

327: Navigating Family with Diverse Worldviews



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 327: Navigating Family with Diverse World Views.

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.

Hello everybody. How's it going? Thanksgiving is a coming up right around the corner. And then we're going to have Christmas, or whatever holiday you celebrate. It's holiday time. This is exciting. This is sometimes overwhelming for some of us, stressful for some of us.

And what I want to talk to you about today is the part where you may be seeing family that you don't always spend time with. Those distant relatives that you don't see on a day-to-day basis, the ones that maybe you're not as close to. The ones that are maybe more challenging for you to be around some of them, some of them I hope that you're looking forward to seeing. But some of them may be more challenging for you.

And I feel like over the past couple of years we've had this dynamic that has existed for a long time between families. Where sometimes we struggle when certain members of our family have different opinions, different world views than we do. But I feel like that problem has become magnified tenfold in the last couple of years with everything going on.

And so, I want to speak to it today because I want you to start thinking about this right now. I want you to think about it many weeks before you go see family members whether you're travelling or they're coming to you, for those of you that are in that situation. And in fact, it's going to be the focus of the workshop I'm teaching in Be Bold in November. So, starting in about a week and a half from when this podcast airs. I'm going to be teaching a whole workshop on how to do this.

But I want to begin today with getting your head in the right place. I want to start pointing you in the direction of how to handle this. And for those of you

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in Be Bold, there will be a lot more. And if you're not in Be Bold and want to join us, of course you can always do that. Go to jodymoore.com, click on the Be Bold information page.

Let's talk about though why it can be so challenging to be around family members who view things so differently than you. Maybe they have different religious views. Maybe they have different political ideals. Maybe they have different ideas about COVID and vaccinations. Whatever it is, these tend to be sources of emotion and conflict. And I do not think that is necessary, at all, I really don't. I think that this is actually something that the adversary is very happy about and that he plays on in our minds to try to drive families apart, to try to create contention, and despair, and distain in the world.

And that is not what I want to be a part of. And I know it's not what you want to be a part of either. So, let's just understand it a little bit. I always like to begin with acceptance, and curiosity, and compassion for where we are. I do not find it useful to think that something's gone terribly wrong, or that we are less loving, less kind as a people. Even sometimes people want to send me articles about how there's so much fear in the world today and why that's a problem and who's fault that is. And I just don't find any of that to be useful.

I find it most useful to think, of course we're feeling the way we're feeling. Of course, we're where we're at collectively as a society, as a country here in the United States of America or whatever country you might be in, and also as a family or as an individual. Of course, we are. This is all part of the journey. Nothing's gone wrong here. We're not looking to place blame because nothing's really gone wrong. From that space we get a lot more access and awareness to it that allows us to get some leverage over it.

So, this weekend my husband and I are going to go out on a date with some friends as well, double date, triple date. And we're going to go to dinner, and then we're going to go see the new James Bond. Now, I have not seen the new James Bond but I'm pretty sure I know what's going to

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happen. I know that James Bond, while he we might say has some questionable values, is ultimately going to be portrayed as the good guy. He's going to be the hero. He's going to save the day in some way.

And there will be other people who are portrayed as good guys or good ladies. And some of them we will find out later actually weren't good. I genuinely haven't seen it. So this is not a spoiler alert, this is just some guesses. Some of the ones we thought were good we're going to find out were actually bad and maybe vice versa. And there are going to be very clear bad guys also in the story. Clear villains, clear people who are doing harm, who are just out to serve only themselves and they're going to be the bad guys.

And I'm going to be inside cheering for the good guys. And there will be some drama, and some twists and turns, and things, and that will be the movie. My kids and husband and I all love the Avengers movies. How many of them are there now? I don't know. So many. They keep making new ones. They keep somehow coming up with new things to throw in there. But when I go to see an Avengers movie, I know what's going to happen. I mean I don't know exactly what's going to happen. But I pretty much know what's going to happen.

I know that the Avengers are going to be portrayed as the good guys. And they're going to be fighting for justice, and peace, and kindness, and whatever else the Avengers, what do they stand for? I don't know. Good things. And while they're not perfect and they're going to struggle with their own issues and things. Overall, they are trying to do what's right. And then there are going to be some bad guys. Usually they're mythical, made up, not even real people in many cases. As I guess the Avengers kind of are too.

