



The Athena Wellness Podcast

Episode 250 – Coaching Convos: Heart-Led Living, Part II – Trust the Transition

March 20, 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.

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.

Let's continue our Midlife Coaching Conversation series inspired by a student who asks, "You always talk about living from the heart. What does that mean? And how do I do it?"



Last week, we laid the foundation. We defined what heart-based living means, gave examples, and talked about how it could be a powerful antidote to some of the challenging times we're living in.

I wrapped up that episode with my own realization that this series is ultimately about hope. I asked you to hold the possibility that by being true to yourself, your life will thrive and you'll be able to create a positive future for yourself, those you love, and your community.

Today, we'll explore ways to gently transition to heart-led living in ways that won't upend your current life, but will enhance it. We'll talk about how to experiment with this way of life, and, most importantly, how to trust your heart. Here we go.

[00:02:14] For many professionals who have been in the game for a while, in order to make sure we get it all done, life can go on autopilot and be guided by logic and reason. It can seem natural to analyze and strategize until every decision is based on hard evidence of what we should do. This is an approach that served most of us, myself included, very well for many years.

But as we discussed last week, there's another way to live our lives – by listening to the voice of our heart and being open to intuition. As I previously noted, intuition is merely a sense of inner knowing without logical deduction. Am I feeling hungry or not hungry? Am I rested or do I need sleep? You innately know the answers to these questions. That's a form of inner knowing.



We concluded last week with the purpose of heart-led living, which is to give you a sense of agency and empowerment with the potential of broader change. I hope you agree that it makes sense to incorporate heart-led living into your life. But how do you begin to make the transition?

[00:03:36] I know it can feel daunting to overhaul how you live. What I'm proposing is not a dramatic U-turn from your current life. It's about incorporating more connection, meaning and purpose into your life today, by developing a deeper relationship with yourself.

To help you get started, we'll be covering the transition process and diving a bit deeper into three topics. self-awareness, experimentation, and trust.

First, the transitioning process. It's been said that the longest journey you'll ever take is from your head to your heart. And I've certainly found this to be true. It's also been the most meaningful journey I've ever experienced. And it keeps getting better. Deep transformation occurs when you agree to travel that road.

Along that path, you'll confront all of your ingrained patterns of thought and behavior that once served you well. And you'll have the opportunity to rewire them one by one.

You'll face your inner skeptic, who will initially want to override your emerging gut feelings. But in no time, you'll begin to understand the language of your heart and its subtle messages. You'll also learn to balance what the head knows and the heart feels, considering both and finding the right ratio that works for you.



The initial stages of the journey can be especially challenging, filled with confusion and doubt. Stepping out of your well worn analytical comfort zone can make you feel fearful and resistant to change. You may find yourself questioning all of your choices and defaulting to your established ways of making decisions.

But if you continue to work with your inner guidance and align your actions with your heart-based values, you'll start to live more authentically. While the disruption might feel a little turbulent at first, your life and relationships will begin to thrive in ways you haven't experienced before. And there'll be no turning back. You won't want to. Your desire will be to continue on your heart-led journey.

[00:06:07] That's the high level overview of the transition journey. Now let's get a little more practical and take a look at other topics I mentioned: self-awareness, experimentation and trust.

First, self-awareness. A standard definition of self-awareness is the ability to step back and observe your thoughts, feelings, emotions, and bodily sensations without judgment. This, in itself, is a lifelong practice.

Going a bit deeper, back in the '70s, psychologists Shelley Duvall and Robert A. Wicklund, in their *Theory of Self-Awareness* research paper, stated this, "Self-awareness is the ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards. If you're highly self-aware, you can objectively evaluate yourself, manage your emotions, align your behavior with your values, and understand correctly how others perceive you."



What I love about these definitions is there's a nice balance of head and heart reliance. While there's an objective evaluation of yourself, using your head, there's also an alignment with internal standards and values, using your heart.

[00:07:38] That said, here's how self-awareness plays an important role in the head to heart journey, and how it can show up in your life:

1. You have a better understanding of your inner world, including your emotional triggers and when you're defaulting to autopilot habits or decision-making.
2. You have clarity on what you value and what's important to you.
3. You learn to identify thoughts and emotions that can take you out of the present moment, and instead, you pause and choose the best way to handle the situation.
4. You discover the language of intuition and how you receive innate insights.
5. You enjoy experimenting with heart-based living practices and build trust with your intuitive guidance as a result.

So how do we begin to transition from relying on our logic to trusting our heart? We'll talk about specific practices in an upcoming episode. For now, you'll want to find ways to recognize subtle intuitive cues in your field of awareness. And in order to be open to this shift, I recommend finding a way to quiet your mind that works for you.



