

379: You're Already Awesome with Alison Faulkner



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Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 379: You're Already Awesome with Alison Faulkner.

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.

Oh boy, you guys, I have a special treat for you all today, get ready, buckle your seatbelt, you're going to love today's episode. Before I tell you about my guest today I want to make sure that you're registered for a coaching intensive because listen, I'm glad you like listening to me talk, you all. I'm seriously so grateful that you like listening to me talk. Thank you for listening to the podcast because it would be really weird if I were just talking and no one were listening.

But I want us to go next level. I don't want you to just listen to me talk, I want to change your life in ways that you haven't even dreamed are possible. So, the way that we do that is through a coaching intensive, it's \$19 and you get easily \$190 if not 10x that in value. So go to jodymoore.com/intensive and just come try me out. Come on, test drive coaching, that's all I'm saying. You don't have to tell anyone if you're kind of embarrassed or whatever. It'll just be between you and I.

You can even be anonymous and not come on camera or talk to me at all. I just want you to feel the power of coaching. What is life coaching? It sounds weird. The best way that I can answer that question is by inviting you to my coaching intensive, jodymoore.com/intensive.

Okay, now, Alison Faulkner has been a guest on *Better Than Happy* before, although it's been a while since we've had her on here. Her name is Alison Faulkner but in my phone, and in my mind, and in my life she is just called The Alison Show because this woman is phenomenal. She is an entire show. Even just hanging out with her, I've gone to lunch with her before and it's a show which is what I love about her, she goes big, she

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goes all in. Now, as you can imagine, going big and going all in is fun until it's challenging.

And I'll tell you what, Alison has a new book out that is amazing. And I highly recommend that you get it, it's called You're Already Awesome. And we're going to talk about that. But in this episode she's going to not only talk about this book, why she wrote it, what she teaches in this book, but also I'm going to ask her the question that so many of you ask me when Alison's name come up which is, "Where has she been and is she okay?" Because Alison who is amazing and all over social media and everything suddenly disappeared last year for a period of time.

So, we're going to answer that question today, you're going to get some amazing knowledge and tools from Alison. Here we go, let's take it away.

Jody: I'm so excited for you to tell me that I'm already awesome.

Alison: You are, you know you're already awesome.

Jody: Well, I do know that and yet I don't know that. I forget that. I still need to be told it on the regular.

Alison: I was talking to a news spot and they were like, "Why don't we feel as awesome as we are?" Because that's what I say, and it was funny because I was on television, on the spot, it was one of the first times talking about the book. I don't even remember what's in the book at this point.

Jody: I had to listen to my book on audible before I started doing interviews because I'm like, "I don't even remember what I wrote in there."

Alison: We forget. And then I was listening to the book to try to see if that was what I say in the book. I'm like, "That's what I say in the book. Good, okay."

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Jody: Yeah, good, good. I got my own back there. We forget and that's natural. Isn't it Brené Brown that says, "The only people that never question whether or not they're awesome", in Brené Brown's words, she says, "Well, that never question that are sociopaths."

Alison: It's sociopaths where a sociopath is devoid of the human nuances, of understanding human connection or caring about it.

Jody: One of those things being shame, or some version of there's something wrong with me. So, we're diving right in and I'm just recording all of it.

Alison: Okay, good, I figured we were recording all of it and I was like, wait, if we're recording I'll be fine.

Jody: We're recording it because people want to know about our lipstick too. We might put some of that in there.

Alison: Also, I was getting ready and I was kind of tired. And I've done a lot of interviews. And I was like, I don't know, I think it just might be better use of the time to have Jody coach me. You're in the book a ton, did you know that?

Jody: I haven't finished the book either, and last night I was trying to skim it. Because you told me that I was in here.

Alison: You're in the book.

Jody: I'm so honored.

Alison: Well, I was reading it and I was like, "I don't think I passed a lot of this by Jody. I think she's going to be fine with it."

Jody: I think everyone should put me in their books and not ask me. I don't need to grant permission. Can I just say though, I love so much this quote you pulled before chapter four, I had to read it to my husband. It's by Dolly Parton. It says, "I'm not offended by all the dumb blond jokes because I

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know I'm not dumb. And I also know that I'm not blond." It's so good, I love Dolly Parton.

