

409: The Power of Your Focus



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

409: The Power of Your Focus

I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 409, The Power of Your Focus.

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. How is life? What's new with you? We have so many exciting things happening here at Jody Moore Coaching. Did I say this last week already? If not, I've just got to mention. I had my team in town recently and we had such an amazing time but we also have so many exciting plans in the works. I can't wait to tell you about them. I feel kind of cliché just saying that but I really am just so excited about some of the things coming this summer and this fall.

So make sure you're getting our emails and texts or subscribe to the podcast, wherever you want to hear from us because we've got some cool things coming that I think you're going to be excited about. I also just got back from Utah. I got to go spend a day at BYU Broadcasting, thanks to everybody there for being so just welcoming and delightful. I was able to be a guest on the Come Follow-Up Show. That episode will not be airing until next year when we move to Book of Mormon in the Come Follow Me study.

So I'll give you a heads up when that comes. But it was just really kind of a cool experience to get to see what it's like to produce a TV show and to meet all the people there. So that's what's going on with me.

Today we're going to talk about the power of your focus. And I'll tell you, I wanted to record this episode because I recently read a book. I'll tell you what it was in just a minute but it just really made me notice this, the way our focus changes things in our lives. And I wanted to talk through it with you a little bit because I think it's a good reminder that we all need from time to time, myself included.

409: The Power of Your Focus

So just by way of introduction, I want to remind all of us that what we focus on matters, it really does. And what I mean by that is what you spend a significant amount of time thinking about and noticing and giving your time and attention to is creating your current experience of the world, it is. Let me say that one more time. Whatever you spend your time thinking about and noticing and focusing on is creating your current experience of the world.

And we tend to think that we're just noticing what's happening in our lives, what comes across our path, what shows up in our lives or for our families, what challenges or problems come our way. And to some extent that's true but to a much greater extent than any of us realize, we are creating it with our focus. So maybe there is something, let me just think of an example. Let's say one of my kids at school is getting into trouble consistently. I'll just pick on my son even though I don't think this is the case. But let's just say that he talks too much, he's not paying attention, the teacher's frustrated with him and he's getting into trouble.

If I don't know that that's happening, if the teacher hasn't notified me and my child hasn't told me about it then that's not really a problem for me because I don't know to think about it. Now, as soon as somebody reaches out to me, the teacher or my child or another parent or somebody who knows about this and tells me this is a problem. Now I start thinking about it and focusing on it. Now my child has a problem, the teacher has a problem and I have a problem and we all three are having somewhat of a negative experience as we think about this topic.

Now, I'm not saying this is wrong. Being able to be aware of problems and to think about them can allow us to then find solutions. So to a certain extent this is useful. I'm not just saying tell everyone to leave you alone and don't tell you about anything going on. I want you to be part of helping people find solutions. But my point is my child getting in trouble at school isn't what makes me feel anxious or worried because I don't feel that way until I become aware of it and start having thoughts about it and it becomes a focus or something I'm giving attention to in my mind. Are you with me?

409: The Power of Your Focus

So one of the ways this is true is as soon as I decide something is a problem then I start collecting evidence that I might be right. Have you ever had an experience where there was somebody in your life or just kind of in the circles that you interact with, who either you just didn't really think about at all, you didn't really notice, you didn't maybe interact with them that often. You really didn't spend a lot of time thinking about them or maybe you had positive thoughts and stories about them. And then somebody else who you really trust says to you, "I don't really like them, I think that they are", fill in the blank.

I think they're really judgmental. I think that they think they're better than everyone else. Or I think that they're being dishonest. I think that they lie a lot. Or I think whatever the judgment is. Somebody who you already trust comes along and says to you, "I don't like that person and here's why." What happens next? Whenever you experience that person your brain is looking out for, is that true, are they bad in that way or are they not likable in the way that my friend just told me? And you start noticing it where you didn't even notice it before.

The person that we're talking about hasn't changed. I just now start noticing. I start collecting evidence that, yeah, it's true, they are that way. I didn't even notice before. Now I notice. So now I have just created a slightly different experience for myself because of what I'm focusing on. Are you with me so far?

So let me tell you about the book I read that really made me want to talk about this. I just finished listening on audible because who can sit down and read a book? I can't. This is not a good thing but it's just the truth. I can only listen on audible because I can't sit still that long or I can't stay awake when I read. But I listen to a lot of books on audible and I can consume a whole book in two days thanks to audible. So anyway, I just finished listening to Prince Harry's book, *Spare*. Have you read this book or listened to this book? I highly recommend it. I thought it was amazing.

I want to just say a huge shout out to my friend, Haz, that's what he goes by, if you didn't know. I want to tell Haz that I loved that book. I am so

409: The Power of Your Focus

impressed with it. I know he had help from a ghostwriter but I don't care. It's still an amazing book. And huge kudos to him for being so vulnerable and sharing so much of his life. I just thought it was amazing and I'm a huge fan of Prince Harry and his wife Meghan and their family. And anyway I want to start with that because I'm going to point out if I was able to coach Harry what I would point out to him.

