



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 210 – Follow the Sparkly Breadcrumbs with Sam Bennett
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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.



Today we have an insightful and humorous take on the topic of transformation. Most importantly, there are actionable takeaways that I found really helpful. What I love about today's conversation is our guest has made a career of transforming herself, shapeshifting from an acting career to a writer, speaker, teacher, and creativity/productivity specialist. And in between, there's a long list of jobs that supported her acting career and transition to her current line of work.

I'm joined today by Sam Bennett, the author of *Get It Done: From Procrastination to Creative Genius in 15 Minutes a Day*. Sam also wrote *Start Right Where You Are: How Little Changes Can Make a Big Difference for Overwhelmed Procrastinators, Frustrated Overachievers, and Recovering Perfectionists*.

Here's what we cover:

- Reasons why we don't move forward and strategies to counter them;
- How to reframe money fears in times of transition;
- Small steps to move forward on the transition journey;
- What to do when we're unsure of our progress and next steps; and
- How to handle the rewards and accolades when we're successful.

You can learn more about Sam at therealsambennett.com, and I'll put a link to her website in the show notes, where you'll find her books and offerings.

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

[00:03:07] Kathy: Sam, welcome to *The Athena Wellness Podcast*. Thank you so much for being here today.



[00:03:12] Sam Bennett: Thank you so much. I'm so happy to be here. Thanks so much for having me. Hi, everybody!

[00:03:16] Kathy: My pleasure. It's so good to have you here. Please share a bit about who you are and what you do.

[00:03:22] Sam: Yeah, my name is Sam Bennett. And I spent most of my life as an actor. I was one of those kids who did all the plays in school. I went to theater camp. I had an acting career that went well enough that you didn't want to give up on it but not so well as to be able to support a person, which meant that I just had every job under the sun. I was a whitewater river guide. I did scarf-tying demonstrations in Lord & Taylor. I was a barista. I was an executive assistant. You name it, I did it. Voiceovers for pinball machines, really everything. [laughter]

Along the way, I just got really interested in this question of, How do creative people make decisions? How do people make decisions when there isn't a template or a right way to do it? There's no right way to have a podcast. There's no right way to be an entrepreneur. There's no right way to be an artist. There's no right way to be a parent or a friend.

But I was good at getting things done. I've always been a very productive person, and I would produce shows and get projects done and stuff. I saw a lot of my-- especially my highly creative friends, who have a grillion ideas all the time, suffering. My mind just naturally went to like, "Well, how do we figure that out?"



I started to come up with worksheets and then a class called Get It Done. I was teaching in a church basement in Van Nuys to 11 people, and I might have charged them \$75 and felt really nervous about it. Over time, it just grew and grew and grew. It became a book, and then an online workshop, and now this whole enterprise that I've been doing since 2009.

[00:04:58] Kathy: You know, one of the reasons why I was so excited to talk to you today is that sometimes we think that our next path has to be laid out before us, and it has to be crystal clear right before we take action. And I love that, your spark, this seed, was-- "Gee, I'm really fascinated with this question."

At that point when you were just holding that question, did you ever think it was going to be your life's work?

[00:05:24] Sam: Never. In fact, like I said, it was just one of a lot of things I was doing. Honestly, I would do it maybe once or twice a year, mostly when I needed to pick up some extra bucks. It wasn't until a friend said, "Hey, wait a minute, you have this course that you love to teach, and everybody who takes it loves it. You're not doing this full-time because...?"

I was like, "Hmmm, that's very interesting." Even then, like I said, in early 2009, a day gig I had had, they laid off two-thirds of their people, including me. A thing I thought was going to work out wasn't. I had this big gap in my calendar and I thought, "Oh, great, now I got to get another day gig."



Then I thought, "I wonder if I could do this full-time?" And I knew nothing. I knew nothing about entrepreneurship, I knew nothing about marketing, I knew nothing about sales, I knew nothing about nothing. But I made it my business to learn.

It's like learning Danish. [laughter] At first, you're like follow-up sequences and drip sequences, lifetime customer value and cost of acquisition. And you're like, "But what are you even saying?" Once you get past the vocabulary, all of a sudden I was like, "This is not that hard. This is just about showing up and being of service to people, to the right people, storytelling and just being real and authentic."

