

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

I'm Jody Moore and this is Better Than Happy, episode 370: Real Marriage Advice.

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, everybody, I still am a little bit coughing, and stuffy nosed, and congested, and all the things. So please bear with me, I'm going to try not to cough too much at you on this podcast but not totally over it yet. Today we're going to talk about real marriage advice but before we dive into it, we are finishing up enrollment for Business Minded right now. And the way our enrollment works is we only open the doors at the end of August and then we all work together for the entire year, September through the following August.

So that means that if you've been thinking about getting some help with your business, or starting a business, or project, or growing your direct sales business or whatever it is, it doesn't have to be a coaching practice. I work with people of all kinds of business. If you're making less than \$5 million a year annually in your business you need to come and work with us in Business Minded. If you're making more than me then your problems are going to start to become problems that I haven't figured out how to solve yet. So I'm probably not the business coach for you.

But if you're not yet to the \$5 million annual revenue mark then I feel confident that with the tools I have, I can help you to take your business to the next level. And for some of you, you're just barely starting out. Some of you are maybe close to six figures or scaling your six figure business. Anyway, we have all kinds of options and I want to make sure you know that you have to get in right now because the doors will close at the end of August, which is right around the corner and then we will dive right in.

So, you can learn more about that in a couple of ways. You can head to jodymoore.com/business and read about it. Or you can come to the

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

webinar I created called Success Secrets for Mompreneurs. And by the time this episode airs, we already have done that webinar once. But there is one more chance to get in right around the corner. So, you can go to jodymoore.com/mompreneur if you want to join me there. That will give you a good taste of my approach to business and how I coach on business and we'll talk about Business Minded there as well.

Okay, I got a message on Instagram, a DM from a listener recently who said, "Hey, my daughter just got engaged and I'd love to send her and her fiancé a podcast to listen to, which one do you recommend?" And my first thought was any of them, all of them. There is 369 options so far, pick any one you like, just have them listen, have them learn about their own emotions, their own thoughts, their own mental health, how to be healthier, how to just be a human with a human brain. And be in charge of your brain and not let your brain be in charge of you.

Any of those will help make their marriage better. But I did tell this woman, "Hey, you know, that's a good idea. Let's do an episode specific to the advice that I would give to an engaged couple if they were sitting in front of me saying, "What's the best advice you could give us, Jody Moore, about our marriage?" So, this is a shout out to that listener and her kids. But I know a lot of you will want to share this with your kids but also it'll be useful even if you've been married for a very long time and you want to refresh.

Or maybe you want to listen with your spouse, maybe you and your spouse want to discuss some of the things you're going to hear here today especially if you feel like your marriage is struggling lately. So real marriage advice. Now, any marriage advice is real marriage advice of course. But what I want you to know is we're going to get deep here. I'm not going to just say, don't go to bed angry. I personally actually think going to bed angry is not a bad idea. I think sometimes emotions settle down after a good night's sleep and it becomes easier to talk through things.

But these are the things that I think matter and make a difference in your marriage.

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

Number one. You are not responsible for making each other happy, you're not. You couldn't even do that if you wanted to because if your spouse isn't happy, if he or she in any given moment, or maybe for an extended period of time, is frustrated, worried, anxious, depressed, sad, unhappy etc., that is because of the thoughts that they're thinking. That is because of what they're believing. That is because of their interpretation of themselves and the world. And I'm not saying they're wrong. I'm not saying they're weak. I'm not saying there's anything wrong.

For some people it's extremely challenging and especially in certain circumstances to think in a way that helps you feel more positive. And for some people there are chemical hormonal biological factors making it challenging. And for some people they just don't have the awareness or the understanding. Or sometimes we just want to feel bad. So as a person who's about to enter into a marriage or who is married, you have to know in your bones that you are responsible for your own happiness, you are.

Now, this doesn't mean that you shouldn't make requests of your spouse. This doesn't mean you can't say, "Honey, you know what would be awesome? Is if you could come home from work a half hour earlier and be here to help me get dinner on the table. That would make my life so much easier. Would you be willing to do that?" I'm all for you making any requests you want to of your spouse.

What I'm against is you hanging your emotions on whether or not he or she complies or whether or not they do it in the way that you pictured they would do it. Or whether or not they do it with the attitude you wanted, or whether or not they think to do it without you asking etc. And as soon as you delegate your emotions to someone else you leave yourself powerless. It's a terrible not fun way to feel and it's not fun for the other person either. So, you're responsible for your own happiness. You're also not responsible for your spouse's happiness.

