



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 152 – Vancast: The Importance of Gathering
September 28, 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: Today's episode is brought to you by The Athena Wellness Academy, your resource for wholehearted living.

The Academy's featured offering is an online course called, *From 'Type A' to 'Type Be,' How to Mindfully Descend the Corporate Ladder and Invite What's Next*. This course is perfect for you if you're contemplating or navigating a professional transition, and it's available as a self study or with a small cohort of students facilitated by me, Kathy Robinson.

To learn more, I invite you to go to [AthenaWellnessAcademy.teachable.com](https://www.athenawellness.com) or click on the link in the show notes.



[00:01:21] Kathy: Hello and welcome. 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 little 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, that's sitting on my back deck, enjoying a warm fall day in the northeastern part of the United States.

What I'd like to share this morning is the positive impact of a recent family gathering. The catalyst for this get together was a funeral that I attended back in May, when a cousin of my mom's passed. He was 85 and he was a treasured relative.

When I uploaded the pictures to the funeral parlor's website in preparation for his service, I smiled recalling all the good times these cousins shared in their later years, whether on vacation or at each other's homes. But then I was struck that almost all of the members of the generation that preceded me, including my mom, have passed. Somehow the kids became the elders.

And I got to see these "kids" - all of my second cousins from Brooklyn - when I attended that May funeral. I was amazed at how easily conversation flowed with people I hadn't seen in a long time. And I vowed that we'd see each other before the next wake.



[00:03:07]: That reunion happened last week. I invited 25 descendants of our great-grandmother, Maria. Maria arrived in this country through Ellis Island in 1903 as a soon-to-be wed teenager. The heartbeat of existence in those days was one square block in Brooklyn, where Maria's children raised their families - our parents. When I was growing up, we cousins made the weekly trip from New Jersey, Staten Island and Long Island to visit.

Last weekend, this clan of cousins and second cousins gathered, bound by our Brooklyn heritage. Many of them can remember when I was born. We all shared collective memories of the neighborhood, the church, the smell of my grandmother's cooking, how we played in the apartment hallway, and ate at the kids table in the kitchen. These are things that no one else knows. And the foundation that made us the adults we are today.

[00:04:15]: By all accounts, the gathering was a success. And I measure this by the hoarse voice and sore stomach muscles I had the day after - the result of spirited conversation and side splitting laughter, two important components of wellness, as far as I'm concerned. But there was also a sense of rejuvenation that lasted long into the week, emanating from genuine connection and belonging that comes from being in the community of our extended village.

We share a humble family lineage - great-grandparents who immigrated from Italy, grandparents who lived through the Great Depression and gave birth to the Greatest Generation, our parents, who wanted nothing more for their kids - us - than to live the American dream, meaning that we would have opportunity to



enjoy a higher standard of living than they did, something we each managed to do in our own ways.

What our family gave us was a legacy of love, hard honest work, and good-heartedness, instilled in roots that run deep to this day, through our growing family tree of next generations. And there's no doubt in my mind that as we were kicking up our heels, our ancestors were smiling down at us, proud of a job well done. And reminding us that it's our turn to tend the legacy.

So here's my takeaway for you this morning. How might you be able to find a light-hearted way to reconnect with those you haven't seen in a while, to share old stories and to make new memories? It doesn't have to be fancy. My gathering was a picnic with a three foot hero and a cooler of beer. The emphasis should be on having fun.

And if you can, perhaps find ways to include the younger generations, so they have a better understanding of where they came from. That's something that I hope to do next year when we gather again.

[00:06:27]: Maybe it's just a function of age, but the old adage is true - time is precious. When I look back at the last time our family had a reunion, it was 2006. So many of our elders from that gathering are no longer here. And we have the hindsight now to appreciate what that time together meant.

Think of it as an investment - an investment in your family, no matter how big or small, no matter its makeup, however you define your family. Family and friends,



whether by bloodline, or those you love unconditionally. Schedule some quality time with them today. Someday in the future, you'll be so glad you did.

[00:07:15] 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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[00:08:18] [END OF AUDIO]