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Introducing Cynthia Meyer 00:55

*Unless we seek out our oldest and dearest friends, my wife and I spend most of our time as the oldest people in the room - at work, socially, musically, virtually - pretty much everywhere. When it's just us, she's still the oldest in the room. At the end/beginning of the decade, I hear people talking about their goals, their vision for 2020 or 2021 - a list of what they're determined to accomplish, habits to change, new projects or careers. I think my life is wonderful; I want to maintain. Maybe because I have secondary progressive multiple sclerosis and maintaining is its own project. My wife says it's because we're old. I'd rather think that we're seasoned. But old, seasoned - doesn't matter. We're in a new phase of life. We've done most of what we're going to do. I wanted to be a good man to a good woman and raise sons in love with strong partners being great dads. Voila. Mission accomplished. It's all gravy now. People ask, are you retired? My reply is, I'm no longer a boss or an employee. Retired feels like marbles in my mouth. I know you're shocked that I'm crazy busy. Consulting, advising, mentoring, podcasting, music-making, being an Opa, walking, stretching, strengthening. But all on my terms. I'm learning that two-letter word - NO. Sort of. Perhaps I'm semi-retired. My friend, Cynthia Meyer makes a business of these gravy years - **Second Wind Movement**. She talks about the 5 Rings of Retirement: Growth, Health, Finance, Community, Giving Back.*

**Health Hats:** Cynthia, thank you so much for joining me on embarrassingly short notice. I was going to do an on mic episode without an interview. I started writing it, and there you were. And I think this would be totally stupid not to call you and see, *oh, maybe she could talk*.

**Cynthia Meyer:** It's my pleasure to connect with you again. It's been a while.

**Health Hats:** I wanted to talk to you about your Second Wind Movement. This whole idea of how different life is this stage. My wife and I were having this conversation last week and the conversation was we're so often the oldest people in the room almost everywhere we go. People talk about what they're going to do in 2020 or 2021. What are they going to change, what are their new things? I keep thinking, I just want to keep doing what I'm doing. I don't have big plans for the future. And she said, honey, we're old.

**Cynthia Meyer:** You're babies, you two. You're living such a robust life right now, which is awesome.

**Health Hats:** We are. We're very fortunate. When we met, you were Director of Marketing. You were well into your career, and then you decided to make this change - a bold move. What was that about?

**Cynthia Meyer:** I had been doing marketing for 15 plus years. I met you as a marketer. And so the skill set was there. I had this passion for pursuing and serving a different audience. Throughout my career, I had served several different industries, several different products and several different audiences. I have always had this inclination to serve seniors. So, the bold move was to do that finally. And what I learned from marketing was a mix of traditional and digital tactics. The last five years or so were basically digital. And so what I learned was the very powerful thing of content marketing. And so that's a whole bunch of research and focusing on serving your audience in the form of blog articles. That worked well for the companies that I had worked for in recent years. That's what I wanted to do for this audience - seniors. So, I started by researching and writing articles. Predominantly, I was into Alzheimer's and Alzheimer's prevention. It runs in my family. The more I researched, I found it touches one in three of us at the end of our life. It impacts a lot of people. What I found most interesting were the preventative measures. My heart is with this audience. Growing up, I had played music, the violin in a lot of orchestras and string quartets, but also some volunteer work in retirement homes. That stuck with me, seeing elderly folks waiting out the rest of their lives. I started by writing articles and serving the audience, and then it turned into a more formal thing. I created an online course and I focus on educating the audience and giving them tactical tools and tips on how to live a robust life like yourself. I teach a method that's based on the five rings of retirement and breaking it down into micro-steps. That's how it started. Along the way, I picked up my life coach certification to compliment someone going through this course. I do one on one coaching and because everyone's individual purpose or calling or what they want out of the retirement years or their golden years is so individualized.

**Health Hats:** I'm a member of your Facebook community. It seems like every week you're welcoming three to five people steadily.

**Cynthia Meyer:** It's steady; it's organic. I'm a little busy. I just had a second baby, so I'm very thankful that's happening. It's finding the time to research the topics that people are interested in and helping them find solutions and tactical ways to live more purposeful retirement years.

