

307: Just a Thought



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Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 307: Just a Thought.

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.

That's just a thought. If you have been following me for very long, certainly if you're in my coaching program, or in my family, or in my circle of friends you might find yourself saying, "That's just a thought." And if you're new to me then welcome. You might find yourself saying this pretty soon. And I want to dive into the thought, that's just a thought. Is it a full sentence or is it a phrase? I don't know. I think if we had 'that's' then it's a complete sentence, that's just a thought.

But I want to talk about it today because we throw it around sort of casually and jokingly. I'm all good with that, I think it's kind of fun. But it really is a powerful, powerful statement. And I want to talk to you about why. So first of all if you're in my family then you say this sarcastically to one another. It's sort of an underhanded way to tell someone that you think they're wrong. And that's not what I want to teach you today.

But I'll tell you that my kids do this and I don't really spend a lot of time teaching them the model or the things I teach you here on the podcast. But they can't help but pick up some of it by just being in our family. And so sometimes I'll say something like, "This kitchen is such a mess." And then my 14 year old son will say, "That's just a thought." I'm like, "Yes, it is and it's the thought I'm choosing."

I come from a family of life coaches as many of you know. I have several siblings, and a mother, and anyway we're all life coaches. And so some of them will say it to each other every now and then, "It's just a thought." My coach friends, we say this to each other. It's true about most things that come out of our mouths, most of what we say is thinking.

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We share our thoughts out loud because that's the interesting part of what's happening for us and what might be happening for other people. That's what makes us interesting as people. That's what makes life interesting. That's what helps us navigate the world is our thoughts.

So the goal is not to not have thoughts, or not speaking thoughts but the statement 'that's just a thought' is a powerful way to back yourself up from what you're thinking, and what you're experiencing, and what you're creating. And notice that it's all just a brain thing. It's all happening in your head and then playing out in your behavior and in the world around you. And you're experiencing the world through your thoughts. You're not experiencing the world as it is.

You're experiencing the world through your thoughts. And that's a pretty powerful thing to know. So I want to dive into it. The two words we're going to explore 'just' and 'thought'. I know you're like, "Wait a second, this sounds very basic." But stay with me for just a minute. The reason I love that it starts with the word 'just' is because it implies that there's not a real problem here. There's not real danger. There's nothing that we have to be really afraid of. There's nothing that we have to manipulate or control to the level that our brains think we do.

It's just a thought as in don't freak out, don't panic. Nobody's going to die over this. It's just a thought. So when we know that it's just a thought then we can apply that to also whatever feeling because thoughts create feelings. If you're new to me, stay with me.

Thoughts create feelings. It's also just an emotion. In other words it's not a big problem. It doesn't mean that something has necessarily gone wrong or something has necessarily gone fantastically. It's just a feeling. It's not dangerous. It's not something that we have to fix right away. It's not something that you can't handle. It's not something that your body doesn't know what to do with. It's just a thought and it's creating a feeling which is just a feeling, a feeling that you've created with a thought.

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I'll tell you, I had a time in my life when I was living in a lot of fear about some things going on in our family. And I was worried about the outcome of such things. There were some legal issues and things and I was worried about what was going to happen. And I would find myself feeling a lot of fear. And what would comfort me is these are just sentences in my brain. In other words, these are just thoughts. Everybody's fine. Everybody in my family is doing great right now. Nobody's suffering in a lot of pain, or in a lot of danger, or in a terrible situation.

As far as I know anyway right now in this moment, it could change tomorrow, but right now everybody's fine. So it's just a thought. It's just thinking that's creating this fear for me. It's just sentences in my brain. Might some of those thoughts, some of the things I'm worried about, come true? Yeah, they might. But right now these are just thoughts and then what I'm feeling inside my body is just an emotion. In other words, not something gone wrong, not a big problem, not something we have to get rid of or run away from, just a feeling. You see the power of that word 'just'?

Now let's talk about the word 'thought'. It's just a thought. The reason we talk about thoughts so much here on the Better Than Happy podcast is because thoughts are the part that are just made up by us as humans. They're not real. They're not tangible. They're not rules. They're not facts. They're not set in stone. They're not necessarily true.

