

435: Facts Versus Thoughts



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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 435, Facts vs. Thoughts.

This is *Better Than Happy*, the podcast where we study what the healthiest, most successful people in today's world think, feel and do. And we leverage this knowledge to create our best lives. Are you ready, little bird? Let's fly.

Hello everybody, welcome to episode 435. So today I'm going to give you some content that I know will be really valuable because I posted this, a similar version of this I should say on Instagram recently. And I got so many people going, "This is so helpful, please do this more." And I'll tell you what I mean by this in just a minute.

Before we dive into it, I want to talk to all of my friends who are coaches, teachers, experts, healers out there trying to get your work into the world and make an impact. And maybe you're brand new trying to do that or maybe you've been doing it, but you feel kind of stalled and you're ready to grow or scale. I have a workshop I'm going to be teaching very soon called Nail your Niche.

And this is of course going to be really powerful if you're just starting out. Figuring out who you help, who your services are for and what you offer them is one of the biggest sticking points I see with new coaches and teachers and experts. There's just so much to work through in our own heads. There's so much that I want you to better understand about this. I even want you to understand when you don't need to have a niche because that's a real thing as well. I'm going to teach all of that in Nail your Niche.

But even if again, you've been at this for a while and you've seen some success. I want you to make sure that where you're going is the place you want to be going in your business and in your offer. And I want to make sure we get it right. So make sure you head to jodymoore.com/nyn which stands for Nail your Niche. And come to this workshop because it's

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happening very soon. And I'd love to help you solve this problem once and for all.

Okay, so what I was referring to when I said I did this on Instagram is I posted a question box a little while ago and this is, I should say, on the heels of a deep dive workshop we just did in The Lab. For those of you in The Lab, you know we just did how to solve any problem which basically teaches the model. But we kind of went deeper in each section of the model and dissected some of the pieces and talked about where fine tuning the way we utilize it can make it more effective.

And the place where we began, of course, was at the top of the model where we have circumstances and thoughts. And it's one of the first things that I learned when I learned this work from Brooke Castillo in The Life Course School was I learned the importance of pulling out thoughts and not just believing that they are facts or circumstances. And the circumstance line of the model is the part that we don't focus on a lot in coaching because it's the part that otherwise, when we're not coaching, when we're not conscious about how we're thinking about things, it's where we put too much emphasis.

We just tend to notice what's wrong with the world outside of us or what other people are saying or doing that we don't like. And we tend to put way too much energy and focus into trying to manipulate or control or change circumstances. And it doesn't always work, in fact, mostly it doesn't work. This is the problem. If it worked, great, we'd just keep doing that. And I would help you to do that. But in many cases anyway, it is not going to be the way to actually solve the problem.

So because of that, we tend to then get a little bit lazy in our models and we just don't give much attention to the circumstance line. We just sort of fill in something really vague like let's say you're having a conflict with your spouse. It might be tempting to just put in the circumstance line, I have a husband because that is a fact and it's a neutral fact and we don't have to question it or argue it. And we could just throw that in the circumstance line

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and then we don't have to worry about that part and we move right on to thoughts.

But that kind of thing is not wrong, it's not bad if you're doing that, and sometimes it's where we start out. But one of the things I taught in this deep dive workshop of how to solve any problem in The Lab was let's get more specific in your C line. And then let's ask ourselves, is that really as facty as we can make it or can we get more facty? Which is a made-up word, but I know that, I'm just saying that, you don't have to email me. I know it's not a real word but stay with me. You know what I mean.

Can we get more factual? Can we get less subjective? Can we take adjectives and opinions? And sometimes we use words just in the name of summarizing what is otherwise a complicated circumstance. But now we're in thought land because the word you might pick to summarize, the description, you would give it or the meaning or the prediction that comes within our summaries might vary for all of us. So we want to be really specific in our circumstance line or the fact part of the model.

And then we want to pull a thought. We want to look at a thought and you can look at any thought. You can run multiple models about any circumstance and it will be useful. But often in coaching what I'm trying to do is find the thoughts that you don't realize are thoughts. You think they're just general overall truths. And when I say you, I mean whoever's the client.

Sometimes I'm coaching myself and I'm trying to find the thoughts that I just think are just overall general truths or that are just me conveying the news about the situation, but they actually are thoughts. Meaning they have some level of subjectivity or are subject to interpretation in various ways. That's what makes them thoughts. So that said, I posted a question box on Instagram, I said, "Give me one fact and one thought." If you guys are on Instagram and you ever engage with these kind of Q&A boxes and people's stories, you know that you actually don't get to write very much.

Instagram only gives a certain number of characters we can put in there. And so in some ways that made it difficult, but it also kind of helped

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because you had to get really focused, and just give me one fact and one thought. And then what I did is I replied to those and I shared some of them, of course, anonymously. I'm going to keep everything anonymous here. But I talked about just how to fine tune the way you're looking at circumstances and thoughts, and then sometimes a little bit of coaching.

