

278. Renewal



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Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy* episode 278: Renewal.

Did you know that you can live a life that's even better than happy? My name is Jody Moore. I'm a master certified life coach, and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. And if you're willing to go with me, I can show you how. Let's go.

What's up everybody? Welcome to the podcast. Listen, I don't know what you're feeling right now. I don't know what might be going on in your life. I don't know by the time this podcast is published what will be going on in the United States of America or in the rest of the world. I don't know what will be going on with Covid or at your kids' school or in your family. So many things are changing so rapidly.

But here's what I do know, for the next 20 to 35 minutes I've got you. So whatever worries, anxieties, fears, stress you might have going on in your life I want you to just set it aside for a moment. And I want you to just trust me that everything's going to be okay. You're just allowed to believe that. You can go back to worrying as soon as this episode ends if you want to, or you don't have to. But I just want to offer to you for a moment to sit with me, listen to my voice. Learn what I'm going to teach you today.

I think it's an awesome version of self-care when you show up here and you listen to this podcast. So I want to congratulate you and thank you for taking care of yourself in this way. I'm all for bubble baths, and manicures, and girls' night out and all that. But I think the best version of self-care is self-improvement. So that's what we're going to do here today.

I want to talk to you today about the renewal cycle. So this is a theory of adult development that was developed by Frederic Hudson. And I am by no means an expert in this theory so I'm going to do my best to share with you the way I learned it and also the little bit of research I did to prepare for this episode. But please forgive me if I do make any mistakes, it's definitely not intentional. But I was thinking about again, just everything going on.

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We've been dealing with the effects of Covid for a while now. And I'm noticing a collective shift in our energy. And it goes on over and over again; it's not just one time that we have a shift. There is a shift that happens and then we shift back and then we shift again. And we do it individually at varying times and at varying paces, but we also sort of do it collectively. And sometimes just understanding what's going on with us and what's going on for us gives us a lot of peace around it.

So that is my hope today is that I'm going to be able to share some information that for me gives me a lot of peace. I hope it will do the same for you. So the theory of renewal talks about four phases.

Now, I think that it's interesting to think about the natural rhythm of four, because there's something about the number four that we can wrap our heads around. This is why perhaps anyway we see four in a lot of places. We see football games and basketball games, a lot of other sports divided into four quarters. We see school often divided into four quarters, or two semesters made up of each two quarters. We tend to talk about the calendar year in quarters, especially in business. We talk about quarter one, quarter two, quarter three, quarter four.

We divide things in quarters because it helps us view things in a short enough time span that we can really wrap our heads around it, but also gives us enough distance, enough length, if you will, in terms of how far we're looking to really enact some change, so quarters are useful.

Now, we also see quarters probably most obviously when we look at seasons. That is the way our world tends to work, that is the way the Earth works is we have four seasons and those seasons look different of course everywhere in the world. They may not be as obvious in some places as they are in others in terms of the weather. But typically in many places we have four seasons and we move in and out of those seasons in a year time span.

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So, four is kind of an interesting number for us human beings to wrap our heads around. And so I love thinking about this process of renewal as something that we are moving through, the way the seasons change. So I want to break down each part of renewal and then I'm going to talk about it with regards to some of the things you might be going through in your life. I'm going to really specifically focus in on the kinds of thoughts and feelings that we tend to have in each phase.

Now, as I do this I want to preface it by saying this is not so that you can tell yourself, yeah, see, I have to think this way and feel this way, or of course I'm going to because I'm in this phase of renewal. You have the ability to override this any time you want.

So when I learn a tool like this, whether it be personality types, or love languages, or any other kind of theory that tends to classify people in buckets, I think that kind of information can be really empowering. But like anything else, you could use it against yourself. And that is not what I want to encourage you to do today. I don't want you to use it to keep yourself stuck. So I'm going to talk through some of that as we go.

Let's start with phase one. Phase one of renewal is called go for it. I did not come up with these names. I mean I like the name, it's pretty obvious, but anyway phase one is called go for it. So in phase one we tend to be somewhat energized. And renewal I should back up and say is a process that we go through as human beings when we're dealing with change. So we tend to be energized in phase one. Let's look at, if we look at the model that I teach you guys, we're going to dive in specifically like I said to the thoughts and feelings that we have.

So maybe the change is a change that you wanted, it might be a marriage, or a birth, a new baby, a new grandchild in the family. It might be children growing up and leaving the house or growing up and all going to school. It might be a new job, a new city, a new house, so any kind of change that's significant to us is going to oftentimes put us in a renewal cycle. So

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oftentimes like I said, phase one, go for it is where we are somewhat excited about the change.

