

341: Why Feelings Matter



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 341: Why Feelings Matter.

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.

Hey there, everyone. Thank you so much for joining me today. I am really happy to be sitting down at my computer with my gigantic microphone and headphones on talking to you. I just have been postponing all week recording this podcast. I need to get the episode to my producer, Pavel and Angela, and their team that does such an amazing job on the podcast. And the reason why is because I am in the weirdest funk right now.

And I keep thinking, I've got to get myself a little more motivated, and feeling better, and energized, and to be able to say something really inspiring on this podcast. And I do actually feel a little bit better today. The sun came out, that always helps. But I'm still in this weird funk and I just want to share that with you because I want to be transparent. I think that's helpful for all kinds of reasons.

But I also want you to know that you can be in a funk and you can obviously still show up in your life but also I kind of get excited when I'm in a funk like this. I know that sounds crazy but hear me out. The funk, I don't know what it is obviously, if I knew what it was I would probably move out of it faster. I think part of the reason for it is the unknown. And I think though that it's either I'm sort of on the verge of a midlife crisis because I'm 47 years old now and this tends to happen to people at this age.

I do feel a little bit of that, what am I supposed to do next? What am I supposed to focus on? What am I going to be excited about? I don't know if that's kind of midlife crisis or not. But the reason I'm excited about it is because I think that those ebbs and flows that we go through in life of being really driven, and passionate, and excited, and then sort of bored, or lost, or confused are healthy and they're what lead us to the next thing. And I

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don't mean the next thing like I'm going to make any kind of drastic changes.

I have no plans to leave my family, or my business, or anything like that. I just mean this kind of funk that I have experienced a few other times in my life, like right after graduating high school, right after graduating college, right after having children. This is always what happens before I find something else that I'm really excited about. So, I'm just letting myself be in the funk.

I am letting myself sort of be uncertain about what I'm pursuing, about what is the next thing, about where my life is headed, or what I want to dive into, what I want to learn more about, what I want to spend my time on, who I want to become. All of that's just kind of up for grabs right now. And that's both depressing, and scary, and exciting to me. So anyway, that's what's going on with me. Just want to be real about it. I am still very excited about what I'm going to teach you today, that part hasn't changed.

And I'm even more excited about the full workshop I'm going to be teaching in Be Bold next week by the time this episode publishes. So today I just want to introduce you to this idea that feelings matter. And this is something I've talked about before on the podcast. I'm going to talk about it a little bit differently today because I'm always trying to sell you all, and myself, and all my clients on the idea that feelings matter way more than we tend to give notice to. And the more you understand that the more powerful you become in your life experience.

So, I want to start out by sharing something from Will Smith's new book that's out called Will. It is fantastic. I consumed the whole thing, I listened to it on audible which I highly recommend because you get to hear Will Smith reading it and they've edited in music and things. And it's just a pretty amazing experience listening to it on audible. I listened to the whole thing in less than a week. It was so good, highly recommend. One of my favorite parts is a little over three-quarters of the way through the book when Will Smith starts to gain a greater understanding of the power of feelings.

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And he sets it up by telling the story about his daughter, Willow, who is only 10 years old. Can you believe that? When her song, I Whip My Hair Back and Forth, remember that song? Whip My Hair Back and Forth. She was only 10 years old when that song was a hit. And so, you can imagine a 10 year old would be really excited about touring, and doing concerts, and performing the song. And then all of a sudden she decided, well, I think I've done with that. I don't want to do that anymore. And that's kind of what happened with Willow.

Will Smith tried to talk her into, "Well, honey, we have to honor these commitments that we've made. And we need to see this through." And what she says to her dad is, "It doesn't matter to you that I'm done, daddy?" And he says, "No, it matters, it's just commitments", and etc. He gives her the speech again. And then later on again as he goes through his own sort of midlife crisis and taking a deep dive into understanding himself and to trying to improve his relationships and all of that.

He starts to understand the power of feelings. And I'm going to read to you just a little bit here from his book because I love the way he says it. He quotes Willow again, "It doesn't matter to you that I'm done, daddy? I know it sounds crazy but Willow's question put a Liberty bell sized crack in my world view. It was just an innocent question from a daughter to her father but somehow I knew that it was more than that. What she was really asking me was, "Don't you care how I feel?" It was the deepest existential human question.

