

397: When You Talk Too Much



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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 397, When You Talk Too Much.

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, welcome to the podcast. Who's a talker out there besides me? I love to talk. So first of all thank you for listening to the podcast because it gives me an opportunity to talk which I am very good at doing. Before we dive into this topic I want to make sure that you're signed up for Wellness Week. It's \$19 and we're going to spend time together really diving into all the pillars of wellness, physical, emotional, spiritual and all the other things.

And the best part about Wellness Week is that it gives you a feel for what coaching is like. And so if you've ever wondered if coaching could benefit you in your life, if it's really what you need maybe – I know I get a lot of people that are like, "My stuff is too heavy, coaching won't work." And they're surprised most of the time to discover that coaching is the perfect solution.

And then I get the opposite too like, "I don't have any real problems or real struggles. I just listen to this podcast because it's fun. I don't need coaching." And those people have their minds blown too about how coaching takes everything beyond what they even knew was possible. So please come to Wellness Week and check out coaching if you haven't before. It's 19 bucks and you can register at jodymoore.com/intensive. Just be prepared because your life won't be the same after.

Okay, so again, I want to talk today about being a talker. So like I said, I would classify myself as someone who easily can talk too much. If I am not self-aware and I don't manage myself I have a tendency to talk too much. Now, what is too much? That is subjective. It's totally up to you. There is no right amount to talk or wrong amount. So I'm not telling you this because I

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want you to feel bad or feel ashamed. That is not my intention here at all. Please don't go to that place.

I'm going to help you determine for yourself what is talking too much. And then I'm going to give you some strategies that I utilize to try to manage, again, that I part of myself that wants to talk a lot. So first of all a lot of people like to dive into diagnosing why do we talk too much. Or maybe you have a friend or someone who talks a lot and it's easy to move into judgment if you find that to be annoying. That's not what I want to do today.

I don't know. I'm not a therapist. I do know that there are a lot of the most well-known and well vetted personality assessments out there and there are many but most of them have some kind of component around verbal communication. And most of them identify that there are people who tend to be more verbally communicative and others who are more internally processing if you will. And so it doesn't mean anything. Sometimes the talkers actually appear to be more confident. That may or may not be the case.

Sometimes we talk out of insecurity. Sometimes we're speaking out of confidence. It's just simply a different way of being in the world and it has to do partly with how your nervous system is wired and your DNA and then your life experience and a bunch of other things like I said that I won't go into. I just want to be clear that I'm not saying it's better or worse to be more verbal, more communicative. It's just different. And at the same time I am a believer that any one of our strengths overused can become a weakness.

There are many people who teach this in different forms. I didn't invent that idea. I was taught it when I was a corporate trainer in a leadership training. But I love that idea that any one of our strengths becomes a weakness over years because it means any one of my weaknesses are just one of my strengths overused. So I do believe that our ability to talk and connect and express verbally and connect with others through language is a huge strength that can become a weakness when overused.

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So I want to talk about it in different settings. I want to talk about it first of all in a group setting. So if you are in a class or in a room, in a workshop with a bunch of other people or maybe you're on a Zoom call with a bunch of other people, when you're with a group of people, think 15 people or more at least. What is happening in your mind if you're the person talking and what is an appropriate amount? I don't know the answer to what's an appropriate amount. I just want you to decide it intentionally.

So I was talking to a friend of mine, Melissa, hi, Melissa, I'll just say it, it's Melissa. I love Melissa so much, Melissa Spencer. She's my good friend and we work together in the business. And she was saying how her stake president, which is just a leader in our church, will pass out tokens. I think she said he literally, did you say, literally brings tokens, Melissa? I think she said that. Or at the very least he reminds everyone, "You have two tokens, every time you make a comment you give me one of your tokens and when your two tokens are gone you're done."

I don't know if he literally brings tokens or he just reminds everyone, "You get to make two comments." But this is his way of trying to manage the room because what's difficult is when you're the leader of the room. And I am often the leader and I'm also often a student. The leader has to try to manage the dynamics for the whole room to try to help everybody get what they need out of it. And when you have a dominant talker it's challenging because on the one hand some people don't want to speak up.

