

402: Biceps After Babies with Amber Brueseke



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

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I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 402, Biceps After Babies with Amber Brueseke

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 *Better Than Happy*. Thanks so much for joining me today. I want to tell you about a new workshop I've put together and I want to begin by telling you the price. It's a pretty killer price. It's completely free. And I'm calling it Tryout Coaching because that's what it is. It's a chance for you to try out coaching. It's a chance for you to see what coaching is like and therefore be able to make an informed decision about whether or not coaching could help you with the things you're struggling with or the goals that you want to achieve in your life.

I know of no better way for you to make a decision like that than to just try out coaching. So this is going to be a two hour workshop. It's going to be very interactive. In fact I'm going to be bringing people on for coaching. And you're going to get to experience what coaching is like. And my guess is that for most of you, you will feel the life changing power of it. If you don't feel that, if it doesn't resonate for you, that's good for you to know too that at least my style of coaching isn't the right fit for you.

So I want to encourage you to come and check it out. It is at jodymoore.com/trial T-R-I-A-L. You're going to understand the kinds of things that coaching can help with and the kinds of things that it can't. And you're going to leave with better information. And even if you don't want to work with me as a coach, I think that you'll find it really valuable to understand what any coach who is trained in a similar modality to me would be able to do for you.

So even if you're not considering my coaching program, if you're considering another Life Coach School certified coach come to Tryout Coaching and see what you think.

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Okay, so my guest today is Amber Brueseke. And here's what I want to say about Amber is that I love this woman so much. I've only actually ever talked to her a couple of times but we both follow each other online and know of each other and are very supportive of one another's work. And our work overlaps a little bit. She and I have a lot in common. We are both members of the LDS faith so we bring that kind of foundation with us into our lives of course and sometimes into our businesses. We both really value empowering women.

We are both coaches. We both love building our businesses too. We both get really lit up by that and we're both moms, trying to juggle being a mom and an entrepreneur and all that. So you can see why I felt really drawn to Amber. Now, where I look up to Amber and feel that she is ahead of me or has just some strengths that are my weaknesses, maybe they always will be weaknesses for me, is around the idea of bodies and food. And you guys know, I try to be really transparent with you that that is a topic that for me is still a challenge.

I have a lot of work to do still around my thoughts and my relationship with bodies and food. And I've done a lot of work on that area. And I'm in a much healthier place with it today than I was even five years ago but I still have a lot of work to do and it still sort of ebbs and flows for me where I go through periods of being really healthy in my thinking about it. And of course when I'm healthy in my thinking it results in being healthy in my habits and then my physical health. And then other times where it's just a lot harder and I find myself more emotional and everything.

And so what I love about Amber is that she doesn't come from a dieting mindset but she also hasn't flipped just to the other side of that coin and said, "You should never try to work on your physical health." I just find that to be not true either. She's got a really awesome approach and I really enjoyed talking with her.

And just you're going to find so many gems in here if you're like me and you're still doing work on your relationship with your body, your relationship

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with food and improving your physical health. So without further ado here is my conversation with Amber Brueseke.

Jody: Amber, I'm so excited to talk with you.

Amber: Yes, this is going to be fun.

Jody: How's life?

Amber: Super good.

Jody: You're in California, right?

Amber: Yeah, Southern California. We're just 10 minutes away from Disneyland.

Jody: My kids are obsessed with Disneyland.

Amber: Yeah, we actually got in 2019, so December 2019 we got season passes to Disneyland for our kids for Christmas. We surprised them big, 2020 is going to be the year [crosstalk], so many times. And we did go a lot between January and March when the world shut down.

We probably went eight to 10 times but my kids were actually kind of happy that it got shut down because they were kind of sick of spending every Saturday at Disneyland and sort of were like, "Oh, we're going to Disneyland again." And I'm like, "You guys are so ungrateful. You don't know how many kids would love to be in your shoes."

Jody: Would die for that.

Amber: So anyway, it had to be shut down and we got a refund. So we lived it up for a good two and a half months.

Jody: Okay, well, now you know what that's like. Sometimes I remind them, they always say, "I wish we lived right next door and we could just come here all the time." I'm like, "But then it might not feel as magical."

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Amber: No, it doesn't. I mean there are nice things about it because we would get up and we would be there when the park opened on Saturday and then we would stay until noon. We would ride the rides that we wanted to ride and then we would go home. And so it was nice because we were just doing the morning and it was less busy and less crowded, less lines and we could always come back. So we didn't stay the full 12 hours.

Jody: You didn't have to do the Disney marathon days.

Amber: Yeah, to feel like you got your money's worth so that is nice. But it definitely does, I mean my 13 year old especially, he was like, one night we went back ride Rise of the Resistance and he was like, "I'm not going." I'm like, "It's a brand new ride, we're going back to ride Rise of the Resistance." He's like, "No, I'm not going back. I don't want to go back to Disneyland."

Jody: I've had enough of that. That's interesting. It's all relative in the end.

Amber: It is.

Jody: I'm jealous that you live somewhere warm right now. We're getting in the phase where we're all just...