Alison: She is a picture of emotional intelligence. Do you know much about her?

Jody: No, I don't.

Alison: So, she is actually, I got really, as I tend to do, I got really, really into Dolly Parton, listening to podcasts with her. And then also just watching specials with her and she's a deeply, deeply spiritual person. But she has in her home, almost a church, I'm trying to think of the word for it.

Jody: Like a sanctuary kind of?

Alison: Yeah, like a sanctuary but it looks very similar to a church, kind of like they put in a hospital where it kind of is to mimic a world religion church. And she just is a really, really meditative, spiritual person. And I think that just makes so much sense about how she's kind of been able, I just look up to her so much because she's deeply dedicated to helping the causes like childhood literacy and other causes that affected her and affect people from a similar upbringing as her.

But she also is my dream for being able to – she's this like this pillar of inclusivity where she's this southern Christian woman but she's also a gay icon. And for me being able to be both, well, you know one of my ultimate dreams is to be impersonated by drag queens.

Jody: That's when you know you've made it.

Alison: My whole dream.

Jody: I love it. I love it.

Alison: And that was one of the reasons, I didn't love the picture on the cover of the book. I didn't want the picture on the cover of the book.

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Jody: I love this picture so much.

Alison: I love it now but the place I was in when they showed it to me, and I didn't take that picture for the book, they just used existing pictures. I was like, "I'm not her." It felt so far from reality. But one of the reasons I finally was like, "We can leave it", is I was like, "That gives a drag queen something to impersonate."

Jody: I was going to say, this could be, and it's gorgeous, I love it so much.

Alison: But yeah, so that Dolly Parton quote, I love that. Is that before the shift, how they feel means nothing about me? I think that's the chapter you're in.

Jody: Good. See, that's where I'm at. I've got to keep reading.

Alison: But doesn't that feel like such a Jody Moore principle, how they feel means nothing about me?

Jody: I just, okay, can I just give an example of this?

Alison: Yes, because that is one that you had to help me learn, that you didn't have to, you graciously helped me learn and it is really good.

Jody: Yeah. And it is hard, it changed my life when I learned it. And I still have to remind myself. But I am really, I feel like with all these tools, all these shifts like you're talking about in this book and I'm going to have you talk about that in just a minute for everybody listening. But these shifts, it feels sometimes in the beginning like it's just so hard, I don't know if I can do it. I don't think it's working. And then one day you look back and realize, oh my goodness, I am so not fazed by that stuff like I used to be.

It's like your kids growing up, it happens so gradually you don't notice it till you look at a picture of them from a year ago and you go, wow, they really have grown so much. That's how I feel with this one. I had just a couple of days ago I took my teenage daughter shopping, she's getting ready to start school so we went down town. And she put on this cute little outfit, she's

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almost 15 so she's starting to get really into clothes and style. She's cute and she has her own opinions and wants. She doesn't want my opinion at all which is fine.

So, she had on this cute little black sweatpants and a little cropped shirt, and then a little shrug sweater and her little hat. So, I was like, "She's so cute, I took a quick little video like, "Macy, show everyone a cute outfit." And I put it on Instagram and then somebody DM'd me and said, "If I put a picture of my daughter with her midriff showing like that, people would tell me that I need to dress my daughter more modestly", and whatever, this kind of thing. And she's like, "I'm just genuinely curious, what would you say to those people?"

So, my thought was first of all, do people really say that to your face?

Alison: I've had it said to me.

Jody: And I know it's possible on occasion.

Alison: I can share examples, continue.

Jody: Okay, yeah, it's possible. But I just want to point out that in majority of the time it's somebody said that somebody said that, or you have the thought that maybe they're going to say that. So just be careful about like, the way she posed the question was like, "If somebody walked up to me and was like, "Jody, you need to dress your daughter more modestly." Which again can happen but most often it's like a friend tells me that someone else said this, right?

Alison: Yeah, absolutely.

Jody: So, when she's like, "What would you say to them?" My thought was nothing. I wouldn't say anything to them because I couldn't care less that they think that. It's so far outside of my zone of what's relevant. If somebody were to say to me, "You know such and so, she saw that picture and she thinks that it's inappropriate for your daughter to dress that way."