[00:06:49] Kathy: Relationships.

[00:06:51] Sam: Relationships, 100%. And it turned out I was a little marketing savant. I doubled my revenue in my first year and did it again the second year and won marketing awards. And here was my big secret, and you can see it now if you join my email list. I would send out poems. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm no Mary Oliver.

[00:07:14] Kathy: [laughs] I thought it was a new direction.

[00:07:16] Sam: No, just fun. They're fun little inspirational poems about how weird we all are. There's a lentil soup recipe that I think still gets sent out. I didn't know that there was a wrong way to do it, so I just did it the way I thought, "What would I want to get?"

[00:07:35] Kathy: Mmhmm. So I'd love to talk about your work in terms of the process that we go through in times of transition.



I'd like to start to talk about the contemplation phase and in your book, *Get It Done*, which you just mentioned, you address the reasons why people don't move forward in spite of their inner voices urging them on. I'd love for you to speak to some of those reasons and some strategies for working through them.

[00:07:58] Sam: Yeah, sure. There's a myth in the world that change is hard, or that we don't like change, or that we don't like learning new things. My experience is that that's not really true. We don't like the anticipation of change, but when it's actually happening, we're generally pretty good with it.

One of our characteristics as human beings is we are highly adaptable, highly adaptable. You see this all the time. People go into prison and within two weeks, they are in the prison, it's like they are behaving like prisoners. They are in the prison system, they got it. People who work in hoarder situations where they're dealing with these incredibly foul smells and horrible situations. Within a couple of hours, certainly days, they're nose blind to it. It's just work. We can adapt to the strangest things pretty easily.

I always like to say, "You may not like change, but change sure loves you." When we see it coming, we start to get these little nudges. And sometimes they're internal nudges, an increasing sense of dissatisfaction with a relationship or a job or a situation.

Sometimes they're external, we can see the yellow lights, "Oh, this business is not going to go well. I think my quarterly review is-- I think they're going to lay people off. I don't think this isn't going to go right."



What I really urge people to do is start paying attention to those little signs and signals, those little tiny taps on the shoulders, those little intuitions, those little niggling like, "This is so weird. I don't know why I'm thinking about this, but I feel like I want to get my degree. I feel like I want to move to Florida. I sorta feel like..."

Start investigating. You don't have to throw over your whole life right away, obviously. You're at what I call the sparkly breadcrumbs stage. Start following the sparkly breadcrumbs and see what happens. See what happens.

Certainly, get rid of the idea that you alluded to earlier, that somehow we have to have it all mapped out perfectly inside of our minds because how well does that ever work out? It's never going to work out that way. But you know how it is. You see the sparkly breadcrumbs, and then you start to take a couple of little teeny, tiny steps and sometimes at that point, the world just comes rushing at you.

You're like, "Oh my God. It was the weirdest thing. I was in line at the post office, and then this happened, and this woman, and she runs a knitting shop..." All of a sudden, your life has changed.

Other times you take a few steps, and it's a lot of knees and elbows, and it's expensive, and it's weird, and you don't like it, so you're like, "Good. Not now. This isn't for me. This isn't the right time for this."

[00:10:35] Kathy: Those are different kinds of whispers but whispers nevertheless.

[00:10:38] Sam: Whispers nevertheless. So give yourself those little moments of investigation.



Because if you ignore the little intuitive taps on the shoulder, the signs are going to start getting louder and more prominent. If you don't take action then, then you're going to wait till it's an emergency.

In some ways, we kinda like waiting for it to be an emergency because then it's like, "Oh, it's out of my hands." But once it's an emergency, you have a lot fewer options, and it's usually a lot more expensive. You're much better off, like I said, paying attention.

It's hard because we're not really taught to pay attention to that inner voice. We're taught to pay attention to all these outer voices. And there's a million outer voices telling us who to be and how to do it, and only one little whispering voice inside going, "I think I might like the garden more. [laughs] I think I might want to write a book."

[00:11:33] Kathy: Yeah, definitely. You use the term *displacement activity* in talking about this. Can you share a bit about that?

