

Ep #3: The Body Compass



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

C. René Washington

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"The body truth goes ahead of the mind lie." - A yogi.

Welcome to Midlife Woman Redefined, a podcast for women near retirement who are ready to step into a new chapter of freedom, travel, and fulfillment. If you're ready to focus on figuring out who you are and what you really want, this is the place for you. Here's your host, master certified life coach, travel addict, and midlife maven, Rene Washington.

Hello out there in podcast land. Welcome to episode three of Midlife Woman Redefined, the show for women who are ready to let shit go, flip the script, and begin living life in redefined purpose and passion. I'm your host, C. Rene Washington, your midlife maven and a woman who's committed to moving through this best life chapter freely, deeply, and passionately and helping as many women as possible do the same.

If you listened to episode one, I shared my foundational framework for living the life you want. It's based on three questions that I walk my clients through to get clarity and take action. I am all about taking action. The questions are who am I, what do I want, how do I get it.

I went through the steps of connecting you to your who-am-I. Be sure you go back and listen to that episode if you missed it. You just go to crenecoach.com/2 for episode two. That's crenecoach.com/2 because we're building layers here. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that until you know who you are, you can't really know what you want. It just doesn't work out.

Next week, I'll take you through the what-do-I-want. Today, I'm sharing my favorite coaching tool for making great decisions. The body compass. But first, it's time to celebrate. This is the part of the show when we pause to celebrate a personal accomplishment, a win, or a, "Yes, I did that thing." Remember, this is about you so it's a personal "yes, I did that thing." Not something someone else did. Something you did.

What am I celebrating? My first TV appearance. Today I was on a local general interest show called Talk of Alabama to promote this podcast. And I'm telling you, no joke, for years I have been watching this show daily, and

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every day I watch it I say, "I could be on that show," but I didn't do anything about it.

This is why I'm here on this podcast, women, because I know that there is something that has been pricking at you that you have been wanting to do, and I'm showing up here to tell you, do it. Do it. So I did the appearance. I can't even tell you what I said, but I must have done well because the host has asked me to come back next month. I'm so excited.

So what are you celebrating? It could be something as simple as saying yes to taking the time to catch up with an old friend, or having the courage to take that trip, to eat at that new restaurant solo when you couldn't find anyone to do it with you.

You know how we keep ourselves from things because we can't find a friend to do it with us or we can't get our spouse to do it with us? Let that shit go. Do the thing. Whatever you're celebrating, take a moment to honor yourself for having done it.

Okay, back to the body compass. My life coaching certification is from the phenomenal psychologist and life coach Martha Beck's life coaching school. If you're not familiar with Dr. Martha Beck, she has many excellent highly recommended books and she does the monthly coaching column in O magazine. She's called Oprah's life coach.

I learned so many things from Dr. Beck, and my favorite tool is the body compass. If you're familiar with the principle of opportunity cost, then you know that it's the loss of potential gain from other alternatives when one alternative is chosen. In other words, it's the pain of indecision because you fear making the wrong choice.

So you know how we get caught up in analysis paralysis, perfectionism, or even self-sabotage so that you don't make a decision and you end up choosing an option by default. You know how we do? Don't want to make a mistake. I tell my clients all the time, a decision is just a decision. It's not a life sentence. But we act like it is, don't we?

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Course correct. As long as nobody died, you can change. You can course correct. You can take another turn. You can pivot. Dr. Beck says that when you live in indecision, you become an opportunity miser, and that just as money misers hoard their wealth, sit on all their money, living as if they were poor even when they're rich, opportunity misers hoard their freedom to choose and end up becoming prisoners of indecision.

Now, I don't know about you. I have done this so many times, but my number one guiding value is freedom and when I realized how stuck this was keeping me, I was so glad to tap into this tool. How do you break that indecision fever? I'm going to tell you through the body compass.

Now, many of us live in our brains. All of us do it in some shape, form, or fashion. We're programmed to do it. And while the brain is absolutely incredible, amazing, we don't have to live there to the exclusion of instinct because living exclusively in our brains can help us stay stuck in false fears and deciding to do the safe thing that ultimately becomes soul-sucking.

Learning how to listen to your body compass messaging in conjunction with your brain's messaging makes decision-making exponentially simpler and more accurate. And listen, you already know about body compass. You've experienced the power of body compass. You may call it intuition, gut feeling, instinct. I call it first right mind or spiritual GPS.

You know when something happens and something had been nudging at you but you ignored it and when you look back, you know that's what you should have done, you should have followed that internal nudging. That's what I call my first right mind. But whatever you call it, it's that inner knowing that can't be logically explained, that you regret not following when you do see to logic.