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I'd be like, "Yeah, that's cool." I'm good with it, she can think that. It really is fine. Not that I'm a robot, not that I'm not at all affected but I'm so much less affected than I would have been before I learned what you're teaching there.

Alison: Yeah. That how they feel means nothing about you. I love the way that you brought it up is yes, often, it is somebody that your friends with who hasn't learned the very valuable lesson that I don't want to hear negative things people say about me.

Jody: Don't tell me that. It's almost like, why are you telling me this? Do you think that's going to help me?

Alison: I had a friend send me a link to a news article, this was five or six years ago where they were saying, "People on Instagram who do this and do that", and they mentioned me. And my response was, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I don't receive anything like this."

Jody: Yes, it's true.

Alison: And I said, "Hey, thank you for thinking of me. In the future if you see anything like this please know I'm not interested at all." So, there's that side of it but then there's also the time this gets so tricky. And I actually used this shift, so the idea is that the book is, You're Already Awesome, but why don't you feel as awesome as you are? Well, we forget. And just your non-negotiable value as a human being, your birthright is that you are already awesome, like a newborn baby, you don't have to earn it or claim it.

I mean as an adult you claim it but as a baby you don't have to prove it. You forget and then I have 12 shifts because for me, you know I'm a tad more dramatic than Jody. And so, we've talked about this where it's like, well, but in terms of I'll be crying, hyperventilating under a desk. And when I am crying, hyperventilating under a desk if somebody hands me a self-help book, or a tool, I want to throw it across the room. And so, I thought from that place to the one at the breaking point.

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What could I hand them in just a shift? And that's the miracle of writing my book for me and really believing and practicing these shifts is it's not as low. I don't get as low. But I actually had an uncomfortable conversation with my dad last night.

Jody: Are you going to tell us? I bet your dad doesn't listen to Better Than Happy.

Alison: Yeah. And if he does, whatever. I never disagree with my dad, never. And we're doing this event and he's hosting this event for my book launch. And I wanted something and he didn't want it. And I kind of let it go and then I was feeling really resentful. And I just was like, "This is important to me." I made all of these other concessions. He called me and I told him that and it was like I was an alien person. I have never done this before. I just said what I felt and then I didn't explain it.

I mean I didn't defend it or try to convince him, I just said what I felt. And then when he didn't agree I just let him not agree rather than flipping.

Jody: How did that go?

Alison: It was an out of body experience.

Jody: You don't have to be angry, and upset, and defensive to state your opinion and hold your ground is what I think I hear you saying, Alison Faulkner.

Alison: Well, for what I would usually do. And this is going to be surprising but with my dad I just will flip my opinion and agree with him. So, it wasn't even that I wasn't having attitude. I mean my dad and I are very similar. We agree on most things. I didn't agree. And the one thing that I wanted at the party and he was like, "Well, we'll have to agree to disagree." And rather than trying to make that okay, I just said, "Okay, we'll agree to disagree." Now, agreeing to disagree with my dad feels terrible. It felt like earth shattering.

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And so, then we kind of had the rest of the conversation and it was okay. And then I was sitting there and I was talking to Eric and I was like, "That's never happened. I can't remember as an adult or even as a teenager ever doing that." And he's like, "I can't remember you ever doing that either." And my tendency was to start to think that my dad thinks I'm a brat, that my dad thinks I'm a diva. That my dad doesn't think I'm grateful for what he's doing, how he feels.

And so now that shift of how they feel means nothing about me. It came to me and I was like, "Yeah, but it's my dad. Yeah, but it's my dad. How my dad feels means nothing about me." And I'm like, "I know this is true but it really, it's difficult. It's difficult to sit in."

Jody: Can you elaborate on that for people, how does how your dad feel, how could that not mean anything about you?

Alison: Right. And so, I talk about, one of my favorite examples of this is from *The Four Agreements* by don Miguel Ruiz. And one of the four agreements is to not take anything personally. And in that book he uses the example that if even if somebody walked up to you and shot you in the head, it's not personal. And you're like, "How can that be true?" For me taking things personally was kind of like a mark of being a good considerate person. So, this was a really mind altering thought for me. And it was introduced to me in this book.