And again there were maybe 10 or so of them that I shared and everybody's like, "Please do more of these, keep them coming. This is so helpful. This really makes it next level for me." So I thought, okay, let's share them on the podcast. Let's do this in podcast form. So for example, somebody sent this, I have parents. That's their fact. They should have divorced years ago, and they make us miserable. Now, this person was sneaky in they gave me two thoughts. They should have divorced years ago is a thought and they make us miserable is a thought.

The circumstance, I have parents. So what I said to this person and I'll kind of share what I said on Instagram, but since I can elaborate more here than I can in a quick written form I will do so, is, we want to make the fact more specific. "I have parents" is one of those very general thoughts. It's true. It's a fact. We all agree with it. It's not subject to interpretation or anything like that for the most part but it's not very specific,

So what I said was, "Tell me something specific that one of them or both of them have said recently, recall a specific conversation or a specific behavior at a specific time that has for you triggered the thought, they should have divorced years ago. And then if we wanted to do that again, with they make us miserable." Because this makes it easier to examine your thinking. If it's last week my mom said this, and then my dad said that. And then my mom said this back and my dad said this back. And in my mind, I'm probably describing an argument that they had.

And then my thought is they should have divorced years ago. And facts can be, they don't have to be specific. That's not a hard and fast rule. It just makes it easier to examine your thought. When I heard them having this conversation, when I heard these words out of my mom's mouth and out of my dad's mouth, and then my mom left and got in her car and drove away,

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wherever it was. Then I had the thought they should have divorced years ago.

And then the second thing I offered to this person was I said to notice that with this thought, they make us miserable, that part of the thought. You've delegated your emotions to your parents. And we all do this at times, but the thought they're making me miserable is delegating my emotions to them. And I added that it sounds like your parents are struggling right now to manage their own feelings. And maybe that's not who we want to put in charge of our feelings right now. So don't feel bad about it. Don't tell yourself you shouldn't think it, don't try to hurry and change it.

Just notice, that every time I think this thought, my parents should have divorced years ago and they're making me miserable. They're making us all miserable. I make myself miserable. Alright, I'm not going to go beyond that. All we're doing at this point is facts versus thoughts.

Here's the next one. Somebody said, struggling with relationship with daughter-in-law. Fact, we haven't had enough time together to have things in common. Thought, she doesn't care for me. So I said to this person, "This is a good start but this fact is not a fact." We haven't had enough time together to have things in common is not a fact. How do we know what's enough time? That is very subjective. So nothing in common is also not a fact.

For example, you both live in the United States of America if that's where you live, or whatever country you live in or you both love your son. I bet you, actually we could come up with a whole bunch of things you have in common. So this fact that this person gave me, we haven't had enough time together to have things in common. It's definitely not a fact. It's two different thoughts. And then I said to her, "As for your thought", remember her thought was she doesn't care for me.

I said, "As for your thought, what if it's true she doesn't care for you?" You guys, when I say it's a thought, don't make, it's not a fact. It's not necessarily universal truth. I'm also not saying it's not true. Sometimes the

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way I coach myself most effectively is I'm like, "Okay, what if it's true?" So this is what I'm doing here. What if it's true she doesn't care for you? It might not be, but it's possible. What is the upside of you thinking about that though?

Think about this, you guys. What is the upside of you walking around thinking the thought my daughter-in-law doesn't care for me? Is there one? Just ask yourself the question and answer it as honestly as you possibly can. And I said, "Just because something might be true doesn't mean we need to let it take up space in our heads." Because when we think someone doesn't care for us we become a less likable version of ourselves. We also don't care for people who don't care for us so we become the very thing we're disapproving of in them. Do you see that?

Then I offered this person this thought, how about I love her and there's nothing she can do about it? I don't know if that's the right thought. If your brain totally rejects that and you're like, no. Then that doesn't have to be the one. There are literally millions of options but I like to just throw some out there and see what happens.

Let's go to the next one. This person said, fact, cannot have a conversation with my 15 year old daughter without arguing. Thought, what am I doing wrong? So ask yourselves, you guys, I cannot have a conversation with my 15 year old daughter without arguing. Is that a fact? I hope you're saying no, it's not. Even if you've had an argument with her every single day of her 15 years of living, it's still not a fact. I bet there's been one time when you said, "Should we have pizza for dinner?" And she said, "Yeah." That would be a conversation where you didn't argue. So your fact is a thought is what I told this person.

Even if you have many examples, it's not provable. So pick one conversation and make the facts of that conversation be your exact words and her exact words. And then we have to remember facts are neutral. She said, "This", as best you can recall it." I said, "This." Don't summarize it because now you're getting into thoughts. You have to keep it really neutral

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fact, she said these words, I said these words. Not dramatic. Not interesting. That's what happens in the fact line.