There are some people who are like, "Oh, good. I don't want to speak up so I'm glad that other person is filling the airtime or answering the questions so that I don't have to." But at a certain point there becomes a tipping point at which it's like, "Oh, that person again. We know what that person has to say." Or there are some people who are less quick to raise their hands and speak up but when they do it really benefits them and sometimes an uncomfortable awkward silence is what they need to get up the courage to raise their hand and speak up,

So as the leader of the room, if you've never been a teacher or led a room which I'm sure we all have done that at times. But it's a challenge because

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we don't want to ignore the person raising their hand or make them feel left out or feel bad. But we do want to make sure we're considering everybody in the room.

So that brings me to being a participant in the room. As a participant in the room I try to keep that in mind. I try to keep in mind that even though I always have a thought and I always want to raise my hand and I think that what I have to say is really valuable and useful, it will help everybody if you'll just let me share it. I know that that is not always true. I'm not as brilliant and wise as I think I am all the time.

But even if I do have a lot of good ideas I may be taking away from somebody else that either wants to speak up or could really benefit from being given the opportunity to speak up and needs some uncomfortable silence and pause to build up the courage to speak up. I think for me anyway it's selfish of me to not consider everybody in the room like that and not manage myself. So I give myself a couple tokens. Now, again, it depends. If I'm in a meeting with five other people I think I get maybe two or three tokens if there's a lot of dialogue, if there's a lot of opportunity to speak up.

I'm trying to take a reasonable assessment of what percentage of answering questions or making comments would make the most sense given the number of people and the number of opportunities to speak up in this environment. And I'm trying to give myself a tiny percentage. And when I'm tempted to speak out more like Melissa would say, "I've already used my two tokens, I'm done." That's her and I's way of managing ourselves and telling ourselves, "No, Jody, you don't need to speak up again even though you think you do."

If I have used my 'two tokens' and my brain's like, "But I have this thing I need to say. I have this really good idea, people are going to love this." Then I tell myself, "It's okay, you can just enjoy your idea." It's perfect for you to keep for yourself. Maybe the reason that idea came to your mind or that you recalled it or that you read it at some point or wherever it came

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from was just for you. Let's be quiet now and let other people have a chance to speak even if it's silent and no one else is speaking up.

Did you know silence is not a bad thing? So it's again hard for my brain. In the LDS church once a month we have testimony meeting which means that there aren't assigned speakers or an assigned agenda for the main portion of our church service. There is just an opportunity for anyone who feels prompted to come up and share their thoughts and testify of Jesus Christ. And it's not uncommon for no one to get up for a while, for there to just be a mic and everybody else sitting there waiting to see who's going to get up.

It doesn't usually last too long but for a good five minutes or so sometimes, which feels really long and everyone's just sitting there. And every time that happens my brain's like, "I should get up, I have something to say." I always have something to say. I always have a story to tell or something on my mind and communicating verbally helps me process and I connect with the spirit and people like it. People tell me they like what I have to say. So my brain's telling me to get up.

And what I tell myself is no, "Silence is good. Silence is sometimes what's necessary for someone else who wants or needs to get up to build up the courage. So you keep your idea, Jody Moore, to yourself. It is for you internally. You process it, you appreciate it, you feel the benefit of it. That is enough." And again I keep using two tokens. I don't mean literally two. Maybe it's not two, maybe it's one sometimes. Maybe sometimes it's more. I want you to decide what is two tokens for you. And when you feel you've used your two tokens you monitor yourself.

Now, the next situation I want to talk about is in a one-on-one conversation, same rules are going to apply, my friends. And again the way I manage myself in this situation is a little bit different. I don't necessarily think about have I used my two tokens. Some of the people in my life are like, "You need to work on it more, Jody." So let me just own that I know that's true. It is challenging for me but what I try to do is be quiet and let other people

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talk because I have a tendency to run people over with what I want to say, to interrupt people, to cut people off.

And here's what I try to keep in mind is I don't ever want and I'm not saying this doesn't happen sometimes but I feel heartbroken when I know or when I believe that somebody has left a conversation with me or an interaction with me feeling not heard and not seen. And for those of you that are talkers like myself I just want to remind you that when we talk too much we are not listening enough, period.

We cannot be talking as much as we want to and because not only are we talking but when they're talking we're thinking about what we're going to say next. And we can't do that to the extent that some of us try to do and hear and see other people. It's just not something we're capable of doing. The brain doesn't operate that way. And people can feel the difference. You've been at the receiving end of this.

We've been in a conversation with someone and you realize they didn't really hear anything I said. They heard me kind of. They even replied sometimes as though they heard me. They didn't really hear me. They didn't really see me because they were busy thinking of what they were going to say next. Now, that's a common thing I'm sure you've heard before, "People don't listen. They're just thinking of what they're going to say next." And I do think that we all do that to a certain extent, even when we're managing ourselves very well or even for people who aren't talkers.

