



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 205 – How to Rewrite Your Story with Shirin Etessam
June 14, 2023

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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 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 writer and entrepreneur Shirin Etessam. During this discussion, Shirin compares the process of rewriting your story to a classic movie and shares a technique for moving your life forward.

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

[00:01:56] Kathy: Once again, I'm joined by writer and entrepreneur Shirin Etessam. Welcome back, Shirin.

[00:02:02] Shirin: Thank you so much for having me back.

[00:02:05] Kathy: So we were talking about your wonderful book *Free to Be*. And one of the things that I loved in the last section was this whole area about rewriting your own story. And you equate this process with the movie *The Black Stallion*. I'd love for you to share that story and how it relates to the rest of the book.

[00:02:24] Shirin: I so love that film. Have you seen it?

[00:02:28] Kathy: I have not seen it, but I wrote it down because now I will.

[00:02:32] Kathy: Do see it. I mean it's Francis Ford Coppola and it's a classic.

So just a really, really quick synopsis of the storyline. A black stallion, Arabian gorgeous horse, and a young boy, are in a shipwreck and they end up on an island stranded together. And they spend some time getting to know one another.



They're both afraid of one another and they slowly come together and they become friends. And the horse allows the boy to ride him bareback. There's all these gorgeous scenes of them riding down the beach and they have this special bond.

And then they're found and the black stallion is really costly and all of that, and they try to separate the boy and the horse and neither one of them will have it. They realize very quickly that the horse and the boy need to be together.

So the boy studies to be a jockey and learns all the rules and regulations and is all dressed up and all of that and gets really, really trained and they participate in a huge race. And everybody is counting on them. There's all this pressure and all of that.

And out of the gate the horse stumbles and so they naturally fall behind. And then you see the little boy, the camera goes close up to the little boy and the little boy, they're starting their momentum. And you just, I mean I get chills as I'm talking about it because he naturally starts tearing off everything that he has, everything that he's wearing, his whip, his helmet, his shirts, all of that stuff. And he starts riding the stallion the way he did on the beach. And of course, not to give the plot away, but I kind of will, they win the race and they won.

And to me that was such a gorgeous visual of what is possible when one is - that is the reclamation of one soul, right? It's doing away with all the external shoulds and all of that and returning to what is true for you. So that is why I mention the Black Stallion there.



And truthfully, as I mentioned in the previous interview, people talk about like, "Oh, follow your bliss or live your best life," but nobody, very rarely, are you told how, like, how? "Okay, yeah, where is my bliss? Can you please find it for me? And then, how do I live from it?"

So my book is very much a how-to in that way. And the last chapter, which is I called it, well, my wife truly called it manifesto like you mean it, because manifesto is in parentheses. And there is a step by, well, actually a Venn diagram. Some may be familiar with the concept of Ikigai, but it's the Venn diagram of finding your joie de vivre and your raison d'etre.

It's combining what you believe you are good at, what you're passionate about, what the world needs and what you can make money for, might make money with. So it isn't, you know, oh, you want to be a mountain climber, go do it. It's truly like okay, how can you, given where you are, how can you design your life so that you can climb mountains and live off of it? And I think that is really important.

And it doesn't have to be mountain climbing, it truly can be, I don't know, macrame, it doesn't matter. It's what lights you up. And, depending on where you are in your life, you know, can you get paid for. It can be meaningful or not, because you may not need that, but it is a part of the equation. And frankly, you know, that part of the equation is, well, it's in my bank account, you know, but most people don't have that.

So it's really figuring out what it is that makes your soul come alive, and not for an hour or a day, but that you truly feel and see yourself living in that way. And then



the means to support it, so that everything is aligned that way, including, you know, everything else you do in your life. So it isn't my career and then my life is here, it's all, all inclusive.

[00:08:22] Kathy: An integration.

[00:08:24] Shirin: Correct.

[00:08:26] Kathy: When you were telling the story, and I read it, but when you were telling the story, I was getting chills as well. What I love, and I think it's a beautiful way to end the podcast, is that what you took us through today was: We grow up with this external validation. We go inside and we strip it all the way, just like that little boy did, right, to get back to the essence. And then we take that whole self and we go back out into the world in a different way, which is just, I'm getting chills just kind of talking about that, but that's kind of what the process is.

[00:08:57] Shirin: That is it.

[00:08:58] Kathy: Yeah, okay, that was a mic drop. So that's what you will get when you go out and pick up a copy of *Free To Be*, and I will link everything up in the show notes. Again, I thank you so, so much for your time. I'm sure it's going to make a big difference in our listeners lives. Thank you.

[00:09:17] Shirin: Ah, thank you.

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[00:09:19] 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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[00:10:21] [END OF AUDIO]