And then remember her thought was, what am I doing wrong? And I said, "This is probably not a useful question to ask yourself unless you get good information when you answer it." So a lot of times our thoughts are in the form of questions. So we just want to see what information do I get? If, when I ask myself, what am I doing wrong? If I get really useful information like, you know what? This probably isn't working. Maybe we should try this thing.

Sometimes that could be a useful question, but my guess is this person is not answering it that way, she's answering it with, "I don't know, teenagers are hopeless or I'm a terrible mom." Or something that is not a useful thought. And so what I suggested is that we change the question to something more useful such as, what would make this easier for her and for me, or what do I need more of in my life and how can I make that happen? Or how about, what is really going on for her?

Something that will prompt your brain to come up with some useful information instead of just give up or judge you or your daughter or complain.

Here's the next one. The person said fact, I get \$450 a month in child support. Thought, it's not fair, he makes more money than I do. So notice, this person did a great job with the fact. I get \$450 a month in child support. So the fact is a fact. It's neutral. It's specific. I like this fact to start out with. Then her thought, I said, "But this thought makes you a victim." And remember that victims are powerless. So I just gave this person some other options to play with. If I want more money I can make that happen. I've got this. I don't want his money. I don't need his money. Money is fun to create.

These are some thoughts I would suggest you try on. If they don't feel believable to you yet, again, we can find more. When we do in person coaching in The Lab, we play with different options and eventually you can

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get to these. You might need some bridging thoughts in the meantime, but I'm just throwing it out there as others to consider.

Next one, fact, the church is run by humans that are voluntary. Thought, I'm not a fan of some of those humans. Maybe the church isn't for me anymore. So here's what I suggested to the person that wrote this in. I would suggest that this fact, the church is run by humans that are voluntary, it's getting close to being facty. But I think we could still be more factual. Because some would argue that the church is run by God.

So if we get more specific, this is one where I would say getting more specific might help. For example, this person said this specific thing on this day or in this talk or in my ward or whatever it was. And then remember the thought, I'm not a fan of some of those humans. Maybe the church isn't for me anymore. I said, "How do you feel when you think this thought?" If it feels like light and love and peace, then maybe it's something to consider. If not, consider some alternatives.

Here are some alternatives, 'the church', is all of us and it needs people like me to balance out the ones who see things differently. I don't know, how does that thought feel? You guys, you've got to try on thoughts. You've got to be like, do I like this one? Does it feel true to me? Is it believable on some level? Do I feel more like the way I want to feel and the person I want to be when I think it? Here's another option. I go to church to connect with divinity, the rest is up for grabs. These are all thoughts by the way that I like when I go to church.

I like some of the humans at my church. You guys, that's a really simple coaching hack. Instead of walking around thinking I don't like some of those humans, you can think but I do like some of them. And I don't know if this person should stay in the church or not. I'm just saying we want to make that decision from our best selves, from our most trusting, loving, abundant selves.

Here's one more. Most people mean well, but some of them don't get it. Good thing I'm here. And I wrote next to that, is this one too pretentious? I

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don't know. And I had a bunch of people reply. "No, not too pretentious. I love that one." So anyway, like I said, you try on thoughts, you take what you like. You leave what you don't like,

Here's another one, fact, cancer. Thought, it sucks. Here was my reply to this person, 100% we want to keep this thought, don't we? Even though it feels terrible, we want to think positive about everything, you guys, that's not the only option. I know some of you listening are like, "I had cancer and my thought was I'm going to get through this. I'm going to kick this. This won't take me down", or whatever. I'm not saying it's the only option. I'm just saying if you have cancer or someone you love is going through treatment for cancer and you want to think it sucks, I'm in. It's totally okay.

Next one, I was late to pick up my daughter at the bus stop. Thought, she shouldn't be mad at me because my job is making it hard to be on time. So I said to this person, "Good fact, terrible thought. But I've got you." My daughter at the bus stop, I would call that a fact, and especially if you're like, "This happened on Thursday", or whatever, there's a specific instance, I would say we're doing well with the fact line. But here's what I suggest about her thought line. Let's try this.

She can be mad if she wants to. I'm not going to be mad at me and I'm not mad at her for being mad at me. I don't like being mad. I choose peace. She's mad, but I'm not mad about that. And then I asked this person, "Can you get here? If so it will set you free and you deserve that." Just saying, she does and so do you, my friend.

Here's another one. Fact, there is laundry and garbage and dishes on my floor in every room. Thought, this place is a disaster. Can this go in the fact line? There is laundry and garbage and dishes on my floor in every room. So here's what I said, "Is this really a fact, in every room? Don't be dramatic in the fact line." So if we're talking about your house, I like people to get very facty. I'll make them tell me. There are seven plates, two bowls, five pairs of socks, three t-shirts and two empty potato chip bags on the floor in this room.