And then through conversations with you, and experiences in which I essentially chose continuing misery or believing this to be true. I chose just despair, and depression, and sadness, and complete self-doubt or being able to believe how they feel means nothing about me. And he gives the example in that book of the smoky mirror, the foggy mirror. And that everybody has their own perception of reality. And we are looking through our own foggy mirrors.

And so, my experience, my biology, my upbringing, my nurture, my nature, all of that is going to color how I interpret the world and see things. And we

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talked before earlier, okay, so you're like, "How does this not make me a sociopath?"

Jody: Right. Shouldn't I care if my dad's mad at me?

Alison: Yeah. And that's the difference, it's not that I don't care, it's that it doesn't touch that core of non-negotiable worth. And so, then what I'm able to do is I'm able from a place of not the world completely ending if it's true, examine if there's some sort of change, or forgiveness, or metamorphosis that I want to participate in. And I really love – well, and I know so much to be true, the concept of godly sorrow where the shame and the beating yourself up, that's not godly sorrow. That's never what it has felt like for me.

If I am honest with myself, me sitting there and projecting, here's what my dad thinks, here's what my dad thinks, here's what my dad thinks. Because that's what I'm doing, I'm using my own foggy mirror to say, "Here's what he thinks." Finally, I just was like, "You know what? I'm a lot like my dad and when I say how I feel, I'm fine and then I keep moving." I'm not passive aggressive, I'm just aggressive.

Jody: That's so much better, really. I would much rather have aggression than passive aggression.

Alison: Yeah, and some people don't, Jody.

Jody: Right, it's true I guess.

Alison: And that right there is the invitation to sit with the discomfort where I'm like, "Okay, how my dad feels means nothing about me. And I have this return to awesome, return to wholeness. And from that place I can check in with God, I can check in with my divine self. Is there something that I could work on? Is there something that I could tweak?" But my default was always self-development, personal growth junky, my default was, this wasn't a comfortable situation, what do I need to change about myself so this doesn't happen again?

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It stamps out my experience over, and over, and over. So actually, by not taking things personally you become a much more compassionate person. And your capacity to feel uncomfortable feelings, your capacity to explore maybe I am a brat, okay, cool, I'll be a brat. The big one for me is the role of the villain where I don't want to be the villain, I don't want to be the villain. And lately sounds like I'm the villain in their story. I've got some Ursula in me, poor unfortunate souls.

Jody: Yeah. That's what I always think. You want to judge me, get in line behind me because you're not better at it than I am. And if that helps you to make me the bad guy, I'll do that. I'll be the Ursula, I'd rather be me than your husband, or your kid, or somebody. I'm just whatever, make it me, I'll do that. And so, it helps me to think about too, it's one thing to say, "What my dad thinks about me doesn't mean anything about me." That is true.

But on the other hand, your dad has known you your whole life. He knows you better than somebody who just picked up and started reading your book, or following you on Instagram, or whatever. But it's still true, the example I always use is if I'm listening to a speaker, my husband and I will go to conferences and things and we'll hear speakers and a lot of times we agree. But sometimes I'll go, "That was so good." And he'll be like, "It went too fast." He couldn't follow it or something.

And so, if his opinion or my opinion meant something about the speaker we would both have the same opinion because we both don't know this person, just experienced them in the same way at the same time saying the same words. So, our opinions of them means something about us, about mu preferences, about maybe where my head is at that day, how much sleep I got. They mean more about the person holding the opinion, way more than the person who is the subject of the opinion otherwise everyone would have the same opinion.

And even though, again, your dad has known you your whole life, he probably knows you very well. Still, he and your mom who's also known

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you her whole life, don't always have the same opinion of you. And because their opinions are about them, they're not about you.

Alison: Absolutely. And their reflection of what my choice is or what my opinions mean as them as a parent, as a person. And I noticed this because my sister, Andrea, have you had her on the podcast?

Jody: No, but we should get her on here.

Alison: Yeah, she's great.

Jody: Maybe you can put in a good word for me.

