

Ep 206. Your Relationship with Your Life



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 206, Your Relationship with Your Life.

This podcast is for people who know that living an extraordinary life is not easy or comfortable. It's so much better than that. This is *Better Than Happy*, and I'm your host, Jody Moore.

Hey there, how's everyone doing today? I hope you're having a fun summer. My kids and I, yesterday, went on a little excursion. The McDonalds Happy Meal toy right now is from Toy Story 4 and you get all these little individual characters and they each come with a little piece that they stand on and do some kind of trick on. But if you collect all 10 pieces and you put them all together, they build an RV.

And as of the day I'm recording this, Toy Story 4 isn't even out yet, so we're not really sure what the RV's role is in the story, but anyway, my kids got excited about collecting the pieces and I said, well let's just go on a scavenger hunt. Let's go to all the McDonalds and we'll just buy Happy Meal toys because – did you know you can do that, by the way? You can just buy the toy; \$1.79. Just tell them, "I just want a toy, no food."

So anyway, we thought, let's go see if we can find them all so we can build the RV. And it took us a few hours. It took us seven McDonalds, but we did it. We found every one for two of my kids. The third kid that was with us, she's little, she didn't really care. So the two that cared, we were able to get all the pieces for and now they can build their RV. And that was so much fun. So if you're looking for a fun summer activity, go on a McDonalds scavenger hunt; highly recommend, good times.

Right, we're going to talk about your relationship with your life today. Now, those of you who have not heard me talk about relationships for a minute, I've got to back it up and explain what a relationship even is. I hope some of you know this. If you're in Be Bold, I hope you know the answer to this question; what is a relationship? But if not, I'm going to remind you now. And for those of you who aren't in there, let me give you the two-minute

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version of what we study all month in Be Bold, which is that your relationship is how you think about someone else.

That's all it is. A relationship isn't a tangible thing. You can't touch it, taste it, feel it. We can't measure it. We can't see it. We can't all agree on what it is even necessarily. Even you, if we're talking about your relationship with one other person, you may think the relationship is one way and that other person may think it's a totally different way because a relationship just exists in your mind. It's the story you tell yourself.

When somebody leaves your house and goes to school or to work, it doesn't mean your relationship ends because they're not there. You still have a story that you tell yourself about them and a way that you think about them. And when somebody dies, your relationship doesn't end.

Sometimes, when people leave our presence, our relationships get a lot better because it becomes easier for us to think a different story; a more living, kind, peaceful, happy story. So your relationship with another person is the story you tell yourself. And your relationship with your life is no different.

Now, we tend to not think this. We think, well, our relationship is me and how I show up and it's them and how they show up and how they treat me and how they think about me. That's not true at all. Your relationship is only the story you tell about them. And sometimes, when they treat you in certain ways or talk to you in certain ways then it causes you to think differently about them or think differently about yourself in relation to them if you don't know how to manage your brain, or sometimes you just might choose to think in a way that makes you feel negative. But it's still all happening in your head.

And you also don't affect those other people, except for the way that you choose to think about it. So, you are somebody else's neutral circumstance. The way you behave, the things you say, the things that you do, the only thing that affects them is the story that they believe about you and the story they believe about themselves in relationship to you.

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So that was, like, five minutes of what we spend all month long really understanding and really working on when we work on relationships in Be Bold. It's super powerful work. But today, I want to talk about your relationship with your life.

Did you know that you have a relationship with your life? Do you think about it that way? And do you think about your relationship with your life the same way you think about your relationship to other people? Odds are, if you tend to think that your life is hard, your life is unfair, your life is not easy, your life is not turning out how it was supposed to, then you're going to have a negative relationship with your life.

Now, there are many, many parts of your life, and we're going to dissect each of them for just a minute. But I want you to think about not just the people in your life but your life overall in all these other ways. And I want you to ask yourself, do I choose how I want to think about it, or do I just listen to my brain and believe what my brain tells me?

