

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

I'm Jody Moore, and this is Better Than Happy episode 235: Accountability and Choice.

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.

Hello. Welcome to the podcast. Thanks for joining me. If you're new here, I don't know quite how to describe what we're doing, so I put together a podcast roadmap for you. I don't expect you to go back and listen to 234 episodes to get caught up, it's really not necessary. So I pulled what I thought were the most important eight episodes in the order I recommend you listen to them so that you can onboard yourself into what I'm teaching you.

You can start anywhere, I don't think you're going to be completely lost or anything, but if you like what you hear and you kind of want to get caught up without having to listen to 234 episodes, then make sure you download the podcast roadmap. There's a link in the show notes, but you can also go to jodymoore.com/map, and grab that. It's also really pretty, which I think is just an added bonus. You might all want to get it, even if you've been listening for a while.

The other thing that I want to make sure that I'm letting you know about is that I'm coming to Salt Lake. I want to do a live podcast day. I want to spend the day, and I want to teach you some stuff like I do in the podcast, but we're going to spend the majority of that day coaching, we're going to spend the majority of that day interacting. I want you to bring all your questions. I want you to bring your biggest challenge. I want you to bring that area that you're stuck in. I want you to give yourself the gift of spending an entire day on your own personal development.

This is true self-care, in my opinion. Nothing wrong with getting your nails done, going to the spa or whatever, that's fine, but as soon as you're done with that activity, you go back to your regular life and your regular brain and your regular emotions.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

Better Than Happy Live is a day where you will go home and you will start seeing things differently. You will start seeing yourself differently, you will start seeing the world around you differently. Again, you can come and interact with me and get coached by me and bring your questions. If you're too shy to do that, that's okay as well. You're still going to have a transformative experience by coming and listening to other people's situations and how we approach any problem in your life.

So, go to jodymoore.com/live, because whenever I come to Utah, it sells out very quickly. We tend to sell out everywhere, but Utah sells out the fastest, for probably pretty obvious reasons. I'm coming February 10th, it's right around the corner. I do record my podcasts in advance, so I'm assuming by the time this one goes out, there will still be some seats left, but I don't know. Go check it out.

We're going to talk about accountability and choice today. Now, you may have heard the term in reverse, you may have heard it described as choice and accountability. That's how we talked about it in Young Women's when I was growing up, it was one of our values, and it was a really useful concept for me as a youth.

But the way we talked about it then, the way we used that, at least my experience in the past, has been to help us really recognize that we make choices in our lives and then there are consequences for those choices. By consequences, some of them are positive, some of them maybe are negative, but there are always consequences, and to keep the focus on making the choice we want to because we get to make choices, we don't always get to choose what the consequences of our choice will be. That's an amazing, useful concept, but it's not what I'm talking about today, though. I'm talking about accountability and choice.

Here's what I want to introduce to you today, the idea that the more accountability we take over our own experience, over our results, over every single thing that happens to us, and around us, and the way we experience those things, the more accountability we take for them, the more choices we have.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

Another way to think about this is the more we own the results of our lives, the more we own what we've created and we recognize our own role in the creation of it, then the more freedom, power, or choice we have in what we want to create going forward.

I'm going to go through and give you tons of examples of this, but I want to make sure that you're clear that I'm not saying I want you to view everything in your life, whether it's going well or not going well, as your fault. There's a difference in my mind between making it your fault and making it your responsibility. Taking accountability for it is not the same as blaming yourself in some way.

Here's the difference in my mind. If I'm blaming myself, or I'm making it my fault, then there's an implied negative association with it. It's sort of saying, "You created this because you're weak, or because something's wrong with you, or because you aren't strong enough". That's not what I'm saying at all. I don't want you to start judging yourself.

And this is the challenge for many of my clients. As soon as I try to give them accountability for the results in their lives, they immediately then want to judge themselves for it and so that doesn't feel good. Sometimes, they reject the accountability for it, they try to project it again outward outside of them because it doesn't feel good to beat yourself up.

I want you to know that you can take accountability for everything in your life and you don't have to beat yourself up for it. You don't have to make it mean something negative about you.