**Health Hats:** What are the themes of interest to what people?

Finding purpose in retirement 08:00

**Cynthia Meyer:** First and foremost is purpose. People tend to talk about needing help because we're trained by society to live in three big linear chunks of life stages: education, zero through 20, then work and family, the bulk of your life, then you supposedly reach the finish line. This is the life of leisure. An antiquated way of looking at it. [Dr. Ken Dychtwald of Age Wave](#) did the research. It's more cyclical where there's technology at your fingertips and so many more opportunities. You can pepper education throughout the rest of your life as you are an avid student of so many technologies and so many different topics and so many organizations. And then there's the work and family sporadically spread throughout the rest of your life. Same with leisure. You could have the years of leisure right after college and to Europe backpacking. We're ready to retire, let's chill. That's so not the case and so not healthy. Living life stagnant. There are crazy stats on the rise like Alzheimer's, depression and loneliness among

the elderly and nursing home occupants. Oh my gosh, the number of TV hours the elderly watch per week is astounding - over 40 hours a week. We need to embrace the new way.

**Health Hats:** I resist thinking about retirement. I'm not retired. I'm certainly not an employee or a boss. I'm thankful for that. But I'm so busy that retirement seems like leisure. There's nothing wrong with leisure. But I'm busy. I have a million projects and some paying gigs and some not paying gigs and music and podcasting and advocacy work. I've been trying on I'm semiretired because that's not an employee or a boss. But the thing that I keep coming back to as I'm pulling people together to collaborate is that I don't want to run anything anymore. Maybe that's not being an employee or a boss, but I don't want to run anything. I don't want to run a business. Yet I do have a business. I have a consulting practice.

**Cynthia Meyer:** I'd say you're running this podcast. The last time we spoke, you were considering it.

**Health Hats:** This will be my 53rd or 54th podcast.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Yeah. Crazy. Big endeavor.

**Health Hats:** Yes, you're right. Okay, maybe my not wanting to run anything is also not working for me as a label.

**Cynthia Meyer:** In a traditional sense, you don't want to run anything. You don't want to run a team of people who clock in and out.

**Health Hats:** I don't. I want to be able to say no. It's work just maintaining my health. And so I need time for that. And I play music. I just started playing in a Latin band. So now I'm playing in two different bands. I need time for all that stuff.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Are you good at saying no?

**Health Hats:** No, not really.

**Cynthia Meyer:** I've known you to be tempted by every project that you were interested in, in which there are many. Many passions.

**Health Hats:** I do. I'm not that good at it.

**Cynthia Meyer:** How do you squeeze it in? The last time we spoke, you had trouble squeezing in music lessons, one band.

Micro-stepping with mini-goals 12:53

**Health Hats:** How do I do it? I need to let my readers and listeners know that you and I have had several sessions together. Not only do I belong to your Second Wind Movement, but I also have taken advantage of your life coaching skills. One of the things that you've talked about with me - not an original thought, but an important thought - is microtasks. That's my method. Pretty much everything that I'm doing I give a little bit of time. I give it a little bit of regular time. Probably the most exciting thing that I'm doing these days is podcasting. And it's not just because podcasting is a craft and an art and it's fun; it's community. I'm part of an international community of podcasters. One of the things that we do that's a different way of saying your micro... What is it that you call it?

**Cynthia Meyer:** Micro stepping with mini-goals.

**Health Hats:** Micro stepping with mini-goals. Between 15 and 30 of us worldwide, do something called 60 seconds a day. We post an audio clip. When I say 60 seconds a day, I mean that I do it four or five times a week. And I do a little audio like this, but it's only 60 seconds. Then I post it to an online community, and I respond to other people's 60-second posts. People are doing different things: they're trying out new technology, figuring out a storyline, working on different facets of podcast production. All in 60 seconds a day. We're finding that this 60 seconds a day is a key amount of time. It's the every day of your micro-stepping. For example, music. Somebody came to me and said, "we need a bari sax player in our Latin band." I've never played Latin. Why would I say yes? So I said, no

**Cynthia Meyer:** Good practice.

**Health Hats:** But then I thought, "I've always wanted to be part of a horn section." There was an alto Sax, and a trombone, and a trumpet. It's a nine-piece group where I'm one of four horns. I thought, as long as they don't kick me out because I don't know what the heck I'm doing. All I can do is put in the time. I play music about an hour a day, probably six days a week, and now I'm with two bands. But it's still the same stuff. It's just learning music theory and improv and the tunes – micro-steps. Whatever you call it, whether it's 60 seconds a day, or micro-steps is key. When I first started talking to you, it was music and it also an exercise program because I have MS. When I talked with you more than a year ago, we started talking about even more than podcasts.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Over fifty-four episodes ago.

**Health Hats:** I have my exercise routine. I was doing two pushups per session, and now I can do 17. That's from every other day, putting in the half-hour, 45 minutes of exercise, and my balance routine. So I think there's a lot to that.