Now, I've been wanting to do a podcast for years and I allowed many iterations of fear, false evidence appearing real fear to keep me from actually doing it. I'm not smart enough, engaging enough, I hate my voice - I do hate my voice - the black women doing successful shows are much younger than me, all the excuses. Lizard thinking and shit I needed to let go and still, I dithered.

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In May, I was supposed to attend a live event connected to a business mastermind that I'm a member of led by badass business coach Rachel Rodgers. But I wasn't feeling attending. I hadn't hit the business goals that I set for myself, didn't want to show up there looking less than the other women who were attending, and stuff was literally falling apart in my house.

The ceiling in my closet fell in, the stairwell bannister broke, and I was thinking, these must be signs that I'm not supposed to go. I also had another trip planned that I did cancel without a second thought, but attending Rachel's event kept nudging me. Two days before the event, I checked the airfare and of course, the cost was prohibitive.

But something said check the one-way fare. I did, and it wasn't bad, plus the ticket I'd cancelled on the other trip more than covered it. A go sign? I wasn't sure. Maybe. I wanted it to be, but wasn't it crazy to buy a one-way ticket without knowing how I'd get back? Going just wouldn't leave me alone though. It would not leave me alone.

I booked the one-way fare and on day one of the conference, I was talking to these two women that had come and in the course of the conversation, one of them mentioned being from Chicago. And so I told them, I said, "You know, I flew through Chicago to get here." Now, I live in Birmingham, Alabama. I fly Southwest. My favorite airline, which I love for many reasons, but the thing I don't love about Southwest is that their flight routes can be bass-ackwards.

So flying from Birmingham North to Chicago, and then back southeast to Savannah, Georgia was kind of cray cray. As the women I was talking to, they thought the same thing. And so they said look, we came here from Atlanta, don't do that. Go back with us. Now, I didn't tell them I bought a one-way ticket. We were just talking.

And so she just volunteered, she said listen, when the conference is over, ride back with us to Atlanta. Now, bear with me because the serendipity of all of this will make sense to you in a minute. Atlanta is only two hours away from my city, and my husband said he'd come get me and because I

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was going to be arriving late at night, I decided to spend the night in Atlanta and let him pick me up the following morning.

I have a girlfriend who lives there, called, let her know that I would be in Atlanta, would she join me for breakfast. She said yes, and then she said, by the way, I'm going to Birmingham that day. So my husband didn't even have to come and get me. I rode back home with her, and the hotel ended up being free because of the points that I had.

So all of that happened because I said yes, not knowing what the end was going to be. And let me just tell you, that was the best business conference I've ever attended. We learned so much and we had so much fun. I would have been so mad at myself for missing it.

One of the presentations was on how to launch a podcast, and it wasn't so much what she said. It was that she was doing it. And I decided right then and there, so was I, and here I am. I honored my body compass. The decision to not go was based in fear. False fear of not being good enough. Then the self-sabotage of waiting until the last minute to decide to go and telling myself the lie that I couldn't afford it.

It wasn't that I couldn't afford it. It was that I didn't think I deserved to pay for it, that I wouldn't give myself permission to pay for it. But I've been operating intuitively a long time. Long enough to know that I ignore my body compass to my detriment. Are you ready to connect to your body compass?

If you're driving, pause the podcast here. The body compass process needs to be done in a quiet, distraction-free location where you can sit hands free with your feet on the ground. You're also going to need a notepad, a pen or pencil, and a timer. If you use your phone though, do silence it or put it on do not disturb so it doesn't break your concentration.

There are three rounds to the body compass. The first is a general focus, just connecting you to your body. Just getting you used to paying attention to the physical sensations that are just generally going on in your body. So when you're ready, I want you to sit with your feet grounded and your eyes

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closed. Take a few deep breaths in and out. And then I'm going to start moving you through your body and I want you to pay attention to any physical sensations you experience.

Okay, I'm about to start. Eyes closed. Feet grounded. So I want you to feel your feet on the ground, wiggle your toes, feel connected to the earth. And I'm moving you through your feet, up into your ankles, up into your calves, your shins, moving over your knees, into your thighs, moving from your thighs into the groin area. From your groin up into your stomach, moving from your stomach up over your breasts, into your chest, coming up into your neck, and moving around from your neck to the tops of your shoulders.

Moving down from your shoulders through your arms, moving through your upper arms, over your elbows, into your lower arms, into your wrists, your hands, into your fingers, wiggling your fingers. Then coming back through your hands into your wrists, up through your arms, lower arms, elbows, upper arms, moving back up into the shoulder area. And moving from the shoulder area down the top of your back, moving into the middle of your back into your lower back, into your butt.