But at any rate, there will be bad guys who are a lot uglier than the Avengers, and a lot louder, and a lot more violent, and a lot more angry. And this is true of James Bond movies, and Avengers movies, and Star Wars movies. And even romantic comedies have clear good guys and bad

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guys. This is the way it goes in a good story. And sometimes the 'bad guy' might be just a force in the world, or a natural disaster, or something like that.

But we love a story that has heroes, and villains, and victims. That's what we love. Because it's interesting. And because we believe this is kind of how the world works. We believe that there are good guys and bad guys. And we like to believe that mostly we're the good guys. We are, we're the good guys. I mean we see it the right way. And it's just so unfortunate for the rest of the world that they don't see it our way, some of the world, I should say.

And again, I'm talking about religion. I'm talking about politics. I'm talking about the way you should raise your children. I'm talking about whether or not you should get Botox, where you should buy your clothes, what kind of food you should or shouldn't be eating. We could go on and on about the way our brains create these false dichotomies. False dichotomies. We want to put ourselves on one end of a spectrum and people who have, especially if they have the opposite view of us, on the opposite end of the spectrum.

And we do this in order to try to feel safe. We're trying to feel safe in a world that is chaotic. We're trying to feel we understand what's going on a little bit, that we can wrap our heads around it. And we're trying to feel good about ourselves. We feel justified in our opinions. And therefore we have to believe that other people's opinions are mostly unjustified. We like to clarify our own opinions even just to ourselves, but especially out loud to others who share our same opinions. We like to add evidence to the file cabinet of why our opinion is the right one.

We like to add some evidence about why the other people's opinions are wrong. All of this is building the case that we are in fact the good guys. We're on the light side. They're on the dark side. This is just the easiest way to sift through all of the complicated things that our world actually is, all of the complication that human beings actually are. We try to simplify it and

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in the process try to make ourselves feel better. We also get to connect with other people who happen to share our same opinions.

So, this is not because we're bad people. This is not because something's wrong with us. This is just a natural easy way, somewhat entertaining way even, to interpret the world. The problem is it is a false view of the way the world works. People are complicated. Opinions are layered and complicated. People's reasons for making a choice, or having a belief, or pursuing a certain course of action, or not pursuing a certain course of action. Those things are multileveled, multifaceted, and complicated.

And so, to try to simplify them the way our brains do, simply doesn't acknowledge reality and it creates separation. So, while I said we may feel more connected to people that share our same world view, at the same time we feel further away and more disconnected from people who do not. And this is not useful. This is again, if we look at today's society it's creating anger, it's creating a lot of fear, it's creating a lot of panic, and chaos, and disconnection, and judgment, and hate. That's it.

So, what's the solution? I'll tell you what my brain thinks the solution is. Tell me if you can relate to this. My brain's like if those people would just take a moment to hear me out. Those people that disagree with me about whatever the topic is, if they would just take a moment to hear me out, I'm sure they would understand. They would probably even agree with me if they would just pause and take a look at all the evidence I have been collecting, that all my friends have collected.

If they would notice how we're the good guys, they would surely want to come to our side because I know they want to be good guys. They're not these big monstrous creatures that are made up in a Star Wars or an Avengers type show. They're not that, they're humans. So I know if they would just take a moment and listen and put on their reasonable hat instead of their crazy hat, they would see what I see. But that's not the solution, you guys.

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Gosh, isn't that crazy? That's what our brains think. That's what my brain thinks, anyway. That is not the solution, because as much as I think that about whatever my world view is, everybody else thinks that about their world view as well. I'm talking about most people, most reasonable, rational people who are trying to do what's right, consider themselves good people. We all think the same thing which is: why don't you just pause and listen to what I have to tell you? And then you'll see. And then everyone will come to my side, and we'll all be the good guys and live happily ever after.

So, I want you to think about for just a minute the difference between persuasion and manipulation. The difference between being influential and even persuasive and being passive aggressive. What's the difference? What do you think? Do you ever encounter people who you find to be really persuasive, people who are influential, who influence you, your opinion about something? What is it about those people that you find to be moving, that you find speaks to a part of you, that says, "Yes, I like what you're saying, that sounds right?"

Versus the type that causes us to feel resistant, to put up a hand and say, "I don't want to hear that. And you don't know what you're talking about." And to sort of shut down, even if we're still listening, you know the difference between being open in your mind and being shut down in your mind. What's the difference?

