

400: Pretending vs. Becoming



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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 400, Pretending vs. Becoming.

Did you know that you can live a life that's even better than happy? My name is Jody Moore. I'm a master-certified life coach and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. And if you're willing to go with me I can show you how. Let's go.

Hello my friends. Happy anniversary to us. Happy birthday to us. It is our 400th anniversary, 400th, is that how you say it? Why does it sound weird, 400th? This is episode 400. Wow, that's a lot of me talking. Thank you so much for listening. Whether you joined just last week or you've been here since episode number one I'm so appreciative that you're here. I value your time and your attention. I hope to make this worth your while. I feel really excited about today's episode.

I was trying to think, what could I do that would be really special for episode 400? But I kept coming up with things that went with the number 400 like 400 ways to whatever and was like that's a no. Nobody wants a list of 400 of anything nor could I come up with 400 good things. So we're not going to do anything like that. But I am going to share with you a message that is really near and dear to my heart that I really think can have exponential value in your life if you apply it.

And that is this idea that there is a difference between pretending and becoming. And I'm sure you're already aware of that. I'm going to dive into what I mean by that but I'm going to tell you how to do more becoming and less pretending because the goal in anything you're trying to change or become or create in your life is to become rather than have to pretend for, I think obvious reasons but we're going to dive into them anyway here today. Thanks for joining me.

I'll tell you that becoming, helping people become is my life's work. That is what I do as a coach, what I'm trying to do, trying to help you do, I should say, for yourself and your life. And it's going to be the focus of Wellness Week. And so if you're not registered for Wellness Week, it's \$19 and you

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should definitely join me there. Let me tell you first about pretending and becoming. And if you like what I have to say here and it feels powerful to you though, definitely consider joining me there. So there are in my mind three different times, three examples of when in our life this comes up.

When we can either pretend or we can become, three times, maybe there's more but there are three obvious ones when it's really relevant and this could be useful. The first one is when you're trying to make a change. Maybe you are trying to change the way you eat. You're trying to eat healthier. You're trying to change the condition of your body in some way. You want to change the composition of it or the health of it in some way. Eating habits will be a part of that and also exercise routine and sleeping routines and stress levels.

All of those things are going to impact your physical health. And if you're trying to change something in the realm of physical health then there may be some pretending but ultimately we want to become. Let's just talk about this for just a minute. If I'm trying to eat healthier because it would benefit my body then there's times when I have to really think about what I'm eating and plan my food more carefully and not give in to urges, to eat things that aren't as good for me, maybe the things that I'm in the habit of eating.

But at some point I can become someone who just eats healthy. I'll tell you what. I do still quite a bit of pretending around food. I pretend to want to eat an apple but no, I would rather eat a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup in the afternoon. I think one of the ways this is the most obvious to me is when I see people and health is one way when this happens to me a lot. I like to follow people and look up to people who are really good at eating right, exercising, taking care of their physical health.

So for example I follow Brad Jensen who I've talked about before. I've even worked closely with Brad Jensen. He's on Instagram as The Sober Bodybuilder and he is a health and fitness coach. And I like to follow Kristin Andrus who does all kinds of amazing work in the world. She also creates

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exercise videos that she puts on YouTube and she's a big fan of taking care of your physical health.

And I've heard both of them on different occasions or witnessed I should say, witnessed them be asked the question by people, "How do you do it? How do you stay motivated? How do you go to the gym and exercise every day? How do you eat well consistently over and over again?" And they're both very transparent about the fact that they're not perfect and they're not extreme about anything but that they consistently take care of themselves physically.

And they both give a different version of the same answer which is, "It's just who I am. That's just what I do. I don't have to stay motivated to do it because it's just what I do, just like I don't have to be more motivated to brush my teeth every night, it's just what I do." It's just a habit we sometimes call it. But I like to think of it as more powerful than just a habit. I like to think of it as they've both become at some point in their lives, they became someone who exercises pretty much every day and eats pretty healthy on the regular.

So there's pretending which is doing it even though it's hard and we don't want to and we have to think about it and we have to use some willpower and we have to use some other techniques to get ourselves to do it. And then there's becoming someone who just does it. Maybe the change and like I said, change is the first way that this shows up a lot. Maybe the change you're trying to make is you want to be better with your time, with time management. Maybe you don't plan your time at all and you want to get yourself planning your time or this is what I hear most commonly when I coach people.