You know what my favorite thing is to make anything mean about me? Oh yeah, I'm a human. That is, to me, such a compassionate way to think about myself. Rather than think that I should be perfect... I don't know why we all think we should be better than we are, we should be more perfect, we should have things more figured out, we should be able to overcome our bad habits and our negative thinking and all of that drama is nonsense.

We're humans! We're always going to struggle with it in this life. We're never going to get to a point in this life at which we are perfect. We don't

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

need to, right? That's where the atonement comes in. I want you to take accountability without taking blame. Take accountability and own your results without telling yourself, "This is your fault because you should be better than you are". You with me?

Now, let's look at the various aspects of our self and our experience that we can take accountability for. There was an amazing Instagram post not too long ago by President Uchtdorf that had a picture of a hand, I was assuming it was his hand, writing on a piece of paper, and it said, "I have control over my thoughts, feelings, and actions". It was probably my most favorite post from President Uchtdorf yet.

Those of you that have listened to me or are in my program know why. That is the model, essentially, that we teach, right? Those are actually the three areas that I want to focus on today, helping you gain some more accountability over. I'm going to talk to you about why we sometimes don't give ourselves the accountability for them and how to give yourself back the accountability for each of them, and why that's such an amazing, powerful gift to give yourself.

I'm going to start with actions. Actions are the things that we do, the way that we show up in the world. Sometimes, they're things that we don't do that we want to be doing. All of that goes in the action line, it's the way we actually show up and interact with other people in the world around us.

Sometimes, I'll be coaching a client who will say to me, "Hey, I keep doing this thing that I don't want to do and I don't know why and I don't know how to stop. Can you help me?", or, "There's this thing that I want to be doing, but I can't get myself to do it. Can you help me?". That would be an action item, right?

They'll say to me, "I keep yelling at my children. I don't want to yell at them, but I can't help it. Can you help me?", "I want to get up early in the morning, but my alarm goes off and then I hit snooze, and I go back to sleep and I can't get myself to get up," "I want to stop overeating. I want to not be on social media so long. How do I stop doing that?". That's just a handful of

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

things. Anything you're doing or not doing that you want to change in your life go in your action line.

The question I always ask my clients when they lead with something like that is, "Why? Why are you doing what you're doing?", or, "Why are you not doing what you want to be doing?". Now, do you know what the number one most common answer I get is? "I don't know. I don't know why". That's what they tell me.

Notice, as soon as we say, "I don't know why I'm doing it," we're pushing ourselves further away from taking accountability for it. We sort of describe it like it's just this thing that happens, "I watch myself do it, it just happens to me, I can't help it, something comes over me". It's completely disempowering to think about it that way.

It gives us no awareness over what's going on, and it gives us no accountability of what's going on. When we have no accountability, then we feel like we have no choice, we have no alternative. We feel powerless to choose something different or change that action. If you find yourself answering, "I don't know," when you ask, "Why am I doing that?" or, "Why am I not doing it?", again, one of two things is happening.

Number one, you're just rejecting the accountability, your brain doesn't want to take the time to slow down and think and figure it out, or number two, as soon as you identify the reason why. You drop into shame and guilt over it, you beat yourself up, you tell yourself something's wrong with you, you tell yourself it's your fault, and that doesn't feel good, either, so we want to go back to unconsciousness, which is, "I don't know why". Neither of those things is necessary, neither of them is serving you.

Now, let me give you the answer. The reason that you're doing what you're doing, or the reason you're not doing anything you're not doing is because of how you're feeling. Always. Your feelings are the fuel for your action, they're driving your action. So, when I ask my client, "Why are you doing that?", what I'm checking to see is, "Are they aware of the emotion that they're feeling?".

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

Many times, they are not. So, as a coach, it's one of the things I help them do is identify the emotions. Why do we yell at our children? Because we feel frustrated and angry. Why do we overeat? Because we feel bored, or we feel a desire or an urge or a craving, or any other emotion, you name it, drives us to overeat. Why do we hit snooze in the morning? Because we feel tired, or we feel unmotivated, some other emotion like that, in the morning. That's why we don't get up when we said we were going to.