Alison: I don't have to put in a good word, Jody. But yes, Faulkners, yes, we like to talk about ourselves, yes. But I remember a few years ago looking at Andrea and realizing she's 18 months younger than me, and we have this very close dynamic. And you want to keep people, especially in your family, or people that you're close to, it is easy to keep them in their particular role. And I feel like it's the people that we're closest to who have the hardest time allowing us to grow, and change, and evolve.

And so, with this dynamic it can be really stifling and hurtful to yourself to hold your version of reality or truth of yourself to these people who very often can't accept the change until after they've seen it and seen how it's beneficial for you while it's happening. And so, I remember Andrea, I think she was giving a keynote or speaking and I just sat back and I was like, "Man, I've been seeing her as my little sister in so many ways. And she is this glorious, a businessowner, take no prisoners, genius in her own right in so many ways."

And of course, I thought great things about my sister and I think really highly of her. But to take her out of the little sister role and allow her to be in the role that she is as this adult woman, and not the 14 year old who was stealing my shirts and losing them.

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Jody: That's such a good point, yes. I sometimes coach a woman who wants to stop fighting with her husband for example. And so, she's working on not getting angry, not getting defensive, not yelling, even if he does. And you would think that the spouse would just be really welcoming of that. But like you said, they're not always, it's uncomfortable because in a relationship that you have that's close like that, it changes the dynamic.

So, when you change your role, I would say it's like you've been dancing the waltz and suddenly you're changing the music. And he can't keep dancing the waltz, it's going to be uncomfortable for him. And so, there is that, like you said, the sister, family, whatever, dynamic where growth feels. I remember people going, "It feels worse than when I started working with you." I'm like, "You're doing it right."

You've got to get through that discomfort of we don't even know how to be then with each other. If you're not my little sister or we don't fight and yell, I don't get defensive. It comes across as, so you don't care now then, if you're not willing to fight with me over it. And so that discomfort is something though that you can work through. And on the other side of that is then more evolved you and a more evolved relationship.

Alison: Absolutely. So, one of the other shifts I have in there is feeling my feelings sets me free. And that was one, so much of the book when I wrote it, there was a big lag as of course with the publishing industry, there was a big lag between writing the book and when the book came out. It was almost a couple of years. And as I was writing the book I was like, "Am I at this level?" I'm writing this and it feels inspired and I know it's true, and I know that I'm living it in some ways but feels a little bit beyond me.

This feels a little bit beyond my understanding. And then luckily everything fell apart and I was given the opportunity to grow into it.

Jody: Thanks universe.

Alison: Appreciate you God, we're going to fight. And that's one of the things I learned is God can handle me being really mad at him, and

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screaming eff words at him. And that's just part of how I process my feeling. And so, it was interesting because last night when I was talking to Eric about, well, I feel like a brat but okay. And Eric said to me, he's like, "Okay, so right now I'm genuinely curious, how do you feel these feelings?" Because I was talking to him and then I wanted to watch the rest of development.

And I was like, "Okay." Because I knew I was feeling my feelings but it's how do you describe feeling your feelings? And I think that's what you were describing. When people were like, "This feels worse." You're like, "Yeah, because you're feeling it." And you're not making something else the problem. You're not making something else. And so, for me, kind of my go to physical state for so much of my life has been anxiety. And so, when I feel anxiety it overrides. This was a product of dysregulated nervous system, habit, hormones.

It's not like I was bad for doing that. But as I have been able to heal my go to override the system emotion or feeling is not anxiety. But when I don't feel anxiety it's very disorienting because now I'm feeling hurt. I'm feeling sadness. I'm feeling these true raw emotions. And as I spoke to Eric, I was like, "Okay, so here's in this case how I felt my feelings. Number one, the conversation we had wasn't about my dad or if he was right or wrong. The conversation was an observation of my internal and physical response to the conversation." And so that's a big difference right there.

Jody: One of the things that helps me with what you're talking about is, I call it and I didn't make this term up but I think of it as clean pain and dirty pain. Where there's that hurt that you're feeling, even though it's uncomfortable, it's useful, it's going to move you through the experience and it's going to help you get to the other side of it. And it's the reality for you and it's coming from thoughts that you want to keep versus the anxiety where we resist the hurt, we push it away. We don't want it to be our fault so we start blaming someone else or whatever behaviors we turn to.