Amber: You guys are getting pummeled.

Jody: [Crosstalk] winter.

Amber: Yeah, you guys are getting pummeled. So on my team I have somebody from South Dakota. I have someone from Utah and I have someone from Alaska. And so we get on our team meetings and I'm like, "It's so cold here today, it's 65." And they're like, "We don't want to hear it."

Jody: Really, up here in Alaska.

Amber: Yeah. My friend from South Dakota, she'll send me messages of what degree it is that day, it's negative 14 degrees. And I'm like, "I can't. I can't, I'd die."

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Jody: That's a no for me. Well, anyway let's get into the good stuff. I'm so grateful that you're here. I want to ask your opinion about this whole topic of health and bodies and weight loss and muscle, building muscle and all of it. I feel like since I was a kid anyway, we've made a lot of progress in understanding just how toxic that some of that messaging was for many of us and still can be. I feel like though, and I'd love to hear your opinion on this.

I feel it's sort of like Esther Perel who is a marriage specialist and relationship specialist talks about, it used to be frowned upon to leave your marriage. Now it's frowned upon to stay in your marriage. I feel like with health and bodies especially when you bring weight loss in that's what's happened. We used to shame people for being overweight and now we shame people for wanting to lose weight. And I want to be like, it's the different side of the same coin which is making somebody else's body yours to determine.

I don't know, because you work in that industry full-time, have you experienced that?

Amber: 100%. And I think you're absolutely right. And I think there's truth on both sides. And what I find is so often when you put truth next to partial truth, they look very similar. And so it's really easy to get confused and people are like, "Well, can I lose weight or can I lose weight, is that diet culture? Any time I want to change my body, is that now I'm letting my programming and diet culture lead the way and is that a bad thing?"

And so I definitely have seen the swing from everybody should lose weight and you're fat and lazy if you don't to now we can't even say the words, 'I want to lose weight', or else now you're promoting diet culture and you hate people who are fat and all these things. And exactly what you said, those are two sides of the same extreme coin. And getting somewhere in the middle can be a healthy productive place.

One of the reasons that I love fitness and one of the reasons that I've stayed in the fitness realm for so long is I see it as a place to – and this

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kind of gets into your work and what you do is I see it as a place for personal development. It is a container that breeds personal development and the ability to be able to grow and pressure growth in what can be a very healthy way. Now, it can be a very unhealthy way as well. And so one of the things I'm always working with my clients is, and you talk about this I know, is what's the why underneath.

What's driving that decision to lose weight? Two women can be on a weight loss journey and one can be in a very unhealthy sphere that is promoted by diet culture and this idea that she will be more worthy or that if her body is smaller she will be more confident and be a better person. And that's a really unhealthy space to be in.

And another woman can be on the same weight loss journey and it can be a very empowering container for growth where she is looking for what she wants to create and being driven by some of the challenges that are happening. And seeing that as a way to drive her development and her growth. They're both on a weight loss journey. And so if we just blanket cover and say all weight loss journeys are bad and driven by diet culture, we're missing out on the nuance there of what's underlying, what's driving that decision.

And I think that's the important part for people to really step back and look at first. You probably know Dr. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife. She has this really awesome concept of differentiating between desire and want. And she speaks to how if we want something, that is coming from a place of lack. We only want things that we don't have.

And so there is a difference between wanting something which is coming from a scarcity, I don't have this thing. I need this thing in order to be whole. And desire which is I'm already whole as I am and I would like to do this thing and I desire this thing. It's a forward facing, a forward looking, I'm whole, if nothing happens I'm whole as I am and I also desire that thing. And so I think that's such a beautiful way to look at yourself is do I want to lose weight or is it a desire? Is it coming from a place of I'm already whole

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and I would desire this thing? Or is it coming from a place of this is going to fix me?

Jody: That's good. I describe it as wanting versus needing. Do I need to lose weight before I can accept myself and love my body and feel like I'm okay and understand my worth? Or do I just want to because I want to see what I'm capable of and I want to see what's possible? So for our listeners who are asking themselves, well, am I in a healthy place, how do I know? How would someone know, first of all, Amber?

And then if they recognize, no, I am a little bit driven by body shame or whatever, can they get themselves into a healthy place? And do they need to wait to start on a weight loss journey before? And how do they do that? There's five questions.

Amber: Yeah. I mean I think it's the right question to be asking. So if you're sitting here listening and asking yourself the question even before Jody posed it. That's the right question to be asking yourself, what is driving my desire to change my body? And I think it would be silly to say that for all of us there is no influence of diet culture in that decision. That's silly to say. We've all been raised in a society and a culture that promotes thinness, that promotes that as the ideal aesthetic.

So it would be silly for any of us to say, "No, that doesn't impact me in the slightest." So we can recognize, it's in the water we drink, it's in the air that we breathe, it's in the culture that we are raised in. That definitely has been the standard. So that impacts all of us. But I think to your point, what you were saying is how much is that, if I took a pie chart and I said, "What percentage of it is driven by that cultural ideal?" And compare it against what is it from a desire to see what's possible for me? Or is the desire to just push myself and to do hard things?