It is human nature to be as you're listening, sort of thinking about how you're going to reply. So I don't want you to feel bad when that part of you doesn't totally go away. I don't think it ever totally goes away. I don't know, maybe some people would say otherwise but for me it never completely goes away. But what I can do is manage it a lot by rather than thinking about what I want to say next, what's a story I can tell that sort of relates to this or that would be funny or that would add to this.

I am thinking, what else do I want to know? What are they really trying to tell me, or what's underneath this that's true for this person? So rather than

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thinking of what I want to say, I'm trying to shift my focus to thinking about them and being curious about them, which causes me to think about what do I want to ask. What do I want to ask? And again being a talker, it's tempting for me to want to ask three questions at once. This is something I try to practice in my coaching.

Somebody tells me a situation and I want to go, "So what did you mean by that? Do you think you meant this or do you think you meant that, or did you feel this way or what was going on?" See how I just asked four, five questions at once? So I really work on making my questions more succinct when I'm working on this talking less thing. So I'll say things like, "Interesting. What was that like? Say more about that. How did that feel? Oh, fascinating. Why?" See, all of these and I don't ask all those at once by the way.

Those are just examples of a question that I ask when I'm really being there trying to allow someone to feel seen and heard and we all want that. We all want to feel seen and heard, you guys, even the people that are really quiet, that don't ever speak up. If you're a talker like me you're like, "Why don't they speak up if they want to feel seen and heard?" Well, because they're not wired the way you are. They're not wired the way I am. They're wired a little differently. Maybe it feels dangerous etc., who knows the reason why? I don't really care the reason why.

All I know is I want people to know that they're valuable and I want them to feel seen and heard after they leave a conversation with me. I don't just want them to walk away feeling enlightened by what they learned from me. That's ridiculous. I want them to feel seen and heard and validated after they spend a few minutes talking with me. And that doesn't happen by me talking. That happens by me listening. This is not easy to do, my friends.

Here's the last thing I want to tell you. All of this really shifted for me about 10 years ago because I took some kind of online personality assessment. I'm so sorry I wish I could give the credit to wherever it came from but I don't remember. I just remember everything was put on to these continuums of like from one extreme to the other. And there were all these

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different questions that you answered about yourself. And so one of the questions had to do with this.

It said, "When you're in a class situation, how likely are you to speak up and answer a question?" And it started from not likely at all, all the way over to very likely, I do it all the time. So I answer on that side very likely, I do it all the time thinking look at me, I'm so confident. I'm going to get a good score for that. And as I got the results of this assessment what I discovered is that a lot of my answers fell on that side.

And that what the test told me was that that isn't useful either, that what is the most healthy, the most confident is falling in the middle. So falling on one extreme of I never speak up, I never raise my hand because I'm too nervous, I'm afraid people will judge me. I don't think I have anything useful to say. That's fear based but the opposite end of I'll raise my hand, I have something to say, everyone listen to me, is also fear based they said. And my mind was exploding a little as they said this. I'm like, "What are you talking about? I'm not afraid."

And they said, "No, it's coming from an insecurity of needing to feel heard or seen or validated. And the way you're trying to feel that is by having to talk all the time, needing someone to listen or to believe that people are listening by speaking out loud." People who are truly confident fall in the middle. They can speak up and they can also be quiet and they can feel important and validated and trust they have good ideas and not good ideas and it's all okay. That's what I like to teach about confidence.

And you don't have to speak up all the time and share what you're thinking in order to validate yourself in that way." And my head just exploded a little bit. I was like, "Oh, I think that's true." I think that's true. I think when I talk too much it's coming from insecurity just like I like to look at people that never speak up and go, "It's too bad, they're so insecure." But guess what, so am I. It just shows up differently. When I'm in true confidence I can just listen and love people and soak it in and I don't have to say everything that comes to my mind and I can manage myself.

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Now, again, I have coached some of you on this before and I am not telling you to beat yourself up over it. I am simply trying to give you some awareness and some tools that you can implement. You're not always going to do it right. I don't always do it right. I still talk too much but I know what to do when I want to work on it. I know how to manage myself. And I will continue doing that. I'll probably have to continue doing it the rest of my life but I'm in. Who's with me?

Alright, thanks for joining me today for another episode of *Better Than Happy*. I'll see you next week. Take care everybody, 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.