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And it actually intensifies it and turns it into a pain that keeps us stuck. It doesn't move us. That clean pain moves you through an experience. Dirty pain keeps you looping in it like on a hamster wheel and it feels like you can't get out of it, there's the drama and all of that.

Alison: I love that because I feel like it kind of marries these two shifts of how they feel means nothing about me and feeling my feelings sets me free whereas kind of one of the, you know, we're not idiots. We're doing things because they serve us in some way. So, what did that anxiety do for me is it made me feel in control of relationships. It made me feel in control of other people's feelings and perceptions of me because I'm constantly monitoring them in my mind.

So how they felt meant nothing about me because I'm in control and I'm holding it all, and I'm going to change the perception, and I'm going to fix it. So, letting go of that anxiety then moves me into feeling my feelings. And the second part is but it sets me free. It does set me free and just like you're saying, it's that clean pain where you sit there. And so, what I said to Eric is, "So what I would have normally done is try to validate my position, try to validate myself." And now what I'm doing is saying, "I wish my dad did that different."

And it hurts that he doesn't. And I would like to control him. But I don't actually want to control him but I kind of do, and that's okay, because it's okay if I'm a villain and I'm Ursula, I love the shadow side. And God, fix it if you need to, otherwise let's keep going.

Jody: Yes, amen, that's exactly right.

Alison: And so, then the conversation lasted probably five minutes longer let's say than it would have in the past. Because in the past I might have called my sister to rally a validating story. I might have turned on the TV to shut out those uncomfortable feelings because there was a part where I was like, "I can't, I can't with this feeling, I can't with this feeling." And when I felt like I couldn't with this feeling, that's when I went and I sat.

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So, I have a practice in the book that is TAP. And I employ it over and over. And it's an acronym I made because when you're in these types of situations you need something quick that can cut through. And so that it's Tune in, T is tune in. A is accept and P is pick your focus. And this is my favorite part is that – and especially with the model that you use and what I would like to do, what I used to do is it's tune in, accept and pick your focus. So, what I would do is tune in and pick my focus.

Jody: You've skipped the middle.

Alison: I just skipped the A.

Jody: And the A is the most important part.

Alison: It is the most important part.

Jody: Yeah, everybody wants to skip it.

Alison: Of course, because the A is feeling your feelings, that acceptance is that I hate that my dad and I disagree on this. I love him. I hate feeling like he might think negatively of me in some way. Yeah, I'm just going to accept that. Yeah.

Jody: So, here's what I love about what you're saying, like you said, you're feeling your feelings but you're also – the way you're talking about your dad is that you're accepting of your dad even though you have opinions which we always will about him. And you're accepting of yourself. That's another mistake I see people make is they'll go, "I know, okay, I'm judging my dad and I'm wishing that he was different, and I'm wishing that I could control him. And I know I shouldn't so what should I think instead? I'm like, what? No. We've just got to get yeah. Like you said, it's okay that I think that.

For me the easiest kind of summary of that A part of the TAP is we're just a couple of humans, he's just a human and he's doing a good job and a terrible job. I'm a human, I'm doing a good job and a terrible job. We're just a couple of people trying to plan an event together and we both have

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opinions and it's all good. It's like accepting everyone and everything including yourself and even your thoughts that you know aren't serving you. You have to embrace them in order to get leverage over them to then like you said, choose your focus and pick your focus in that last phase.

You don't have the leverage to do that if you're resisting and you're mad about it, and you're judging yourself for what you're thinking.

Alison: That is the key right there. I feel like that is as I said, growing into these principles, becoming from a person who knows them and is writing about them, and has a few experiences with them to a person who is living them. That acceptance of as Carl Jung would say, the shadow self. And it's interesting, after I wrote the book I went into kind of like a cocoon. And I sat in this room in a recliner chair listening to a ton of Clarissa Pinkola Estés. And she wrote *Women Who Run with Wolves*.

