

257. To the Mothers of Adult Children



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy* episode 257: To the Mothers of Adult Children.

Welcome to *Better Than Happy*. I'm your host, Jody Moore. I'm a mother to four children. I'm a huge Taylor Swift fan, and I'm a master certified life coach. I'm here to teach you how to manage your brain and manage your emotions so that you can create a life that's even better than happy. Are you ready? Let's go.

Hello, everybody. I am excited to talk to everyone today, but especially the mothers of adult children, but don't tune out if you don't have adult children. I promise you're going to hear some things in this that will help you no matter what. But I have had several conversations in the last few weeks with either a mother of an adult child or multiple adult children, or maybe an adult daughter who has a mother. I just have a few things that I want to offer to you that I think you're going to like.

Now, before we get into it, if you're a certified coach who might be interested in improving your coaching skills by learning from me really intimately, if you want some clients and you want some feedback on your coaching and you have a potential interest in working for me as a coach one day, or maybe for another coach, or maybe you don't, you just want to get better at coaching, make sure you get on the waitlist for more information about Coach Incubator. You got to go to jodymoore.com/coach, where I will tell you all about this program.

We will only take a few people so you'll want to be ready to go when we open the doors, but I will be sending out more information all about it. If you are already certified, but you want to take your coaching in the next level and you want to learn my methods and skills. Then selfishly, I kind of want to steal some of you to work for me. So jodymoore.com/coach. If you're interested in Coach Incubator.

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Alright, listen up moms, you know who you are, you have grown up kids, you don't have toddlers anymore, you have older kids, maybe you've got some in high school. But you consider yourself to be a more mature mother, you look back at these girls who are raising babies and toddlers, and you have an amazing perspective now, that you didn't have then, okay. I want to talk to you for just a minute because this week alone I have had three or four conversations with people that caused me to want to hit my head against the wall.

So rather than hit my head against the wall I just want to give you some things to consider. First of all I want to bow down to you because I think that raising kids is the hardest work on the planet, I really do. I've had a handful of jobs in my day and I've done a few things. I've even achieved what to me were some big goals, like run a couple of marathons, built a million dollar coaching practice. And I still think raising kids is the hardest of all of the things that I've tried to do.

And I'm just in the thick of raising kids, some of you that I'm speaking to are definitely ahead of me, you're wiser than me, you're more experienced than me, you have a perspective that I don't have yet. And so I just want to bow down to you and thank you for what you've done. I know that your work doesn't get recognized often enough, that you don't hear thank you's and appreciation as much as you should. And I just want you to know that I have so much respect and appreciation for you.

Now, I also have 10 things that I want to offer you today, specifically especially when it comes to the tools that I teach here and the coaching that I do, and the thought work, and the model and all the things that I talk about here on this podcast. I want to talk about the way I want to encourage you to think about them in relation to yourself in your own life.

So, first thing I want to teach you, number one. You were not supposed to find this work earlier. You were not supposed to know about the model when your kids were toddlers. You weren't supposed to have a coach or

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know that coaching existed, if you didn't know it existed, when your kids were younger. This is a common thing I hear is, "Gosh, I just wish I would have had this when I was raising my kids. I wish I would have known this, I wish this would have existed when I was younger and when my kids were younger."

And there is no upside to that thought, there isn't, because we can't go back in time and change the past, and there's just zero point in thinking it, it's a waste of your brain, it's a waste of your energy to think that thought. So I want to give you permission right now to just decide that it's not a useful thought, and that you're done thinking it, and that you're done even believing it. Because you were not supposed to find this before now, because if so you would have found it before now. You know when you were supposed to find it? Exactly when you did.

You were supposed to raise your kids without this knowledge, even this unnecessary suffering and struggling and mistakes that you made, all of that was perfect, so let's just begin there, that's number one.

Number two, this work is not just for the young moms. I think about women when I sit down to do a podcast. Now, I know there's men listening, I love you men, this is completely relevant to you too. But I have to keep my head in the space of who am I talking to. But to be honest, the woman I'm talking to is me. So I have some little kids, I have some kids that are getting older, I didn't start having kids until I was a little bit older than many. So I'm going to be 46 years old this year.

And I don't just tailor this content to people with young kids, because it doesn't just apply to people with young kids. It applies to you as well, just as much. Notice how when I talk to the men I'm always like, "Men, I love you and you're welcome, but you're kind of the exception to what I'm trying to teach." And that's true. By the way, men, I'm working on creating something just for you.