It may be the most important question that we as humans ever ask each other, does it matter to you how I feel? Even though she was only 10 years old and my choice to abandon the conquest had sufficiently answered her question in the affirmative", meaning he let her stop her tour. "I asked myself, what is my honest answer? I took a deep hard self-reflective look at my belief systems around feelings. And my truth startled me. I would have never said this out loud but a truthful answer to, does it matter to you how I feel would have sounded something like this.

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“Not exactly sweetheart, feelings are seventh on my list. First and foremost, I care that you eat every day. Second, I care that you have somewhere to live. Third, I care that you’re safe. Fourth, I care that you are intelligent and your mind is trying to solve the problems of your life. Fifth, I care that you’re strong because the world is hard. And sixth, I care that you’re productive. I want you to contribute to the human family. And I believe that if you have all of those things they will add up to you feeling great.

I believe that if I take care of one through six, number seven will take care of itself. This is not something I just apply to you. I don’t even care how I feel.”” And then he goes on to expand on this realization that he has been trying to achieve in his life in order to feel a certain way. He’s been trying to make other people happy in order to feel a certain way. And this realization that he has achieved so much, he’s Will Smith and yet happiness often eludes him.

And so today we’re going to talk about feelings. Maybe Will Smith will listen. He did learn a lot of lessons that we worked with, a lot of experts and has a great understanding of these concepts now. But I want you to ask yourself what you’re feeling. If you’re feeling great. Awesome. If you’re feeling a little down, what is that about? What is the feeling? Is it overwhelmed, anxious, afraid, dread, uncertainty, guilt, resentment, worried, bored, stuck? Some of those feelings I have been feeling lately myself.

I want you to know that feelings are not soft. We used to think they were. People used to avoid them, especially men tend to get uncomfortable talking about feelings. That’s a feminine thing. Not the case, feelings actually are a human thing. And they are not as ambiguous as I used to believe they were, thanks to the things that I’ve learned about the brain and the tools I use as a coach. And they are so important to understand. And they’re the driving force within each of us. Our feelings genuinely are first of all what cause us to show up as we are. They make us who we are.

My personality, my persona, the way I interact with people in the world and the way people would describe me is because of the main feelings I

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operate from. Our feelings are the reason for our ability to succeed or our inability to succeed, or our failure, in other words, at a goal. I promise you this is true. What drives you is your feelings. So, you can take the same action but if the feeling fueling you is not useful you will likely fail. Feelings are the reason that life seems to come easier for some people than others.

Now, of course we all have different opportunities. We are born into different circumstances. And yes, of course those things matter. But what I'm saying is, why is it that some people born into what we would all call is hardship or really challenging circumstances, end up soaring while others sink, who come from those same circumstances? Why is it that some people who are born into what we would call privilege and ease end up soaring while other people self-sabotage? It's because of the feelings that person is living from the majority of the time.

So, your ability to allow and understand feelings makes you either more or less effective at anything you have the desire to do in your life. Your ability and your willingness to feel those feelings is critical, first of all. You have to understand how to feel feelings. When I say how to feel better I don't mean how to feel positive all the time. I mean how to feel not so out of control, how to not be so afraid of your feelings. I'm going to talk more about that in just a minute. To be willing to feel them.

The other key piece of this is that you have to understand what they truly are, what creates them and what they mean. Also understand what they don't mean. And if you can do those two things, if you can be willing and able to feel feelings and understand what is true about feelings and what is not true about feelings you will become a different version of yourself. You will become more powerful in your life than you could have ever imagined. You will create more goodness. You will feel more love and abundance.

You will succeed at anything you choose to succeed at if you can master those two things. Now, sometimes I have people tell me, "I am a highly sensitive person. I feel feelings really intensely and I'm tired of feeling all these feelings. It's exhausting." And then there are other people who would

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say, “I’m more of a stoic, or I’m less ‘sensitive’ in that way. I don’t feel feelings really intensely.”

What I’m going to teach you today and what we’re going to expand on in February in Be Bold and do together throughout the month applies either way. I promise you. This is relevant no matter where you fall on that sensitivity of emotion spectrum. So, I want to use an example here of what I’m describing to you because I know I’m making some pretty big promises about feelings. And I don’t mean to oversell it. I just feel so passionately that this is true and I’ve witnessed it so many times in my life and in others that I am trying to sell you on just believing me that feelings matter.