And to realize that doing hard things has inherent value for growth. And I think you can kind of graph that out a little bit for yourself of being honest of what's driving that. And I think if majority of what you are trying to do is to achieve a cultural ideal or to fix yourself or to think that there is going to be

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better than here. I think there's a lot of good that can be done to address that before you step into a weight loss journey. And I'm not going to give numbers. You're going to know yourself better than me.

But if that is a smaller part of the pie chart and there is a larger part that has a drive, that has a desire, that wants to see what's possible. I think you can work on that part of yourself simultaneously with a weight loss journey and it can still be so very healthy. A lot of the women that I'm working with, they're doing it simultaneously. They're working on their mind and their body simultaneously. And like I said, working on your body can be a context that pushes you to work on your mind.

If you don't go into that goal it's like it pressures you. When you get into that weight loss journey it pressures you, it shows you your blind spots of this is a part of my mind I actually really do need to work on. I didn't realize it because I was just going through my life. So it actually shows you those parts of yourself, of where you can work on your mind and you can do that simultaneously.

Jody: I think so too. And I think that's, again, why I still teach and coach people through or talk about my own weight loss journey is because I like that it brings up opportunities for me to work on myself. It brings up my thoughts, my limiting beliefs, even the diet culture I've been socialized with. And that's how I get to take a look at it, a lot of it I'm already aware of, but some of it I become aware of. So I talk a lot on this podcast about examining your beliefs and how your thoughts are driving you, but I'm a believer in working on your beliefs and taking action at the same time.

And it's sort of for me with food and weight and everything it's I have to pay attention more. I sort of think of it like riding, you know those one wheel skateboards they ride now that have the one wheel in the middle? And you kind of have to balance. And that's what I'm trying to do is stay balanced in the middle of yes, paying attention to my food and whatever health journey I'm on but also not putting my worth into that. And not being on this emotional rollercoaster of oh, yes, it worked. Oh, it didn't work. Staying balanced of this is just because I want to push myself.

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And yes, I have some residual stuff about bodies, like you said, that's there too, but I just think even things, and I'd love for you to talk about this too. I've been surprised over the last few years at how much in the past I underestimated little things like drinking water, getting steps in. In my mind, weight loss was big and challenging. And not that I still don't think it's challenging, I do, but those little things I think I could easily still be focusing on if I needed to increase water, get more sleep, get more steps without my head going into a negative space.

Amber: Yeah. Well, and I mean this is the thing is that, and I talk about a pyramid of fitness. And what's at the foundation of the fitness versus what's at the top and the little 5% at the very top. And so many women want to focus on the very top of the pyramid before they have the bottom of the pyramid really like the foundation of fitness nailed down. And so they want to get into counting macros or they want to get into interim fasting or they want to get into all these techniques and these tools and these things that they think is going to solve everything.

But they're completely ignoring the foundation which is, are you generally an active person? Are you getting enough sleep? Are you drinking enough water? Are you trying to get a diverse amount of food? Are you limiting your stress or are you stress managing? That is 80/20. And so many women want to go to that 20% because they think that's going to be the solution, but they're skipping the 80% that really creates the foundation for the 20% to work.

Yeah, if you get all that, if you've got all your house in order, the foundation, yeah, now we can add these other techniques and tools and science and things like that. But so many women are skipping that foundational piece and feeling like what's missing is the cool stuff at the top.

Jody: So for someone listening, thinking, okay, I've got to work on the foundation, I know you sort of mentioned a few things there. But would you mind fleshing some of those out a little bit more for us?

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Amber: Yeah. I think, so one of the big ones and you kind of spoke to this is just daily movement is am I daily moving my body? And I even think, am I in some exercise routine? Now, we can go into depth about putting together an effective exercise routine and one that is actually going to drive muscle growth or whatever goal you have. But that doesn't really matter as much as do you have some sort of practice of disciplined movement of your body? And that's going to be a foundational piece no matter what types of techniques or tools you want to use is, do I have some sort of foundation?

And now this is going to start to expose like you said, this is going to expose people's weaknesses and a lot of women struggle with consistency when it comes to something like having some sort of daily movement practice. And that can be an opportunity to be able to address that first. Because if you struggle with consistency in one area of your life, you're probably going to struggle in multiple areas. And so if we don't address that consistency, it doesn't matter if you start counting macros.

If you're not consistent with whatever you're going to do next, it's not going to be effective. So noticing that about yourself is, do you struggle with consistency in whatever movement practice that you have implemented? And addressing that, again, before you start to add on that 20% at the top. So some sort of daily movement practice, or I would say a consistent movement practice, whatever that looks like for you, are you consistent with doing it?

Jody: And I'll just share for our listeners, I'm 48 years old and I used to run marathons. And I loved a really intense aerobics class. And as I've gotten older and I don't run marathons, my head is still like, what, I'm going to go for a walk, that's not going to help.

Amber: That's not going to do anything.

Jody: That's not going to do anything. And I'm not even going to be sweating hardly because it's so cold outside. But that's what I mean by I have just been amazed at how just at a minimum I get 10,000 steps. And then the other thing I know you're a big believer in this but strength training.