I don't recommend the latter. I recommend that you choose intentionally how you want to think about your life. I'm going to give you some of my own examples, and this is work that I'm doing ongoing as well. It doesn't mean that I'm perfect at this, by any means. But after I record this podcast episode, I'm going to be hopping online to do an episode with Brooke Castillo.

She invited me to come on her podcast, The Life Coach School Podcast. And I was kind of just trying to mentally prepare this morning for that call. And I thought, I know Brooke's going to ask me how everything's going, because she's a caring person and she'll ask me that, "How's it going in your business? How's your family? How are your mom and dad? How is your mom's health?"

I'm like, she's going to ask me these questions. And not just for the sake of answering Brooke, but for my own self-coaching, how do I want to answer those questions? How do I want to think about those things? Specifically, I

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decided, how do I want to answer that question for myself? How are my parents? How's everything going with them?

Here's the way I choose to answer it; it's magical. This is a magical time that I never would have created, had I been the creator, I never would have predicted, and there are many parts of it that are challenging that I still would change if I had the power to change them. This is a magical time. The time I get to spend with them, the way I feel about them, the conversations I'm having with them, the way I view them, the way I believe they view me, it is magical.

So, I can tell it that way. I could also tell the story; my mom still doesn't feel good a lot of the time. She's still in a lot of pain. It's really frustrating, it's really hard to see. And that would be equally true, but I get to tell the story however I want.

Let's talk about some different areas of your life and the stories you might be believing, the thoughts you might be having about them. Let's start with your home. Did you know that you have a relationship with your home, wherever you live, whether you've bought your house or you're renting or you're living with your parents, or wherever you are?

You have a home, most of you – I'm assuming if you're listening to this podcast – have a place where you live and you have a relationship with it. How do you think about your home? Because if you think thoughts like, "My home is just not big enough, it's not good enough, it's not pretty enough, it's never clean enough, it's always a mess. As soon as I clean it, it gets messy again. It doesn't look quite right. It's not as pretty as I wish it was. It's not as put-together." If you think a lot of negative thoughts about your home, that is going to impact your ability to take care of your home. It's not very exciting and motivating to take care of a home you don't love.

And I like to think about, listen, my home does such a good job taking care of me. Why would I want to beat it up? I don't care what my home looks like. I've lived in all kinds of homes, even just in my 14 years that I've been

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married, we've lived in all kinds of homes. We live in a nice home now, but we haven't always lived in a home this nice.

We lived in a less-than 1000 square-foot apartment home. I guess it was technically a home because it wasn't connected to others. But it was a tiny little shoebox of a place in California. And when I thought, this place is too small, it's too crowded, there's not enough room, this is ridiculous, my washer and dryer were stacked on top of each other in the kitchen, not exaggerating – when I thought negatively about my home, I felt negative about it.

My home was just there. It was just doing the best it could to put up four walls and keep us safe and keep us sheltered from the weather. It did its job. It did a beautiful job. I was the only one that judged it. And when I stopped judging it, which I did at times as well, I suddenly was more invested in taking care of it and figuring out how to fix it up and figuring out how to maximize the space that we had and how to love that home. You can choose to love your home if you want to. You don't have to change your home.

How about your money? What is your relationship with your money? This is a big part of your life, right? Do you judge your money? Do you hide from your money? Do you constantly tell your money that it's not enough? Imagine if you had a child who you constantly told, you're just not enough. We just need you to be more. We just need you to do better. We hope one day we're going to get more out of you.

Imagine what that would do to your relationship with that child. That's what so many of us do with our money. We don't pay attention to it. We neglect it. Clean up the way you think about your money. You get to think about your money any way that you want to. Maybe you want to think, my money is kind of like a child; I'm hoping to grow that money into an adult, but I'm going to love that child. I'm going to take care of that child. I'm going to do everything I can with that child and maximize that child's efforts and abilities and skills and I'm going to grow that child because I love that child, not because I need that child to grow up in order for me to love it.

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How about your body? We see a lot of positive movements nowadays. I notice a lot of positive movements around body image and a lot of people working hard to undo what we've culturally been taught, many of our lives, especially those of us that are women, about how our bodies should look. So, I love seeing all of that.