And sometimes when I tell people that they think that I'm saying, "So you should go to the opposite extreme, you should decide that's not true." And then they're like, "I don't know if I can get there." And I will say, "No, we don't have to go to that extreme, in fact you could even keep the very thought you have. You can decide you still believe it, that you want to believe it. Or that you just want to keep it around for future use." It's still just a thought. It's not a fact. It's not the reality of how the world works. It's not what's true. Again, it's your interpretation of the world.

So let's look at some examples, I am teaching Train Your Brain. We're having so much fun, doing some amazing coaching. I'm meeting some of

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the greatest people in there. And so some of these examples come from things I've coached on in there or things I've coached recently on in Be Bold with clients or frequently in the past. So here's a thought that came up recently.

She's not there for me like I'm there for her. I coached a young lady about a couple of her friends. And she said, "My friends, they're not there for me." Now, this shows up in all different forms. But she's not there for me is not your observation of what's true. It's not you telling me about her. It's you telling me your thought about her. She's not there for me is just a thought. Because what does it even mean to be there for someone? What does that look like?

There's no way that everyone in the world would ever agree on what it means to be there for your friend. It just wouldn't happen. It's just a story. It's just an idea. You have an idea in your mind of what it should look like for your friend to be there for you in order for you to say, "She's totally there for me." But your friend may have a different idea. Certainly lots of people in the world have different ideas. So she's not there for me like I'm there for her. She doesn't initiate getting together like I do.

I know you guys think you're telling me about what's true with your friendship. You're not. You're telling me your thought. That is just a thought. She doesn't initiate, is just a thought. I promise you it's not the truth. It's not a fact. Now, when I tell people, "That's just a thought", they'll say, "Okay, but let me give you some examples." And they could give me examples all day long. And what I tell them is that "That still doesn't make it a fact."

That doesn't change the fact that it's a thought because your brain has been on the lookout for examples of that thought, just like all of our brains are on the lookout for evidence that our thoughts are true. So of course you've gathered a lot on the way because you have an amazing, brilliant brain that's doing exactly what it's supposed to do, which is pick up rocks that fit nicely in the basket of she's not there for me. And leave the ones on

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the ground that don't fit that basket if possible. Sometimes you'll accidentally pick up some others.

You'll be like, "I mean sometimes she does this nice thing." But mostly your brain is looking for rocks that fit in the basket of she's not there for me. And you've got a basket full of them now and it's a very heavy, heavy basket you're carrying around. And I'm not telling you that you have to believe that she's totally there for you. I'm just saying, she's not there for me is just a thought. That means it's an optional made up story.

And when you recognize that it's just a thought then you can go to the next step of I could be wrong. I mean it's possible. Other people could be in the exact same circumstance, meaning that they've interacted with this friend of mine in the exact same way that I've interacted and they could have a different thought. They could think she's really busy. She means well but she forgets sometimes, or she's in a lot of pain and so she doesn't know how to behave the way I wish she would. Or she has a different idea about what friendship looks like than I do.

I mean that's just a few. There are literally hundreds of others that are possible options that would be realistic to still believe in this scenario. So she's not there for me, just a thought.

Here's another one I hear a lot. I love this one. From parents they say, "My teenager's been lying to me." And I'll say, "Okay, what's the problem?" And they'll say, "Well, I mean I don't want them to lie obviously. Teenagers shouldn't lie to their parents." I'm like, "Really? Did you know that's a thought, teenagers should not lie to their parents is just a thought? You can keep it if you want to." Sometimes people get defensive, they think I'm going to try to take their little thought away from them.

I'm like, "I really don't care at all if you want to keep that thought. I love you. You can keep it, not going to keep me up at night if you do. I just simply want to point out to you as your coach that it's just a thought. It's a thought that you heard somewhere along the way." Someone offers us thoughts all

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the time in our lives and then we pick them up unknowingly then we think they're just truths about the world like teenagers shouldn't lie to their parents.