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And when I say strength training, I'm not, right now in my life I'm not in the gym lifting, power lifting heavy weights.

But just having, I have some weights at home that are heavy enough that lifting those consistently impacts my overall fitness and my body way more than all of those high intensity aerobics classes ever did. And I still go to those sometimes because they're fun. Why did we not know this growing up in the 90s?

Amber: Oh my gosh, I just wish we could go back and just have weight training be a staple thing that women grew up doing because I think it would change everything. And hey, look, I taught group fitness classes for eight years. I taught Zumba, I taught body pump, I taught body combat. I taught all the things. I taught high fitness. I love a good aerobics class, I grew up on that. But I think about cardio, if you have cash and you just have cash sitting in your hand versus weight lifting is like investing that cash into the stock market and having it grow over time.

You get the benefit of cardio in the moment. You burn the calories right now and then that's it.

Jody: You feel that high.

Amber: And you feel that high and you love it and it's fun. You get the cardiovascular benefit, you get that right in that moment. The difference with weight lifting and this is why some people have a really hard time transitioning from cardio weight is that you don't get the pay off right now. You don't get the high for a lot of people. You don't get the core burn. They look at their Apple watch and they're like, "Freak, I only burned 100 calories doing that lifting. I burn 600 calories when I do high fitness. I'm going to go do high fitness because that works better."

But in reality those 100, yes, you burn less calories in the moment but it's investing that money over time. And what happens is as you build more muscle now you burn more calories every single day, all day of your life when you're sitting reading a book, you're burning more calories. And

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you're depositing into your bank account for as you age. One of the most important health factors that can improve women's health throughout their life is the amount of muscle mass that they are able to put onto their body.

Because as we age our muscle mass naturally declines. And what do you need muscle mass for? Literally everything you do in the day, getting up out of bed, sitting on the toilet, brushing your teeth. And the amount, I'm a nurse, so I worked in long term healthcare before I went into, I got my RN. And I saw women who could not physically get up off the commode or couldn't physically get out of bed. And that is because muscle mass declines as we age.

And so one of the best things you can do for your health right now, I don't care what age you are, if you're 20, 40, 70, 90 is to start to lift weights. Because the more that we can counteract that natural muscle decline the healthier you're going to be able to be. And the more you're going to be able to do those activities of daily living that allow you to be independent as you age.

Jody: That's awesome. Okay, so regular movement, what else, what else is at the foundation?

Amber: I mean the two big ones that I feel people know but they never want to take a look at are sleep and stress. Everybody knows that most of us could use more sleep and it's such a low hanging fruit, but most of us just it feels hard to get more sleep and to prioritize that. But honestly, getting enough sleep. So here's the thing that people don't understand and maybe this will drive you guys to get more sleep. People don't understand that our bodies only adapt to that, which is required of them.

So a lot of times people think that they go into the gym and they lift weights and that's how they're building muscle is the lifting of the weights, actually not how you build muscle. You build muscle by recovering from lifting weights. So there's actually no muscle growth happening in the gym. All you're doing actually is breaking down muscle. You're creating microscopic tears in those muscle fibers and you're actually breaking down the muscle.

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Jody: Literally, yeah.

Amber: Literally breaking down the muscle, that's what happens in the gym. And then what happens the next 24 hours is the most important because that's when your body says, "Oh crap, there was these tears, there's damage done to the muscle, we've got to go back and repair it. We've got to make it a little bit stronger this time so that it can withstand that next time." If the body has to go through whatever it just went through, that workout, we need to make it a little stronger so that it can withstand it.

And so that recovery process, when your body's actually going and repairing those microscopic tears is what makes you stronger. Which is why, the next time you go back to the gym, you've got to push a little bit harder because you've got to push past whatever you just did last time to create the same damage for then your body to come back and repair. And that cycle of damaging and repairing and then coming back and doing it over and over again is actually what makes you stronger. It's actually what drives adaptation in your body.

Now, the thing I see so much is that people focus so much on what goes on in the gym and they forget what happens after the gym, that recovery process. And then they wonder why, hey, I'm going to the gym and I'm doing all this really hard workout but I'm not getting any stronger. And a lot of times is because they're not actually taking that recovery process seriously. They're overtraining. They're not getting enough sleep and recovery in order for their body to go in and actually make their body stronger.

So if you want to get stronger in the gym your sleep is one of the best things that you can do to promote that adaptation in your body.

Jody: That's awesome. A couple of years ago I started working with Brad Jensen who's a mutual friend of ours. And I mentioned casually to my then, I think seven or eight year old son something about, "I've got to get to bed on time. I need to get enough sleep. I'm really focusing on my health and trying to lose a little weight and sleep is an important part of that." And he

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goes, “Oh, well, you’re going to lose a lot of weight then because you’re always tired.” And I was like, “Well, I don’t think that’s exactly how it works.”

