



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 208 – Envisioning Your Future Life with C.K. Collins
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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 author C.K. Kelly Collins. During this discussion, Kelly speaks to those contemplating a major life change but are feeling stuck or fearful. Kelly provides several actionable steps, including ways to envision your future.

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

[00:01:59] Kathy: Once again, I'm joined by author and traveler, C.K. Kelly Collins. Welcome back, Kelly.

[00:02:05] C.K. Collins: Thank you. Glad to be here.

[00:02:07] Kathy: I'd really love to get practical for this session, Kelly. I'm thinking about the listener who is hearing these inner whispers that a major life change is needed, but is feeling a little paralyzed by fear and is feeling stuck. Maybe she doesn't have the ability to be able to go walk the Camino or maybe doesn't have the desire to travel. How might a person like this begin to make a big life shift?

[00:02:33] C.K.: I think it's really important to first do some self-care, whether that's through meditation or walking in your neighborhood. I believe in connecting with nature, so if you can get outside, whether that's sitting on a park bench or whether that's walking a mile or 10 miles, whatever it is, get out of the house, get away from the electronics and connect with this amazing Universe that exists for us. It's there



for you. It's there for me and it's there for the listener. I think caring for yourself is really the first step.

Then once you're in that mode I think you can start envisioning a future for yourself. I really believe, I know it's because I'm a writer so I really connect with words, but just making a list of things that make you happy and then start thinking about that. Then as you're doing this practice, other things will come to you.

You can share this with a close friend or a co-worker, if you got a good buddy at work, and that will spin off some other ideas of what makes you happy. What this is doing is telling your subconscious, "I want to be happy." Just making those lists of things that make you happy, even if you're miserable right now, then think back to what used to make you happy or dream about what would make me happy in the future. That turns into your vision board or your vision story.

I had a life coach who I'd say, and I think this is really powerful for anybody to do, even if you don't like writing. If you're a journaler, this would be really easy for you. She had me write a story about my future instead of making a vision board. So I did. The story was so fun and so happy and man, my boyfriend was cute. He was hot! [laughter and crosstalk] It was like a freaking romance novel by the time I was done. [laughter] Just being honest!

But I think that spinning that off, that was how I was creative. We all have a way in which we're creative. I remember, my sister-in-law has a friend who was depressed because she had an injury and she had to give up CrossFit, which was her life. She was a CrossFit coach and she just couldn't do it. Big life change.



Her mother suggested she journal, but she never felt book smart. Beautiful and highly intelligent woman, but she never felt like her writing sounded good, her grammar wasn't quite there. She was very self-conscious, I guess, is the bottom line of that.

So she picked up a paintbrush and just started doing textured artwork. She is an incredible artist, but it was in those moments that she could zone out of the external and zone into her internal. That became where she started envisioning what she wanted for her life because everything had been about work and kids, and now she couldn't do that work. She literally is an artist now selling paintings.

I think that... tap into your creativity. Is it refinishing a piece of furniture? Is it writing a story? Is it helping little kids learn how to paint or tutoring somebody? Whatever it is that gives you that happy juice, your energy level goes up, that's what you're looking for.

I think those are the first steps to snapping out of the hard moments. This is not something you do one time. This is a practice. Practice, practice, practice. Practice being happy and you will turn into a happy person. I mean that very simply.

[00:06:43] Kathy: It sounds cliché but it does work that way, doesn't it?

[00:06:46] C.K.: Yeah, and forgiveness is the same way. Forgiveness is not a one and done. Forgiveness is over and over and over again. I think forgiveness is like anger. I think they're bosom buddies and it takes a practice to move over that hump.



I liken anger to that high school bully that wouldn't leave you alone, but instead of your lunch money, they want your happiness. Anger is there to take your happiness, take it, take it, take it.

I think once you get to this, you're able to self-care, you're able to envision a future, there's your motivation to start letting go of all of the things that are holding you back.

If you say, my problem is blah, I'm guessing that might be part of the problem, but there's probably-- for me, anger was what was holding me back. I was so mad that my life wasn't what I thought it was going to be. I was so mad that I had been betrayed when I am such an honest person. That's why it took me four years. That's a big chapter in my book. Anger and forgiveness get their own chapters. [laughs]

[00:08:01] Kathy: I wonder if you didn't go through a lot of these major, major upheavals, how would you envision your life being today? Do you think you would've found this level of contentment without going through everything that you've gone through?

[00:08:20] C.K.: I have no idea. I don't think about that because from the second it wasn't an option, I just refused to look back. Now I can look back. Now that I'm in a healthier place, I can look back and appreciate the good times that I had. I know for myself that I'm glad I'm out of that situation.