People are making plans. They're making to-do lists. They're thinking about what they need to do but they're not following through on the plans. So maybe it's a time management type of change that you're trying to make in your life. At some point you want to become someone who does the things that you write down on your to-do list for yourself or in your calendar to do. Maybe the change you're trying to make is around spending less time

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scrolling social media, more time reading or in your spiritual practice or what have you.

Whatever it is, change is a time when becoming is the goal and pretending is where we start out. Okay, let's talk about the second time. And like I said, after I give you these three examples then I'm going to tell you some strategies to help you to do so. But the second example when I think this comes up a lot is when you're in a new circumstance. When you suddenly get placed into a new circumstances for various reasons there's a lot of pretending happening before we become.

So, not right after but after graduating college, a little while after, I waited tables for a while with my college degree and that was fun. But then eventually I got a job, in my mind it was a 'real job' in corporate. I worked for the University of Phoenix. I was an academic counselor. Now, I felt like I was pretending because I was in the beginning because I remember knowing I'm supposed to dress according to the dress code and get my car and go to this office and be there by nine o'clock every day and stay until five o'clock but I don't know what I'm supposed to do when I'm there.

I go to a cubicle and I sit at a computer but until I became fully trained, until somebody taught me what to do, where to login, what databases to check, what phone calls to make, what things to look up. And until I especially, here's what I thought was interesting as I was thinking about this example. In the beginning when we're pretending someone just tells us what to do and then we do it but the becoming happens after you understand why you're doing it. You understand the bigger picture. And then you can make the nuanced adjustments.

So I was pretending to be an academic counselor when they first hired me to until I understood the objectives of my job and I understood what success looked like and I understood the tools and vehicles that I had by which to become more or less successful in that role.

Maybe you get a new calling at church, maybe you can relate to this. They're like, "Hey, thanks for being willing to be the relief society president

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or the bishop of your ward.” You are the bishop now, if they called you to be the bishop or you’re the relief society president. But it’s sort of like you’re pretending that you are in the beginning because you don’t even know what that means. You don’t know how that fits into your life.

You don't know what you're supposed to be doing or how to do it or when to do it or how you're going to do it in your way even if you, maybe you're very familiar with how the person who did it before you did it. You still don't know how you're going to do it. What are you going to bring to this? So there's some pretending that happens in the beginning before becoming.

If you're trying to start a new business, I felt this way so much when I was a new coach first of all. I was pretending and then as a new entrepreneur. I was trying to become a coach, become an entrepreneur but in the beginning I was pretending that I was a coach.

As a new mom, oh my goodness I remember bringing home my first child, my son Isaac from the hospital when he was a baby. And my husband got us home and then he went to get diapers and whatever at the store. I don't know why we didn't have diapers. Maybe we did, I don't know. He went to the store to get some stuff, maybe to pick up dinner. So I was home alone with this baby for the first time. And we lived in a tiny little duplex with lots of other little houses and places really close to us in California where it was hot. So everybody always has all the windows open.

And Isaac was crying, I was changing his diaper and he was crying on the changing table and I remember thinking, oh no, the neighbors are going to hear and they're going to roll their eyes or sort of laugh at me and think she doesn't know what she's doing because her baby's crying. Little did I know that babies cry no matter how amazing of a mom you are. But I remember, it reinforced for me that idea that I'm pretending to be a mom, but I'm not a mom yet.

I'm just pretending to be a mom. I mean I am a mom, I have this baby but didn't feel like I was a mom. I didn't know what to do. This happens in new

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relationships too. Okay, so that's the second way, change is the first way, something new is the second way.

The third way that this shows up a lot in our lives is when we're in a phase of growth. And the truth is, hopefully we're always growing at least a little bit, we're always being given lots of opportunities to grow in life, dang it. Some growth I think is more exponential and therefore more challenging or more painful than others. And so I think that in those times of growth we move back into the pretending before we move into becoming.

So for example when my business went from being just me to, or maybe just me and an assistant to a team of people I had this realization one day. I was meeting with my team and I have a small team of five or so people, six people that we meet weekly. And then some other additional support too but I remember in one of the meetings somebody asked me a question about something. I don't know what it was exactly. It was something like, how many people are we going to have at that event or something like that. That I remember thinking, I don't know.