[00:11:43] Sam: Yeah. This is something that a lot of mammals do, including humans. It's a version of freeze, fight, flight, or fawn – those panic activities that we have. You've seen it in all the nature documentaries where there's maybe a younger chimp who maybe is like, "I'm going to be a big guy." Then the big guy is like, "Are you really?" The little chimp is like, "Nothing. Nothing. No. I'm not really here. Never mind." [laughter] That was my chimp. End scene.

[00:12:20] Kathy: Improv chimp.



[00:12:21] Sam: Right. For us, it tends to look like bingeing hours of television shows. For me, it's rereading 1,200-page historical novels. I'm just going to take all of this energy that I feel coming at me, all of the discomfort that I feel around the idea that I might actually be changing my life, and I'm going to divert. I'm just going to go to something that feels safe and static to help calm me down. I think it's fine for a stress reliever. I think it's fine for something to help calm me down. You just don't want to stay there very long.

[00:12:53] Kathy: I never really thought about it. It's really like a soothing activity of some sort, but too much of that, no good, and not enough of that, you probably could use some, right?

[00:13:05] Sam: For sure, for sure. And sometimes, and again, I'll speak to the highly creative people because I think that's most of y'all, you may not be artistic, but you're definitely creative because everyone's creative. Not everyone is artistic, but everyone's creative. Creativity just has to do with innovative problem-solving. It means you have a lot of ideas. There's something that you're just naturally good at in the world, possibly multiple things.

I hear a lot of people like, "Oh, I'm such a procrastinator. I'm such a procrastinator. I always wait till the last minute. I haven't been writing. I haven't been writing. I haven't been writing." I'm always like, "Maybe, maybe you are, but it also may be that things are in the rock tumbler." That's how I always think of it, things are in the rock tumbler.



Sometimes things have to be in the rock tumbler for a long time before they spit out. "Oh my gosh, I got this presentation on Monday, and I haven't even looked at it. I haven't even thought about it." That's probably not true. You actually probably have been thinking about it, and you probably by now pretty much know what you want to do. By the time you sit down to do it, sure, it may be Sunday night or even Monday morning, [chuckles] but you pretty much know where it is you want to be headed.

If you're the kind of person who can pull things off at the last minute, then that's fine. You're not doing it wrong. Writers, like I said, they tell me all the time, "Oh, I haven't been writing. I haven't been writing." I'm like, "That's not true. You've been writing. You just haven't been writing it down." You're writing in your head all the time. You just haven't been writing it down.

[00:14:27] Kathy: I love that analogy of the rock tumbler because it's taken me a really long time to realize my own process. That is a big part of it. I'm not the last-minute type of person. I'm quite the opposite of that. However, when you start to feel that urge of, "I've got to get started, I've got to get started, I'm behind," and exactly to your point, it's like things are just processing and filtering their way through. Once it gets to the point where it can be expressed, it will be. That's a lovely, lovely analogy.

You also talk about this technique of using our heroes as fuel. Can you speak about that a bit?



[00:15:05] Sam: Yeah. There's an exercise that I have in the book that I do all the time with people when I'm working with them that has to do with coming up right at the top of your head of people that inspire you or delight you in some way. We can do this right now. We can do this together. Everybody, grab a pen.

Just think of somebody in your field, however you want to define your own field, living or dead, doesn't matter, that you just think, "That person is cool. I would like to have lunch with that person. I think they're neat." We'll just do two for the sake of fun.

Then maybe somebody from the world of entertainment, maybe an actor or a character in a show or somebody that you're just like, "I think that person is amazing. I think they're cool. I'd have lunch with them." Again, living or dead, real or imagined, doesn't matter.

For some reason, I just wrote down Winnie-the-Pooh. [laughter] I really encourage you to surprise yourself with these. You're like, "Why am I even thinking of that? That's weird." First of all, you can keep going with this. You can make a list of people you admire in literature and in politics and in business and in your own family, whatever you like.

That list alone can have some value because, as you may have noticed, your immediate family and friends have no idea what you do or why. [laughter] And they don't care. They're not going to read your book. They're not going to come support your shop. They're not going to listen to your podcast. Maybe some of them will, but don't count on it.



Your family and friends are not your clients. They're not your fans. They're in your life to be your family and friends. It's lovely, so just let them be that. But you do need people in your life that do understand what you're up to, that do get you on some level. Even this list of heroes, if we want to use that word...

