



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 249 – Coaching Conversations: Heart-Led Living, Part I – Overview
March 13, 2024

[music]

[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.

Before we get started, I wanted to mention that I have a new free resource. It's a short guide titled *Five Questions to Explore a Soulful Second Chapter*. It's perfect if you're thinking of leaving your professional career and you're wondering what to do next. You can download it at [athenawellness.com/reimagine](https://www.athenawellness.com/reimagine). And I'll also put a link in the show notes so you can check it out.

[00:01:03] Kathy: Hello and welcome friends. Thanks so much for joining me.

Today's episode is a Midlife Coaching Conversation inspired by a student who asks, "You always talk about living from the heart, what does that mean and how do I do it?" That's a great question. And it has so much depth.

As I explored the different angles I could take to address this question, I realized that it's a topic that I want to delve into in ways that I haven't before.



What I know at this point is it's going to be a series, it'll have actionable takeaways for you, and we'll go where the topic leads us. What I don't know is what we'll discover.

Today, we'll explore what it means to live from the heart. In upcoming episodes, we'll look at topics such as how to transition to heart-based living, practices that you can try, and coaching exercises that might be helpful. But I have a feeling that there will be interesting twists and turns along the way. And I'm so glad that you're with me on this journey.

[00:02:14] So let's begin with the original question: What does living from the heart mean? Here are some basic definitions for context.

The phrase *living from the heart*, to me, means living your life guided by your intuition and values more than your reliance on logic and societal signals.

Two points to make on this definition. The first is if you feel yourself bristle at the word *intuition*, the way I'm defining it is to know something without reasoning or logical deduction. And we do this all the time. Think about the decisions you've made when you just know it's the right approach to take. That sense of knowing is what I mean by intuition.

The second is when I say *living your life guided by your intuition and values more than your reliance on logic and societal signals*, I use the words *more than* intentionally because I believe we need both.



If we live exclusively from the head, life can be devoid of emotions and human experience. On the flip side, if we live way too deeply from the heart, we can be out of touch with reality and our surrounding environment.

So you can think of it as a spectrum where you can easily change the ratio of logic and intuition. It comes back to the Athena archetype and why I named my business Athena Wellness - head and heart, shield and owl, intellect and intuition. We're not excluding logic and reason. We're connecting with and trusting what we know to be true deep in our soul using our whole selves.

[00:04:12] When we operate solely from our left brain logical selves, we live out of balance. Here are three examples that come to mind when there's an over reliance on reason and intellect.

1. **Dismissing intuition and emotion.** In this case, there's an emphasis on achieving goals that are acceptable in your social circle, even if you have to suppress your feelings and override your gut instinct.
2. **Prioritizing control and practicality.** In this case, personal fulfillment is de-emphasized to create a lifestyle based on security and/or social expectations, where decisions are made based purely on logic and external factors.
3. **Making choices based on external validation.** In this case, your own values and desires are disregarded when making decisions. Instead, choices are based on what others expect or society deems successful, such as external achievements or possessions.



Here are some examples of what that can look like in daily life:

- Working at a job that pays well but leaves you unfulfilled;
- Remaining in a challenging relationship because of family expectations or the fear of being alone and starting again;
- Masking uneasy feelings, such as sadness, overwhelm or disappointment, by staying composed in the moment and leaving the emotions in an unprocessed state, meaning not dealing with them;
- Living a life of comparison, trying to match what appears to be perfection in others and on social media; and finally
- Spending all of your time doing what others want or need to the detriment of your own self-care and happiness.

While there are always trade-offs in life and relationships, when we stay toward the left brain logical part of the spectrum for prolonged periods, the result can be disconnection and burnout.

[00:06:31] Now let's look at the opposite. Here are three examples that come to mind when you move down the spectrum toward heart-based living.

1. **Inviting intuition and emotions.** In this case, there's a curiosity when your emotions become a compass and your inner voice is leading you forward, especially when it's not clear where you're headed or why.
2. **Prioritizing values and compassion.** In this case, there's a balance in respecting what truly matters to you, while striving to understand other



people's perspectives, so you can make values based decisions and communicate them effectively.

3. **Living an authentic life.** In this case, there's an emphasis on expressing your unique personality and perspective with confidence, especially when it's not in line with social constructs and expectations.

Here are some examples of what that can look like in daily life:

- Finding ways to feel more fulfilled at work or balancing a demanding professional life with activities that feed your spirit;
- Setting relationship boundaries with a willingness to walk away from any unhealthy situation;
- Honestly, communicating your feelings while finding ways to work through them;
- Noticing the beauty in daily life, as well as acknowledging all the things that go right each day; and lastly
- Offering small acts of kindness to others and to yourself.

[00:08:20] If I had to sum up what living from the heart is, I'd say it's about making conscious choices that are rooted in love, compassion and authenticity. As you're able to make life choices in this manner more frequently, you'll find more depth, richness and meaning each day.

When we first start to work with this concept, some clients have said that living from the heart can sound selfish. And my response is, if it's taken to an unhealthy



extreme, the idea of following your heart can turn into self-indulgence. But that's not what we're talking about here.

Here's a quick way to remember the difference. Heart-based living prioritizes long-term well-being and positive impact for yourself and others. On the other hand, indulgence craves short-term pleasure with potential negative impact.

[00:09:26] Now that we have a solid foundation to work from, let me tell you why I'm so excited about this series of talks. We are living through amazing times. On the upside, there are countless advances in technology, a heightened understanding of what it means to be a global citizen, and a growing focus on positive changes in society.

But on the other side of this equation, all of this change, coupled with information overload, can bring a paralyzing sense of uncertainty, which can lead to fear, conflict and polarization.

Here are three ways that heart-led living can offer a powerful antidote:

1. **True North.** As you learn to trust your heart, the decisions you make feel clear and aligned, regardless of what's happening in the external world.
2. **Resilience.** As you focus more on your own self-care, your sense of compassion and gratitude naturally expands, which acts as medicine against stress and negativity.
3. **Connection.** Continuing on this upward spiral, as your compassion and gratitude grow, so do your empathy and understanding which deepens your relationships.



[00:01:02] And this is why I think this series is actually about hope. We'll explore how to navigate these complex times and not only stay well, but by being true to yourself, your life will thrive and you'll be able to help create a positive future.

And that's the possibility I'd like you to hold as we bring this episode to a close. While this series will be very practical in how to live a more heart-led life, the purpose is to give you a sense of agency and empowerment with the potential of broader change.

That choice to reclaim your own destiny is the very essence of hope. The choice to prioritize the emotions of love and compassion. The choice to make decisions aligned with your core values, And the choice to live an inspired life, which by the very act of doing so, causes a ripple effect of positivity for others.

I'll leave you today with the words of author Marianne Williamson.

"As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give others permission to do the same."

Let's do that for each other.

Have an amazing day. And I'll meet you right back here next week for Part II of this series on heart-led living.

[music]

[00:12:43] 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!

[music]

[00:13:45] [END OF AUDIO]