You get to choose to think about your body however you want to, did you know this? And you have a relationship with your body. What is your relationship?

There was a letter that I read a few years ago and I wish I could find it. I haven't been able to find it online again, but it was this woman who had been diagnosed with breast cancer and she was having to have a double mastectomy. And she wrote a letter from her brain to her body and she talked to her body and just apologized to her body for the negative relationship she'd had with her body for so many years.

She told her body that she was sorry for neglecting it and for judging it and for wishing that certain parts were bigger and certain parts were smaller and for constantly telling it that it was never enough. And she basically told her body, "I'm done beating you up, I'm just going to love you. I know you're doing the best you can. I know it's hard to be you. I know you're struggling and you're fighting against a lot and I'm so appreciative that you're keeping me alive and I'm just going to love you from now on." Did you know you could just do that?

And my favorite part was that she signed the letter from her brain, and then she said, "PS, our new boobs are going to be awesome." You could just choose to have a better relationship with your body, you guys, without changing anything about your body, if you want to.

What about the things that you do in your daily life? Maybe you have a job, so maybe it's your work, where you spend a lot of your time. Maybe you have other interests and hobbies and projects that you work on. Maybe you have a church calling that takes a lot of time. Maybe you spend a lot of time raising children if you have a lot of small children who need you.

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Whatever it is that you do on a day to day basis, the contribution you're making in the world, what you're doing from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed, how do you think about that part of your life? You get to have a relationship with that part of your life. What is your relationship going to be?

Are you going to judge it? Are you going to think that it's overwhelming and challenging and unfair? Or are you going to think, "I'm the best one for this. I've got this. I'm glad that I'm in a relationship with this part of my life that pushes me and challenges me and helps me to grow." Or do you think it's boring, it's not fulfilling, it's not rewarding, it's not enough? Again, if that were a person, your job, or your contribution, are you thinking about that person in a way that serves you that's going to create a healthy relationship.

Here's another one I see a lot, and I do a lot of coaching on this; you have a relationship with the city or town where you live. Do you realize this? The city or town is just showing up, being whoever it is, being whatever it is, and then you have thoughts about that city or town, that's what determines your relationship with it. It is not the place you live. It is not how many people in your area are in your same situation. It is not how many things are there to go and do, what is the weather like, what is the shopping and the restaurants like?

Whatever else you think it is, it's none of those things. It's the way you think about your city and town, and you're going to find what you're looking for. This is why some people just keep moving from one place to the next, trying to find a town that they will love. But it is never the town. It's always your thoughts about the town.

How do you want to think about your city? This is the place where you live. Choose intentionally how you want to think about it. How about your time? What is your relationship with your time? Do you think about your time the same way you think about your money, like it's just not enough? It's not providing you what you need? It goes too fast?

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Do you judge time for being wrong in some way or doing something wrong? Or are you compassionate and kind and loving with your time? I have a lot of kids outside my door today, can you hear them? School's out for summer, what can I say? I'm glad they're all so happy. They're having fun out there.

Let's talk about your car though next. How do you think about your car? You have a relationship with your car, right? I know, growing up, we used to name our cars. We had Rhonda the Honda, I remember. So we would name our cars and we had relationships with our cars. And in college, we used to do this too.

We would say things like, "My car needs new tires. She's getting some new shoes. She's going to be so excited." But what is your relationship with your car? Again, you can judge your car. You can notice all the ways that it's not enough. Or you can love that car and you can have fun with that car and you can appreciate that car.

How about your ward? Okay, now, your ward is full of people, so maybe you have specific relationships with specific people, but I want you to just think about your ward in general. How do you think about your ward when you think about your ward?

Now, for those of you who aren't members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, a ward is just kind of like a school district boundary of people that you live near, probably, that you go to church with at a certain time and certain location. That's it. It just helps us organize ourselves as people in the church.

So, a lot of times, we want to judge our ward. We want to say, "This ward doesn't have people that I relate to. This ward is not good enough in some way. It's not meeting my needs. It's not fulfilling me."