I had a client one time who says, "It's really more like knee-jerk admiration." I'm like, "Right," so this list of knee-jerk admiration can provide you with some inspiration of like, "Oh, how did they handle getting older? How did they handle imminent bankruptcy?" We can look to these people for inspiration. Also, great if you have to write a blog post or need a quote or want to dress up as somebody for Halloween, this list can be really fun.

Now there's a part two to the exercise, though, which is to just write down a word or phrase that describes why you think this person is so cool. The only caveat I'll give you is that there's some words in our vocabulary that have grown to mean too many things.

Nice means too many things. If I say, "Oh, she's so nice," you're, "That doesn't really tell me anything." *Awesome* means too many things; *talented*, *smart*. Everybody's smart in some way. Just go one step further. "Oh my gosh, they're so awesome. They're so awesome because they're so warmhearted." Good, more specific.

Let's see. The first person I wrote down in my own field was Byron Katie, who I just adore her work. What I love about her is that she is so grounded and honest. There's two words. See, I broke my own rules.



Winnie-the-Pooh. What do I love about Winnie-the-Pooh? I love Winnie-the-Pooh because he's so cheerful. Now, we have a couple of adjectives that, wait for it, also describe you.

[00:18:11] Kathy: Ah, interesting.

[00:18:12] Sam: Ta-da! It's a magic trick.

[00:18:14] Kathy: So you're telling me I'm genuine and unique?

[00:18:17] Sam: I am telling you you're genuine and unique.

[00:18:19] Kathy: Well, thank you. This is turning out to be a wonderful podcast.

[00:18:22] Sam: See, I would go further and say that person that you wrote down, they're so unique because they're so what?

[00:18:29] Kathy: Expressive.

[00:18:30] Sam: Excellent. So I would add *expressive* to that. Because, again, unique is one of those words, it just means one of a kind, which we all are. You get a little more precise.

Great, now you have three words to start throwing around in your bio, in your emails, in your Facebook posts.

[00:18:48] Kathy: That's a big leap.



[00:18:50] Sam: Yeah, but when people say, "Tell me about yourself." You can say, "In general, people find me to be pretty grounded and pretty honest and pretty cheerful, except when I'm not." [laughter] "Great. Tell me more about that."

You can say, "There was this one time when I was traveling--" Now, you are honestly expressing something real about who you are. If you really want to take this all the way, and Lord knows I do, you get a good list of these, five or six that you really feel great about. Now, you can take them to your website designer and say, "Look, I need a website that feels grounded, honest, cheerful, expressive."

You can have somebody coach you on your TED Talk, and say, "Look, as long as it feels this way." You can say it to your headshot photographer, to your hairstylist. Artists respond really well to themes. Not so well to rules, but to themes.

And it helps alleviate some of that social anxiety, which I totally have. I'm super shy and super introverted. But I find that most of our anxiety comes from like, "What are they going to think about me? What's everybody going to think about me?" They're going to think this, some version of that, probably.

[00:20:02] Kathy: This is good stuff because I'm thinking, this was just off the top of the head, but as you're really working through this and getting more granular with the words, this could be really helpful in trying to say, "What is it that I'm even trying to offer people? What is that differentiator?" It's this.

[00:20:20] Sam: It's this. Yes, it's absolutely your unique selling proposition. It's also how you know what kind of vibe you're going for.



It also probably describes some of your ideal clients. And now, you're attracting people who share your values. And not all your values, obviously, but some of them. I always say I like to have clients who laugh at my jokes.

[00:20:42] Kathy: But that's a lovely way of getting to values because we're talking about people in times of transition. So if you sit down and say, "What are your values?" It's like, "I have no idea."

[00:20:51] Sam: Or they'll say, "Oh, my health and my family and my friend." Of course, those things are valuable to you, of course they are. But they're not the things that get you up in the morning.

If you've ever wondered like, "Wow, why did that job not work out for me?" If it wasn't matching some of these values, it was never going to work out for you.

[00:21:09] Kathy: And if I am at a point where I am in a transition, this at least is setting a template for me of the direction I want to go in, directionally.

[00:21:19] Sam: Exactly.

[00:21:20] Kathy: It wants to feel like this.

[00:21:21] Sam: Exactly.

[00:21:22] Kathy: Because it makes me feel good. It's resonating with me.