And I want to just preface it that I'm doing it with the most love and that I do the exact same thing and I bet you do, too in different ways. But I want to use his story as an example because his life is so different than the life that any of us probably listening to this podcast are living, but it will be really easy to see. And then we'll talk about how to apply it to our lives. So what Harry has done and maybe he's still doing, I don't know, is he has put a lot of focus and attention and energy on noticing how the media, the press, the paparazzi are making his life miserable.

That's what he believes, they are making his life miserable. Now, he has a valid reason for believing that, 100% valid. First of all, starting when he was 12 years old and his mother was killed being chased by the paparazzi. So it begins with trauma and actually even began with what I would say was probably traumatic experiences even before that of just being chased by them when he was with his mom. But certainly losing his mother to a chase by the paparazzi at such a young age was a trauma.

And by trauma I just mean his brain responded in such a way that it rewired his brain to say this is dangerous. And then all throughout his life as he's grown up, he's been put in the papers, photos, stories some of which were either partially true or not true at all and others of which were just a violation of what should be private personal experiences. So again he has a totally valid reason for hating the press, hating the paparazzi, being so angry at them.

He has real experiences of when people like his family etc. should have come to his defense and didn't, or when people who he loved and trusted and were even behind the stories. He has valid reason for it but still he's made it the bad guy in his story. He's made it a main character and

409: The Power of Your Focus

therefore he's given it a lot of power over his happiness, he has. Now, again, I do this with other things but I wanted to begin with this example because my guess is that most of you listening to this podcast and myself included cannot relate to this.

I do not have paparazzi trying to figure out where I am at any given moment and invading my life. So it's easy for me and for you maybe to look at Harry and go, "Well, just don't read the papers. Just don't pay attention to it. Who cares?" It's easy from our seats to give Harry that advice, much more challenging to actually implement it. And I want to give you one other thing here that will be an indicator then I'm going to go through some examples that you can probably relate to or at least that I can relate to.

One key indicator that you've made something more powerful in your life than you need to is you will be surprised that it keeps happening. So Harry in this book tells us all kinds of stories about all the terrible things that the press has done, all the traumatic things he's experienced at their hands. And yet even at the end of the book, after he's married and has a family and is still trying to get to peace he continues to be shocked at it. As new stories come out, as new things get published, he can't believe it.

His mind is always blown that they would print the stories, that his family wouldn't come to his defense, whatever it is. He's like, "I couldn't believe it happened." And as I'm listening to it I'm thinking, come on Harry, let's be real here, we can believe it happened. I'm not saying it should happen. I'm not saying it's right. I'm not saying that people shouldn't be held accountable for this but are we really so surprised? Because this has been happening your whole life, why are we so surprised?

Of course that happened. Of course that happened. So this kind of shock and surprise that we have is because we are holding on to hope that it will change. And I'm all for you wanting it to change. I just don't want you to need it to change in order to have the life you want to have, in order to feel peaceful and happy as you might want to feel. You're going to have to shift your focus. You're going to have to stop giving it so much power by stopping giving it so much attention.

409: The Power of Your Focus

In Harry's story, Harry and some of his friends and family and sometimes these characters change from time to time, but they are the good guys, they're Luke Skywalker and Yoda. And then we have Darth Vader who is the media. Now, Darth Vader is a very powerful main character in Star Wars, everyone knows who Darth Vader is. Not everybody knows who some of the other random side characters are but everybody knows Darth Vader because Darth Vader is a main character and he's extremely powerful and he's extremely dangerous. And without him we wouldn't have such a fascinating story.

And Harry has made the press powerful and dominant in his own story by focusing on it so much. Now, here's the thing, if we could change it, I'd be in. And I'm all for us trying to impact circumstances like this, doing what we can. I'm all for whoever wants to, Harry or anybody else trying to get things in force to get proper accountability, to get laws changed.

I'm all for that but not if it's going to be at the expense of your happiness and peace. Not if it's going to take over your thoughts and your focus in such a way that you're going to impact really significantly negatively your current life experience. Because there are certain circumstances that cannot be easily controlled or changed, one of them I would say is the media. If that's ever going to get better it's going to be a long slow process. So I don't want Harry hanging his happiness on it. I want him to figure out how to find happiness and peace even though.

And he doesn't even have to think positively about it. I just don't want it to be such a main character. Let's just let it be a little side character. Let's let it be something that is annoying, that we do have to deal with at times like an annoying uncle that pops over for dinner but in the end no one really remembers his name because he's not a main character in the story. Okay, so thanks to my friend Harry for letting me use him as an example.

What is that in your life? What is the paparazzi in your life? What is the thing that you maybe give too much attention to even though maybe you still want to think it's a problem and it's a negative thing you don't want it to be such a main character. You don't want it to have such a dominant role in

409: The Power of Your Focus

your life because you're making it even more of a problem than it needs to be by doing that.