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But at any rate, the women, the moms, you are the one I'm talking to, even the moms that have all adult kids, that are grown and have left the house and are all married and having kids of their own, it's you, I have you in my mind. So the reason I say I'm talking to me is because I'm kind of in the middle. I don't have toddlers and babies – well, I have a four year old, you could count her as a toddler. But I'm starting to get out of the baby stage, I don't have adult kids yet, I'm kind of in the middle. So I'm speaking to everyone, it's not just for young moms.

I love it when my clients tell me, "Gosh, my mom could benefit so much from all of this, she could be so much happier, she could be so much less stressed. She could be so much more confident; she could be so much more peaceful. But what she says to me all the time is, 'I'm so glad that you have Jody and that you have those tools.'"

Now, again, I'm glad that your daughter does too, but I think she wants you to know that this is for you too. I'm just saying, if you want to be happier, if you want to be more confident, if you want to achieve goals, if you want to live your life in a more extraordinary way, this is for you too. Okay, so that's number two.

Number three kind of piggybacks on number one, but I want to elaborate a little bit on the idea that you did all of it just as you were supposed to in the past. One of the common things I hear from women with adult children is they say, "I just sort of wish that I would have done this part differently. I wish that I wouldn't have been so worried about the house being clean. Or I wish I wouldn't have worried about the kids being dressed a certain way. I wish I wouldn't have been so stressed about my son getting his EAGLE Project. Or I wish I wouldn't have," whatever, fill in the blank.

Okay, so you did it all just as you were supposed to, even the parts that you would label mistakes, or that if you could go back in time and do it again with the perspective and knowledge you have now, you would do differently. You were supposed to do it that way, and regret is optional, you

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don't have to regret something, even if you want to label it as 'wrong', it still doesn't mean you have to regret it, this is how you do it.

I certainly have things in my past that I look back and go, "Well, that wasn't a wise choice, that was wrong, that goes against what I believe or who I'm trying to be." But I don't regret any of those things. You know why? I don't spend any time thinking about how I shouldn't have made mistakes, because I did make the mistake, I can't go back in time and change it.

And I also, if I sit here and beat myself up for it and think about the past and think about how it should have been differently, then I don't get to live in the present and create the future I want. I'm just hanging out in a ditch about the past. So regret is optional, regret comes from the way you think about your past and it's also not useful, it's not necessary, it's not important. So the way you raised your kids, 100% the way you were supposed to do it.

Imagine if Oprah Winfrey had been raised in a different environment, if she had had a better mother. If she had had a mother who was better able to take care of her, and love her, and nurture her the way we think mothers should, she wouldn't be Oprah Winfrey today. She would be a different version of her, wouldn't that be a shame? So even if some of the things that happened in your past or the way you were with your kids or your husband, or whatever it was, gave them reason to suffer and struggle, it was still supposed to go that way.

Here is the real truth, you guys, for all of us, as soon as I started owning that yeah, I'm supposed to be a mess, I'm supposed to do a lot of things really well and I'm supposed to mess a lot of things up. And I'm going to keep trying and I'm going to keep trying to improve myself and do better. But I'm never going to get it perfect in this life. I'm supposed to keep falling down. And if I can get back up instead of sitting on the ground going, "Dang it, I wish I wouldn't have bumped into that thing and fallen down." Then that's where I progress.

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Alright, number four, the future is yours for the taking. We talk about this at high school graduations, I love how it's high school graduation time but we're in an interesting situation with social distancing. And so the high school graduation speeches are coming out online, which is super fun for the rest of us who want to be able to hear these great commencement speeches.

But at commencement, whether it be high school or college, or whatever, we talk to people about their future. We tell them, "The future is yours," and maybe we try to give them some words of wisdom and some precautions, and some motivation and inspiration, and then we send them out into the world. And I just want to give you that same speech right now, because the same thing is true for you. Whether you're graduating college, or you're 18 years old, graduating high school, or you're 65 years old and your kids are grown, the future is yours for the taking.

And you can tell yourself that you're pretty much done living your life, or you can decide that you're just getting warmed up, and it's up to you, what do you want to choose? Because you have a lot of future ahead of you probably, many, many years, so what do you want to do with it? Do you want to spend it thinking about the past?

Maybe you're regretting the past or living in memories of the past and wishing for the good old days, or do you want to create an amazing future? Because if you want to create an amazing future you're going to have to start thinking about the future. And you're going to have to think about it intentionally, not just whatever your brain does on default, which will sometimes be useful, but often be not useful. Think about the future you want and picture who you want to be in the future. And whatever you're able to picture is what you will be able to create.

What you can get yourself to believe you will create in the future, and that's true at age 18 and is true at age 65.