[00:21:24] Sam: Exactly.



[00:21:26] Kathy: Before we get on to taking some action in this transition journey, one of the things that stops a lot of folks, and it gave me quite a bit of pause when I was going through a big career transition, is fears around money. Especially people who are in corporate careers, you've got this very reliable ATM that just seems to go and you're thinking of stepping out of that.

How can we reframe our thoughts about money in times of transition?

[00:21:56] Sam: I can't decide if I'm absolutely the wrong person to answer this question or absolutely the right person to answer this question because while I named you all the jobs, [laughs] the 137 jobs I've had, I never had a job in corporate America. I never had a steady income. I never had a thing...

[00:22:11] Kathy: I think that's exactly why I want to ask you.

[00:22:13] Sam: [laughs] In fact, my sister even said to me one time, she was like, "You really don't know month to month how much money you're going to make?" I'm like, "No. I have projections, I have plans, but honestly, no."

[00:22:29] Kathy: I'm just more and more intrigued.

[00:22:32] Sam: Yeah, so I think we get attached sometimes to where money comes from instead of remembering that money doesn't come from people, it comes through people. Money doesn't come from an organization, it comes through an organization, just like love. Love comes through people, it doesn't come from people.



But if we get a mistake in that, in our mind we think, "Oh, this person who used to love me doesn't love me anymore. Now, I don't have love." No, you still have the same amount. The same amount of love is available to you no matter what. It's just not coming through this particular person today, but it's coming through other people, and it's coming through the world to you.

Money, same, same. There's no shortage or lack of money. Have you seen what people buy? [laughter] I mean, there is no shortage or lack of money. It's not evenly distributed and that's a separate conversation.

I can prove it to you because there's no shortage or lack of raspberry jam either. [laughter] And nobody's going all like, "Oh my God, I don't know where I'm going to get next month's strawberry jam. I need to buy more. I need to make sure that there's enough strawberry jam for my children and my children's children." It's just a thing, it comes through other people.

And it's not that hard to make. I mean, I know there's a big story in the culture that says like, "Oh, money's challenging and money's very hard. It's very hard to make, and you have to work very hard. If you're not working very hard, then you don't get to have a lot of money. Even if you work very hard, then even still sometimes you don't get to have a lot. You only get two days off a week and only two weeks vacation a year. You have to work very hard." We like that because it makes us feel like, "Oh, I'm worthy. I'm working, and I'm worthy, and I'm working hard and that's important. I'm contributing to the world, and that's important."



But it's all a big fat lie. You don't have to work that hard, unless you like to. When you're working hard on the stuff you love, it doesn't feel like work.

[00:24:27] Kathy: Right. That's true. Sure.

[00:24:29] Sam: That's the stuff that you spend all weekend doing and everybody in your life is going, "You're doing what? You're spending what? You're going to Peru to learn about what?" You're like, "No, no, it's fun for me. I can't wait." They're like, "Really? You baked a whole--" "Yeah. I love doing it." That's not work.

Which is not to say your hobby should become your work, sometimes they can, sometimes that's a great transition. Sometimes they should just stay as something that you love. But I just want you to notice that effort doesn't have to feel hard. We like to work, we like to learn things, we like to work. Like I said, we like change. We don't know that we like it, but we do.

I'm addicted to all these home rehab shows because I love television in which nothing bad happens. [laughter] "Ah, they're just recovering the couch." Nothing bad happens.

Even when they are fraught of like, "Oh no, I can't believe we're tearing this down. Oh, this was my--" The minute they show them the new house, they're like, "Ah, this is fantastic. I can't even remember the way it looked before. Oh, this is my kitchen? I don't even remember what it looked like before. Is that where the door was?" All of a sudden, when presented with change, we are often fine with it.

[00:25:38] Kathy: Yeah. There's a lot of drama leading up to it.



[00:25:40] Sam: That's what I'm saying. We dread the anticipation.

[00:25:43] Kathy: I think you hit on an important point because I think it's really this anticipation of all the possible things that are happening in our minds. Many of which, and almost all of which, never happen, and that's what we spin our wheels about, right?

[00:25:59] Sam: This is... you're not using your imaginative powers for good!
[laughter]

I was talking to a friend who was talking about his anxieties about a project he was working on. He's like, "I'm just afraid that we're going to put it up, and then somebody's going to see it, and they're going to say this, and they're not going to like it, and it's going to have this terrible fallout."