I recently heard a great quote and it was this: “Stillness is the access point to acceleration.”

[00:09:13] Over the last few years as I've worked with the *Type A to Type B* method, I've found this to be true. But at first, it was such a curious and unfamiliar concept. By slowing down I can be more effective? The short answer is, “Yes!”

And now, it's my practice. The more skilled I get at quieting my mind first thing in the morning and revisiting that space throughout the day, the quicker things fall into place with less effort.

And no, you don't need to meditate and you don't need to journal, unless you already do those things or these practices call to you. You also don't need to spend a lot of time doing this.

I enjoy 10 minutes when I wake each morning being in the quiet of my heart space. And if I'm feeling overwhelmed or I find myself pushing too hard during the day, I'll briefly pause, breathe and realign myself by coming back to this heart space.

We're going to explore how to experiment with this. But here's a pro tip before we do. In the beginning, it's best to practice this when things are going well, when you're in a good headspace. Don't wait until you're in great need to give this a try, if at all possible.



And what you're looking to do is simple. Note the times when your heart feels peaceful, expansive or intrigued. This is what heart-led living feels like. For now, all you need to do is notice the shift and how it feels different.

[00:11:01] Now let's take a look at experimentation. Heart-led living is a continuous journey of discovery. And a fun way to embark on this journey is through experimentation, a process of trying new things in a safe, exploratory way.

Start small with incremental shifts in your daily routine to see how they feel. And if they resonate, reflect and modify as needed. Over time, you'll have an approach that's custom-made just for you.

Here's how experimentation can help you transition from living from the head to the heart:

1. **Learn by doing.** The heart learns through experience. So the best way to see what new practices, activities and opportunities fulfill your heart's true desires is by trying. This approach is also how buried passions are discovered.
2. **Gather intel.** Experimenting is a great way to gather evidence of how you're connecting with your intuition. When something works well, you'll know you're on the right path. And if something doesn't work as intended, you can adjust and try again. What did you learn as a result?



3. **Change the equation.** Instead of relying on data and logic to make decisions, try asking this question: “How does this decision make me feel and why?” Taken a step further, as you imagine the possible outcomes of the choice, what's the emotional impact?
4. **Reframe fear.** At some point in this journey, fear will inevitably make itself known as you step out of the comfort zone of your logical mind. Acknowledge that it surfaced and view it as an opportunity for learning and growth. You can also explore that feeling a bit more. Is it truly fear or are you feeling anticipation or excitement for what's ahead?

Have fun with experimentation. It's the bridge to living a heart-centered life, inviting you to try new things and integrate the learnings.

[00:13:28] Which leads us to our last topic: trust. To fully transition to heart-led living, you'll need to develop a trusting relationship with your intuition.

We've talked about how to build your self-awareness and how to experiment, but the only way to rely on your inner guidance is to trust it. And there are two parts: trust in your intuition and trust in yourself. Let's take a look at each:

- **Trust in intuition.** It's easy to follow the whispers when they make sense, but difficult when there's no clear logic. The trust comes in recognizing you're being led by your emotional response, such as feelings of peace or expansiveness, along with the knowing that it's the right thing for you.
- **Trust in yourself.** Confidence comes in following your inner guidance, even when it runs counter to expectations or societal norms. Start small



but know the more you take responsibility for your own well-being by following your heart, the more you'll be able to embrace the unknown and take your life to heights that you can't logically imagine.

These two elements of trust work together to create your unique inner compass that will guide you toward a meaningful, passionate life where you release logical outcomes and trust the journey as it unfolds. When you can do this on a regular basis, you invite unexpected opportunities to emerge, utilizing the stillness for acceleration.

[00:15:22] As we bring this episode to a close, I'd like you to consider how you can begin to listen to your inner knowing. Experiment with these three suggestions:

1. Find 5 or 10 minutes each morning for quiet contemplation, where you can just listen and see what surfaces for you.
2. When facing a decision, connect with your heart space and see how the various outcomes would feel.
3. Note the surprising whispers, especially ones that feel curious, unconventional or exciting.

While we focused a lot on connecting with the heart in this episode, it's the conversation between your head and heart that creates a balanced life. Working with your self-awareness, experimenting and trusting will ensure that conversation is healthy and supportive, and your journey unfolds at the right pace for you.



I'll leave you today with the words attributed to Steve Jobs:

"Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary."

Enjoy the experimentation and let me know how it goes. You can always reach me at hello@athenawellness.com.

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

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[00:17:07] 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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