But here’s one example, so I have a coaching program right now called Business Minded where I work with entrepreneurs building businesses. We are having so much fun in that program, by the way. It’s not uncommon for people to ask me questions like this. “Hey, Jody, do you think this price I’m charging for my program, or my service, or my product, do you think it’s the right price? How do I know if the price is too high or too low?”

Or, “Do you think this is a good offer? Is this a good target market? Do you think this is a good idea for my Facebook ad or my opt-in? Do you think this will work”, they’ll ask me. Now, I ask people that same question all the time. But here’s what happens. Because they are in my program they obviously think I have a little bit of experience, a little bit of knowledge about this area.

So, if I say, “Yeah, I think that’s a great idea. I think that’s going to work great.” What they do then is they give themselves permission to believe that as well. To believe that their idea is right, or that the pricing is right, or that their target market is a good one. And that creates a feeling of confidence and determination. And then they go out and are much more likely to make it work. So, their belief, and again I do the same thing, we all have what’s called a confirmation bias. We go to great lengths to prove our beliefs true. It’s what our brains are supposed to do.

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So, when I say, “Yes, that’s a great idea”, or if somebody that I’m working with, a teacher or a mentor of mine says, “I think that’s a great idea, I think that’s going to well”, then I actually keep finessing it and put the energy and effort into it with emotions like determination and confidence that make it work. It’s not that it was a good idea or that it wasn’t a good idea. It’s the belief driving me and the emotions driving me that cause me to then ‘make it work’. I really do think that’s true.

So, I want to talk for just a minute about one of the concepts I’m going to be teaching again in the February course of Be Bold. So, if you’re not in there and you want to join us, the doors will be open for just a few days here. And you can go to jodymoore.com/membership. But I know a lot of you listening are already in Be Bold. So, I’ll talk a little bit more about what I’m going to teach in the course.

But the first concept I just want to teach to everyone here on the podcast and that is the concept of 50/50, that there is opposition in all things. That what I am trying to teach you here is what I like to call emotional balance. That is the healthiest way. I’m listening to a book right now written by a positive psychologist. He keeps talking about emotional balance.

So, I write about this in my book, Better Than Happy, there’s a chapter, chapter 11, it’s called Opposition in All Things. And it takes a deep dive into this concept of emotional balance and 50/50 experience. But I do want to share for those of you who are faith based like myself, specifically a scripture from The Book of Mormon, from 2 Nephi 2:11 that says, “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, my first born in the wilderness, righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad.

Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one; wherefore, if it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having no life neither death, nor corruption nor incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility.” So right there in the scriptures, and there are scriptures also in the Bible that refer to this. But we are taught that we are meant to have opposition in all things, including within us.

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And part of the reason that I see people really struggle, and feel stuck, and end up in a cycle of negative emotion outside of, let me just make sure and preface, there are legitimate chemical hormonal issues that can lead to depression and things. But I'm talking about the 80% that we have control over, for some of you, you have more control than that, for some of you, you might have slightly less. But there is an element of it within our control which is how we choose to think about it when we're feeling bad.

So, the 50/50 concept teaches us that if we feel bad about feeling bad then we double the bad or we create something that we don't want in our lives. But if we can embrace that the human experience, what makes us alive, according to this scripture there could be no life without death. There could be no happiness without misery. What creates an amazing complete experience for us is to sometimes feel bad and other times to feel good.

So, I want to illustrate some of the ways that this, like I said, either doubles feeling bad, when we resist it and we're afraid of it we don't want to feel it. Or sometimes it just creates a result that we don't want or it causes us to show up in a way that we don't want to. So, for example, if I'm afraid of being disappointed then I lose the opportunity to be delighted. Why don't you think about that for a minute. If I'm not willing to be disappointed then I will often forego the opportunity to be delighted. Do you have examples coming to your mind?

We have to take a risk on something to be delighted. And if it works out we get to be delighted, and if it doesn't, we might choose to be disappointed. But the alternative is to never take the risk. I see this happen all the time. I just don't want to be disappointed. Alright, but now you're missing out on the opportunity to be delighted.

