



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 218 – Reimagining Midlife Wellness, Part V – Consistency
August 23, 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 at home on a gorgeous August afternoon.

[00:01:03] Today we'll continue with the fifth 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 for you to 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 your 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 explored 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://www.athenawellness.com/action-plan). And I'll include a link in the show notes for you.
- **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.
- **Part IV:** We talked about 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.



[00:02:55] Today we'll be exploring the third Athena Principle, which is **consistency**, defined as the art of staying committed and engaged, especially during challenging times.

And perhaps you've heard the stories. An NFL coach arrives at the playing facility on a July 4th holiday to find his all-star running back doing drills and running stadium steps all by himself. Or the NBA superstar who was in the gym shooting baskets the morning after winning an NBA championship. Or the infamous anti-inflammatory nutrition and flexibility protocols a celebrity quarterback followed year-round that extended his playing career well into his 40s.

This type of preparation exists in the business world as well with corporate executives, this podcaster included, over-preparing for important meetings and practicing presentations repeatedly, aloud and in front of the mirror, years into a career to build the confidence needed to take command in the boardroom.

The common thread weaving through each of these stories is the importance of consistent action, a critical factor in determining success, because it leads to reliable outcomes and results. And the reverse is true as well. Inconsistent action usually equates to less than optimal results.

[00:04:27] Why is consistency so impactful? Repetition creates an environment of continuous improvement where feedback and learning can be applied, allowing adjustments to be made in real time while moving toward the intended outcome. This trial and error approach builds trust with our inner knowing and develops new habits we begin to rely upon as we find our own way. Then our level of personal



empowerment increases, because we realize that the responsibility for a beneficial outcome lies within us, leaving little room for blame or excuse.

The more we practice consistency, the more we come to know that being present each day is the key to moving closer to realizing our intentions. With consistent effort, we notice it becomes easier to bypass distractions and immediate gratification in favor of creating a lifestyle that supports good habits and making the right wellness choices over the long term.

Momentum builds when we understand that true satisfaction comes from incremental deliberate choices linked to desired behaviors. We begin embracing the process and the work that's moving us toward our desires.

And that's the sweet spot and an indication that our lifestyle has shifted, when we begin to enjoy our wellness practices. We find that consistent preparation, effort, learning and adjustment are the driving forces of the whole wellness equation. It's all about how you choose to show up for yourself.

Great leaps of effort are not required to begin to move toward your intentions. In fact, studies have shown that small steps taken consistently lead to lasting change. Plan to start your wellness efforts with a series of micro-actions and before long, you'll feel the momentum build and know when you're ready to increase the frequency and intensity of your actions.



[00:06:47] Now it's your turn. Here are nine steps to begin to craft a suitable approach of consistent action:

1. Review your wellness intention and clarify your area of focus.
2. Begin where you are with a realistic view of your current circumstances, ability and time commitment. Be mindful not to overcommit at first.
3. Select a suitable first step or micro-action that gets you actively moving forward with little effort.
4. Emotionally connect this activity with your "Why," focusing on the benefits and additive value this action will bring to your life.
5. Create a routine to make taking action easier, such as a start date, a calendar appointment, or preparing a gym bag the night before.
6. Pay attention to the inner critic and have a plan to offset a negative talk track, should it surface.
7. Anticipate and clear your biggest obstacles to the extent possible.
8. Share your plan with a trusted friend as extra incentive to not hit the snooze button in the morning.
9. Track progress in a way that's visible and tangible for you.

And now a quick personal story before I get to your takeaway.

If I look back over the last 25 years, my wellness intentions haven't changed all that much. I still want to eat healthy, move my body, maintain a positive mindset, be creative, and be actively engaged in my life.



What has changed over the years is *how* I stay consistent. I have continuously adjusted my routine to align with my life at any given time, such as when I traveled extensively for work just a few years ago.

These days, while contributing to the care of a loved one, I had to adjust once more, creating a new schedule to get my runs and weight training workouts in between my caregiving sessions. I've also restarted a sitting meditation practice each morning to ground myself, something I haven't done since my Wall Street days.

[00:09:21] And now your takeaway. How do you make consistency your new norm?

As you've learned, consistency is what builds healthy habits that are integrated into your lifestyle, rather than sporadic activity that can leave you open to bargaining on whether or not to do something.

Here are five ideas to help make wellness your new norm:

1. Immerse yourself in your new activity by learning about it, reading, listening to podcasts, meeting with others with the same interests, and having fun discovering new things together.
2. Be true to yourself rather than fitting in with someone else's wellness expectations and implement the changes that matter most to you. What changes will make you feel good and what is actionable for you at this time in your life?



3. During the first four weeks of the new activity, try not to make exceptions to your new activity schedule. Instead, to the extent possible, get into a solid groove.
4. On the days you're not feeling motivated, perform your activity anyway. A substandard effort is better than none at all, especially in the beginning.
5. Wellness choices don't need to be categorized as good or bad, checked-off or missed. Instead, view choices as those that are right for that day and moment, and choose mindfully.

[00:11:02] To summarize, true long-term success is not about perfection. Our best plans can go awry. The key is getting back on track as soon as possible and using the feeling of being off-course to adjust and move forward.

I hope this session helped you remember that wellness is a journey, not a destination. It's a way of life that will ebb and flow. The overall aim is to make healthy choices the norm over time, not the exception or something you have to do.

Small achievements can lead to large accomplishments. With enough practice, you will be able to reach a tipping point where things get easier with less mental and emotional effort.

Wellness becomes the norm when you keep upgrading your lifestyle, little by little, expecting more of yourself over time, while gradually moving your wellness target forward at periodic intervals.



Where intentions meet consistency – that's where the magic happens.

Thank you so much for listening to this series. Remember that you can download a free Athena Principles overview at 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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[00:12:34] 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.

Until next time, be well!

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