I'm like, "It's an interesting thought to have if your teenager's lying to you. I just want you to question if it's serving you. And maybe it is. Maybe you want to keep it." But many times I find that it's not. It's just a story. We could be wrong about it. It's just a thought, it's not a fact. There is no rulebook of how to be a teenager for the world that everyone agrees on that says teenagers shouldn't lie. Some of you are thinking about doctrine we teach in our church about honesty. And everyone in the world doesn't agree with our church so it's not a fact. It's just a thought. It's a story.

And even within our church, I'm a member of that church, a very active member, a very strong testimony. But I don't walk around thinking teenagers shouldn't lie to their parents because you know what I've noticed? Some of them do lie to their parents. So I find that that thought is pretty disempowering and creates judgment and disconnection in families. It creates frustration and resentment in parents.

So the alternative doesn't have to be teenagers should lie. It's totally okay for them to lie. I mean you could go there if you want to. But there's also hundreds or thousands of other options that we could think. Teenagers shouldn't lie is just a thought.

How about sometimes teenagers do lie? And I get it, I understand why. They don't want to get in trouble. If they did something they weren't supposed to do and then they tell us then they get in trouble. I totally understand why they lied. And I can still hold them accountable if I want to. I can still teach them about honesty integrity if I want to. And I don't have to walk around thinking teenagers shouldn't lie to do any of those things. It's just a thought, that's all I'm saying.

Here's one we coached on today in Train Your Brain. Grandparents should want to spend a lot of time with their grandkids. I coached the sweetest

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young girl whose like, “I don’t understand why the grandparents don’t want to come be with my kids, their grandkids. They should want to see them more.” Now, even just they don’t spend a lot of time with my kids is a thought. What’s a lot of time?

When we dove into it, I learned that they come and see her kids about once a month. I was like, “Well, that seems like a lot to me.” No, in her mind that’s not.

But the next layer that’s causing her a lot of pain is that they should want to come see the kids more. They shouldn’t want to spend their time with friends enjoying their retirement, that’s selfish. They should want to hang out with their grandkids to which I say, “What? That’s just a thought you realize. And it sounds like such a lovely pretty thought. It’s a painful terrible one. You’re bringing a lot of judgment and resentment into your family with that thought. You know what the grandparents should do? Whatever they want to do, that’s what I think.”

She’s like, “Well, they’re retired, so they should be able to spend time.” I’m like, “They’re retired. We should let them do whatever they want. They spent their lives working and raising their own kids. Now they get to do whatever they want. That’s a good part. Now, if they want to spend time with their grandkids, great, if you want that.” But otherwise I don’t understand why we’re judging them. I mean let’s be honest; kids are great and all but also better when you don’t have to see them as much.

I’m just saying, it’s not as far stretched to understand why they wouldn’t want to spend as much time with the kids as they want to hanging out with their friends. I mean let’s be real. Now, does that mean they don’t love your kids? No. I mean I don’t know, maybe some of them don’t. But it doesn’t necessarily mean that. They can totally love your kids and not want to spend time with them. This is not a stretch. So if you have this idea, that’s just how the world works, that’s what good grandparents do. That’s what people should do.

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You can keep those thoughts if you want to. Just don't forget they're just thoughts. And my thoughts are just my thoughts too. I'm very well aware of that. What I love about knowing it's just a thought is I know that it's all optional. And I know that I'm not right and somebody else isn't right, and I'm not wrong and they're not wrong because these are just thoughts. So we're all right and we're all wrong. We're all just walking around thinking thoughts.

Women should stay home with their kids, just a thought. Women should work if they want to work, just a thought. Women should work only if they have to work, just a thought. Women should do whatever the heck they want to do, just a thought. Pick the one that feels the most true to you, that's all I'm saying. Which one feels right to you, you have to decide that.

I'm a really good mom, that's just a thought you guys, it's not an observation of you. It's not an assessment of you. There's no mom report card that the whole world agrees on that we could fill out and say, "She is a good mom." Or "She is a bad mom." That's not a thing either, that's just a thought. We will never be able to prove if you're a good mom or a bad mom. So if your brain is wrestling with that trying to figure it out, it's a waste of your brain because it's all just a thought.