Again, this doesn't mean you wouldn't want to say, "Honey, I'm so sorry you're struggling, is there anything I can do to help? I love you. I hope you feel better", etc. It doesn't mean you wouldn't want to reach out and offer

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

help, you will want to, that is a very loving kind thing to do. What it does mean is that you don't want to cross over into taking ownership. I did this when I was first married.

My husband was struggling to figure out his career path and he felt really bad about not having that figured out. And he was frustrated and overwhelmed with job hunting. And being in some bad jobs and things like that. And I took that on. I thought, oh no, my husband is really struggling, he's depressed, he's anxious, he's overwhelmed, he's stressed. And then I got depressed, anxious, overwhelmed and stressed about him feeling that way. Because I thought as a good wife it must be my duty to try to help him or at least to feel really terrible right alongside with him.

Isn't that the loving kind thing to do? No, it's not. It's not necessary and it's not helpful. So, you have to remember, okay, my spouse is on his own personal journey in this lifetime. And sometimes that means he's going to struggle and I wish I could take it away from him, I would but I really can't. It doesn't mean I won't try at times, I'm going to try, I'm going to do everything I can to help him and support him. But ultimately I have to keep the knowledge that it's his to own. And that I need to own my emotions.

And especially when my spouse is struggling, what kind of self-care do I need to keep myself feeling how I want to feel, to keep myself mentally and emotionally strong and healthy? I promise you, that's the best thing you can do for you and your spouse.

Number two. A relationship is an awesome vehicle for your own personal growth. There's a lot of ways but there's a handful that I have experienced or I'm aware of in my life that I know are awesome vehicles for growth. And I am all for us participating in things if we feel called to participate in them that help us to grow. And a relationship is one of those things, especially a marriage relationship.

Some of the other things that are awesome vehicles for growth are things like choosing to go on a health journey, maybe it's a weight loss journey, or a muscle growth journey, or strengthening, or a figuring out a diagnosis. A

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

health journey is an awesome vehicle by which you will have the opportunity to grow. Another one might be just other kinds of career goals that aren't entrepreneurial. Being a parent, having children of your own is an awesome tool for growth.

Now, here's the reason I'm telling you this, anything that's an awesome vehicle for growth is going to be challenging, more challenging than we usually realize when we sign up for that opportunity for growth. It's going to be difficult. If it wasn't difficult you wouldn't grow from it. That is the reason it's such an awesome vehicle for growth, because it is so difficult at times. You're going to want to quit. You're going to want to judge yourself. You're going to want to judge your spouse. You're going to think something's gone wrong.

You're going to want to feel sorry for yourself. You're going to compare yourself or your spouse to other people or their marriages. You're going to be tempted to go down a path of becoming bitter, or feeling sorry for yourself, or resentful. You will have the opportunity to go down that path. You will also have the opportunity to overcome those primitive human tendencies and choose something different, choose curiosity, choose empowerment, choose boundaries, maybe even in some cases, choose to get out of the relationship.

But you can choose to become a victim or you can choose to take ownership of your experience in your marriage. I promise you will get that opportunity. Some of you it will be a more extreme opportunity than others. But being married will give you that opportunity. And good news, if you make a choice that you don't like, you can always make a different choice. You're going to have to make this choice over and over again.

So, expect that it will be challenging and it's worth it because of what you'll create on the other side of it, which is an extraordinary circumstance of a marriage that didn't exist before. A partnership between two people as well as who you will become along the way as you create that, as you overcome again, the natural default human tendency of negativity, and blame, and

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

shame. You will become a stronger more Christlike, I think version of yourself. It's worth it.

Number three. Let's talk about money. I have some thoughts on money that I want to share with you as a newly married or engaged couple, or again, maybe you've been married a long time. If money is a source of contention for you, these are some things I wish someone would have told me when I was engaged to be married. First of all, make sure before you get married you be very upfront with each other about your money situation. Because if you have a lot of debt, whatever kind of debt it is, student loan debt, credit card debt, whatever kind of debt you have.

Your spouse and you will now own that debt together. So, you just want to know what you're signing up for. Not that it should change your decision but let's be upfront with it. I promise you that if you have debt and you're embarrassed about it, and you hide it from your partner, eventually there will probably come a day when you'll have to divulge it. And the longer you wait, the more anxiety you're going to create for yourself, the more difficult you'll make that situation.

So, let's just get it out of the way right now, let's just tell each other about any debt that we have and go into this being open and honest. There's always a way out. There's always a way to get out of debt. But you've got to be honest and own it first. That's the first thing. The second thing, we all have different comfort levels with how much money we think we should have in our bank account. We all have different buying behaviors.