Okay, here's another one, when we fear embarrassment we miss out on the chance to be proud of ourselves, to feel fulfilled. Some people don't like that word, 'proud'. I like it. I like to feel proud of myself. But if you're worried about being embarrassed you will forego an opportunity to feel proud of yourself. Interesting.

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I'm thinking of playing the piano in church. For some reason the thought of that makes me so afraid. I would for sure just mess it up, and get lost, and probably have to quit in the middle of the song, and that's what I picture. And I don't want to be embarrassed. I would be embarrassed because of what I would think if that happened. And so, I will not play the piano in church which causes me to miss out on the opportunity to be proud of myself, to be fulfilled, to do something hard and then experience that feeling afterwards that we did it.

If we fear rejection we will miss out on connection. This is an interesting one. To truly connect, to have true intimacy in a relationship we have to be willing to be vulnerable. We have to allow our true selves to be known. The reason we fear vulnerability is because we fear rejection. If we never let our true selves be known, if we keep a guard or a wall up, no one can truly reject us because they don't even genuinely know us. But if we let that wall down we risk rejection but it's also required for connection, for true connection. Fascinating.

If we fear failure we miss out on success. We kind of talked about that one a little bit with embarrassment and feeling proud. When we are worried about overwhelm we create anxiety. I see this one happen all the time. Overwhelm is an emotion, we create it with our thoughts. Well, you can just be overwhelmed and just allow it, it's fine. If you're mad about it, if you're worried about your overwhelm, if you're resisting your overwhelm it may often escalate into anxiety.

Here's a similar one. When we are afraid of worrying we create panic. Or sometimes people tell me, "I'm just tired of being worried all the time." And then they resist the worry, they intensify the worry, it turns to again, panic, maybe anxiety. Anxiety tends to be an escalated emotion, meaning we're resisting the primary emotion. We're not just allowing it, we're mad about being worried, we're tired of being worried, we're worried about being worried, we then become anxious. See how we are compounding it with this?

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When we are unwilling to be disappointed we create anger. This one I was kind of thinking about when I wrote these notes for myself here. That often when people are angry, anger is another emotion that psychologists tend to recognize as an escalated secondary emotion which means there's a primary emotion underneath it. And I think many times it's disappointment underneath the anger. Think about when one of your kids doesn't listen to you, you have to ask them five times. You're really just disappointed that they're not listening but it escalates into anger.

Here's another one that's similar. When we're afraid of hurting we become mean. Think about the last time you encountered somebody who was mean, or maybe it was just a character in a movie, or maybe it's somebody from your past that you would describe as mean. Ask yourself if there isn't hurt and pain below that meanness. And that person may not know what to do with that hurt and pain. They don't know how to just allow it. They don't have the knowledge or the, at least, conscious awareness that they're creating the hurt and so they resist it and then become mean.

When we are unwilling to feel insecure we become bratty. I notice this, I mean it's pretty obvious in younger kids but adults do it too. It's kind of something I notice more in women than men although it can go either way. Men probably become mean more often, women become bratty. So, think about the last time that you were sort of bratty, or somebody you know was acting kind of bratty, maybe gossiping, maybe talking bad about someone else, maybe even putting someone down. It's coming from insecurity.

Think about whatever reality show of choice where there's some cattiness going on. It's always coming from insecurity. But if you're just willing to feel insecure, you just be insecure for a little while then you don't have to project it onto anyone else. You don't have to act out on it. You just be insecure, you can still be kind and be insecure. When we are unwilling to be uncomfortable we lose authenticity.

I was thinking about this one because it's not uncommon for me to coach people who say, "I know I'm people pleasing. I know I'm pretending." We just did an episode a little while ago on pretending here on the podcast. "I

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know it's not serving me but I am just uncomfortable saying what's true. I'm afraid they're going to be upset. I'm afraid they're not going to like it. I'm afraid they're going to be mad at me. It's just really uncomfortable for me to say what's true."

So, when we're unwilling to be uncomfortable we lose authenticity. Authenticity matters for so many reasons. It's a connection with yourself. It's a violation of yourself to not allow yourself to be authentic. It's like saying, "Hey, could you please hide and pretend to be someone other than you are so that we can keep everyone else happy? Thank you." So, it can create a lot of problems. It also of course disconnects us in relationships and things.