And she's a Jungian psychoanalysis so she follows Carl Jung. And I listened to probably 12 of her audio programs. I mean I sat in here embroidering and in the tarot that would be the archetype of the hermit. And I also love architects for mythology, or from the tarot because they're part of the human existence. And so going into that hermit phase where I had just written this thing and putting it out there. And then I had to go in, I had to tune in hard core.

And as I tuned in a lot of stuff came up, as I started even exploring, what would it be like to accept the shadow? What would it be like to accept the parts of myself, and my relationships, and my life experience that I've not had the capacity to accept? And that right there, that is what has healed me beyond what anything has ever healed me. That is what has brought me more compassion, more understanding, more empathy and made me more into a human that I so really truly desire to be than anything else.

And so, the acceptance for me and I think for most people, it really has a lot to do with accepting the shadow side, accepting the what we might deem

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the unsavory parts of our character. It's almost unsafe to do that without this rock core belief in my inherent goodness and wholeness.

Jody: Yes, I would agree with that.

Alison: And so, it was that capacity, as I tuned into that so hard, my non-negotiable worth, my capacity to see everything and to see clearly was just so magnified. And personally, that's what I want. I want to be able to see myself clearly and say, "Oops, I didn't get that, looks like I was a little bit of a monster there." Where before that type of understanding would really put me into suicidal tendencies. And I know that that's a place that a lot of people can relate to unfortunately where you're like, "I am just so terrible and worthless."

I can't accept this truth about myself, it's so uncomfortable, I need to end it. And so, to be able to build that up has just been so freeing. So, feeling my feelings sets me free. And being able to put a book into the world and sleep at night is a really big deal for me.

Jody: Yeah, amen. Everybody needs to read this book, seriously. Everybody who's listening to this podcast you will love this book because it aligns so nicely with what we teach here at Better Than Happy. But it has Alison's fun flair. And I love Alison, I know you're a, like you said, a self-help junky. You're a student of personal growth and development. I love all the different people that you've referenced and just your stories. It's an amazing book. Everyone go get, it's called You're Already Awesome.

I will say before we wrap up here, any time your name comes up now, people, I think they think that we get to hang out more than we do get to hang out. We should change that.

Alison: Yeah, let's make that true.

Jody: Yeah. But people say to me, "How is Alison, how is she?" And I don't know how much you're comfortable talking about, give us the short version but I know that you took some time off from social media and things. Again,

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every time your name comes up in any circle, everybody loves you and everybody wants to know how you're doing. I always say, "I don't know. Let's ask Alison." How are you, girl?

Alison: Thank you. So, I finished the book at the end of 2020. And then it was the end of 2020.

Jody: Yeah, I like the timing.

Alison: So, there was that. I got the book contract, the dream of all dreams right when I didn't want to do it anymore, any of it anymore because that's the way it works. And I wrote the book and then my body shut down. It started mostly in my bladder and my uterus, and it essentially was almost a year and a half of just constant debilitating pain with no answers. All the different types of therapies. And it's interesting because everyone's like, "Yeah, because you were hit by a car."

And I'm like, "No." That was five years ago. It's not because I was hit by a car. It's because I ran on adrenalin and anxiety, and trauma for 30 plus years. And being hit by a car, what that did is it showed me what flashbacks and PTSD felt like. And then I was able to finally go, "Oh, okay." And so, my body shut down. And I put an epilog at the end called The Year of Magical Peeing.

Jody: I love it.

Alison: I can't believe I got away with that. The whole book, I quote Billy Madison in the book and I'm like, I can't believe that.

Jody: I know. And one of the first things I loved just even in the intro was you said, "I am really super excited you are here." And you made super excited all one word and I was like, "I love that they let you do that."

Alison: Apparently that's the technical way to do it.

Jody: Really?

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Alison: Yeah. Well, I don't know.

Jody: Well, I thought that was just like an Alison, super excited as all one word.

Alison: Super excited, yeah, I am, I'm super excited.

Jody: Anyway, year of magical of peeing.

Alison: Yeah, the year of magical peeing. And so, what that looked like, the dysregulation of my nervous system. So that's where so many people are going to be able to relate to this where things that are tied, systems that are tied to the nervous system are the ones that are in chronic pain where nobody can do anything for you. And that's because the nervous system really requires mind, body, spirit, healing. And definitely need pills. I'm not saying no to pills.