Now, if I think about another person that way, they're not good enough and they're not meeting my needs, that's going to show up in my relationship, in

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the way I talk to them, the way I treat them, the way I feel about them. And the same is true in your ward.

How you think about your ward is optional. It's not the truth. It's not a fact. So I'm not suggesting that you just get factual. I'm suggesting that you choose a story that you can believe that serves you well.

Now, the last part of your life that you have a relationship with is yourself. So, I have tons of information to share with you on that. And in fact, in *Be Bold*, that is going to be our topic in August; confidence. So I'm not going to spend a long time on it here today, but just know that you're probably going to notice patterns.

When you are critical of your home or your money and your body and your contribution and your city and your time and your car and your ward, you're probably also very critical of yourself. There's going to be patterns that exist. And I think a lot of this is rooted in how you think about yourself.

If you think loving, kind, compassionate, considerate, generous, abundant thoughts about these areas of your life, it's probably an indicator that you think that way about yourself as well. Now, I want you to think about how you talk about your life, because that's a direct reflection of how you think about your life. It doesn't mean that you probably say everything out loud that you're thinking, but certainly, there's a correlation there.

And just like I was describing to you at the beginning with, like, "Hey I'm going to talk to Brooke today, she's going to ask me how things are going. How are things going? How do I want to think about these areas of my life?" That is work that you can do and it doesn't have to be that you're talking to anyone to do that work.

Just thinking about it intentionally – maybe you want to journal about it and do some self-coaching, or maybe you do want to talk through it with someone. But the standard answer that we give when people say, "How are things," is, "Oh fine, things are fine." And I just think that we can do

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better than that. I think that we could tell the truth. I think we could be more authentic about it.

I've noticed that there are people who I admire and look up to or have heard about and really respect that have thought through how they want to think about their lives, and I pay attention to how they describe it. So the first person I noticed is Oprah, because I was listening to Oprah this week to one the podcast episodes that she had on her recent podcast where she gave a speech at UCLA.

And she started out by saying this, that I thought was awesome. She said, "Whatever you imagine my life to be, whatever you think it's like, I want you to know, it's 10 times better than that." How awesome is that? And then she went on to explain, "It's not because of the things I have, but it's because I know who I am and I know whose I am," Oprah said.

So I love how she owns and purposefully thinks about her life and she isn't afraid to even say, "My life is 10 times better than you might even imagine it is." And she likes having nice things. She likes having a nice home. But it's really no those things that makes her life 10 times better than what you might imagine. It's because of her relationship with herself and with her life. She didn't word it exactly in those ways, but that is what she goes on to describe in that talk.

I have another friend who is a doctor and she told me about one of her colleagues who is also a doctor, who she said used to walk around – he was a gentleman – and he used to just always say, "Couldn't be better." When people asked, "How are you doing, doc?" He'd say, "Couldn't be better." That was his standard response.

Now, you could argue that that's like a general generic response, but isn't it still more fun? Isn't it a more exciting way to think about your life than just, fine?

I remember her telling me that this doctor even once was operating on a baby. And I don't remember the details except to know that it was a pretty

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precarious situation, that he was trying to save this baby's life. And in the middle of that operation, someone says to him, "How are you doing, doc?" And he says, "Couldn't be better."

Did you know that you could choose to believe that any time, that you couldn't be better, that this moment could be just as amazing as any other moment in your life?

Brooke Castillo also is very intentional about how she answers this question and typically, one of her most favorite words I've noticed is amazing. "How you doing, Brooke?" She'll say, "Amazing. My life is amazing. I'm doing amazing. I hope you're doing amazing."

So it's really not about what you say. I want to make sure you're clear on that. But it's about what you believe because that will create your relationship with your life. Now, one of the things that I like to say when people ask me how I'm doing, one of my kind of standard canned responses is I like to say, "I'm living the dream." Because I really do believe that.