I'll tell you what I think the difference is, I think that in order for someone to be truly persuasive and influential, and first of all, if they already share the same opinion that I do, then it's really easy. I'm like, "That person makes such a good point." But I'm talking about a subject that you don't have an opinion on yet or maybe you even have a slightly different opinion. The person that is able to be persuasive and influential does not have an agenda of getting you to change your mind. They're not angry. They're not pointing fingers in blame.

They're not out to prove something so that they can feel justified and more self-righteous. They don't even really care if you agree with them or not

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when it comes right down to it. They're not tying their emotions to whether or not you agree with them. They just have an opinion and they're offering it and sharing it out of love. And they love you. Love is a word I should put in quotes. What I mean is they're not hating you. They're not out to prove you wrong so they can prove themselves right. They just simply have an opinion.

Maybe they are an expert who's done lots of research on a topic. Maybe they have experience in some way and they're just offering it up to the world. But they typically, we can feel that they don't have this agenda of needing you to see it their way for them to feel better. That's it. When we try to be persuasive out of fear, or contempt, or hate, it's not persuasive. It's manipulative and it's passive aggressive.

We've probably all been on the receiving end of both. And I don't know about you, but I've probably been on the giving end of both, unfortunately. So, the difference is what is driving me? Am I trying to prove something or not? So that's first thing. If you're going to see family and you want to have discussions about certain topics, make sure you clean up your brain. Make sure you understand that if you go into that trying to prove something so you can feel justified, it's going to be received one way. Probably not the way you want. It's probably going to create division in your family.

So, what's the alternative? Either don't talk about it at all. Isn't that what they say with family, don't talk about politics and religion? You can just not talk about it at all. Even if someone else brings it up, you can just change the subject, or you can just leave the room. But if you want to, if you want to challenge yourself to get better at navigating the world, at navigating, start with your family, and then broaden to the world.

I like to push myself to get better at navigating relationships where people don't see the world the way I do. I find that to be really useful. It's really expansive. It's really connecting. I feel like it helps me be more influential in the way that I want to be. It helps me be a better missionary. It helps me be a better sister, or aunt, or cousin, or whatever it is, my relation to the people

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I'm talking to. So, if you want to push yourself, you have to clean your head up first.

I'll tell you the thought I like the most when I'm going into a situation like this. I remind myself they don't need to understand why I see it the way I do. I understand. I don't need them to get it, I get it. Now, if it comes up and we want to discuss it, I keep that thought. I don't need them to see it my way. I already see it my way. They don't have to do it for me. So that's just a quick little shortcut. And it might take practice. It's not going to be your default at first. Your default's going to be to try to convince them. But that's okay. We want them to see it however they choose to see it. So, we drop the part where we have an agenda.

The next thing I want to offer, and I have about seven tools total like I said, some of them are going to take a lot more time. And I'm going to in the workshop that we'll do in Be Bold, I'm going to bring on people with specific examples. I want to hear what's going on in your family. What's the challenge that you're worried about? What's been your pattern in the past in your family? And we're going to talk through them and I'm going to teach you a whole bunch of tools.

But the other one I wanted to give you here today on the podcast is something I've talked about before whenever I talk about family reunions, or holidays, or anything. And it's especially for the women listening, we tend to go into it with this thought, I just want everyone to get along. I just want everyone to have a good time. Doesn't it sound like a nice thought? It sounds lovely and kind.

It's not a useful thought in most cases, it's actually a pretty toxic thought. Because when we say, "I just want everyone to get along and have a good time", we're up in everybody else's business. And that's scary because we can't control them. As much as we may try, we can't make everyone get along. At least I haven't figured out how to. If you've figured out how to please send me a DM on Instagram, or email me, or something and let me

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know. But so far, I've yet to find anyone that has learned how to force anyone to get along.

And even I've yet to find anyone that's been able to figure out how to make sure everybody's happy and has a good time because we can't control the other people outside of us. So, I always tell my clients when they say this, "Hey, what if we drop that thought and we replace it with, I just want people to feel however they want to feel." And I want people to have whatever experience they choose to have at Thanksgiving. I just want people to be people.

And some people are going to choose to get along and have a good time. And some people are not going to be able to or they're going to choose not to. We've got all different kinds of people in our family, don't we? Some of them will make some choices consciously. Many of them will make a lot of unconscious choices and not realize that it's even a choice. And it's all fine. What if we just want people to feel however they feel?

