hey, what do I want to do given all this? Do I have power?" Because a lot of what we're experiencing is feeling like we don't have power over these huge things - and a lot of them we don't - but that doesn't mean we're totally powerless.

And I'm not perfect at all, I don't mean to imply that, but just to use myself as an example here. I wrote a blog post about what was going on for me in my update two years out from the George Floyd murder, for instance, which happened right here in my hometown of Minneapolis.



I got together with a bunch of my meditation friends and we did a ritual together and meditated together. And then I hung out with family members who I hadn't seen in a while. And my mood lifted and I started to determine other things that I want to do.

So, it's embracing the truth of what's coming up, allowing it to be there, allowing it to pass, and then figuring out what's next.

**[00:05:30] Kathy:** I love that. It's almost like a recipe to be able to shift some of this stuff in the acknowledgment, but the identifying what is one small step that I can take, it's in the action it feels like.

It's two things. One it's not bottling it up and letting it out. I love that you use the word *metabolize*. I think that's perfect, of just letting your body absorb all of this, of trying to work through that but then, "What do I do with it?" And I think sometimes that's where we can get caught up in staying more in the head and in the emotion versus how do I physically start to do something, whatever that might be, even if it's typing a blog post with your fingers, that's still action that you're taking. I love that.

I think about people who are kinda getting like the double whammy, like they may be in a situation that we were both in, of this might not be my ideal situation, or wherever they may find themselves. And then there's this additional pressure coming in externally.



I equate it with deep sea diving where you feel the pressure of that water. If it's just that feeling, how do you start to break that down so you can begin to metabolize it?

**[00:06:50] Tom:** You know, I feel like it really comes back to being with someone you care about and trust, and taking the risk to acknowledge the truth of what's going on, and being met by them, being heard.

First of all, the act of speaking the truth, by naming it out loud, because it can be so different in our mind and we can really get into looping in our minds and thinking it in the same way over and over and over again. When I go through the act of saying it out loud and I have to explain it so someone else can understand it, it helps my brain shift my own relationship to that situation. Then to have them be there for me, repeat back what they've heard, be loving, kind and compassionate and help me come up with some alternatives. Then I have hope and I've connected with another soul.

Because again, when we're in that state like you were talking about, and I love that metaphor, deep sea diving where there's all that pressure, that's a very lonely experience. And as I said earlier, we are social beings, we must have contact with other people. So when we can get in there and say our truth with another person and have them still love us, magic happens.

**[00:08:14] Kathy:** Mmmhmmm. One other last quick question. How might somebody who isn't used to having these types of conversations initiate that?



**[00:08:23] Tom:** Start small, I would say, and be transparent. “Hey, I got something going on,” and give them the option to opt-in. “Would you be willing to talk about this? It’s a little deeper.” Acknowledge, “This is a little deeper than maybe we’ve talked about in a long time or ever.” And ask your friend or your family member “Would you be willing to sit down with me over coffee for 10, 15 minutes and just talk about this thing?” Almost always they’re going to say yes, because then now they’re curious “Oh, what’s going on? I want to know, that sounds juicy.”

[laughter]

**[00:09:00] Kathy:** I love that, yeah. I also think that’s very generous to be able to give them the ability to say, “Do you have the capacity for this right now?”

**[00:09:10] Tom:** And if they’re overwhelmed, they can say no. Sometimes people are, yeah. And let them and find someone else, yeah. Don’t give up if the first person says “I got too much going on with my own family,” for instance.

**[00:09:23] Kathy:** Right, perfect, wonderful. Well once again, Tom, I can’t thank you enough. I’ll link up everything in the show notes and thank you so much for your time today.

**[00:09:30] Tom:** Thank you.

**[00:09:34] 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!

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**[00:10:37] [END OF AUDIO]**