I said, "Look, I am not willing to make my decisions based on an imaginary production of an imaginary show that an imaginary person sees and has an imaginary reaction to. That's too many steps."

And if we're going to play that game, then let's play the game of this imaginary person who sees it and loves it and can't wait to invest a grillion dollars into it and tell all their friends and call their friend who is the editor at *The New York Times*." If we're going to imagine things, imagine it working out because sometimes it does.

[00:26:50] Kathy: That's good. Beautiful.



So I want to talk about the point in the transition journey where we actually take some action. You talk about ways to get moving in your book, *Start Right Where You Are*. I'd love for you to share a few of those techniques.

[00:27:05] Sam: Yeah. My favorite way to get started because everybody does this, they have these big ideas or even small ideas, and then they immediately feel overwhelmed, I don't even know where to begin. "I want to write a novel, I don't even know where to begin." You want to redo the whole house, "I don't even know where to begin." Of course, you don't, how could you? That's not a reason not to start.

My favorite is always just 15 minutes a day. Spend 15 minutes a day every single day on the thing that matters to you. Whether that's investigating a new career or looking to a new location to move to or trying to find someone to be a partner with or whatever it is you're up to.

Fifteen minutes a day every single day. Before you check your email. Before you check your email! Spend 15 minutes a day on the thing that matters to you. What happens is, first of all, we're busy, this idea that you're suddenly going to have six weeks off to write a novel or an hour a day to go to the gym. I don't know whose life that is because it's certainly not mine. But I can find 15 minutes. I can get up 15 minutes earlier. I can squish something for 15 minutes. It is shocking how much a person can get done in 15 minutes. It is shocking how much a person can get done in 15 minutes every single day for a week or a month or a year or 6 years.



While we know it intellectually, obviously, if you practiced guitar every day for 15 minutes a day, in not too long of a time, you would be a better guitar player. Even something like writing a novel in 15 minutes, you can write maybe 250 words-ish, in less than a year, you've got a 50,000-word document.

Now, you're going to get to next year no matter what, it's going to be 10 months from now, eventually. Do you want to land there with a draft of a novel or not?

The other thing that happens with the 15-minute-a-day thing, the reason I'm such a fan, is it hopscotches right over your perfectionism. Because how perfect is it going to be? It's 15 minutes. It's like, "I'll just write a little character sketch. I'll just do a little doodling."

The big story about this is actually in *Get It Done* where I had a woman who had a corporate job-- not a corporate job, but a job under fluorescent lights, a day job. Really, she felt those fluorescent lights were sucking her soul away. And I think they do, I think they do suck your soul away.

She wanted to design jewelry, design and make jewelry. I introduced her to this 15-minute-a-day thing and she's like, "Sam, it takes me 15 minutes just to get my stuff. There's no way." I said, "Listen, you're a smart person. Play around with it. Maybe you just sketch for 15 minutes a day or do research. I don't know, something."

The next time we meet, she has in fact played around with it, and she actually made herself a little tray that had her stuff on it, so she could just pull it out and do



some work and then put it back on the shelf, genius. In fact she had made three necklaces, which was three more necklaces that she had made in the previous six months. She's feeling quite chuffed.

Then because she has this little tray thing, the other thing she was doing was apprenticing to become a tattoo artist, which in LA is a big deal to be a tattoo artist. But now, she had this little kit that she could take with her, so she started bringing it to the tattoo parlor to do on her downtime there.

Well they didn't know she made jewelry. They start selling her jewelry at the tattoo parlor. She moves up in her apprenticeship there. Now she can quit the day gig and spend time on what she really wants to do, which is oil painting, but that's a whole new story. [laughter]

[00:30:46] Kathy: Whoa, twist ending. Okay, all right. Well I like that. We were talking about journeys. That was quite a journey. I love it.

[00:30:56] Sam: Again, sparkly breadcrumbs, sparkly breadcrumbs, sparkly breadcrumb. She couldn't see from her 9:00 to 5:00 job how she was ever going to get there, but little tiny steps will get you there.