We're not feeling committed, we're not feeling determined, we're feeling lackadaisical, we're feeling indifferent, possibly, even. There's always an emotion behind any action, inaction, or reaction, anything that goes in your action line.

When you identify that and you don't beat yourself up, "I shouldn't be feeling angry. I shouldn't be so lackadaisical. I should be motivated. I should be committed. I should be kind and compassionate". Don't be in a rush to get there, it just won't work. If I thought it would work, I would say, "Let's hurry up and get to the better feeling," but you have to slow it down long enough to really observe yourself in your current patterns with compassion, remembering that you're a human to really get enough accountability for it to now have choices about what you want to create in the future.

That might take some time. It might you saying, "Huh. I think the reason I'm yelling at my children is because I feel frustrated with my children. That's interesting. Let me observe myself and my frustration, let me see where that's coming from. Let me understand it a little better, let me be kind and patient with myself," and from there – again, this might take a little bit of time – you will gain so much leverage over it.

Accountability for your actions. Nothing just comes over you. Nothing forces you to put food in your mouth. I promise you. Maybe you're feeling uncomfortable and then you put it in your mouth. Maybe you're feeling confused. Maybe you're feeling unconscious, even, you're not paying attention. That could be it. Food doesn't just go in your mouth. There's always the decision you make to put it there. There's always a decision we

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

make to yell at people. There's always a decision we make about whether or not to get up in the morning.

Now, I do want to mention that you're taking all kinds of amazing, useful action in your life too, and I want you to take accountability for that as well. My guess is that 98% of the time, you're showing up amazingly well. You are doing the things that you want to be doing in your life.

You do the dishes probably every day, you clean up your house, you take care of your kids, you feed them, whatever else it is that you're doing, work that you're doing in your world, or in your ward, in your community, things you do to take care of yourself, you brush your teeth, you take a shower. You do so many amazing, useful things and all of those, again, are driven by really, probably, useful emotions.

Sometimes not, though. Sometimes it's people pleasing and perfectionism and we've got to question that. All of the things that are serving you well that you want to keep doing, that you enjoy doing, that you want to be a part of who you are and how you're living your life, those are all driven by feelings as well. Keep the accountability for it, and now we show ourselves that we have choices.

That was action. Let's talk about feelings next. Again, sometimes a client comes to me and they start out by saying, "Here's my problem, Jody. I just feel overwhelmed". I coached this awesome man the other day who said, "I come home from work, and my kids want me. I'm exhausted. I'm an introvert, I'm drained, and I feel claustrophobic. I feel overwhelmed," and then he said, "I feel guilty for feeling that way."

Maybe it's that you feel insecure, maybe you feel inadequate in some way, maybe you feel exhausted. Feelings, emotions, I'm talking about when I say feelings... Be careful with exhausted because that can be a result of a physical symptom happening in your body that your body genuinely needs rest, but sometimes exhaustion is emotional, right? All of those emotions that we feel in our body are created by us. 100% of the time. When you

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

recognize that, then you get all kinds of power back to choose how you want to feel.

As long as we delegate it to things outside of us or people outside of us and we don't take accountability, then we don't have a lot of choices. Controlling the universe, controlling the world outside of us is super challenging to do so it limits our choices of how we want to feel if we don't take accountability for our feelings. Again, when a client comes to me and says they're feeling frustrated, they're feeling overwhelmed, they're feeling inadequate, I'll ask them why. "Why do you feel that way?"

Now, do you know what they almost always tell me? "I don't know." The brain doesn't really like to take accountability. It's a lot of work to figure it out and then we tend to want to beat ourselves up for it so we resist that. What I want to offer to you today is that if you can own up and take the accountability for it, you will have unlimited choices as to how you want to feel. The reason for every feeling that we feel is the way we're thinking. The way we think about people, the way we think about the world outside of us, the way we think about any circumstance in our life will create the way we will feel about it.