Now, I want to speak to each of these phases with regards to the change that we all experienced last March in the United States and varying times in other countries. But the change that we experienced when Covid-19 really hit your country and things started really changing around you. So I'm going to call it social distancing. Now, most of us didn't have thoughts, yay, this is going to be awesome, I'm so energized about this change.

But what I think phase one looked like, if you were in phase one was sort of a determination. It was thoughts like okay, we can do this. This is only temporary. We're not going to be like this forever. In some ways this is really good for us.

This could even be fun in some ways, having a break from our usual life. We actually really needed this change. This slowdown is really nice. Did you have any of those kinds of thoughts in the beginning? If so you were in phase one. Those kinds of thoughts probably generate feelings like creativity, being strategic, curious, determined, open-minded, optimistic. So even though that's not a change that any of us probably would have signed up for or asked for, many people went through a phase one.

Now, not everybody goes through phase one, some people skip right to phase two. Before we go to phase two though, I want you to think about phase one with regards to the other things in life. When we first get engaged we're pretty excited about getting married. That phase can last varying times for different events in your life and for different people. Phase one is pretty fun, it feels pretty good. Those emotions obviously are going to serve us well. Let me read them one more time, creativity, strategy, curious, determined, open-minded, optimistic.

Alright, it is natural for us as human beings going through change to then at some point move into phase two. Phase two according to the renewal

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theory is called the doldrums. Again, I did not name these. I don't think I would have picked the doldrums as the name but it does describe the phase pretty well. This is where we start feeling discouraged. This is where the excited bubble or the at least kind of confident, curious, optimistic bubble gets popped. And our brains start thinking, wait a second, this is harder than I thought.

Here's some of the thoughts that come with phase two. This is hard. I don't want this. I just want things to go back to normal. When is this going to end? This is not fair. They're not doing it right. So in phase two we start feeling feelings like discouragement, frustration, fear, worry, blame, criticism, self-pity, resentment, anger. So I want you to think about this not only for yourself, to have compassion for yourself, but also to have compassion for other people.

When people are blaming, we're accusing or pointing fingers, or criticizing or downright yelling at one another, they're probably in phase two of some kind of a change, I mean they may be, if it's surrounding a change. So we have seen this with the pandemic. We see people becoming more and more judgmental of whether or not our leaders are handling it correctly, whether or not the schools should be open, whether or not we should be wearing masks. Whose fault is this anyway?

Should we have handled it differently in the country in the first place? All of this kind of chatter is coming from that phase two type thinking. Now, phase two does not feel very good at all. In fact it's, I think the worst feeling of all the phases. It's the heaviest, keeps us the most stuck, you might believe that you're doing it wrong, that you should be happier, that you should be dealing with this better. It's all just coming from what the brain is going through as you move through this cycle of renewal.

If we choose to move through phase two and we don't get stuck there then we can move into phase three which is called cocooning. I like the name cocooning, good job on that one. Cocooning is just what it implies, think

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about a caterpillar going into a cocoon, wrapping itself up, removing itself from all the external stimulus, taking itself out of the outside world and allowing itself to actually melt down in order to change. So in our world of the pandemic what cocooning looks like is thoughts like, okay God, I'm open, help me, tell me.

So maybe you reach out to God, maybe you reach out to experts, or friends, or family, maybe you do some of all of that. It's a reaching out and an opening up for help. It's a surrender of holding on so tight to what we think should be and what we think we know. And an opening up to show me, tell me. I included here some thoughts like this matters, that doesn't matter, because this often happens in a cocooning process. It's a realignment of priorities. It's a reset button sort of that happens within us. It creates feelings like humility, surrender, reverence, peace, relief.

Sometimes phase three can feel like a relief because it's a letting go of what we had in phase two. So it's a surrender, it's a reverence. I think there's a real spiritual component to phase three, the cocooning because it is where we now focus on self-care, discovery and it's a healing phase. Once we move through phase three we move into phase four which is called getting ready for the next chapter.

So in phase four now we've had somewhat of a transformation within us, not a transformation necessarily outside of us. We can still be in the midst of social distancing and pandemic and move into phase four where we are now having thoughts like let's try this. We could recreate it. This might work. This could even be better in fact. What else can I try? What else can we do?

So notice we're preparing for the next change but we've moved through the cocooning phase into maybe now ready to take some action, ready to try some things out, which is going to generate feelings like being experimental, creative, curious, determined, committed, strategic, optimistic. Notice these sound really similar to the emotions I think we feel

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in phase one. So phase four, excuse me, tends to feel pretty good because we're starting to move back into phase one.

What I want you to know about the renewal cycle is that it works in a circle. We go from phase four back to phase one, which means phase two and three are probably coming again behind it at some point.

Now, here are the other things I want to say about a cycle like this is it's not as linear as alright, I'm in phase two, now I'm going to move phase three. You might move in and out of phases, not always in its exact sequential order.