But they were all looking at me like I should know. I'm the one in charge. I'm supposed to tell them the answer and there's no more hiding behind I don't know and giving up because there's a whole team of people ready to go to work and create the thing that I want to create. And I remember feeling for just a moment, I'm just going to give an answer even though I don't really know but I won't tell them I don't know. I'll pretend I know how to lead this team. I'll pretend I know where we're going and what we're doing because I hadn't yet become a leader of my team.

I'm still in some ways pretending at times. Don't tell my team. It's okay, they already know. But at times I'm still pretending as I become more of a leader, more of the CEO of my business, my friend Kris Placky, this is what she specializes in and has helped me do is become the CEO rather than pretend.

As my kids get older too, as I have teenagers and just different situations that come up in our family, all of a sudden even though I'm a mom I feel

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like a mom now, I've become a mom. But now I'm sort of back into pretending again to know how to be a mom to teenagers at times. There's times when I feel like I don't know what I'm doing but I'll just pretend.

Maybe you get promoted at work. I used to see this in corporate all the time. You have somebody who's really good at their job and so what do we do? We promote that person to be a manager over a team of 10 people doing that job, except that being a manager is an entirely different job than the job that you were doing. Managing people is not the same as doing whatever the frontline work is that you did that got you the promotion to become a manager.

Except that because you were so good at your job you must be good at being the manager of people doing that job and so people think you know what you're doing and you might have to pretend until you become a manager. So growth, change, new situations or growth, create this dynamic of pretending vs. becoming. Now, here's what I want to say about it. I want to say first of all, we all start out pretending mostly I should say. There's nothing wrong with pretending. I'm not saying that pretending is bad. I think that pretending just is the way.

I call it pretending because I like to give myself the permission to sort of be almost acting or role playing. There are times when I'm just saying, "Yes, I know what direction we're going, team, we're going here." And the part of my brain that's like, no, you don't, you're just making that up. You have no idea what's going to happen. I sort of answer that part of my brain, I should say, I give myself permission to be confident anyway because I call it pretending. I'm like, "I know, but we're just pretending we know the answer." And that's okay. That's where we have to begin.

And sometimes we call this imposter syndrome and I talked a little bit about this recently on the Entre-Talk episodes but I think it comes up in all different areas of our lives. And when that imposter voice comes up going, "You're an imposter." If you just answer it with, "Yeah, I'm in the pretending phase." That's okay, that's where we all start out. You know how kids learn

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to talk? They imitate other people talking. They pretend to know what they're talking about but half the time they don't.

I have to tell you a funny story. I'm sorry. My youngest daughter, recently my mother-in-law, was staying with the kids when my husband and I were out of town and she's in first grade. She says something to grandma, she calls upstairs for grandma to help her with something. And my older daughter who's 15 says, "Oh, Taylor, grandma's upstairs, I don't think she can hear you. Do you need help with something? Can I help you?" And the younger daughter, Taylor, says, "None of your business." And my older daughter, Macy looks at her with surprise like, oh, okay.

And Taylor realizes by the look on Macy's face and by her reaction that what she'd said was sort of off-putting and she admitted, "I don't know what that means." So she had heard probably her older siblings and her parents and other people say, "None of your business." And she got the idea that it's something people say when somebody else tries to get in the middle of your conversation but she didn't fully understand what it meant. She was pretending. She was trying out that statement, "None of your business."

Now, again, by the reaction she realized, I don't think that it means what I thought it meant. And that's how she's going to learn what it means but we all do some of that in the beginning. We're pretending, we're like, let me try this thing that I've seen someone else do or let me try showing up in the way that I think it should look and sometimes I might get it right and sometimes I might get it wrong.

Now, here is what I think is key in this beginning pretending phase. It will feel dishonest I think or dis-ingenuine or outside of your integrity if you're pretending to be an expert at it. I don't mean pretend to be really good at it or to be perfect at it. I mean pretend that you are that thing and see how it goes and be willing to admit that you're just pretending just like Taylor did when she said, "I don't actually know what that means." That makes it a cute, sweet kind of funny story and it makes Macy go, "Oh, okay. Well, let me explain to you what that means."

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So that's what I want you to do in the pretending phase, try it out and when your brain's like, "This is fake." You're like, "Yeah, we've got to try. We've got to start somewhere but be willing to admit that you're still learning and you don't really know. Be willing to say, "I'm not good at this so maybe I messed that up. Maybe I did it wrong." But I find that so many people are not willing to go through the pretending phase first of all. They want specific direction.

