



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 120 – How to Recalibrate Your Habits
March 9, 2022

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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 to Episode 120. Thanks so much for joining me for the shortened Wellness Wednesday episode, a little midweek boost to help keep your Warrior Vibe high.

I've always been a creature of habit, especially in times of upheaval, routine has a calming effect on me. This was apparent two years ago. I had retired from my corporate job in November of 2019 and was focused on getting my first book published in the spring of 2020, along with planning a North American book tour that summer, in my new conversion van.

I had just completed the audiobook recording in a studio in Manhattan when two days later, the entire tri-state area where I lived went into lockdown. Enter the Coronavirus pandemic.

Given that my life had been in professional and personal flux before lockdown, I immediately reverted to what was familiar. I knew I needed some structure to help me through the month of March. So I created a simple spreadsheet called High Vibe Log 2020 that included columns with the date, day and 11 practices I felt would support me during that time.



I selected practices to help me keep my spirit elevated and they included: journaling, meditating, exercising, eating well, getting outside, working on my new business, learning something new, limiting the news, getting quality sleep, connecting with other humans, and clearing some old clutter.

I printed out the spreadsheet on March 18 and kept it by my bed. Each evening I would write in each of the 11 boxes, whether it was green, meaning I did it, yellow, I fell a bit short, or red, I didn't do it. And each week I would update the color coding on the electronic version.

Seeing the mostly green spreadsheet made me feel good about the week, even though everything else felt strange and unfamiliar. It also helped me hone in on some things that weren't helping me and make related positive changes. When April arrived and we were still in lockdown, I created a spreadsheet for April and added a 12th column labeled Joy. With no end in sight, I felt adding one thing I truly enjoyed each day would continue to keep my spirit high.

I kept up this process until mid-June, when the color coding was basically all green. We were still in lockdown, but as a result of keeping that spreadsheet, I had created positive new habits and a new life routine during those unusual times.

But life is changing once again and I recently realized that what supported me throughout these last two years will not support me going forward. And that's what we'll be exploring today. I'll walk you through a simple exercise I recently created to help recalibrate your habits.

[00:03:45] Kathy: This past weekend, I was participating in a virtual workshop and had a realization. I had my notebook on my lap and without realizing it, I wrote this phrase: "My current habits are not aligning with who I want to become."

That surprised me because I've always aligned my habits with the intended outcome in mind. So I created a little exercise for myself that you might want to try.



On a sheet of paper or in your notebook, draw a line down the center of the page. At the top, write these headings: What Supports My Life Direction, over the left-hand column and What Detracts From My Life Direction, over the right-hand column.

When I did this exercise, I had a clear idea of what my life direction looked like. If you need to, take some time to get some clarity for yourself, maybe even writing a sentence or two at the top of the notebook page.

Now it's time to start brainstorming. Begin to list the habits, activities and experiences that move you toward the life you're envisioning for yourself or move you away from it. The supportive habits should be focused on things that you can do for yourself, by yourself and to nurture yourself, whether you're able to do them at the moment or not. The list of what detracts you from doing those things will be broader and include current personal and professional expectations and obligations, both yours and others.

The whole brainstorming exercise should take no more than five minutes. We're looking for the low hanging fruit here, you can always go back and add more items whenever you'd like.

[00:05:39] Kathy: Here's my brainstorming list in no particular order. First, What Supports Me: writing, CrossFit, running, daily walks, my closest relationships, preparing and enjoying healthy food, taking photos, a clean and orderly home, nature, art, poetry, story, spiritual connection, road tripping, solitude, deep conversation, deep connection, learning something new, disconnecting from tech, simplicity.

And here's What Detracts: a packed schedule of obligations and commitments, overdoing anything, whether it be eating, drinking or working, small talk, ongoing media feeds of any kind, the expectation for a quick reply, nonstop news updates,



tech notifications, crowds, in-person networking events and traveling, aside from the road tripping.

As I reviewed my lists, I was relieved that I was doing many of the things on the left-hand side of the sheet. And so my focus is on what detracts, because those are the easiest habits to form and sometimes they even form by default.

For example, I can easily fall into a constant stream of podcasts, audiobooks, news or music. And it can leave me mentally spent by the end of the day. So I'm mindful now to limit background noise. I have similar strategies to address the other items in the detracts column. And I'll continue to review and refine the list as the year unfolds.

As we wind down, perhaps this is a good time for you to be mindful of what habits will support you going forward. How do you want to continue to spend your time or do you need to change the way you're spending your time? What should you keep? What should you let go? Do you need more structure or more flexibility? More social time or quiet time? Is it a life season where you're focusing on others or can you carve out time for an activity that's just for you?

Mix and match and create a hybrid of habits that feel right for you today and will also support your future growth. You may be surprised that the things that used to relieve stress or energize you no longer do. And I hope you have fun exploring new habits that support you and new activities that light you up.

[00:07:50] 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.



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Until next time, be well!

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[00:08:52] [END OF AUDIO]