Okay, so those were just some examples I thought of, of how not allowing or getting good at negative emotion creates problems for us. It either compounds it into an even more painful emotion, causes us to show up in a way we don't want, or create a result we don't want in our lives. So, what's the alternative? We should just feel all of this? Well, yes, but also remember, with awareness and confidence around it.

So, in other words, it's perfectly safe to feel any emotion when you know that they aren't 'true information' about yourself or the world around you. If they are true indicators of what's true about you or the world then they're scary. Here's the thing, if they really mean there's danger then you should be afraid but in most cases there is no danger. If there is immediate danger then we actually want the surge of adrenalin to kick in. If there's a fire in my house, I want to be afraid, I want to panic, I want to get everybody out.

If I'm being chased by a bear in the woods, same thing, that is rarely the case. Most of the negative emotions that you're experiencing today are simply the human experience. It's your human brain creating emotions with sentences in your mind. It feels protective and preventative to your brain to create these emotions. And maybe sometimes it is but it's only that, it's only preparatory. It's not truly dangerous right now. In the now we occasionally have a problem to solve.

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So, let's say I'm at home and my husband is in the next room and he suddenly falls unconscious on the floor. Okay, now I have a problem to solve. So, I need to figure out, what am I going to do. Am I going to call an ambulance? What do you do when someone falls unconscious? You go check on them, see if they're okay, maybe call 911, maybe call somebody. But you get to work problem solving in the moment when there's a problem that presents itself right then.

So, I want you to think about this. What is worse, being in that moment when something has happened and you've got to figure out what to do, or worrying that something might happen to your husband? And playing the movies over and over again in your head of what they could be and not really knowing what they will be or if. That latter is much more painful than the actual challenge presenting itself and then our brains going to work problem solving.

So, here's the truth. With this contrast of emotions our life is much more beautiful. It is necessary. And the truth is I don't know how to teach you to never feel negative emotions again. I don't think that's the point. Even if it were I don't know how to do that. So, we might as well find a way to relax around it. My six year old daughter has decided that she doesn't like going to school right now.

She doesn't like getting up for school. It's pretty cold and dark here and she doesn't like having to go outside in the cold. She doesn't like being away from me all day. She just decided she doesn't like school. She's been really fighting us on going, and complaining, and all of the things, crying about it. And we've just been trying to help her through that. And the other day she said to me, "Mom, I decided I'm going to try to like school now." And I said, "Well done, Taylor, because you do have to go to school so you might as well try to like it."

And that's what I'm offering to you here about negative emotion. You're going to feel it sometimes. You might as well stop resisting it and learn how to get better at it, and how to relax around it. And of course, this leads us to the next question of how do I do that? Which is what I'm going to teach you

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in Be Bold. So, you've got to get in there and join us. If you're not in there you can just join for this month. If you just want to learn this class, come in for one month and leave, you could do that. You're probably going to want to stay.

We have people that have been in there for years. But I'll tell you, I'm going to teach you how. I'm going to start by teaching you a concept that I call normal feels normal. I'm going to teach you about the mental diet, and it has nothing to do with food or weight loss by the way. It has to do with your brain, your emotions, your thoughts. And I'm going to spend a lot of time giving you a deep dive on topics that I have taken a close look at, I'm calling this section, this I know is true.

And it's not to tell you what you should think, it's to open your brain up and to knowing that you have the ability to think whatever you want. And then we're going to practice together generating emotions so that you can generate more of the ones you want. I'm going to teach you how to do that. And we're going to practice managing the negative ones. I don't want you to just feel negative emotion all the time and feel out of control about when it comes and what it does to you.

I want you to know that you have the ability to manage those negative emotions and we're going to all practice it together in Be Bold. So, I will see you there. Thank you so much for joining me today you guys, I feel better already. I'm excited about whatever's coming in the future for me and for you. I'll see you next time. Bye bye.

Hey there, if you enjoy this podcast or even if you just find that it sort of piques your curiosity, or it makes you think, you're going to love the book that I wrote. It's called *Better Than Happy: Connecting with Divinity Through Conscious Thinking*. And it's available now at Amazon in print or kindle version. Or if you want me to read it to you, head over to audible and grab the audio version. And why not grab a copy for your sister, your best friend, or your mom while you're there too. Just saying.