I had somebody message me on Instagram the other day, and this person said, "Do you have any podcasts on how to deal with an impatient person?". My reply was, "There is no such thing as an impatient person. There are only people, and when we become impatient, when we feel impatient about them and the way they're behaving or showing up, then we suffer".

If another person is feeling impatience, they're going to suffer because impatience doesn't feel very good. It feels like a rush, it feels like a tightness, it's something that many of us try and manipulate outside circumstances to change. The person that they're talking about is impatient about who knows what, they didn't give me any more details, so I'm going to make up a pretend scenario. Let's say it's a child who's impatient.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

The child wants whatever it is that they want right now, and they don't want to wait, and they keep nagging and asking and maybe whining and maybe having tantrums, even, and we might say that child is impatient, but that child, notice, is feeling terrible.

That's the reason they're acting out, because children don't know what to do with emotions, they don't know how to just allow them, they don't know how to not react to them, and they absolutely believe that things outside of them are creating that problem so they're trying desperately to manipulate the world outside of them, namely, us, their parents, to get what they want.

That doesn't affect us, though. What affects us is our thought, "This child shouldn't be so impatient. This child should be more patient, and I need to teach him or her how to calm down and be patient. I'm feeling impatient with that child not getting it, with that child not calming down and behaving the way I think a child should. That's my problem, that's the only reason I'm suffering".

That's the reason this person is asking me this question; how do you deal with an impatient person? In other words, how do I manipulate and change this child or whoever this person is, so that I don't have to feel the way I'm feeling. Guess what? That other person is not creating your feeling. Your thoughts that they shouldn't be impatient is the reason you feel impatient with them. You with me?

As long as we delegate the accountability to the child in this scenario, then we have to try to control the child. We have to try our best parenting technique to get them to behave in order for us to feel better. Sometimes, maybe that will work. Other times, maybe it won't.

A much more effective method is to recognize that we are creating our own impatience and our own problem for ourselves by thinking that the child shouldn't be so impatient. We could change that thought right away, right? We could have success with that 100% of the time if we chose to. If we genuinely decided to believe this child is of course going to be impatient, that's what children do.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

Here, she hasn't yet learned how to calm down. As the mother, maybe I want to teach him. Maybe I want to even have consequences and hold him accountable to certain behaviors but I can do all of that from compassion and peace and patience, and it's going to feel a lot better and I'm probably going to be a lot more effective at it, than when I'm doing it from impatience where I'm suffering alongside the child and then trying to change him or her.

Every feeling we have is created by our own thinking. When you keep the accountability for that, you suddenly open up the ability to feel any way you want to, any time you want to. A lot of people are not taking accountability for their feelings because they're too busy trying to take accountability for other people's feelings.

We get it all backwards. We label it kindness or empathy, or something else that sounds pretty, and at times, those are very useful attributes, don't get me wrong, but there are other times where we create problems because instead of owning our own emotions, we try to control the emotions of people around us.

Again, it comes from believing that if they feel better, then I would feel better, which means if they're not feeling good, that's the reason I'm not feeling good, which is just a lie. Other people's emotions don't just jump off their body, you don't feel bad until you think a thought like, "I wish they felt better. I wish they weren't unhappy with me. I wish they weren't mad at me," and then you feel bad.

Let me give you an example. Let's imagine that you're going to go to lunch with a group of friends. Maybe it sounds like this. Have you ever had this experience? "Where do you guys want to go to lunch?" "I don't know, where do you want to go to lunch?" "I'm not really sure, but isn't Julia coming with us?" "Yeah, I think Julia's a vegetarian, right? Let's consider that. Let's make sure we go someplace where there's enough options for her. What about Susan? I don't think Susan wants to spend a lot of money, so we don't want to go someplace where she's going to feel uncomfortable

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

because of the price on the menu. What if this person doesn't even want to go? Did we invite them?"

"I feel bad, I hope they're not coming just because we invited them. I hope they don't feel obligated. Is there anyone we left out that we should be inviting? What if they feel bad? I don't want anyone to feel bad that we didn't invite them". We end up going to lunch somewhere and maybe it's a place you want to go and maybe it's not.

