



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 157 – Are You Thinking About a Second Act? with Shannon Russell
October 19, 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 Shannon Russell, who is an entrepreneur and the host of the *Second Act Success* Podcast. During this discussion, Shannon shares some advice for those who are just starting to think about a second act. Now onto the show. I hope you find this conversation insightful.

[00:01:57] Kathy: Once again, I'm joined by television producer turned *Second Act Success* podcaster, Shannon Russell. Welcome back, Shannon.

[00:02:04] Shannon Russell: Thank you so much, Kathy.

[00:02:06] Kathy: Shannon, for this episode, I really want to talk to the listener who's just starting to think about a second act in their own lives, but they have no idea where to begin. What advice could you offer?

[00:02:19] Shannon: Well, I like to say "learn and leap," a lot of times because I know we all have that vision of going into our boss's office and saying, "I quit," and just storming out. But I like to do research before we make that big leap.

So I usually say assess where you are now, assess all of the skills you have, that you and I have talked about, Kathy, about whether it was a job you did in college or your first job out of school, just all the skills that you have.



And then make a list of your non-negotiables and your priorities in your life, whether it's your family or you love to run on weekends, or you have a book club once a week. Whatever your priorities and non-negotiables are and start seeing what you see in that diagram that you're making in front of you.

Then, from that information, to know, "What would I like? What have I done that I have not liked and what would make me happy?" Normally, everyone knows that one thing, whether they want to admit it or whether they know that that can become a career.

So just think about what that thing is and then start doing your research. Just start looking to see what's out there. Look at everything, from, what would pay? Would you need to go back to school? Would you need a business plan to start a business? Look at what it would take.

Feel free to see if anyone in your network or on LinkedIn is currently doing that job, and ask for an informational interview. Because people are always willing to help. If anyone reaches out to me, I'm always willing to give advice no matter what it is, even if they don't take it. If they want to talk, I'm happy to help because you always want that for yourself when needed.

And then when you feel like you've done the homework, just get your ducks in a row and leap, and just go for it. I bought into this franchise not really knowing how it was going to happen. And when you're held under the gun, I think sometimes you just make it work.



The same thing with my podcast. I took a course to learn how to get my podcast going and that held me under the gun to do it. I paid money for it and I did it and didn't really know what I was doing at first. And it's one of the most amazing things I've done in my life is this podcast. Because I get to meet people like you, I get to learn, I get to have these conversations and give back to the community that's listening.

So I think just knowing that a leap sometimes is all you need. Just go and try it because failure is not an option and you can always go back.

[00:04:51] Kathy: What I love about what you said was you don't have to know how. And the leap doesn't have to be off a cliff. And I think that's what kept me in place for a long time, too. You think you need to leap into this new life. And it really is these are small leaps that we're taking.

The idea of, "I took a course," and just in paying for that course, which we're not talking about a Master's degree, that it's not that kind of an investment. It's a much smaller investment, but there's still some skin in the game. You're going through this, you've made this declaration. You know want to do this. You've paid some money and you don't want that to go to waste, you don't want that to fail. And so that keeps you accountable.

[00:05:37] Shannon: Kathy, you know what, too? To add on to that, sometimes you can say, "Oh, I can DIY it. I can figure it out."



I could have figured out how to make a podcast myself. But because I was juggling the other business and my family, I said, "This course says that I can make it within three months,"-- I think it was three to six months, whatever it was, and I did it in three months. It held me accountable. So I could have done it on my own, but it gave me the roadmap to get there. And to me, that was well worth it. Look, now I have a podcast.

You can take those baby steps to help you get a little bit further, whether it's a certification or just something-- Maybe you take it and you realize, "This is not for me." So you might have spent \$100 or whatever it would be, and now, you learn that that's not for you.

[00:06:23] Kathy: Right, yeah. So there's this low-stakes way of trying to dip your toe in the water, but there's still a commitment there. It still moves you forward. You learn something about yourself and about what those next steps might be.