But I do love sleep, I’ve actually always been really good at getting enough sleep. I know a lot of people do struggle with that. I coach people on that a lot, trying to get themselves to go to bed earlier. I have never been able. And some people are like, “Well, I can do, I can function on five hours.” That has never been me. What else also though, when you say recovery period, what kinds of foods should we be eating? I know there’s not a one size fits all but after a good workout, what should I be eating?

Amber: Yeah. So a lot of people like to talk about nutrition timing around workouts. And again, I would put this at the 20%. So if you don’t have the movement pattern figured out, focus on that, who cares what you eat? Let’s focus on consistency there.

Jody: Yeah, so don’t worry about it at first but then eventually.

Amber: Don’t worry about it at first, but if you do have a consistent practice, I always eat at least 20 grams of carbs pre workout. That allows my body to be able to have quick access to glucose which is what’s going to be able to fuel me during my workout. So I’m having at least 20 to 30 grams of carbs, preferably really straight carbs. You don’t really want fat and even protein for most workouts, you don’t really need protein [crosstalk].

Jody: What do you eat? Give me an example.

Amber: So usually two things. These are the two things that I always eat pre workout. It’s either a banana or it’s either the fig bars from Costco. They’re such great sources of super dense carbs. So if you’re someone who are like, “Oh my gosh, I can’t even think.” Because I workout at 5:30 in the morning. So I get up and I go to the gym. And a lot of people tell me, “I can’t even imagine eating anything that early in the morning.” The fig bars are the size of two quarters but they have 20+ grams of carbs in it. So it’s a super-fast carb source.

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So those are my two go-to's, either it's a banana or a fig bar. And then post workout you're wanting to replenish your glycogen storages. So you're wanting to get another at least 20 to 30 grams of carbs. And then this is where we do protein as well. So 20 to 30 grams of protein because now, again, remember, you just damaged all those muscle tissue. You now need those building blocks which are the amino acids found in protein to be able to go and do that repair process. So in general 20 grams of carbs pre workout, 20 to 30 grams of both carbs and protein post workout.

Again, we're not wanting a lot of fat in either of those because fat slows the absorption process down. So trying to get those proteins and the carbs without a whole lot of fat is going to be beneficial for you. And then you go to your fat later on in the day.

Jody: Okay, cool. So movement and...

Amber: And sleep. And the last one is stress.

Jody: Stress, okay.

Amber: Again, one that everybody kind of knows about but a lot of people don't actually want to look at in their life of how are they managing their stress. And stress comes into the recovery process as well. Something that a lot of people don't understand is that our body does not segment out stress. Our body isn't like, that's relationship stress and that's job stress and that's gym stress. And it's not like we have different buckets for each of it, our body just sees stress on the body.

And we have an ability to be able to work within a certain threshold of the amount of stress, but when we cross that threshold, our body's ability to be able to recover, and again, this is why that stress recovery adaptation cycle is so important to understand. If we're stressing the body in the gym, if we don't go through that recovery process and we come back to the gym not completely recovered, we're actually getting weaker every time that we go to the gym. And so our body sees stress.

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Going and doing a weightlifting session is stress on the body. If you're loading that on top of work stress and relationship stress and mental health stress and financial stress and all of these other things. Your body reaches its limit of ability to be able to recover effectively from the stress that you're putting on your body. And so stress management is so important for a healthy mind and also for a healthy body. And so taking a really hard look at, hey, what are my stressors in my life? And we can't get rid of them.

I'm not saying we need to all go be Buddhist monks and have no stress in our life. That's not realistic, but how are you intentionally managing that stress? And a lot of the work that you do with your mind is a really great way to be able to manage that stress because yeah, you may have kids that have issues and it's stressful for you. You can't get rid of that experience, but when you can shift your thinking around it you can shift what you're making it mean.

You can shift where you're going in your mind. That can take what could be a stressful situation and you can manage that stress by actively how you're managing your mind.

Jody: That's powerful. I wonder too because I notice that a lot of times when we resist emotions, when we sort of push them away and sometimes we do that literally by avoiding them. Overeating is a common way that we avoid emotions. But it doesn't have to be that, can just be a tightening against, a pushing away. And so I think there's a fine balance between, for all my listeners when you hear Amber saying stress can impact your health negatively, that you have to be careful. Because once the stress comes up and we're like, "Oh, no, Jody and Amber told me, I need to manage this."

Now we're resisting stress so there's yes, doing thought work or finding practices that help you minimize your stress but also then when it does come what do you do with that? Do you know how to breathe and relax into it? And allow your body to process it in a healthy way so that it doesn't escalate into anxiety. Anxiety's just in some cases, anxiety can be a lot of things, but in many cases it's just an escalated resisting of stress. We push

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it down like pushing that beachball under the water, it pops up, that's anxiety.

Amber: Yes. This idea of stress is bad or negative emotion is bad and so I shouldn't feel it. And then I feel bad when I feel it and then we get into this spiral of not only feeling bad but now I feel bad that I feel bad. That's not what we're talking about at all. It's that ability to be in the circumstance, to be in the situation and to be able to process it and move through the tunnel, not avoid the tunnel, but move through the tunnel and be able to be with those emotions.