[00:31:08] Kathy: Yeah. People, let's say, that they're doing this consistently, and it's a year or two, they're finding some success as the person that you just talked about. I find that folks sometimes can wind up in two camps.

One is, they don't feel like they're making the kind of progress that they wish they did, even though they're putting in this bit of effort. There's this, "Do I cut bait and



try something else?" Not knowing the right time to maybe bring it to an end or to keep going is one. The second one is where accolades come very quickly, and it's unnerving. It's like two ends of the spectrum.

Can you speak to those people who fall on those two camps and how they might be able to reframe it?

[00:31:50] Sam: Yeah, I can. For the first person in the first situation where maybe they're seeing some results, but it's not as much as they wanted, or it's not going as well as they would like it to be going, I have two thoughts.

One is, reality check. Talk to some other people who are better at what you do than you are or more experienced in your field than you are. Because sometimes I talk to people and they're like, "I don't know my open rate in my emails is only 78%." [laughter] I'm like, "Oh my God, you're killing it." They're like, "I am?" Like, "Yes."

Sometimes people are doing much, much better than they think they're doing. Reality check it. Are you really not doing that well, or in fact, or your number's not that great. That's also completely possible.

Then the other question I would ask is, because the problem when you've been putting these things, a lot of time and effort in, and you're not seeing the results you want, now you have this feeling of like, "I've already worked so hard, I don't want to quit now."

The only answer, and this is very challenging for human beings to do, is to look at what they call *sunk costs*. Sunk cost is the time and money that you have spent



that you are not getting back. You've already invested this much in the website, you've already put this many hours in, you've already paid the assistant this much. Whatever it is you've done. It's tricky to feel like, "Oh, now, I'm stuck in this thing."

The question to ask yourself is, "Knowing what I know now, would I make the same decision again? Knowing what I know now, would I enroll in graduate school again? Knowing what I know now, would I marry this person again? Knowing what I know now, would I open this shop?" That's your answer. It's a hard, hard--

[00:33:41] Kathy: Yeah, that's real stuff.

[00:33:42] Sam: It's real stuff. It calls for some real grit to answer this question, honestly. The fact of the matter is, sometimes you look at it and go, "You know what, I wouldn't." Just because you've been married to somebody for 20 years is not a reason to stay married to them.

[00:33:59] Kathy: You're going back to your previous exercise and coming up with those words, am I feeling like that in this situation?

[00:34:06] Sam: Right, right. Exactly. "Is this contributing to my sense of wellbeing?"

There's other times where we're like, "Oh my gosh, I put so much time and effort and energy into this, and honestly I would do it again because I've learned so much, and it's been so fun, and it's brought me stuff that I never thought it would, but it's still worth it to me to keep going."



But you've got to keep asking this question. It's a really challenging one. Because, again, I think it's a fear that keeps people from starting of like, "Oh, we don't want to invest a lot of time and energy and then have it not work out." Then sometimes it keeps people stuck. That grit, answering that question with that real deep honesty, it can be really important.

The second part was, yeah, it's going better than you think. It can also happen-- this happened to me, too, where you start also making a lot more money than you've ever made before. First of all, you just have to be very careful who you share stuff with because not everybody knows how to be happy for you. Don't go to the empty cookie jar. Don't look for support from people who don't know how to support you. They love you, but they don't know how to support you. They don't know how to be happy for you.

Make sure that you've got a community of peers around, people that you love and respect and that you feel love and respect you. You always want to play tennis with better tennis players. Find your better tennis players. If you're the smartest person in every room, find new rooms. So that you can be with people who are like "Oh, you signed your first book deal. Are you freaking out? Good. Here, let me tell you about when that happened for me." "Oh, you got an award from the city council. That's amazing. Here, let me remind you about this." "Oh, you had your first \$100,000 weekend. That's cool." You want to be around people who can help normalize this for you.

[00:35:58] Kathy: Yeah, that tribe, building that tribe.



[00:36:00] Sam: Right, and it's going to mean some new people. Maybe some of your old people may not be able to come with you on this journey, but we're not meant to take every step in lockstep through our entire lives with people. Sometimes people drift away, and then sometimes they circle back again. Like I said, it's not always forever, so don't feel like you have to break up with people you love. Just don't have conversations about stuff.