Now, sometimes I say it sarcastically, like when I'm cleaning up my daughter's accident because she just pooped in her undies, like, "Living the dream..." But overall, I do believe that about myself. I do believe that I am living a dream. And I believe every one of us is living a dream actually, if you choose to see it that way. And because I've chosen to see it that way, I see it everywhere and I created that in my life. We make our thoughts true, remember.

Now, I wanted to just share with you, to wrap up this episode, the self-coaching that I did myself on the place where I live. I live in Spokane, Washington. I actually live in the Spokane Valley. We're our own city, Spokane Valley, but I often just say I live in Spokane. And sometimes, my brain wants to go to the place of, like, "Oh remember when I used to live in Southern California, that was awesome, living by the beach. Remember when I used to live where there was all this great shopping, that was fun." And my brain wants to go there.

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And I'm like, "No, no, no, no we're not doing that, w we love this place because we've chosen to live here and I keep choosing to live here and I just want to love it."

And this is what I believe about where I live; we live in a magical place. The weather on a summer night is so nice, it's like there's no weather at all. It's not hot. It's not cold. There's no wind. It's literally the perfect temperature on most summer nights in Spokane. We have the most amazing lakes; tons of them. They're surrounded by forests of trees and sandy beaches and they're a gathering place for families and friends.

The lake means sun-kissed skin and magazines and licorice and new loves and old friends and new skills and so much more. It is magical being on the lake. If you drive just up the street from my house, you'll find horses and cows and roads with no curbs. You'll find deer and forests and hills and lands, just empty land.

We didn't have a lot of empty land around in California, but we do here. It's magical. The neighborhood is full of kids; kids who ride scooters and skateboards in the streets and in their driveways, kids who ride their bikes to one another's houses and kids who sell lemonade on the street every day in the summer.

At Christmas time, just about every house is lit up, and on Halloween, even the adults dress up to trick or treat. It is magical where we live. Our ward is amazing. I love the people who drive their minivans and Honda Pilots to church every week. I love the ones who sit in the hall with noisy children wondering why they even bother and I love the ones whose children have left home and who smile at our kids and remind us of how fast the time will go.

I love all those people who work so hard to teach my kids and create opportunities for them. I love the bishop who worries on our behalf. I love his wife who quietly but oh so magically contributes to all of us, by doing whatever she must have to do now that her husband is gone so much.

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I'm thinking that there is a place in Heaven where all bishop's wives will go to be treated like royalty. They'll be pampered and spoiled any time they want and it will be well-deserved. And as if this wasn't enough, perhaps the most magical thing of all is that I live near so many people who share some of my or my husband's blood.

For so many years, I lived far away from these people and I always hoped to live near them, but I knew that life sometimes has other plans for us. To live near so many of them and get to see them for the 4th of July or Father's Day or Labor Day or just a random Wednesday is magical. We gather, we laugh, we discuss. The cousins laugh and play in the basement while the adults, and adult-like children, soak up this magical time together. See what I mean? It's magical, this place I live. I am living the dream.

So, that is my own self-coaching, you guys. I wrote that when I was like, how do I want to think about the place where I live? I want to think that it's magical, and it is magical. I do believe that. This isn't just me trying to convince myself. This is just me choosing, listen, brain, this is what we're going to focus on is all the magical parts instead of, "Oh, there's no Chick-Fil-A." Which they're building one too, by the way. I just heard.

But that's what our brains want to do on default. They want to focus on the negative. They want to focus on what's missing and what's wrong. And when you redirect it, you then have a healthy positive loving enjoyable relationship with your life.

How do you want to think about your life? This matters. Choose it intentionally. Alright, you guys, have an amazing awesome rest of your week and I will see you next Friday. Take care. Bye.

If you have a question about something you've heard me talk about on this podcast or anything else going on in your life, I want to invite you to a free public call, Ask Jody Anything. I will teach you the main coaching tool I use with all of my clients and the way to solve any problem in your life, and we will plug in real life examples.

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Come to the call and ask me a question anonymously or just listen in. Go to jodymoore.com/askjody and register before you miss it. I'll see you there.