Again, I'm not saying that we don't want to consider other people's desires and feelings. Absolutely, we do. When a pattern like this happens after a while, what I notice that that person who is all up in everybody else's heads and businesses often ends up feeling resentful and frustrated that no-one is considering their emotions and what they wanted, their opinion, their preferences aren't ever being accommodated because they're so busy accommodating everybody else.

What I say is, what if you just let Julia and Susan and all your other friends own their own emotions? What if we just trusted that people are adults and they're perfectly capable of taking care of themselves and it's up to them whether or not they want to step up and voice their opinion or not. If they feel resentful or angry, that's actually on them, but we own our own emotions.

We own how we want to feel. How do I want to feel when we go to lunch? What opinions do I have that I want to consider? What do I want? At least taking my opinion into account when making lunch plans, or am I discounting it, waiting for somebody else to come along and do it? That's a tiny little example.

It's probably not going to be a big problem when it comes to going to lunch, but this is what I see people do in their lives in general. When it comes to family situations especially. Family dynamics with in-laws, and parents, and kids, just all of it becomes a tangled web when we're trying to manage other people's emotions instead of choosing who we want to be.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

This isn't the same as, "I don't care what anybody else wants. I want to go to lunch at this place, forget any of you who don't like it". No, that's not who you want to be, either. Who you want to be is someone who's kind and considerate, and considers everyone's opinions, but also considers what you want and makes decisions accordingly.

I'm telling you, just allowing other people to claim their own emotions, I think is a really kind thing to do for others. They are the ones creating them, anyway. Let's put a little faith in the people around us. Let's put some faith in them that they're capable of choosing how they want to feel and taking care of themselves – they're adults.

Some of you have people in your life who don't want to own their own emotions, they want to tell you that it's your fault that they feel the way they feel, and I just want you to know that those people are just a little bit confused, but that's okay. We can just be compassionate.

Sometimes I hear my clients say, "Hey, my husband was mad at me because I didn't want to go to the movie that he wanted to go to, and I told him what you said, which is it's not my fault that you're mad, it's your fault, you're going to have to own it, sorry". Again, you get to say whatever you want.

My message isn't that we're giving everyone the middle finger and saying, "Forget you all. I'm going to do what I want". That doesn't actually feel very good, either. My message is that, "I totally get that you think that I made you mad. I'm so sorry that you feel that way. I'm actually not that powerful. You get to choose to feel however you want to feel, and if you want to be mad, I understand. I'm sorry that you feel that way, and I love you. I also love me, and I've got to take care of me to a certain extent as well, and this is what I choose in this moment".

We're not just shoving people's emotions back in their face, we're just gently understanding that, of course, they think it's our fault. That's okay. It doesn't mean that you have to own it or try to control it. We really have to

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

give space and compassion to people for people to feel the way that they're feeling, and guess who else you need to give compassion to? Yourself.

Sometimes when I tell people that taking accountability for your feelings means you can choose to feel however you want, they think what I'm saying is that you can just be happy all the time. You could, but that would be very weird. I don't think that you'd want to be happy all the time, to be honest. I know I don't.

I think sometimes you want to be sad. I think sometimes you want to be frustrated and mad, and irritated and overwhelmed and stressed, and all those other emotions. That's the human experience. This isn't about happiness all the time. It's the discomfort that helps us progress. It's the discomfort that moves us towards a useful solution.

When you allow the discomfort, you learn how to feel emotions without reacting, and you own that you're the creator of them with your thoughts, you gain so much power in your life. You gain this level of awareness that many people will never have in this life. This level of awareness about what you're creating and how you're creating it gives you so many more choices around creating what you want. It might take a little time. Be patient with yourself. But that's what's available.

The last area we're going to talk about taking accountability for is your thoughts. Thoughts are creating all your feelings, as we talked about. Your feelings are creating all your actions. This is my most favorite one, probably, this is one we spent a lot of time on when we were coaching, which is identifying what you're thinking and questioning why. When I ask my client, when they tell me what they're thinking and believing... Many of them, because in my program, I teach the model in depth and they have coaching ongoing, many of them come to me and say, "I know this is just a thought, Jody, and I know this is optional, but I can't stop thinking it".