We all have different things we value, different things that we think are worth splurging on and other things that we think aren't worth splurging on and we would call a 'waste of money'. We all have different ideas about how to use money, the wisest way to use money. We all have different levels of scarcity and abundance in terms of our belief in our ability to create value and earn money and that's okay. You and your spouse are probably not going to have the same ideas or views on any of those areas I just talked about and that's okay.

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

So, your job is to work on how you want to think about money, again not that you can't offer it to your spouse. But he or she gets to choose how they want to think and feel about money. So, I've found that the best way to navigate this is that each person in the marriage relationship needs to have some ownership over some of the money. So, the way that works best for my husband and I, and it took us years to decide this. When we first got married we thought we don't want to have separate accounts because that feels divisive.

My husband, I remember him saying, "Then we have more accounts to have to balance and keep track of, make sure we don't overdraw on. Let's just have one account." That did not work well for us because of what I just described. We have different ideas about how and when to spend money and how much needs to be in the bank account until pay day and just all kinds of reasons why that was problematic for us. What made a huge difference was once we each got our own accounts.

Now, the way we have it set up and I'm not trying to say this is the right way or the best way even, but this is what worked really well for us is that we each have an account but our accounts are linked. We have our main account, we call it our expense account because all of our monthly expenses get paid out of that account, our mortgage payment and our utilities and whatever bills we know are going to come up every month, we have them set up to be paid automatically out of that main account.

And when my husband or I get paid our paycheck, a certain amount of our paycheck that we know will cover all of those bills goes into that account. And we can both see what's happening in that account. And then we both have our individual accounts where again, they're all connected. So, I can see my husband's account at any time, he can see my account. We just both like that, we like the transparency. I'm not trying to hide anything from him. And he's not trying to hide anything from me.

But we each have accounts that we understand what gets paid out of those accounts and how much money we have that gets put into those accounts every month. So, when we first started doing this years ago my husband

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

and I were both working for corporate. We figured out, okay, these are our expenses, these are our bills, what's left? It wasn't as much as I wish but there's a little bit left over. So, this is how much goes into, we pay our tithing and things like that to our church. But then this is how much we're going to put into savings.

We didn't have a lot to put into savings but we were putting just a little bit into savings. And then my account covered the groceries, clothes for the kids, clothes and entertainment for myself, if I wanted to eat lunches out, gas money for my car, all of those things came out of my account. And that's just because that's the way we just had it set up. I did the grocery shopping, I bought the kids clothes. That just worked well for us. So, my account was a little bit bigger than his because he wasn't grocery shopping, he wasn't buying the kids clothes.

So, his account covered his gas money, his lunches out, if he was going to eat lunch out. Any kind of entertainment, or fun, or anything he might want to buy if he was going to go golfing one day or something. That all had to come out of his account. And we both agreed on, this is how much goes in your account, this is how much goes in my account. That way I can manage that portion of our money to my comfort level. I can manage it the way I choose.

If I decide to buy a pair of shoes, I might have to spend a little less on groceries that month. I might have to get more creative or we might have macaroni cheese one night instead of the nicer dinner I wanted to make. But that was my money to figure out how to manage. And he had his money to figure out how to manage. And once we started doing that everything got so much better for us financially because we could operate within our own comfort levels. We had respect for one another. It wasn't like I have to ask my husband's permission to spend money on this thing.

No, you're an adult, and by the way, it doesn't matter if only one person in the marriage is working, if only one person is working you still manage your money the same way. In a lot of marriages one person works and one person are at home more with the kids, and taking care of the household

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

more. That's fine. That still doesn't mean that it's one person's money. It's both of your money, you've just decided to divide up the responsibilities in that way. You're both responsible for the finances of your life.

I want to say that again. You're both responsible for making sure that your financial needs are met in your life and in your family. It is not one person's job, even if you decide, the way we're going to handle that is you're going to work, I'm going to stay home. That's cool. But it's still both of your responsibility to make sure you're provided for financially. And it's both of your money. I didn't make that up.

That's what the state says, if you choose to get a divorce, the state's says going to say, "Half the money goes to this person, half goes to the other person regardless of who went to work and earned it." So, it's your responsibility to make sure that you're taken care of financially. And if your spouse doesn't want to go make as much money as you want to have in your life then you figure out. You're going to have to figure it out how to make some money.

Don't delegate money to one person. Don't think that it's one person's money, it's just not. That's just not the truth. Alright, I think that's all I had to say about money.