I had this interesting thing happen where on – was it on a podcast or somewhere? I shared something about girls' camp in our stake. I think it was on the podcast about how our stake does an awesome job with girls' camp. Yeah, it was a podcast. I said, "Our stake does an awesome job with girls' camp. It was a podcast on quitting.

And one of my sweet clients, there's a place in my program where people can write in questions. And so somebody wrote in and said, "I'm a young women's president, I want to know about your girls' camp, what makes it so great? Could you tell me a little bit about the schedule and things like that?" And I thought about it and I realized, I mean there's nothing unique. It's the same thing that everybody does. They have some classes, and they have a

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devotional at night, and they have testimony meeting. And they swim in the lake, and they eat food, and they camp out.

And then I realized you know why that girl's camp is so awesome? Because I think it's awesome. To me it's awesome. Somebody else might come along and be like, "I don't know about girls camp in your stake, it's a little over the top, or a little bit too much, or a little bit lacking and not as good as ours." Girl's camp in our stake is awesome, it's just a thought. It's just my thought. It's not the truth about anything. It doesn't tell us anything about girl's camp. It tells you something about my brain. Interesting, it's just a thought.

I'm not very good at sales. I coach a lot of people on business. I'm getting ready to do even more coaching on business so make sure you're on the wait list at jodymoore.com/business so that you don't miss it, coming late summer we're going to be launching an awesome business program. But I hear this a lot, "I'm just not very good at selling. I'm not comfortable selling. I start feeling really awkward when I have to talk about money. I'm not very good at talking about the money part." These are all just thoughts, did you know that?

We could never give you a blood test and say, "Yes, she is positive for selling skills." That's not a thing. It's just not a thing. It's just a thought. You know what I love about understanding that almost everything that goes through my mind and comes out of my mouth is just a thought is that it gives me the ultimate leverage over myself and my life. Because I know, I know this in my bones that my thoughts will become my reality.

I want to share one other example because my husband and I went to an awesome leadership conference in Texas last week, EntreLeadership through Dave Ramsey's organization, Ramsey Solutions. A shout out to them, they did an awesome job. And one of the speakers was talking to us about how to have difficult conversations with employees. It was an awesome, awesome presentation. And he gave us steps and he's a very experienced leader and I really liked what he had to say.

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But this one example struck me as interesting. He started out by saying that he had an experience recently at work where he had to fire an employee. And that employee's wife is friends with his wife and he called the woman Cindy. I don't know what her real name was. But that day after he had fired that employee, he's at home and his wife says, "I just got a text from Cindy." And they're both a little nervous and she opens up her phone and Cindy says, "Today was a rough day but your husband handled everything with so much love and grace. I hope we can still be friends. Cindy."

Now, that's pretty awesome. He gave that example to illustrate that he was about to teach us a process for holding employees accountable that could be really loving and kind. That your employees might leave and everybody could still love each other in the end. And I do think that that's a powerful way to start that presentation. It definitely made all of us listen up. But my thought was that text message tells me a lot about Cindy. It doesn't tell me very much about your process. I'm still totally open and want to learn your process, but it tells me the most about Cindy.

So Cindy's thought that was a very loving and fair process was just a thought. It sounds like it was a beautiful thought for her to think. Of course the person giving this speech and his wife loved that she had that thought, but that was just Cindy's thought.

So listen you guys, all of us are going to have lots of different thoughts and some of our thoughts are going to be useful and some are not. And that's the power of coaching is we try to do thought maintenance, thought cleanup. We try to keep as many of our thoughts as possible, creating what we want in our lives.

But if you're just starting out and you feel overwhelmed and you're not sure where to begin, begin with starting to recognize sentences in your head that are just thoughts. Because most of what you're thinking is a reflection of what's true in the world is just a thought. What a beautiful thing to know.

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Have a great rest of your week. I'll be back with another episode next week, see you then.

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.