They want to know, this is the person in college that was asking five million questions of the professor, "How many pages does the paper need to be? How much research do we need to do? How many sources do we need to cite? Is it single spaced or double spaced?" I would always get so frustrated because I'm like, "Look, now we have to follow this specific formula."

If you just step back and understand the goal of what you're trying to do and you pretend that you know how to do it and you might get it wrong but then you can go back and revise it, otherwise you have to do it this one certain way that may not be the right way for you, so pretend. Some days I eat a salad for lunch some days. And I pretend to be someone who likes eating a salad for lunch but I am not someone who likes a salad for lunch. I'm just pretending. I am seeing is there a type of salad that I could like that would make my body feel good, that would fill me up, that would be satiating, that would achieve all the goals I have for myself?

But in the beginning I have to pretend. Are you with me? The next thing I want to say is that to move out of pretending and here's why we want to move out of pretending. Let me just preface it before I tell you the way. Pretending is exhausting. Pretending means that it requires a lot of focus and concentration. I have to really pay attention. I have to think through things. Maybe I have to plan in advance. I have to take a lot of guesses. I'm getting a lot of things wrong. I have to manage myself around not beating myself up when I get it wrong.

It's exhausting staying in pretending. This is why people give up on goals. This is why people often don't make lasting change or stick with it if that's

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an option. When you've got a kid, you're a mom, it's not an option to, it is I guess, but most people wouldn't choose the option to walk away and abandon their child. And so there are times when we stick with it and we become. But if it's optional we often walk away because the pretending phase is so hard.

But here's what I want to tell you. I don't want you to walk away from the things that you really want to achieve. I want you to come to Wellness Week because this is what I'm going to teach you. You can pretend on the outside but becoming happens on the inside. Did you hear that? Let me say it again. You can pretend on the outside but to become it has to happen on the inside of you. So what do I mean by that? What's happening on the outside is the action that you're taking and I want you to do that. I want you to take action. I want you to try stuff.

I don't want you to just sit back and become on the inside. I think that's actually the hard way to do it. I think just sitting on the couch trying to believe in yourself is the hard way. I want you to go take a lot of action towards the goals that you want. I want you to try eating the salads. I want you to try some marketing in your business. I want you to try all the things, knowing that you're pretending I just want you to also be working on the internal transformation that must happen for you to become who you're trying to become.

In other words you must change your internal view of yourself, of who you are, of what's possible for you. If you can't picture yourself as the person who does the things that she wrote down on her calendar and said she was going to do you will never get out of that loop of trying and failing. You have to picture yourself as a person who lives a healthy lifestyle. You picture yourself as somebody who eats healthy for the most part, who exercises regularly. If you can't picture yourself and it's okay if you can't right away but you've got to work on that part.

And I'll tell you what we tend to do instead. What we tend to do instead is we move into overwhelm, confusion, believing we're not doing it right or just saying, "I just can't get myself to do it." This is how you know you're not

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doing the internal work. You're trying to do the external work. You're trying to do the thing on the outside, great, keep doing that, don't stop doing that but also you've got to come do the internal work. You've got to change on the inside. This is what we're going to be doing in Wellness Week for five days.

We're going to look at all different topics, physical health, financial health, emotional health. I can't remember the others but we're looking at all the five pillars of wellness. And we're looking at how do I become. Now, here's what I want to tell you. It's not as simple as just change how you think about yourself. Stop believing that you're unhealthy, an unhealthy person who eats lots of junk food. Start believing that you're a healthy person. It's not that simple because if it was we'd all just do that. The mind is complicated. You are complicated and dynamic. And this is why I love coaching.

Coaching allows for that, so coaching allows us to play with your current thoughts, not even necessarily change them. We might be able to find things that you're already thinking but we put a slight twist on them to create a new feeling with those same thoughts and stories. If you've not experienced coaching, that's not going to make a lot of sense to you. But all I can say is sometimes, let me try to give you an example.

Somebody may have the thought, it's all on me. I have coached let's say a lot of moms for example who will say, "It's all on me. I have to do everything." And as we play with it, it's just a thought, it's just a story. I'm not saying that we make it a fact ever. It's always just a story. But maybe we don't have to get rid of that story because a lot of women especially, moms are like, "No, you don't understand. It is all on me. I do all the things." Especially if you're a single mom or you have a spouse who is gone a lot or otherwise unable to help for whatever reason.