I want you to hear the message there. "I know this is optional, I know it's just a thought, but I can't stop believing it". Do they know it's just a thought? They don't really. I mean, they do. Intellectually, we define thoughts in the

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

program, we define them as being different from facts, so they're able to identify that's not a fact, that is just a thought, but their brains don't see that it's optional to believe it or think it. It feels important to think it, it just feels necessary to think it.

As a coach, what I show them is, "Did you know that you don't have to believe that if you don't want to?". Even if you have tons of evidence that it's true, even if everybody around you is thinking it and offering it to you, you get to believe and think anything you want to.

Did you know this is true? It's really kind of mind-blowing. You could just believe that everything's going to work out. You could just believe that you're doing it perfectly. You could just choose to believe that your body looks exactly the right way, looks just how it should. You could believe that you've been doing this whole parenting thing, raising your kids, you've been doing it exactly the way you're supposed to.

You can just choose to believe that you're going to achieve the goal you want to right on time and it's going to be easy and fun. You could choose to believe that everything that happens in your life is happening for you, and it's all conspiring in your favor. When we resist it and push back against it with negativity and stress and overwhelm, we're actually pushing against our best life.

You could choose to believe anything you want to, my friends. Now, our brains want to reject sometimes the thoughts that we're trying to believe because our brains are evidence-gathering machines. They've been gathering evidence for our current thoughts, whether they be useful, amazing, good thoughts or painful, negative thoughts.

To decide to believe something different will oftentimes not just happen overnight. Your brain will have to start collecting evidence for different thoughts, but you do have the ability to think about things any way you want to. You have the ability to direct your head towards what is good and useful and away from what is not useful or not serving you. You genuinely do.

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

When you take accountability for your current thinking, make sure you're not beating yourself up and make sure you're not thinking, "I shouldn't be thinking this. I shouldn't have this thought," because that will not help. It really doesn't. It just minimizes your ability to take accountability for it. Instead, it has to be like, "It's interesting that I'm thinking that. I can see how it's a problem thought for me. I can see how it generates not useful emotion, then not useful action, but I know I have a good reason for thinking it. I wonder what that is".

Maybe you uncover something really interesting about yourself and the way your brain works, or maybe you chalk it up to, "Probably because I'm a human being with a human brain that does what brains do". That's fine. Again, be willing to observe yourself thinking it, be willing to notice the times it comes up, be willing to notice the emotion it creates and how it changes who you become in the world, and from that compassionate observer space of accountability for your thinking, you gain the ability to choose what you want to think. Accountability and then choice.

I like to own as much of the results of my life as my brain will possibly let me. I know I'm the creator of all of them, but some of them I can't get my brain to yet. I'm working on it. When things go wrong, I like to say, "Oh, I've created this. In what way did I create this?"

This is the best news ever that I created it, because that means I can create something different". Maybe it's somebody I'm working with in my business, maybe I don't get the result I want in my business. I always pause, instead of blaming the contractor, I'll say, "This is me. I created this. In what way did I create this?"

That is so valuable to me going forward because I can create something different in the long run, even if it's, "I hired that contractor. Maybe I'm going to hire a different contractor going forward," but I still make it always mine to own. If there's a disconnect in my marriage, I remind myself, "I've created this. That's great news. In what way have I created this? What am I thinking, feeling, and doing that's causing me to feel disconnected in my relationship?"

Ep 235. Accountability and Choice

If things aren't right with my money or my health or any other area of my life, I always pause and say, "In what way have I created this?". Again, not, "This is my fault. What's wrong with me?". Just, "I am the creator of this. In what way is that true?". Acknowledging it with compassion gives me so many more choices going forward.

Alright you guys, have an amazing, beautiful, rest of your week. I cannot wait to meet you at Better Than Happy Live if you're coming, grab your tickets. I will see you next week on another episode. Take care.

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.

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.