I'll tell you what it is for me. It's the weather. And I've talked about this before, you guys know I have, because it's a main focus. Here's how I know it's a main focus. I'm constantly every morning and every night, multiple times a day looking at the weather app on my phone. I think I have winter trauma or darkness trauma from living in a place that feels like it's cold so much and it gets so dark in the winter that I have now given that a lot of power over my life.

Now, listen, I'm not saying this is the same thing as Harry's struggle with the press because I know that what he's dealing with is way more dangerous and way more impactful in many ways than the weather, I'm just saying, I'm trying to identify for myself what am I doing that with that isn't necessary? It feels so justified for me to complain about the weather because you know what, everybody around me does it. I think everyone around me in Spokane has winter trauma. And those of you in Utah who got so much snow this year, you probably do too.

So we all validate each other, we all connect over it. It gives my brain something to think about and focus on, but it doesn't change the weather, dang it. What else might you be doing this with? I see a lot of people do this with a person in their lives. Maybe it's somebody who you have a primary relationship with like a spouse or a good friend or a sister or sister-in-law or somebody that you're kind of close to. And if they choose to be nice and they're in a good mood, then you're going to be happy and if not you're going to struggle.

Or if they talk to you in the right way, great, and if they don't then we're in trouble. Or maybe they're just struggling and you're really worried about them. Maybe it's a child, a child who's difficult or misbehaves. How much focus and attention do you give to it? I'm not saying you shouldn't give it any. I'm not saying you should just bury your head in the sand about it. I'm just saying, let it be a side character in your story. Don't let it be a main character in your story if it's creating a lot of pain for you.

409: The Power of Your Focus

Make it something that you don't think about and focus on as much as your brain might think you need to, because in most cases all that's doing is making us miserable. It's not changing or controlling it. I've seen this happen with clients who have a spouse that maybe has been unfaithful in the past in one way or another. And the villain in their story is that unfaithfulness and they're hanging their happiness on whether or not it happens again, whether or not he's telling the truth or he's lying to me.

You are making all of this so much more dominant in your current experience than it needs to be. I see entrepreneurs do this with their business metrics sometimes, constantly checking your stats. If you're constantly checking your post to see how many likes and shares or you're constantly checking your podcast downloads or you're obsessed about your stats, you're making that part of your business, you're making your business basically be in charge of how you're going to feel.

And maybe your business is doing well and then you're going to feel good and then maybe at times it's not doing well and now we're just on a rollercoaster. So if it's not doing well, especially I recommend that you shift your focus away from it. I know that sounds so strange. If it's not doing well I need to be thinking about it all the time and you need to figure out how to fix it. I mean, yeah, I want you to try things and fix it, but not from stress and energy and scarcity and desperation. Not from that place, not so you can feel better.

People do this a lot too when they have health goals, weight loss goals, it becomes the scale or it becomes the way my body looks or how I look in the mirror. When you're focusing on what's wrong with you, you make that be a villain in your life. You make the gap between where you are and where you want to be, be the villain or the scale is the villain or what have you. And it's a really exhausting way to live. Again, a lot of these things are challenges for me, you guys.

It is challenging for me not to think about my body and food a lot. That is the honest truth. And a lot of those thoughts are not healthy and not positive but if I can notice them, I can interrupt them at times. And I spend

409: The Power of Your Focus

dedicated time sometimes focusing on interrupting them. But I also sometimes just spend time redirecting to something more useful. I just don't let that part of my experience, that challenge that I have with loving my body and being healthy and creating lifelong healthy habits. It's still a challenge for me.

I'm better than I used to be, I should say, at not focusing on it all the time, not letting it play such a dominant role in my experience because I don't want that to be a main character in my story. It's so insignificant, it doesn't need to be a main character in my story. So what is it for you? This is a good way to think about it. Again, thanks to Prince Harry for writing his book, *Spare*. If you were going to write a story, what would be the main message you hope people would take away from it?

I feel like the main message Harry wanted us to take away from his story is that something needs to be done about the paparazzi and I don't disagree with that. But I also don't want Harry to wait for that before he experiences the freedom and joy and happiness that he wants to. And I know he does at many times, he does redirect away from it. But it's clearly still a central character in his story or at least it was at the end of that book.

So what is that for you? If you were to write your memoir, what would be the villain? And then you know how we conquer the villain? Not by bringing the villain down, controlling it, fixing it, whatever we think. By choosing to write it out of the story or just give it a side role. Demote it from being a main character down to just a little, tiny, insignificant side role. This is not irresponsible. This is not just turning a blind eye. This is intentionally choosing to create the experience that you want to in your life. Your focus matters. It has tremendous power over you. Choose it intentionally.

And if you want help, come to ask Jody anything this week at jodymoore.com/trial. I'll see you there. 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*

409: The Power of Your Focus

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.