The other thing that you said that is really striking is as you're going through this assessment, these things that you're putting down on the paper, they don't have to be viable.

Again, this is a place where I got tripped up. I thought that I had to find the next career for me. I didn't realize I'm going to be taking pieces of what I've done and putting them together in a way that, actually, when I left corporate, I could never have envisioned that I would be sitting doing what I'm doing today.



There was this idea of Wellness Coaching and I knew I wanted to write a book. Those things were done, but the podcast, the course, the things that I'm talking about - that came from the experimentation along the way.

You had things on the list like running or whatever it is that's bringing you some sense of joy. So can you think about, either from your own life or from a client or one of your guests, where they've put together that mosaic in a unique way, like they created something new that they couldn't have taken that big leap, they needed to take these smaller leaps?

[00:07:49] Shannon: One just popped out to me is this one guest I had, she was a bigwig, masters. I believe she was in accounting/marketing at the firm. It was her father's firm. She went there right after college and that was what was expected.

One day, she was on a jog and she said she knew she needed to leave and she wasn't sure-- she needed some way to make that exit and she didn't know what-- she had three kids. She was on a jog and the sun was getting in her eye and she's like, "I need a hat that can keep the sun out of my eyes."

She just went home and she was like, "I'm crafty," and she started sewing. And literally quit her job and she wasn't sure if this hat thing was going to work. So she was learning guitar and she learned how to play guitar. She was taking lessons while she was trying to figure out her next move. The kids were in school, she was taking guitar lessons, she was sewing, and she came up with, "I want to make a visor that keeps the sun out, is stylish."



She had all these parameters, she made a prototype, and she just went after it. She found a manufacturer. Now, just over the summer I believe, she launched this brand, Farrell & Co, and she has these amazing visors that she sells. She totally was just playing around, but it gave her the confidence to leave that job and figure it out. And I love that story.

[00:09:17] Kathy: Oh, that's perfect. That is a perfect example. I love that idea that she-- This is Entrepreneurship 101, right? There was a problem that she solved. It was her own, but it can come on a jog.

[00:09:31] Shannon: On the wellness front, Kathy, she felt the guilt of putting the kids in daycare while she was playing the guitar and figuring it out. But she had left so abruptly that it was already paid through the end of the year. She had a month where it was paid and she was like, "Okay, I'm going to use this time for myself," with three kids that weren't in school-age yet.

And she was able to figure it out because I think so often, we just push it to the side and, "Oh, later, we'll figure it out." I love that she put herself first to figure it out, right? Because that's really taking care of yourself.

[00:10:06] Kathy: Without a doubt. Any parting words for our listeners that you would just like to give them a little boost, some words of wisdom?

[00:10:16] Shannon: I just think, as Marie Forleo says, everything is figure-outable. She was a person I listened to in a parking lot, eating a Subway sandwich during a 9-to-5 job that I hated. I could tell you where I was. I listened to one of her



podcasts and it changed my life and made me say, "I'm going to start my own thing."

I think it's so true to just know it doesn't have to be tomorrow, but keep it on the backburner. Pull up that website every once in a while. Do your research. And then you'll know when it's time to make that leap. But you should make it. We only get one life, so we can figure it out.

[00:10:53] Kathy: Perfect, yes. She's another Jersey girl.

[00:10:56] Shannon: Yes, I love it. We've got to hang out with her one day, Kathy.

[laughter]

[00:11:01] Kathy: Wonderful. Well, please remind our listeners again where they can get in touch.

[00:11:06] Shannon: Sure. Everything is at secondactsuccess.co, that's my podcast links, my coaching options, and my upcoming course which you can go to secondactsuccess.co/waitlist.

[00:11:19] Kathy: Perfect. Very good, my friend. Thank you so much for being here today. I appreciate it.

[00:11:22] Shannon: Thank you, Kathy.

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[00:11:26] 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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