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Number five, piggybacks on this one a little bit. There's no such thing as too late. It's too late is just a thought that somebody thought up and said out loud and we all decided we liked the ring of it. We all decided it was a nice way to keep ourselves small and stuck and not have to try hard things, or new things, or scary things, or become uncomfortable. We could just chalk it up to, well, it's too late. It's just a thought, it's not a useful thought, it's never too late, did you know this?

Whatever it is that is your dream, whatever you want to do, whoever you want to become, you can choose to become her right now, there's no perfect time. We all talk about waiting for the right time, young people are waiting for the right time because they're too busy and they're not experienced enough, and they're not wise enough. And then older people are saying, "It's too late, I should have done that when I was younger." So you know what the perfect time is? Whatever time you can wrap your head around getting moving on whatever it is that you want to do.

What do you want to do? Who do you want to be? What do you want to learn? My husband took a comment that I said a couple of weeks ago, he – let me back up. He plays guitar a little bit and with social distancing and not as much to do, he picked up his guitar and he started playing it more. And it's been fun for him to dive in and learn more about the guitar. And he's finding podcasts, and video courses, and Xbox games and all kinds of things that help him get better at guitar.

And my youngest daughter came along and said, "I want to play too." And so she kind of started picking up guitar, so I made a comment casually in passing and said, "I want to learn to play the guitar." And my husband bought me a guitar. So I think it's supposed to come today actually.

And so I'm going to learn to play the guitar. Now, part of my head is like, well, it's kind of too late, you probably should have learned that when you were younger and I mean you're 45 years old and what are you thinking? It's going to be hard, my head's like it's probably going to be hard. I

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remember trying to learn to play the piano and it was hard, and maybe I don't want to do it, maybe it's too hard. Maybe we should just send the guitar back.

But I'm just watching my head do that and noticing how ridiculous it is, because I'm perfectly capable of playing the guitar, physically I can hold it, nothing wrong with my fingers, nothing wrong with my arms. Pretty sure physically that's all I need to be able to do to play the guitar. I have a brain that's capable of learning, I can read, I can still hear, I can still see. I think that's all that's required to learn to play the guitar, so why would I think it's too late? It's ridiculous. Whatever it is that you want to do, it's not too late.

Number six, I can't remember what movie this came from but when I was writing this list and I was thinking about these things I want to offer to you, this quote kept coming into my head, which is, "Either get busy living or get busy dying." Again, that is not my quote, it's from some movie, I can't remember which one. And it sounds kind of morbid and I don't mean it in that way. I don't mean if you're not going to show up in your life then you're not worth living, that's not what I'm saying at all.

But I love to tell myself that thought when my brain wants to say, "It's just so hard, it's just too scary, I'm too tired, I don't have the energy, I'm too old," I'm too whatever. So, listen, we either get busy living or get busy dying, what do we want to do here? I want to live as long as I'm alive, until I take my last breath, whatever it is I'm capable of doing, I want to go all in, I want to push myself, I want to exhaust myself living. I don't want to exhaust myself regretting, and longing, and wishing, and hanging out in the past.

Alright, number seven, your happiness is yours to create, it is not your kids to create. This is probably one of the most common things again that I see, when I coach mothers of grown up kids is, grown up kids, not only do they have agency to make their own choices. But they also have full independence to make their own choices. This can be disappointing, I get it, it's okay to be disappointed, that your kids haven't always chosen to

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become the people that you wanted them to be, totally fine, it's what I call clean pain.

But when you hang your happiness on them being different you are only punishing you and probably putting even more distance between you and your kids. So I've coached on everything you can imagine in this category from, I just wish my kids were active in the church. I wish that they wanted to see me more and spend more time with me. I wish that they left me alone and didn't always come around. I wish they didn't expect me to watch the grandkids so much. I wish they would let me watch the grandkids more often. I wish, I wish, I wish.

And as long as you're wishing that your kids could fulfill your emotional needs, you're going to feel powerless and you're going to disconnect from yourself, you're going to weaken your own relationship with yourself, which means you're not going to feel as confident. And you're probably driving distance between you and your kids, because kids have their own stuff.

And when I say kids, I mean adult kids, your kids, but these adults we're talking about. They have their own stuff they're dealing with and we all have so much baggage and emotional stuff that we're dealing with, about our parents especially, our mothers. It just doesn't typically contribute to a very positive relationship.

You know what will make for the best relationship between you and your adult children is for you to complete yourself and figure out how to be happy 100% on your own, independent of them. And then you get to offer yourself in their lives as a whole complete happy person, and whatever they want to take or leave won't matter because you've already done the work of being happy.