Let's talk about number four, let's talk about sex, baby. Let's talk about intimacy, physical intimacy or sex in your marriage. Now, this one is especially challenging for all my listeners who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints because by the time we get married we have little to no sexual experience. And suddenly we're supposed to get naked and have sex every day, or however often. I remember the first time I discovered Dr. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife. I was already married, well into my marriage, seven or eight years probably.

But I remember thinking, oh my gosh, I wish I would have found her before. She's pretty lifechanging. I'm sure you are familiar with her, if not, go look up Dr. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife. She's been on our podcast a couple times. She's been on a lot of podcasts and you can find her all over the internet.

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

But one thing she said is, “As you’ve been dating you haven’t been very physical. Don’t think that automatically on your wedding night you should have sex. You can but that might not be the natural next step.”

A relationship should progress physically in a slow step by step way. It shouldn’t be nothing one day and then everything the next, that’s not a natural normal way to develop a healthy intimate physical relationship. It should come one step at a time. It should slowly build towards something really, really intimate, like sexual intercourse. So, there’s that but nobody owes each other anything. You do not own each other’s bodies now that you’re married. You’re not entitled to each other’s bodies now that you’re married.

You still both have stewardship over your own body. And you need to understand that about your own body and you need to understand that about your spouse’s body as well. And that a healthy relationship, a healthy intimate physical relationship comes from mutual respect and a sharing of yourself, not a taking what feels like yours. That said, it’s something that you’re just going to have to navigate and figure out and at times it will be awkward and that’s okay. Let it be fun also.

And the other thing I wanted to say about this topic is it’s completely natural and common for there to be a higher desire partner and a lower desire partner. So, if you find that you want sex more often than your spouse or your spouse would like sex more often than you do at some point, that is normal. You can both work through that. Obviously you’re both going to have to compromise a little bit. But don’t think that something’s wrong or oh no, I ended up in this situation, how did I get so unlucky. No, that’s the most common.

It’s much less common for both partners to have just equal sexual desire, equal ideas about frequency. There’s often a higher and a lower. And if you need more help on that later, no shame in getting more help.

Okay, number five. Let’s talk about kids and parenting. If you’re going to have kids, if you’re going to become parents, I recommend again that when

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

you're engaged, you discuss how many kids you think you want to have. Now, I say how many you think you want to have because some of you are very young listening to this podcast. And maybe you are going to change your mind. And even if you're not super young, maybe you change your mind, that's okay. I'm not saying you have to commit to something right now.

And I wouldn't expect you to expect your fiancé to commit right now because as you grow, and evolve, and life happens, you might change your idea. You might decide you want more kids, or less kids. But I think it's a good idea to have an understanding of ballpark, what have you pictured? Have you always pictured yourself with a really big family or have you always pictured yourself with one or two kids or a smaller family? That's a good thing to know about the person that you're about to marry because that is going to be a joint decision.

Again, just like with money, both of you are responsible for being there and helping raise those kids and take care of the home, all that comes along with having kids and a home. It is both of your responsibility. Now, just like with the money, you might decide that one person is going to own the majority of that responsibility and the other person's going to own other things like going to work. Okay, that's fine. Ultimately you're both still responsible for it.

And just like if the person in charge of earning money needs to say, "I need a little help. I can't do this on my own." The person raising the kids is also allowed to say, "I need a little help, I can't do this on my own." So, if you keep the ownership over all the parts of your home and your life regardless of how you decide to divide up the actual work of it, I promise you will have a much healthier marriage. I promise that you will feel more empowered in your life too.

I don't know if this is the right word to use in this situation but I'm going to try it anyway. There's a difference between delegating and abdicating. So, if I'm going to keep the ownership over raising the kids then I'm sort of delegating that part of my responsibility, at least the majority of it during the

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

times I'm working to my spouse. That's not the same as abdicating. Abdicating is, I don't even know what's going on, I'm not interested, that's your job, that's not mine. I just sort of shut off my awareness and my ownership of it.

Delegating is like, yeah, that's a good idea. You take on that part. I'll take on this part. I think that will work well for now. Let's try that. That's true with money, it's true with the home and the kids. Don't abdicate your responsibility.

And then the final thing I want to say about being a parent and having kids is that you and your spouse will each have your own relationship with your kids. You will also have a joint relationship. I feel like my husband and I together have a relationship with our kids, there's us and our kids. And there's times when we have conversations and we've both maybe discussed something ahead of time. We sit down together to talk to our kids about it. So, we have that relationship.

But we also both have our own individual relationships with each of our kids. And they're not the same and that's okay. Some of the things that my husband maybe is more strict about, I'm a little more laidback about and vice versa. And it doesn't mean that you can't be respectful of one another. There's times when I say, "Yeah, well, it seems like your dad feels strongly about that so we're going to go with it for this time." Or times when I say, "Yeah, well, this is something that I've made the decision on and we're going to go with that."