And the better you are at being able to experience negative emotions and work through them and feel those negative emotions the less, like you said, buffering you'll be able to have. And I see tons of emotional heating in the women that I work with. And that's often trying to avoid negative emotions and using food to be able to do that.

Jody: Awesome. Okay, so would you share with me, I'd love to hear because I know there's all different theories and philosophies. What are your thoughts about the scale and should people? Again, I'm not trying to pigeonhole you into a one size fits all answer. But should we be weighing ourselves regularly? Is weight loss the wrong goal? I'd love to hear your thoughts on that.

Amber: Well, I always am really clear that weight loss and fat loss aren't the same thing. And I think that blows a lot of women's minds because we have been conditioned to think that weight loss is fat loss. And you can see how our relationship with the scale gets really messed up because we see the scale go up and we immediately make that assumption, I've gained fat. And then we see the scale go down and we immediately make the assumption, I've lost fat. And that often isn't even the case because the scale doesn't weigh fat. It doesn't just weigh our fat.

It weighs our weight which includes everything. And specifically muscle, organ tissue, skin, fat and water is the big one. And so what I really love to help women understand is that fat loss and fat gain, muscle loss and

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muscle gain are all very slow processes. So any time you are seeing a big jump on the scale either up or down we're talking water weight. You're losing and gaining water weight because our bodies are mostly water. And water balance in our body is a very complex system.

And so just starting to understand one, weight loss and fat loss are not the same thing. And so when you're walking around saying, "I want to lose weight." I always love to correct people because I think it helps to be able to be really specific. Most of us want to lose fat. We're not walking around being like, "You know what, I really want to lose muscle, I really want to lose organ tissue. I really just want to get rid of." We're not saying that. What we really mean is we want to lose fat.

And so understanding that concept can help us to shift our relationship with the scale because when we understand, hey, the scale isn't a one-to-one measure of my success because it's not a one-to-one measure of fat loss. And so I am not of the opinion that everybody should just toss the scale. I think that the scale is just a tool, it can give us some information, however, it is incomplete information. And so what I like to have my clients do is recognize the scale's not bad or wrong, it's just incomplete. It's like looking at one data point and expecting it to tell you everything and it just doesn't.

So you're trying to give it a job that it never should have. So instead when we can put that into a bigger picture and we can pull other data points. So I'm really pushing my clients to say, "Hey, we're not going to just look at the scale, it's a data point. We're also going to be looking at measurements. We're also going to be looking at progress pictures. We're also going to be looking at other non-scale victories. And we're putting all of these data points together just like back when you did scatter plots.

If you just had one point, you could draw a line through that in a million different directions. But if you take all of these different data points and plot them out on a graph, well, now you start to get a trend. Now you start to see, okay, this is where I'm going. And we can use that information and that data to be able to guide us. So I think the scale can be a piece of the puzzle but we can't let it be the whole puzzle.

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And I think that's where women get into trouble is when you make it the whole puzzle and you step on the scale and now you feel super terrible about yourself and you're telling yourself it's not working. When in reality you may just have a little bit more water onboard and now you're making inaccurate assumptions based off of an incomplete data point. So the more data points you can gather the more it's going to have a clear trend and the more we can follow that trend. It has information, it just doesn't have all the information.

Jody: Yeah. And I will add for people that this is another area where, and I know Amber is very open to what's going to work for her clients and I'm the same way. We're not trying to say there's a one way to do your health journey, but I do like to weigh myself and take pictures and measurements and all of those things. Because for me I don't have as much drama around the scale as I do around photos and even measurements. I feel like the measurements don't change as quickly as the scale.

Amber: That's because it's slow, because fat loss and fat gain is slow, [crosstalk] is so helpful.

Jody: These measurements are not changing at all but the scale's gone down a little. But this is when we were talking in the beginning about how this is such an opportunity for personal growth. This is an example of where I like to notice what comes up for me, notice my impatience around it. And I don't get mad and tell myself I shouldn't be thinking that or push it away. I just, I'm like, "No." There's still some of that." I still have some work to do there around what if my body is going to be this, whatever part I'm measuring.

What if my thigh is going to be this measurement until the day I die? That's okay, Jody. All of you is lovable. And this doesn't ultimately matter in the end at all. So I get to do that work of loving my body as I'm focusing on nutrition and health. And that's what we're talking about when Amber and I say this can help with your personal development. It increases your ability to be disciplined, your ability to follow through on what you said you were

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going to do. And then your ability to notice when you're full of judgment or frustration or you're impatient.

And all of that is valuable to work on and will impact so many areas of your life in the end.

Amber: I think we are really good as humans at not seeing our blind spots. And we're really good at being like, "Yeah, I did that work, I'm good. I love my body." I fixed it. I fixed it. I'm okay.

Jody: I'm good now.

Amber: I'm good now. And so that's what I mean by these different areas. I see entrepreneurship the same way. I see our marital relationships, I see parenting, I see fitness as these places where we get pressured into seeing, I still have work to do here. I thought that I was really body confident and there's still work for me to do here. Or I thought that I was able to really maintain my composure and then I blow off at my kids. And I'm like, "There's still work for me to do here."