The other thing is, and I kind of mentioned this earlier but I just want to reiterate it. The amount of time that that phase might last varies tremendously. It varies from one individual to the next. It varies based on the severity of the change that you're experiencing. It varies based on a lot of different factors. And I dare say you can go in and out of it over and over again, even surrounding the same change. You might move through a whole cycle in a week. You might move in and out of it, it make take you a longer time.

You might stay in one phase a really long time and sort of skip through the others really quickly. So unfortunately and fortunately it's not just a linear checklist of items. But what I hope you'll do with this is to have again, some awareness and to be reaching for the next phase, especially if you're in phase two.

If you're tired of feeling anxious, if you're tired of feeling angry, or overwhelmed, or whatever it is you might be feeling about anything going on in our world right now, then reach for that cocooning phase, reach for that inward truth finding. Reach for finding internal peace even though everything outside of you is exactly the same, because I do believe that every one of us as human beings has access to that.

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I want to read you a poem by Maggie Smith called Good Bones. So, *as life is short, though I keep this from my children, life is short, and I have shortened mine in 1,000 delicious ill-advised ways. A 1,000 deliciously ill-advised ways I'll keep from my children. The world is at least 50% terrible and that's a conservative estimate, though I keep this from my children.*

For every bird there is a stone thrown at a bird, for every loved child, a child broken, bagged, sunk in a lake. Life is short and the world is at least half terrible. And for every kind stranger there is one who would break you, though I keep this from my children. I am trying to sell them the world. Any decent realtor walking you through a real asshole, I won't swear, chirps on about good bones. This place could be beautiful, right? You could make this place beautiful.

I love that poem because I think it's an accurate description of how we are as adults and how we try to protect our children. But I do think that we could make this place beautiful. It does have good bones. Our country, our families, our neighborhoods, our world, people in general, good bones. And it's always going to be 50/50 but we will evolve as a species and it will never be the same 50/50 for too long anyway, and then change occurs whether we want it or not.

And just remember that change is hard, it's challenging, especially changes that we didn't ask for and never would. It's challenging even when it is change that we wanted. So you must be kind with yourself and you must be onto yourself that you're just in a phase of renewal. And you won't sit there forever, you will move through it if you open up to it and allow yourself. The brain though prefers what is known, even if what is known isn't great. Even if what we know is painful and terrible the brain prefers that over the unknown.

I love the scene in Finding Nemo when Dory and Marlin have been swallowed by a whale. They're looking for Nemo. They're on this huge adventure in the ocean trying to get to Nemo. And at one point they get

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swallowed up by a whale. And they're holding onto the whale's tongue in an attempt to not go all the way down his throat into his belly. And Dory gets this internal intuition to let go.

She believes that she understands the whale and he's telling them to let go but Marlin doesn't believe her. And she just says, "We have to let go." And she doesn't know why and Marlin doesn't really trust it. He prefers the known of staying there holding onto that whale's tongue even though it's terrible, even though it seems like death is imminent. If he lets go he doesn't know, things might be even worse is what our brains say.

Dory says to him, "Just let go." And he says, "How do you know everything will be okay?" And she says, "I don't." And then she lets go. And then Marlin lets go. And of course then the whale does whatever whales do when they project water out of their blowhole and out come Dory and Marlin and now they're safe. But that's how life is sometimes, guys.

We go into that cocooning phase and we are prompted through the spirit or through your intuition, or whatever you want to call it, to make changes. And the brain will say, "But how do you know I'll be okay?" And the way I always answer is, "I don't." But we're going to move through this anyway and we have to put some trust in things at times.

So a final thought I'll leave with you is to remember to reach for forward movement, there is no such thing as reaching back. There is no such thing as going back in time, we can't go back in the past, we can't recreate things that were. So when I say reach for forward movement what I mean is in your head. Think about the future.

Think about what you want to do now and what you want to create in the future rather than focusing on what was in the past, on what you wish still was, or what you think should have been, or what you think went wrong. That is such a waste of your brain juice, my friend. Think about the future and that will move you through the renewal cycle faster and with more

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peace, even when you're in phase two. As you think about moving forward your brain will work with you to create that.

Listen, I want you to know that I love you, I think about you non-stop. I think about how to better help you. I think about all of you who are in my coaching program and how to really push you to the next level because I love you. And I want to thank you for hanging with me and trying this on in your life. Thank you for sharing it, please keep doing that. And I will see you next week for another episode. 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.

We have group coaching, individual private coaching, and online chats along with hundreds of hours of courses and content that I've created just for you. When you're ready to really take what you're learning on the podcast to the 10x level, then come check out Be Bold at JodyMoore.com/membership.