But I'm saying EMDR and medication, and so really what it looked like was me needing to pee, the sensation to pee at all times, and in all things, and in all places and it never went away. To the point where I didn't sleep for days. My doctor came to my house multiple times to give me different steroids, or pain shots. He was keeping me out of the hospital, because it was also when hospitals were really COVID.

Jody: COVID, yeah.

Alison: Yeah, so it was early 2021. And I just was so lucky to have a physician who I was able to build that relationship with. And so, I really was in bed for about a year. And the physical breakdown of my body led to a true psychotic break, dissociative episodes, a lot of really, really rough stuff. And so, I did 'take a break' but also no longer could I live with compassion and truth, and force myself to be online and do all the things that I have always done. Because in the past I just overrode the system and continued to work and do it. So, it was a break, but also I got taken out.

Jody: You didn't have a choice really.

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Alison: Yeah, I mean I did have a choice because I'm very insanely powerful. But that's kind of how I got here is I'm an insanely powerful override the body, I don't have to sleep or do things that mere mortals have to do. And that meant relationships, friendships becoming really insular because I could not talk about my pain. You tell people you have to pee and they just want to talk to you for an hour about all the different doctors and all the different things you should do. And I'm like, "Okay."

After putting the book down, I was able to find some programs and some different things that really helped me. And at the end of the day, it really was about regulating my nervous system and a lot of somatic healing. So, I just throw that out there for anybody with anything that they feel like the doctors can't touch, any chronic cycles, just look up somatic healing. Somatic healing is that mind, body, spirit, having to do with the nervous system. And it's going to become more and more a regular thing that we hear about as so many people are suffering with similar things.

And so how am I doing? Really, really well. And I'll tell you how I'm doing. I have never been able to have my kids come to an event. I have never been able to not be overwhelmed and stressed, and needing to control and all of the things. And I did this book launch event and I wanted my kids there. And it was the first day of school and that is just such a huge thing for me, to be able to be emotionally, physically, mentally in a place where there's a room with 200 plus people that before I would have felt responsible for all of them and needing to control everything.

Where everyone could come and have their own experience, there's people who are mad at me, not at the event but in my life. I never had disagreements with anyone because everything had to just be okay. And there's actively multiple things in my life that are messy, which I would not never let fly before. And I feel peace.

Jody: You've surrendered.

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Alison: I surrendered. And that event, I did not on adrenalin. And my kids came and I was able to be present and look in the eyes of my children and the people who came to the event. And they danced on stage with me, we taught everyone a butterfly dance. And then I let them stay. What? I don't even know who I am, they stayed. My nine year old, Rad, was running around and he was like, "I don't even know what to do. I guess I'm going to go down some drinks." And he got all these different punch. Frat boy.

And that, being able to help him with his homework and launch a book, I have never been able to do that. And so that's how I'm doing.

Jody: I'm happy to hear that.

Alison: Yeah. And I don't want to have to be on social media all the time. And then there's part of me that's like, "My book won't be successful unless I'm on social media." And so just even watching that and just going, "Cute, that's cute, that's wow, that's, yeah." There's so much benefit and growth that has happened for me. I told God, I made a deal that when I got this book, and so when I got the book offer. And it's really the reason I started everything is I wanted to write a book.

And everything's been about me validating to myself that I'm worth writing a book, I mean a lot of it. And then I get the book offer when I'm in the lowest of low and I just said, "I will not do this how I've done everything else. I will not white knuckle it. I will not go anxiety attack to anxiety attack, hyperventilating, tunnel vision, no other reality exists except the project." And just suffer. I'm like, "I won't do that but I will show up. And if you take care of everything else I'll show up."

And that happened. Now, what it took for it to happen, all these is more than you think you're bargaining for. But I don't have to pee currently.

Jody: Congratulations.

Alison: That's a miracle in and of itself.

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Jody: Yeah. Well, I'm so proud of you. I love your book.

Alison: I love you.

Jody: Everybody in my community just is also a big fan of yours and loves you. And so, thank you for this book. Thank you for coming on the show today and we're so glad to hear that you're feeling better, Alison, thanks for your wisdom.

Alison: Love you.

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.