



**The Athena Wellness Podcast**  
**Episode 217 – Reimagining Midlife Wellness, Part IV – Intention**  
**August 16, 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:** Hello and welcome friends. Thanks so much for joining me for this shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

Today's show is a Walking The Talk vancast, a look behind the scenes into what I'm learning and working through along with a takeaway for you. These portable episodes are informal and casual, recorded on the go from wherever I happen to be at the time. And today, I'm recording this outdoors on a beautiful August afternoon.

**[00:01:05]** Today we'll continue with the third installment of our multi-part series on Reimagining Midlife Wellness. This series is focusing on the importance of staying well as we get older, especially in times of transition. These talks will



provide a framework to help you define what matters most to you at this stage of your life and ways to continue to take positive action to be well.

Here's what we've discussed so far:

- **Part I:** We talked about the difference between wellness and well-being, the essential elements of well-being and what can get in the way of our natural state of wellness. And then we ended with a series of questions for you to explore regarding your current state of well-being and how you're viewing the journey ahead.
- **Part II:** We explore the five Athena Principles along with tools and practices that you can use to enhance your wellness and well-being. I also provided a free overview of the Principles and an action plan that you can download at [athenawellness.com/action plan](https://athenawellness.com/action-plan). And I'll put a link to that offer in the show notes.
- **Part III:** We talked about the first Athena Principle, which is **self-compassion**, defined as “the care for one's own well-being in the form of self-acceptance and nurturing support.” It's the ability to accept our imperfections and be kind and understanding toward ourselves, especially during times of transition.

Today, we'll be exploring the second Athena Principle, which is **intention**, defined as “a way to help us aim, set direction and connect emotionally to what we want. It's the heart-based “Why” behind the urge to transform.”

**[00:02:59]** So let's begin.



Goals, resolutions, pledges, promises, vows - I've made them and I'm guessing you have too. We plan to eat better, move more, learn Italian, save money, start the business, travel internationally, clear out the clutter, write the book, learn to meditate, and volunteer more often, among other tasks, in order to lead what we believe will be a better life. This is especially true as we anticipate what might be on the other side of a long-term career.

The moment we declare a new way forward, we typically feel a great amount of enthusiasm and momentum. As we begin to take action, though, it's not unusual for that exhilaration to wane.

It's estimated that less than 10% of New Year's resolutions are achieved. The main reason for the low success rate is unrealistic outcome expectations that are not aligned with sustained effort. Self-help author, Debbie Ford, once wisely noted, "All of our suffering in life is from saying we want one thing and doing another."

It goes without saying that midlife is a time of significant shifts. But it's also a great opportunity to reflect and implement changes that will provide a future filled with happiness and vitality. And intention is a wonderful tool to help navigate such midlife transitions.

**[00:04:39]** So what's the difference between a goal, and all of its synonyms, and an intention?



A goal is defined as “the end toward which effort is directed.” Goals are future-oriented and focused on achievement. They reflect how we want to show up at a later date in our outer world.

An intention is defined as “a determination or resolve to act in a certain way.” Intentions are rooted in the present and focused on living in alignment with our beliefs and values. They reflect how we feel in our inner world.

The reason why most New Year’s resolutions fail is that they’re usually goal driven, with a focus on results and external rewards. Often, resolutions are not aligned with a strong internal desire, but instead with a sense of what should be done or wanted. The mindset of “succeed or fail” further adds stress to an already taxing behavioral change, which ultimately leads to failure.

Intentions are more forgiving. They honor the effort expended and the process embarked upon. They’re designed for long-term change and they’re connected to the authentic self. And most importantly, they contain the “Why” behind the desire change, perfect for making a life course correction. And since they connect with our sense of worthiness, intentions lend themselves to self-compassionate action.

Setting clear intentions is akin to creating a personal roadmap for ourselves, which is especially helpful in midlife when we can feel unsure and adrift. When we intentionally chart our way forward by getting clear on our “Why,” it’s easier to stay on track and in alignment with what we truly want for ourselves.



Your “Why” keeps you going when you're feeling depleted, frustrated or tired. Your “Why” allows you to identify what's at stake for you personally if you don't make the change. Your “Why” is your deep motivation, your call to action. It clarifies how you want to show up in the world.

Once you know your “Why,” the path forward (the what, how, when, where and with whom) becomes more apparent. You realize that flexibility is your friend and there are a variety of routes to get to your intended outcome.

**[00:07:23]** And now your takeaway. Here's a four-step process for setting an intention, along with an intention I'm working with during this series that I'll use as an example.

1. **Quietly check-in with yourself and see what change you'd like to cultivate.**

Look at your strengths, values, passions, and things that bring you joy. You can think back to Part I of this series to the contemplation questions we worked with or to the PDF download in Part II of this series that included the Holistic Wellness Spectrum for some ideas.

If you're unsure where to start, consider what matters most to you at this stage of life. Here are some prompt questions to consider:

- What do you like to learn about?
- What do you like to create?
- Is there something to start or stop doing?
- When do you feel in flow?



- Where does your heart feel full and aligned?
- What would you like to nurture?
- What nourishes you?
- What would you like to build?
- For whom and for what do you feel gratitude?

Here's my intention: I'm grateful for my health in midlife and want to learn more about the impact of exercise and nutrition on aging and update my routines accordingly.

2. **Select an impactful change that resonates deeply with you and is important to make now be positive and keep the statement in the present tense.** Here's mine: I'm interested in learning how to challenge my body as I age and also treat it with care.

Some considerations for you:

- Make sure it's something that you want to do rather than to appease other people's expectations. Mine is: When I don't eat well and move my body, I can feel some stiffness in the morning that I'd like to proactively alleviate.
- Another consideration: What's the underlying motivation? For me, I want to learn how to move and nourish my body better at this stage of my life.
- Another consideration: Are you enthused to spend your time and energy on it? For me, I know there isn't a life hack that will help me stay



fit as I get older and I want to learn how to help myself stay healthy in the long term in an enjoyable way.

- 3. Determine the mental, emotional, spiritual and physical benefits of attaining your intention.** For me: I know I'll feel better physically, but I believe the benefits of eating better and moving more will positively impact my stress levels, sleep patterns and overall level of serenity.
- 4. Take action.** Now that you have a high-level idea of how the intention will unfold, develop a series of manageable actions that you can begin to take immediately. For me: This week, I'm going to try a new living foods recipe, take my runs outside, and do a CrossFit-like workout at home to add strength, flexibility and balance training to my running routine.

To summarize, midlife wellness and transitions can be challenging, but intentions can help you stay positive and stay on track. Intentions, your "Why," are seeds of creation, providing clarity to point you in the right direction to attain what you most desire, making it easier to see possibilities and opportunities. Intentions allow you to focus on what matters most and release what no longer serves to make space for what's on its way to you.

I hope this session helped you see that intentions can help you create how you want to feel when you wake, go to work, spend time with your family and friends, contribute to the community, nurture yourself, and lay your head down at night. Intentions can also help you dream big and act in accordance with your deepest desires. Consider this your call to action.



Thank you for listening to this series. Remember that you can download *The Athena Principles* overview at [athenawellness.com/action\\_plan](http://athenawellness.com/action_plan) to help you chart your unique path.

And I'll be back next time with the next installment of Reimagining Midlife Wellness. Until then, be well!

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**[00:12:12] 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.

If you'd like to access the show notes, have a question you'd like addressed on a future episode, or would like a transcript of this episode, visit [www.AthenaWellness.com/podcast](http://www.AthenaWellness.com/podcast).

Until next time, be well!

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**[00:13:13] [END OF AUDIO]**