**Cynthia Meyer:** I think the reason why it works is that we're designed as humans to procrastinate and just kind of stay in our comfort zones. You have all these great concepts that you want to pursue. But the act of doing it, the physical act of getting up to do it is so difficult because we're designed to chill, reserve our energy, save it for fight or flight in case something in the wild is chasing us. That doesn't apply to today's modern world. Our brain is designed to reserve our energy. Our prefrontal cortex doesn't get triggered until we actively decide to do something. The reason it takes us so much effort to do something like practice every day until it's an ingrained habit is that it's so different. It takes extra exertion, extra energy. So if you start with one day and you do five minutes. And then the next day you do five minutes again, and the next day you do six minutes. That's more important than doing a whole 70 minutes that whole week because you're getting into the habit of just acting, and then it becomes a habit and then you build upon that habit and you no longer have to make that decision actively.

**Health Hats:** You're creating inertia.

**Cynthia Meyer:** You're creating inertia. You're turning it into a habit. That becomes less cumbersome, the more it becomes a habit.

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Caregivers and the Second Wind Movement 20:29

**Health Hats:** I wanted to ask you something totally different. There's a significant proportion of people who are in this second wind of their lives that are caregivers for their partner, for a parent who's even older or sometimes for their kids. Are people who are dealing with that coming into your circle?

**Cynthia Meyer:** They're not predominantly coming into my circle because they're so focused on serving other people - being a caregiver. I do have one student who, for the majority of her life, was a caregiver to her son, who developed paraplegia in his freshman year of college. That was 26 years or so that she was the caregiver to her son and he unexpectedly passed. She had planned to do that for the rest of her life. They would both enter the retirement home together and she would still serve as his caregiver. But suddenly, he was gone, and she had no idea who her identity was outside of being her son's caregiver. Because she lacked that clarity, she came into my course and we were able to work through a purpose for her and for her to find new joy. The tactic we used is what we're talking about. I called the five rings of retirement cause five different categories are making up a fulfilling retirement lifestyle. The process is micro-stepping with mini-goals.

Five Rings of Retirement 22:33

**Health Hats:** What are those five categories?

**Cynthia Meyer:** It's growth, keeping your neuro-plasticity and your mind stimulated so that your brain doesn't go to mush, constantly challenging yourself and that you're fulfilled. And community, which is socializing. Health, of course, is physical, mental, and emotional. Then giving back - leaving that sense of legacy or volunteerism. The finance part I don't focus on because so much of that industry focuses on retirees. So out of those five categories, you zero in on one. From there, you make out a whole huge list of micro mini-goals. And then from there, you break it down even more into micro-steps and you commit to one micro-step every day until you reached that mini-goal. If your micro-step is too big to complete that day, you break it down even more. So, we did that with my student and she was able to it. Actually it was a huge, not a mini-goal. She moved out of her house and sold her house and relocated.

**Health Hats:** That's a big goal.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Huge. But she's going to continue. Once she completes that goal she'll work on another mini-goal until that category feels good. I also gauge energy levels. Maybe you're a caretaker, and you don't have the time that my student did to dedicate it to just yourself. Okay, now it's my time. You use

the same concept, break it down into micro-steps and mini-goals. They could have done it, but they're so dedicated and consumed to this one thing that their life balance is out of whack. I would encourage them to look at those other four phases of their life. I'm assuming that if you're a caregiver, you're definitely giving back.

**Health Hats:** So it's finding the balance.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Checking your energy level - is something missing? I'm feeling off. What is it? I'm not happy or fulfilled. Then using this as a framework and basing your energy level on that. Then physically creating mini-goals and then breaking it down into micro-steps and turning it into action steps.

Peer communities in Second Wind 25:02

**Health Hats:** You have your courses, your website, your life coaching. Are there peer communities as part of this?

**Cynthia Meyer:** Yes. There's a group, the VIP group, anyone who wants more information in general, articles and concepts like that. But then there's also an exclusive group for students.

**Health Hats:** That's where people can be supportive of each other as they're taking their micro-steps. Thank you very much.

**Cynthia Meyer:** Yes, thank you. So great connecting again.

Reflections 26:37

Ok. We're still babies. It's all relative. Micro-stepping and mini-goals aren't only for retirees. Works for us babies, too. What mini-goals can I set for this new year? Saying no? Stop adding on more things? No, why would I do that? I enjoy this busy life. From my vantage point, I do have some leisure time. I'm on or I'm off. When I'm on it's intensely on. A mini-goals has been to get ahead one podcast episode. The next episode is almost ready to go. Have a wonderful New Year, dear reader, dear listener.