People say to you in the beginning, I have a chapter called *What You Don't Want to Hear*. That's one of the things you don't want to hear. "You're going to be grateful for this someday, honey." [laughs] It's true. I hate to say this.

[00:09:00] Kathy: I just asked it in a different way. I asked that because these are really painful things that we're dealing with, that we're talking about. It feels like there's no silver lining, but we would also be, and it may have been just as happy a path, but it would've been a different one than where you are now.

[00:09:17] C.K.: Yeah, I feel like that inner child in me that was an adventurer, that was a writer, that was just super empathetic to the world, had this new opportunity to come out and play.

Life feels like play right now because it's so fun. I'm totally digging going on podcasts and talking about this stuff because that's what I like to do. It's like play. Instead of going outside, I stand in front of a microphone and play. And I've turned it into a job that is fun for me. I get to talk about my book and I have a workbook coming out and I'm doing a retreat for women. This is all so fun for me and I know I wouldn't have done this, for sure, in my old life. Probably would still be a news publisher.

[00:10:12] Kathy: In true journalistic fashion, I do have one quick follow-up and that is, because I just love this practice of writing this future story. And you gave us some really wonderful examples of, you don't have to write prose, you can write bullet points, you can paint, you can do all of these different things, which I think is great.



What I would love just from your writer perspective, what are some ways in? I can picture somebody picking up a pen going, "I want to try to do this." It's like you get that blank piece of paper feeling.

Is it you're putting yourself in a scene? Are you writing about other people in your life? Can you give us some examples of how somebody might find their way just to begin?

[00:10:57] C.K.: Where I was, when she asked me to do that, I had just retired and I hired the life coach because I wanted some accountability to continue to do things to advance my life. To not just eat, drink and be merry. [laughs] That's not enough for me. [laughs]

She listened and we'd already been working together for three or four months and I still had a little bit of anger. And she said, "I'm hearing anger." I'm like, "Oh no, no, I'm fine. I don't have any anger."

My big dream at that time was I wanted to live by the ocean. And I was in Boston for the summer because my oldest daughter was getting married. I had come back from Portugal and Spain and I was there to do wedding stuff. I was traveling around looking for a beach place around Boston because I thought I wanted to live there. I had all these great, fun adventures but I wasn't getting any closer to living by the beach. I couldn't find a place that I connected with.



I had lost a friend while I was in Portugal, he died in a scuba diving accident, but I had just been on a big sailing rally with him. And so I was thinking, "I want to learn how to sail." I'd been on the rally, but I was the cook.

She said, "Okay, I want you to write a story." She gave me a prompt, would've been a much shorter answer. But the prompt was, "Write a story where you're living by the beach and you know how to sail and you have this happy life." She said, "I want you to describe the house. I want you to describe what the boat looks like, what it feels like to be on the boat." She gave me these prompts, and, "I want a timeline on this, Kelly."

"By December, by my birthday, I will have met somebody special in my life. I'm going to be living in a very small beach cottage and he's going to have a sailboat." [laughs] But it was really important to say how I felt. "I'm in this house and I feel warm and cozy and I've loved that I can walk to the beach every day." This was last June. By September I was in this house. I can walk to the beach. I met a guy with a sailboat. [laughter] It was a manifestation exercise, it turns out. It literally, almost all of it, came true. I'm not madly in love with anybody right now, but that's coming. [laughs]

I think that the prompts really made it easier for me. It all started with the house, the sailing lessons and what it felt like. She was just like, "Keep telling me what it feels like." She refrained from saying *deadline*, but she said, "Add in a timeline. Add in a timeline. It's fall and the leaves are changing on the trees." It was that kind of flow, and I loved it. I loved it.



I think you can paint that too. If you're a painter, you can totally paint that. If you draw with pencils, you can draw that, draw it in stick figures, who cares?

[00:14:16] Kathy: You can take pictures on your phone, you can cut out and paste images, you can do all of that. But I think that's incredibly helpful. That it was really these prompts that connected to the emotions. It's not the thing, it's how you feel in that situation. I think that's incredibly helpful.

Wonderful. Well, again, thank you so much for your time. This has been wonderfully, wonderfully insightful and I hope it helps a lot of folks out there.

[00:14:41] C.K.: Oh, me too.

[00:14:41] Kathy: Thank you again, Kelly, for your time.

[00:14:43] C.K.: That's our goal, right?

[00:14:45] Kathy: That's it! Appreciate it.

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[00:14:49] 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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[00:15:51] [END OF AUDIO]