Coming back up your butt, into your back, moving all the way up into your upper back, to the back of your neck, and from the back of your neck moving up over the top of your head. Coming down into your forehead, over your eyes, to the sides of your face, over your cheeks, over your nose, over your lips, into your chin. From your chin, down the front of your neck, back to the tops of your shoulders. Breathe. Open your eyes, and shake it off.

As you open your eyes, I want you to get your notepad and write down what you felt. Whatever physical sensations you felt. Tingling, pain, fluttering, anything physical. A muscle cramp. Whatever it was. Whatever sensation you felt, write it down. This is your general or neutral body compass and you want to remember how that feels.

Okay, I told you we have three focuses for the body compass. And for the second focus, you're going to do the second and the third focuses yourself.

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So you're going to take yourself through your body like I took you through it. Closing your eyes with your feet grounded, and this time I want you to concentrate on an unpleasant memory.

Now, not one so painful that it breaks you down but painful enough that thinking about it causes you discomfort. Okay perfectionists, don't worry about following the exact path that I did. You're just going to start in your feet and move yourself up through your body with your eyes closed, focused only on that negative thought.

So just move yourself through your entire body. Set your timer for two minutes and then pause this recording because I'm going to be continuing to speak and I don't want you to break your concentration. So set the timer for two minutes, pause this recording while you're doing it, and then start moving yourself through your body, focused on the negative thought.

Okay, pause now. Again, write down the physical sensations you experienced. Did you feel any heaviness? Any pain? Any tingling? And look, if you didn't feel anything, that's okay. This isn't a test. Feeling nothing is information too. You may be so disconnected from yourself that you're numb. Document honestly. It's all information.

Name your negative body compass as a tag for recognizing it when it shows up. You can name it whatever you want that will help you remember when something happens and you experience these feelings, it will remind you of how to recognize that this is not feeling so good for you. So you might call it heavy chest, twitching toe, whatever resonates for you.

For the final focus, you're going to do the same thing but this time, you're focusing on a happy memory. We're going to end on a good note. Something that brought you joy. Set your timer again for two minutes, and when I say pause, pause the recording and go through the final focus of thinking on a really happy memory.

Okay, pause and start now. Are you back? How did the happy memory impact your body? Jot those sensations down too. Maybe it was a flutteriness, a lightness, a beam, whatever it was, write it down. And name that

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happy body compass. So I hope that you really were able to connect to this. This is one of the most powerful things that I do with my clients and I'm telling you, if you look into your body compass, you will make better decisions.

We hold a lot of internal power that we just sit on, that we're afraid to tap into. But you now have a lot more information about how experiences, situations, opportunities are really impacting you, and how to make decisions from the inside out.

For example, if you're dating and your best friend introduces you to someone who sounds perfect on paper, but when you meet them your negative body compass starts going off, pay attention to that. That person may be saying all the right things. Your friend may be so excited. But don't ignore your inner compass.

It could be warning you against impending danger. Can you say Dateline segment? Or it could just be a total waste of your time. Either way, do you pass go. The wonderful thing about body compass is that the more you use it, the more decision confident you become. You trust your inner wisdom that's been waiting on you to tap into it.

Your brain and body compass become more in sync and why wouldn't you want that? Again, this probably is the most powerful tool that I use and it's taught me how to operate intuitively probably 98% of the time. I can change a decision at the zero hour. I'm good with that now because I've learned to trust myself and you can learn to trust yourself.

Alright, this wraps episode three of Midlife Woman Redefined. If your body compass is telling you to leave me a five-star review, don't ignore it. It would be truly great though if you would take a few minutes to rate and review about the Midlife Woman Redefined. This helps the show become discoverable, which helps me continue to show up helping you and many more women.

To rate and review, iPhone users, go to the Apple Podcast app, and Android phone users will go to the iTunes app on your computer. Again, if

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you're like me and not quite so tech savvy, then I'm sure there's somebody around you who is. Get them to help you. Learn how to do this, and don't forget to hit the subscribe button so you never miss an episode.

I'm providing a little incentive as I've been talking about for you helping me kick off this podcast. I'm giving away five \$100 Amazon gift cards. Yes, five \$100 Amazon gift cards. So rate and review to get in the drawing. To get the directions for rating, reviewing, and entering the drawing, go to crenecoach.com/podcastlaunch. That's crenecoach.com/podcastlaunch.

The link is provided in the show notes. Every week I'm coming back sharing tips, resources, tools and real-life examples on how to make your dream life a reality. We can do this. You can do this. Remember, living well is the only option.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of Midlife Woman Redefined. If you're ready to learn more and reclaim your time, head over to crenecoach.com.