I know that's kind of a complicated one and it's okay if you're thinking, I don't know how to do that, that sounds – I don't know how to stop wanting these things, totally understandable.

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I don't have the time to go into it in more detail on this episode, but I just want you to try on the idea that you can be 100% complete, and whole, and happy, even without anything changing with regards to your children. And that that is your work to do, and that is your job to do, not only for their sake, but much more so for your sake, so that you are able to have the experience you want, no matter what your kids choose.

Alright, number eight, you are 100% lovable, complete, whole, and amazing, and part of your work in this lifetime is to understand that. This is obviously true for anybody at any age. But I just want you to keep in mind, sometimes we question ourselves and we question our lovability. And I don't care what you've done or haven't done, I don't care how you show up now, I don't care what you're good at or what you're not good at, I don't care how confident you are or not.

None of that changes your lovability, even if all of these things I've been talking about you're like, "I've been thinking wrong about that, and that, and that, and that." It doesn't matter, it doesn't make you any less lovable, you're still a 100%. The reason I'm offering these things to you is so that you can have a different experience. I think that the wisdom, and knowledge, and perspective that you have is something that we need in the world.

Think about these cultures where their elders are so respected and revered, because they recognize that those folks have the knowledge, and experience, and perspective that younger folks don't have. That is how I think about you, but we only get the benefit of that when our elders choose to step into that role and own that. If you're hiding it, if you're playing small, if you're telling yourself that you're not as good at things as somebody younger, or you're not able to figure things out, or you're not valued in some way, or whatever it is you're telling yourself. That is not true, first of all, and it's not serving you or anybody else.

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So, step into your greatness, step into all the amazing things that you have to offer.

Number nine, these are the good old days right now, what you're living, what you're experiencing. If you find yourself thinking that you miss the good old days. And you remember in the good old days how things were simpler, things were easier, you felt more appreciated, you felt more confident, you enjoyed that stage of your life better. Then I want you to know that what's happening right now is something that you will probably look back on 10, 20, 30 years from now and say, "Those were the good old days, I sure wish I would have appreciated it."

Like when you find yourself wanting to say to a young mother, "Oh, honey, just cherish this time because one day you will miss it," I think that's true. I think they will probably look back and miss it, but I think it's true for you as well. I think somebody 20, 30 years ahead of you would say, "Oh, honey, cherish this time because one day you will miss it." The good old days are happening right now.

This brings me to the tenth and final thing that I want to offer to you. And I'm going to be totally upfront and shameless about it, which is you need to be in Be Bold. Not because I need more people in there, we've got plenty of people in there, not because I'm trying to sell you something.

But because from mothers of grown up kids I hear more than any other population, "What an awesome program, I'm so glad you offer that for those young mothers." And I want to say, yes, I do offer it for the young mothers, but I offer it just as much for you. You're not like an outlier population.

And I want you to know that your friends are in Be Bold because I have just as many women in that stage of life in Be Bold as I do in the younger stage, and they're doing amazing things. I just coached a woman on the call last week who told me that she's 65 years old, and she just finished her

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Bachelor's Degree, because she decided after being in Be Bold to go back to school and complete what had been a goal of hers forever.

I just coached a woman who is also, I think, 65, somewhere in her mid 60s who told me that she can't afford to retire and so she needs some coaching on how to earn the revenue that she wants to, in her businesses. She has a couple of small businesses so we're doing some business coaching. I have women of all ages in Be Bold.

So please don't think that you're the exception, you're not at a point in your life where it's too late for you and wouldn't it have been nice to have known that. No, I promise you that you are creating some unnecessary suffering for yourself that I can help you with.

Some of the suffering you're going to want to keep, as do we all. Some of it is pain that is just a part of life that we don't want to change our belief systems around it. But I guarantee you, there is a big chunk of it that's unnecessary, that's weighing you down, that's holding you back, that I can help you to take a look at.

And that is what we are doing in Be Bold, so please don't wait another day. We need you in there, I want to help you, I want to get to know you, and I, again, have so much respect and admiration for you. I hope that you will allow us to tap into that wisdom by helping you become your strongest version of you. Go sign up for Be Bold, you go to jodymoore.com/membership and get ready because we're going to have a lot of fun.

Alright, you guys, thanks for joining me today, I will see you next week. Take care.

Who is your life coach? If you don't have one I would be so honored to be your coach. I created a virtual coaching program called Be Bold that I want to invite you to join me in. We can address challenges, we can work on goals, and we can do it in so many different ways.

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