If you know that your mom and your sister are going to come and they're going to fight because they always do. Then just decide that we just want them to have whatever experience they choose to have and it's totally okay. And if they get in a fight, when they get in a fight, then who do I want to be? That is one of my most favorite questions to ask myself in any situation, you guys. Who do I want to be now? Instead of, I just wish my mom and my sister could get along.

No, we're not in charge of them. We can't control them. They might not. Who do I want to be if I have a mom and a sister who are arguing? What do I want to do? How do I want to feel about them? I just find the most peace comes when I recognize that we're a bunch of human beings doing the best we can. Sometimes our best is pretty bad. And that all bad behavior from myself or anyone else comes from fear. It doesn't come from someone being right and someone being wrong. It doesn't come from someone being a good guy and someone being a bad guy.

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It just comes from fear and fear can take lots of different forms. Fear can be confusion, overwhelm, shame, guilt, worry. It's all just fear. That's it, you combine that. And I'm talking about the healthiest of human beings are operating many times from some version of fear, we all are.

Then you combine that with human beings who have been through trauma in their lives, human beings who are dealing with mental illness, human beings who are living in a world that's unlike anything we've seen before. And all of that becomes magnified. And that's what we're witnessing in the world today at times.

Now here's the last thing I want to say, well, almost the last thing. As much chaos, and fear, and whatever, separation, and anger, and hate as we have in our world. We have in equal measure an abundance of love, and peace, and grace, and acceptance, and faith, and trust. Because we have a world that has opposition in all things.

And I want to give this example where I was at a meeting once for parents about the dangers of social media. We were learning about the kinds of things that can go wrong if kids aren't careful, if we don't monitor our kids social media time, if we don't put restrictions on things and make sure privacy settings are in place and teach our kids. It was sort of a warning of like these are some situations that kids have gotten themselves into, and it was meant to inform us as parents. Super useful. We want to be informed.

But it was a very fear based presentation. It was lots of talking about what has gone wrong, and what could go wrong. And as parents, I can't think of anything scarier than thinking of something bad happening to your child.

So, this was the meeting, at the end of the meeting a gentleman sitting in the front row raised his hand, and he said, "This is all important information and I'm so glad that we understand it. But also, I work in the field of information technology. And I just want you to know that I go to large conferences multiple times a year with huge rooms packed full of the most

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brilliant IT minds who are busily working to counteract all the dangers that exist on the internet today. And that there are so many good people.”

And I just felt this warmth come over my body when I heard this man talk. I started picturing these huge rooms full of really smart men and women who understand technology way better than I do. And who understand even the dangers of technology better than I do. And who are using their amazing gifts, and skills, and talents to try to counteract the negative. That’s pretty awesome. And in every area of our world, we have that. As much fear, and anger, and pain we have, we also have love, and goodness, and kindness because there is opposition in all things.

And so, we don’t need to bring fear, we don’t need to bring insecurity to thanksgiving if we don’t want. I like to think about thanksgiving in my family, anyway, it’s usually like a potluck. Somebody’s going to prepare, whoever’s hosting’s probably going to do the turkey, and then we’re all going to divide up the sides, and the pie, and the desserts, and all the things that we want to have at thanksgiving.

And I like to think about emotions in the same way. I know that there might be certain people who are coming who are going to bring some fear and pain. And that’s just what they have to bring right now. And I get to choose what I’m going to bring. What am I bringing to thanksgiving? Am I bringing more judgment? Am I bringing defensiveness, and separation, and disconnection, and I’m just going to tolerate it? Or am I bringing something different?

Am I going to bring a different dish to share? Am I going to bring compassion, and curiosity, and openness? Because we already have enough pumpkin pie. If pumpkin pie is fear, I’m sorry, I don’t mean to villainize pumpkin pie, but we’re just making it fear. Maybe half the family’s bringing pumpkin pie. I don’t need to bring more fear and worry. I can bring something different. So, what are you going bring to thanksgiving? It’s your choice.

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Make sure those of you in Be Bold, that you come to the workshop. We will do some work there in person. I'll bring some of you on. If you miss it, of course as always you can catch the replay of it. So, you don't have to be there live. But this month we're going to focus on really connecting with our family especially the ones that see the world totally different than we do. And it's going to be fun as always. I'll see you there. 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.