Otherwise the accolades, the good reviews, the bad reviews, they come and go. You can take a minute to celebrate and feel good, but I wouldn't get super attached. Again, this is partly me as an actor speaking mostly the performances that I feel great about may or may not be the ones that got the best reviews.

I've done some launches of some workshops and programs that I was like, "This is amazing. This is going to kill, this is going to make me all the money in the world. This is going to be amazing," and then crickets, like, "Okay, or not." [laughter] "Okay, moving on." You can't take it too hard.

And I have to say, I felt really gratified when I got my first one-star review on Amazon because it meant I was a real writer. [laughter]

[00:37:13] Kathy: You did.

[00:37:15] Sam: Well yeah, it made me feel like a real writer. I remember one review where somebody was like, "I didn't like this book. It's all that rah, rah, you can do it stuff."



I'm like "Yeah. That's exactly what that is, and it's true. If you're looking for something that's not "You can do it," then, yes, you're not going to care for my book." [laughter] I am a professional encourager! [laughs]

[00:37:37] Kathy: Speaking of professional encouragement, you also talk about this idea, as we're on this transformational journey, about feeling the net. I think that'd be a nice place to end our journey talk of how we feel supported as we're going along the way, wherever we happen to be in the journey.

[00:37:55] Sam: Yeah, this is an image that came to me in a meditation state but is not unique to me. Many, many people have had this image and this thought before. Again, maybe it's better if we do this live here.

So imagine you where you are. How about that? [laughter] Imagine where you are.

[00:38:17] Kathy: I'm here. I'm here.

[00:38:19] Sam: Here you are. And maybe imagine that there's a beam of light that goes through you. And maybe it comes out through your head and connects you to the stars and the heavens. And maybe it comes down out through your feet and connects you to the ground. So there's this pillar of light that you are a part of. Maybe there's other beams of light that extend out of you and connect you to other people that you care about, your ideas, or projects, or plants and rocks, and places, and animals. You've got all these spokes of light like a dandelion, spokes of a dandelion.



If we let those extend all the way out and then we imagine that everybody else also has all these spokes extending out, then we can see that they all intersect, and they make this big net, this big energetic net.

When I imagine that net, I'm reminded that you and I, that everyone is an inextricable part of this net. You cannot be separate from it. It's impossible. You cannot be too much for it. You cannot overwhelm it. If you need energy, maybe you could tug on the net, you could pull on it a little bit and let it energize you. If you have a lot to give, maybe you could throw some more love into the net and watch it ripple out. If you want to rest maybe you could just lay back in the net like it's a big hammock, and let it just support you for a while.

This feeling of deep connectedness that we are all the same thing, we are all part of one thing and nothing is ever lost. Nothing ever goes away, it just transforms. This is why I think we can sometimes feel so close to the people that we love who have died, to projects and ideas.

And if you're dreading change, you can imagine even if you just shift your body a little bit to one side or another, you can imagine how the little spokes off of you shift as well. This is why sometimes when we make a little shift, like 15 minutes a day shift, all of a sudden something that might have been way far away from us and then that all of a sudden has a direct path to us.

This is sometimes how I imagine things arriving miraculously is we just shift a little bit and all of a sudden everything is different. So this is my solace is this idea of this net of love and energy that is all things.



[00:41:02] Kathy: I feel amazing.

[00:41:04] Sam: Good!

[00:41:05] Kathy: Thank you. Thank you. Please, tell us how people can find you and what they'll find when they get there.

[00:41:13] Sam: Yes, please come to therealsambennett.com. I'm sure there's some free opt-in there. You can get some freebie bit and then you'll be on my email list, which is how everything happens. I try to post on social media, but I don't always remember to do it.

So get on my email list. You can always unsubscribe, of course, but most people, like I said, find it to be a very pleasant experience. It's therealsambennett.com, but you can also find me on all the socials, it's therealsambennett.com. I do a weekly Facebook Live. I do a lot of free trainings and then paid stuff. I'd love to have you all become part of the community.

[00:41:45] Kathy: Such a wonderful, wonderful conversation, Sam. I thank you so much for your time. I think this is going to be incredibly helpful. And I hope people flock to your website and want to learn more.

[00:41:54] Sam: Thank you so much. Thank you for having me.

[music]



[00:41:59] 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]

[00:43:02] [END OF AUDIO]