So I think as humans we're really good at not seeing that. And these places that pressure you to show that to you, it's like here's something to work on. Here's something that you still can have some growth on. And I have for sure had those experiences where I'm like, "I thought this was all taken care of. I guess there's still more for me to practice." There's more growth to be had.

Jody: That's so good. Any other, maybe if there's one more you wouldn't mind sharing, myths or areas of confusion when it comes to this whole area of health and fitness. I mean there's so many, but I love what you just shared about fat loss and muscle loss or weight loss are not the same.

Amber: Yeah. I mean it's such a revolutionary topic.

Jody: And that it's a slow process. It sounds like a discouraging thought but that to me brings me so much peace, it's a slow process.

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Amber: Yeah. So any time you see a jump on the scale up or down, you can kind of calm your mind down and just realize, that's water swings. Fat loss does not jump. It does not jump up and it does not jump down, there's no jumping with fat loss or muscle loss. And yeah, it's a slow process but that can help with that relationship with the scale.

Jody: Yeah, that's so good.

Amber: I mean I think we've talked a lot about the realm of exercise. I think there are plenty of myths and understanding that's important for people to get and grasp, with nutrition. I mean I think one that I would love to say is kind of dying but I think there are still people out there who really struggle with it is this idea of the demonization of carbohydrates or the demonization of fat. And I still get women who when we start talking about the different macronutrients, they look at their carbohydrate intake and they're like, "That's too much. I can't eat that many carbs."

This idea that somehow carbohydrates are linked to fat gain or fat is linked to fat gain. And we have this relationship again, it makes total sense, the 90s were big, fat demonization. I remember my mom, I have this funny story about my mom, she was super into fitness as well. And it was the fat craze and so we stopped having butter and we started having margarine. And she started cooking with half apple sauce and half margarine.

Jody: Oil or whatever, yeah.

Amber: Yeah. And I remember one time she decided to make a pie crust with apple sauce instead of the fat. And she brings out this pie, there's seven of us so she brings it to the table. And we go through and try to cut the pie and it was like rubber. You literally couldn't even cut the pie crust.

Jody: You're like, "We're not eating this."

Amber: Okay, so just so you guys know, do not try to make a pie crust with apple sauce because it does not work.

Jody: You need the Crisco in there.

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Amber: You need the fat in there for it to actually be a pie crust, but I mean so we come by it, honestly, we come by that fear of carbohydrates and that fear of fat, honestly, the 90s were fat phobia. And then we moved into the low carb craze.

Jody: Carb phobia, yeah.

Amber: Carb phobia and so I still see women who continue to think that carbs and fat are going to make them fat. And I think when we can start to understand. So just a really quick brief synopsis of macros. Everybody knows what calories are, they're what give our bodies fuel and energy from the food that we eat. But a lot of people don't understand that calories are broken up into three different types. There's carbohydrates, fats and protein.

And the reason that's important to understand is because you need all of it. You need all of it. You need carbohydrates. They do something different in your body than fats do. And fat does something different in your body than protein does. They all have a specific role in your body. It's like a car and you have to have gas and you have to have radiator fluid and you have to have windshield wiper fluid. Yes, they all work to make your car run but if you don't have enough gas it doesn't matter how much radiator fluid you have. It's still not going to work.

And it's the same thing with the macronutrients, carbohydrates are really our body's primary source of energy. Fats are really important for hormone production and really important for brain fuel as well. And protein is really important for repairing tissue all throughout your body, not just your muscles but all of the tissues and the cell membranes of your body. And so you have to have enough of each of those different types of macronutrients. And if we have imbalances it's just like again, if you have enough radiator fluid but not enough gas, your body's not going to run well.

It's the same thing, you have enough carbs and not enough protein, your body's not going to run well. And so just understanding that you need some of all of it. You don't have to be scared of carbs, they have a purpose. You

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don't have to be scared of fat, it has a purpose. You don't have to be scared of protein, it has a purpose and we need a little bit of all of it to help our bodies run well. And so hopefully that can start to dispel some of that fear that if I eat carbs I'm going to get fat. If I eat fat I'm going to get fat. That's not how it works.

Jody: I love that. And protein, I know for many of us it's the hardest thing to figure out, how am I going to get more protein in. Would you share with us some of your favorite protein sources?

Amber: Yeah. So first of all I find when people come to macro counting they tend to, I call it bringing the dieter mentality into macro counting. They've gone through lots of diets in their life, they know how diets work. You're told what to do and then you have to follow it. And that's how you get results. And if you don't do it then you're not going to get it. That's the mentality that we bring and a lot of people bring that mentality with them into macro counting. And so they get into macro counting and they have their macros set, whether someone sets them or they set their own.

And they are looking at this protein number and they're like, "How the heck am I going to eat 130 grams of protein?" Because last week they ate 40 grams of protein a day. And so then people start to beat themselves up and they're like, "Oh my gosh, I can't ever hit this, it's too hard." They try, they struggle and then they give up. And then they say, "Well, macro counting doesn't work for me." And they toss in the towel. So the first thing that I always love to tell people is that macro counting is not a diet. It is not a one size fits all. It is not, this is the only way to do it.