You're going to have to compromise again. But my point is, don't overstep your bounds, even if you see your spouse have a relationship with your child that you think is negative. Maybe they argue a lot. Maybe you think that they should get along better or they should listen to one another better, or what have you. Again, you can care about it, you can offer suggestions and help but don't cross the line into taking ownership of it, that doesn't work for anyone.

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

Now, again, there are times when I would say if your spouse is abusive to your children, that is a boundary situation. That is a time when you're going to step in and go, "That's not okay. It's not okay for you to treat our kids that way, or talk to our kids that way etc. If you do, this is what I will do to protect them." That's different. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about you're not always going to like the way your spouse parents, you're just not. You're going to think that they're doing it wrong. You're going to think your way is better.

And that will create problems in your marriage. You have to remember that we all have our own approaches and our own methods and respect that your spouse will have his or her own relationship with the kids as is supposed to be the way.

Okay, number six. I really want you to keep this in mind especially if you've been married for a while or as the years go by and the newness and excitement, it's going to wear off. And there's still going to be a whole another version of what's awesome about being married. But keep in mind you are never stuck, you're not. It's going to feel like you are possibly, your brain's going to tell you that you are and I promise that you're not. I notice a lot of people continue to live their lives in the exact same way day after day, year after year because they think they're stuck.

They think that because they have responsibilities and they've made commitments, that they're stuck. You're not stuck. Here's what I mean. Do you still like living where you live? Because you don't have to stay there. You don't have to stay in the same house. You don't have to stay in the same neighborhood. You don't have to stay in the same city, or state, or even in the same country. Do you want to mix it up? You don't have to stay at the same job. You don't have to even stay in your family. You don't even have to stay in your marriage. Do you want to? Great.

But don't be afraid to mix up parts of your life that don't cause big waves and ripples because if you don't, at some point you're going to feel stagnant. And this is what a lot of people call a midlife crisis. But if you're constantly changing up the little things like I'm going to change up what we

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

eat for dinners. I'm going to change up when we eat dinners. I'm going to change up the furniture in my bedroom. The other day I had this thought, we should change what sides of the bed we sleep on, honey. I didn't say this to him yet but I might.

Because I seriously have this belief that we need and like change. We don't always want big change. We don't want change we weren't expecting. If we don't have change at some point, we all of a sudden go, "Oh my gosh, I'm trapped. I'm trapped in this life. I'm trapped in this job. I'm trapped in this family. I'm trapped in this marriage. I'm trapped in this house. It's normal for your brain to want something new and fresh. So, you're not ever stuck even if you think you are.

There's just probably a lot of parts of your life that you want to keep but we have to be willing to mix up other parts to keep things fresh, and exciting, and keep you progressing and growing in life.

Okay, last piece of advice. Your spouse, and this is something I learned from Brooke Castillo that was like it blew my mind when I heard her say it. If your spouse isn't there to make you happy and they're not responsible for your money, and they're not responsible for raising your kids, and they're not all of these things, then why, and we're not stuck, if we don't have to stay then why bother getting married? And here's what Brooke Castillo teaches that I love so much.

The only reason to get married, well, not the only reason but the main reason is for you to have someone to love. So that you have someone to love. And you know what? Some days it's going to be easy to love that person and some years it's going to be easier to love that person. And other days and other years it's going to be challenging to love that person. But if you choose to love them and you work at loving them, especially when they're difficult to love, it doesn't mean you have to be perfect at it. It doesn't mean you'll be able to do it all the time.

But if you work at it you will become a version of yourself that I promise you will like so much better, that will take care of you, take care of your goals,

Ep #370: Real Marriage Advice

take care of your life in the way that you want, that will be the kind of person that you want to be. I promise you this is who you want to be. This is who you already are at your core but you have to overcome a lot of your human tendencies to access that version of you. And when you love your spouse you benefit the most because you get to feel love and you get to be a loving being which is again, who you truly are at your core.

Your spouse will also prefer that you're loving. They'll like it better than you being judgmental, or angry, or resentful etc. But I want you to do it for you. I want you to have somebody to love. That is the reason to get married along with whatever you happen to believe religiously, if you have some religious beliefs around getting married. But that's the reason that drives me. That's what keeps me loving being married. And I hope it's easy for you to love them right now but it won't always be and that's okay.

Alright, thanks for joining me today you guys, have a beautiful amazing rest of your week. I'll see you next time.

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.