



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 241 – Unlock Your Next Life Chapter, Part I – The Gift of Discontent
January 17, 2024

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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 as you create your next chapter, turning life transitions into transformation.

[00:00:31] Kathy: Hello and welcome friends. Thanks so much for joining me for the shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

If I could sum up the biggest lesson I've learned since leaving my longtime corporate career behind, it's this: The skills that make you successful in one chapter of your life are not the ones you rely on as you create the next chapter of your life.

In my case, what helped me successfully scale the corporate ladder didn't help me descend it. And I've since created a new toolkit that I share with clients and students to help them unlock their next chapter and navigate the unfamiliar terrain ahead.



This is what inspired the next series of podcasts that I have planned for you. Here's a sample of what we'll be exploring together:

- **Part I** – Today, we'll start at the beginning, with that vague yet unshakable sense that we can get at times that something needs to change.
- **Part II** – Next week, we'll explore the elements of our origin story and how it's made us who we are today.
- **Part III** – The third episode will include how to rewrite that story, the parts that are no longer serving you while leveraging the parts that do.
- **Part IV** – The final episode in the series will include an example on how to utilize this technique using my own story, along with some resources that were helpful to me when I was looking to make a change.

[00:02:18] Let's begin our session today at the very beginning, with a quiet whisper in the form of a vague feeling of discontent.

So how do these whispers begin to show themselves? Perhaps you notice it after a minor mishap at work, such as a meeting that didn't go quite as planned. Maybe your level of enthusiasm that you once had for your work has waned a bit. Or maybe you're experiencing bouts of the Sunday Scaries and find yourself dreading what Monday morning may bring.

It can be confusing. You finally have all you've worked for – the team, the title, your colleagues. Yet any sense of happiness seems to be situational, dependent on the wins of the day rather than that deep-seated feeling of fulfillment.



As the internal tug of war continues, you may wonder, “Is it a phase or is there something wrong?” Yet the whispers won't stop. There seems to be something beckoning you beyond your familiar boundaries, but the something is shapeless and nameless. It's more like a pull, but to where?

My advice is don't discount the feeling, but engage with it. These little nudges are pointing toward the next chapter, one that's more fulfilling than your prior one.

First, let me put your mind at ease. The reason why this feeling is nameless is because the common model we have for the second half of life is outdated. Our parents dutifully follow that model. They worked until retirement age and then enjoyed as much as they could before their health declined. It's the way their parents did it if they lived long enough.

But today, people are routinely living longer and not many people want to retire to a life of leisure. And as more people stay engaged as they get older, we see that they're blasting through the myth that life plateaus and then declines. We're learning that people can contribute no matter their age.

So cast aside the old model and welcome a new one, where your current life chapter is merely a springboard for the next one, one of unlimited possibility.

Before we can begin in a new direction, we need to know where we are today. So we'll be looking at three things: discontent, the opposite of that feeling, and how to begin to gather information on both that will help us move forward.

[00:05:16] Let's start with discontent and three ways it can show up in your life:



- 1. Life as a treadmill.** This occurs when you find yourself going through the motions. You're getting things done, and no one else seems to think that anything is wrong. Even so, there's an emptiness and a yearning underneath it all. It's how I felt before I realized it was time to leave my Wall Street career behind many years ago.
- 2. Impatience becomes paramount.** Think of it as a buildup of pressure comprised of unexpressed emotions. Your life, which used to run like clockwork, now seems to be plagued with inconvenience, and you overreact as a result. In addition, undefined longing for a life that seems out of reach becomes more unbearable by the day, with little relief.
- 3. Doubt that lingers.** You begin to negatively question all the good that comes your way. The tokens of success that were once so important feel empty and the trade-off for achieving them feels imbalanced. You have a sinking feeling that more of the same type of achievement and success will leave you feeling worse.

The good news is these feelings are giving you important messages and can be used to instill lasting change in your life. Here's a simple way we'll be working with discontent. Every time you feel any glimmer of apathy, frustration, dissatisfaction, doubt, envy, comparison, impatience, emptiness, or like feelings – take note of it.

For example, in my Wall Street days, which were long before smartphone notepads, I always had a notebook with me. During my commute or at lunch, I'd note whatever riled me that day. Sometimes it was something a colleague did, a



conversation with my boss, waiting in line for coffee, in traffic going home, whatever was causing the discomfort would be captured.

And I suggest you keep a running list as well. You don't need to do this for a long period of time, just enough time to spot some patterns and go deeper into the cause.

[00:07:51] At the same time, and in order to not only focus on the negative, find where there are glimmers of contentment. If you're in a place where you're unable to find any at the beginning, note things that would make you feel content. Here are three examples:

- 1. Glimmers of peace.** During the stressful days that you're experiencing, what would bring you a moment of relief? At the end of my Wall Street career, I remember moments of enjoying music during my commutes, noting the passing seasons as I drove, and watching the sunset through my office window in the evenings.
- 2. Moments of awareness.** Throughout your days, how many tasks can you do with a sense of presence? And how many acts of kindness can you note taking place all around you? How many can you initiate? Even if you're low on energy, an exchange of smiles between strangers can do wonders to lift the spirits of both.
- 3. Sparks of inspiration.** What are the things or experiences that bring a little light into your days? For years, I worked in midtown Manhattan, close to a block called Music Row filled with music stores. I spent many a lunchtime playing guitar in those shops. And I'd also take lunchtime trips to zine



stores – shout out if you remember zines – Tower Records, bookstores, Central Park or vegan restaurants.

And yes, please keep a list of whatever glimmers are illuminating your days, or things you'd like to experience, no matter how small.

Why bother to note moments of discontent and contentment. You'll utilize this list to further explore and unlock your next chapter. And in doing so, you'll be guided to a new life of true fulfillment.

[00:10:06] As we bring this episode to a close, I'd like to offer that discontent is not a shortcoming. It's a powerful catalyst for growth.

By identifying and noting where and how it surfaces, it will allow you to better understand and work with it, which we'll be doing in upcoming episodes. Until then, note what your inner landscape is showing you. These glimmers are the key to unlocking your next chapter.

If you're interested in exploring the themes we covered today and would like a guide for this soulful journey, please do reach out. My coaching services are listed on my website, and you're always welcome to reach out via email. I'll link that all up in the show notes. And as always, I look forward to connecting with you.

I appreciate you and I'll see you for Part II next week.

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[00:11:05] 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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[00:12:07] [END OF AUDIO]