It is not you have to eat one gram of protein or it's not going to work, or a pound of body weight or it's not going to work. And instead I love to push women to say, and this is why one of the first things I always do with my clients, take one week of your normal eating and track it. See how much protein you've been eating. See how many calories you've been eating because people want to jump in and they want to set their macros without understanding where they have been and then they make it too hard on themselves.

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So once you know about how much protein you've been eating, let's increase it.

Jody: Just a baby step.

Amber: Yeah. Let's not maybe jump to 130 grams of protein if you were eating 40 grams of protein last week. So that's my first thing is if you're coming into this and you're just getting started and you're getting really overwhelmed with your protein goal, my guess is it's probably too high to start with, so pull it back. So that's my first thing.

But in terms of protein sources, one of the best ways that you can get more protein into your diet is to, again, go back to the tracking for a week. Go look at what protein sources you ate last week in just a normal day of eating and just increase your portion size. So if you had a turkey sandwich and it had three slices of turkey on it, double it.

Jody: Six, yeah.

Amber: So put six on it this week. So that's one of my favorite hacks for increasing the amount of protein you're eating because it doesn't require you to eat any new foods. It doesn't require you to go get any new food at the grocery store. Doesn't require you to try and force feed yourself food that you don't want to eat. You're literally just taking whatever you ate last week and you're just doubling the portion size. If you ate three ounces of chicken, eat six ounces of chicken. So that's number one.

And then two, just going through and starting, I mean you can find Google, protein sources and Dr. Google will give you all of the list of protein.

Jody: And I think people just think, meat. Most of my protein doesn't even come from meat really.

Amber: Right. Well, and yeah, people who are vegetarian, people who are vegan are always like, "What do I eat?" Go to Google, print out a sheet and start crossing out things you don't want to eat and putting stars next to things that you don't want to eat and then start including them in your diet.

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You don't have to eat cottage cheese if you don't like cottage cheese. You don't have to eat yogurt if you don't like yogurt. But there are lots and lots of protein sources. So just go through and star the ones you want to try, start to include those into your diet.

And my last protein hack is preplanning your food. This takes a little bit of work, I recognize that, so maybe it's not the first thing that you do. But if you can sit down the night before and think through your day and even log it into whatever tracking app you're using. And then look at how much protein you're getting and seeing where you need to insert more protein. It's a jumpstart for your next day.

It's, I'm now jumping into this next day prepared to be able to be successful instead of crossing my fingers and toes going into the next day and just hoping that I'm going to end up with the amount of protein that I want to hit.

Jody: Okay, that's such good advice. And I'll just throw in that I recently saw on your Instagram page. I think you were like, "Just take Greek yogurt, put a scoop of protein powder in, mix it up." I've been doing that almost every day.

Amber: 40 grams of protein.

Jody: And if you have a good chocolate protein powder or something, it's a nice little treat. And anyway, I do that a lot at the end of the day when I realize I still need some protein.

Amber: 40 grams of protein at the end of the day.

Jody: 40 grams in one sitting, what am I going to eat.

Amber: And you're like, "I don't want to eat this plain egg white."

Jody: Right. I don't want to eat just egg whites. I do eat a lot of eggs though, I like eggs. I like cottage cheese. Anyway, like you said, go to Google and everybody, I feel it's one of the things that a lot of people, anyway in the fitness industry agree upon, is that everyone needs more

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protein. So there is usually, whoever you like to follow or wherever you want to go, you're going to find people offering protein tips.

Amber: Yeah, protein tips, yeah.

Jody: Yeah. Okay, Well, Amber, thank you so much. This has been such a fascinating conversation and so useful. For anybody, it's kind of that time of year where New Year's resolutions have dropped off. And now we're just like, "Okay, I'm probably not going to overachieve everything this year but let's just take some baby steps to get healthier, to feel better, to have more energy, to like you said, age more gracefully. Where can people go to learn more from you?

Amber: Yeah. Well, if you're listening to this I assume you listen to podcasts. So my podcast is *Biceps After Babies Radio*. And I talk a lot about health and fitness, macro counting, weightlifting there. And then I'm most active over on Instagram, so come to *Biceps After Babies*.

Jody: Yeah, *Biceps After Babies*. How about that, you all? Alright.

Amber: [Crosstalk] biceps after your babies.

Jody: I mean that's when I'm going to get mine. How about when you're about to have grandkids?

Amber: Yeah.

Jody: Biceps then too.

Amber: It's never too late.

Jody: Never too late. Alright, thanks so much, Amber.

Amber: Thanks, Jody.

Who is your life coach? If you don't have one, I would be so honored to be your coach. I created a virtual coaching program called *Be Bold* that I want

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to invite you to join me in. We can address challenges. We can work on goals. And we can do it in so many different ways. We have group coaching, individual private coaching and online chats along with hundreds of hours of courses and content that I've created just for you. When you're ready to really take what you're learning on the podcast to the 10x level then come check out *Be Bold* at jodymoore.com/membership.