It's all on me, might be a thought that we keep but rather than it's all on me, poor me, this is so hard and self-pity what if it's all on me, look at me, I am pretty freaking amazing. And it's all on me. It's all on me. I get to choose here. I get to decide what we're going to do. We can tap into the side of all

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of us that actually wants to be in control and leverage that part of us with the thought, it's all on me rather than tap into the side of us that wants to feel sorry for ourselves and think that we can't do it and poor us and feel bad for ourselves with the thought, it's all on me.

Do you see what I'm saying? Same thought, different emotions behind it through coaching. Sometimes with coaching we get to work in the space of allowing emotions and processing emotions. A lot of people take what I teach here on the podcast and then you use it to judge the way you're thinking, to judge your feelings, to push them away, to resist them. That is not going to work long-term in most cases. So we work in the space of allowing and processing emotions and sometimes that's enough. Sometimes just giving it a minute to cycle through you is enough.

Sometimes the work of coaching means cleaning up stories that you have from your past. And sometimes we find that the stories that you have from your past are indulgent and we don't need to tell them ever again. Sometimes we need to create a new story for your future and we need to focus more on the future. Sometimes we need to have you focusing less on the future because it's freaking you out. How could it be all of these things? Because it's specific to each individual. It's specific to you and your dynamic complicated mind.

We need to sometimes acknowledge your current beliefs with compassion and create safety for you to step into that next version of yourself. We need to make it safe for you to believe in the version of yourself that you want to be. For some of you it's not safe to believe in that version of you for all kinds of reasons, again sometimes it's past experience. Sometimes it's things that you've been taught about what people like that are like.

I coach a lot of people who want to make more money but they recognize that they have thoughts about people with money, judgments of people with money. And that they're afraid if they make more money they're going to turn into a bad person. Okay, that's valid. We can't just dismiss that and say, "Stop thinking that." We've got to understand it. We've got to pull it

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apart. We've got to play with it. We've got to make it safe for it to come out and be exposed to the light because the light dissipates it ultimately.

So that's what we're going to be doing at Wellness Week. If you're not registered you really need to be there, jodymoore.com/intensive. It's 19 bucks.

Okay, now, there's one more thing that I want to teach you though about the process of becoming. So far let me just recap. We've talked about the three times when it's relevant, during a change, when you're in a new situation or during times of growth. I've also taught you that we all start out pretending and that's okay. And I've taught you that you can pretend on the outside but becoming only happens on the inside.

And the last thing I want to offer to you today is that the process of becoming is more valuable than the arrival point. Again, I want to say that one more time because you need to write this down if you're not. The process of becoming is more valuable than the arrival point. It is more expansive. It is more exciting. It is more fulfilling. It is more exhilarating. It is more fun. I know this is hard to believe. How could the process of making a million dollars be more fun than having a million dollars? It's hard to believe, isn't it? I get it.

It's the honest to goodness truth. And maybe you have experiences in your life that you can look back on and say, "Yeah, I do believe that." Because I don't know about you but I have experiences where I can say, "Yeah, I believe that." And at the same time a part of me doesn't believe that at all. Part of me is like, "How could that be?" Once I am really skinny and fit for life that's just going to be so amazing. I'll just be so happy all the time except have you seen people who are skinny and fit? They are happy some of the time and they're still unhappy some of the time. How could that be?

That's just the reality of it. Your brain's going to come with you and that's why the process of becoming though is valuable, it is expansive. It is actually what I believe that we're here on Earth to do. I think it's why

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Heavenly Father sent us to Earth and gave us bodies and said, "Let's go, let's see what you can do." And gave us the human condition to push back against.

Because without that human condition, without the temptation to give up and the struggle with discomfort and the ongoing self-doubt and self-judgment and criticism and pride and all those things that we have to overcome. Without any of that we wouldn't have this becoming process available to us. That wouldn't be even a thing that's possible. And so by simply getting over one more hump in terms of understanding how to leverage yourself as a human being, how to manage yourself, how to manage your mind, how to process emotions.

How to better connect with other people, how to be in abundance and gratitude and operate from all those places. All the things that are necessary in order to become as opposed to just pretend are the point. And we feel that intrinsically. We feel the power of that as human beings and so for that reason let's do some becoming. In whatever area of your life you want to become, I would love to help you. It's so much fun. Head to jodymoore.com/intensive and come and join me and let's become at Wellness Week. I'll see you there, take care everybody.

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.