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When you just name all the stuff, it's much easier to neutralize it in your brain. You're like, "There are seven forks in the sink." Because what I like to do is be like, "Those forks are just whatever metal material they're made out of. They're not here to hurt me. In fact, I want those forks. I bought those forks." So neutralize it by just calling out the stuff that you can see at least. And then this woman's thought, this place is a disaster. I said, "How does this thought make you feel, overwhelmed, frustrated?" If so, it's a terrible one to choose. Maybe try on some of these.

Wow, we have a full life. Or I'm going to create a system so this doesn't keep happening. Isn't that a more useful thought than this place is a disaster? I'm going to create a system so this doesn't keep happening. Or how about, looks like we really know how to live it up at our house. That one works well for me. It takes me out of the frustration and self-pity and to be like, "Look at us living a big life."

And then I like to shift into a thought like I'm going to create a system so this doesn't happen again. And that system will involve the other people that I lived with, by the way. Finally, I offered this one. What do I need and how can I make sure and give it to myself? I don't know if you remember, but I mentioned that one to someone earlier. I think this is such an important question that all of us should be asking ourselves more often. What do I need and how can I give it to myself?

I'm going to go through a few more here. Fact, son does not have seminary on his school schedule. Seminary is a religion class where we study the scriptures that we encourage our high school students to attend. So that's a fact, son does not have seminary on his school schedule. Good fact. Thought, he should go to seminary and his life would be better if he did. Here's how I replied to this person, I said in very big letters, "How do we know? How do we know his life would be better if he went to seminary?" That's what we think.

We think we know what would be best for our kids and all of our loved ones and all the people around us. But then I said this, "He could go to seminary and hear something that offends him and he distances himself from God

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and it all goes south. He could be in his not seminary class, whatever class he's taking instead and meet someone who impacts his life for good in a profound way." We don't know. So then I said, "My point is we don't know what other people should do, even our kids." You guys, understanding that will set you free in so many ways.

Here's the next one, thought, she doesn't know how to win. Fact, daughter's coach playing certain players during the games. I think I accidentally posted them in the other order. So the fact was the daughter's coach is playing certain players, thought was she doesn't know how to win. So then I said, "How do you feel when you think this? How does that feeling feel in your body? Do you like it?" My guess is no. And it's not helping the team. It's not helping your daughter. It's not influencing the coach. It's not winning. It's only causing you to suffer. Interesting, don't you think?

Then I offered her some alternative thoughts she could try on. Maybe losing is the experience my daughter is supposed to have. Or maybe coach has a good reason. Or maybe I don't know how to win either otherwise I'd be the coach. Some people are going to go, "That's not true, I know how to win. I just don't have time." That doesn't have to be your thought, but these are just some options. Here's one more I gave her. What do I want to bring to this experience instead of judgment and criticism? Just some alternatives.

It says, "My daughter-in-law goes on vacation, needs a babysitter, sends a text message to both parents and we have to figure out who can do what days." So that's not a very facty fact. The part especially where it's like, we have to figure out who can do what. That was starting to get dramatic and interesting. But anyway, she goes on to say, "My thought is that it makes me mad that she doesn't have the decency to ask in person." This was my reply, "Why? You have a story about what it means to ask in person and that's okay but you should know it's a made up story, 100% made-up. Yes, I'm sure.

More importantly, why do you want to feel mad? Doesn't it feel terrible? How do you show up when you're mad? Do you like being with yourself

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when you're mad? Just notice how you're punishing yourself for someone else's actions. If you want to be mad, you can, but if you don't want to, try", here comes some alternative thoughts. She doesn't do things the way I do, and that's okay. Texting is actually easier than phone tag. I'm so glad I get to be in my grandkids' lives. Those are just three I thought up on the spot. There are millions of possibilities. That's all I'm saying.

Here's the next one. Fact, it's my birthday tomorrow. Thought, no one will remember and I'm already sad about it. So then I sent a giant colorful, animated happy birthday sign. And then I said, "Now stop feeling sorry for yourself and create the birthday you want, text everyone tonight and tell them tomorrow is your birthday and give them very specific directions of what you want to do to celebrate. Make the reservation, bake the cake, buy yourself something beautiful. Invite others to join. But no matter what, it's your job to celebrate you." New thought, happy birthday to me.

I've got two more, are you ready? Fact, barbarians are being called freedom fighters in this Hamas Israel war. Thought, the misinformation spreading is sickening. Here's what I said, "Well, the word 'barbarian' can't go in the fact line because that's a matter of opinion, but right now is the time to allow all the feelings. When something is happening that we want to think is horrible and wrong then we allow the feelings we create and we let those feelings refine us, even though they feel awful. That said, I also like to keep these thoughts alive along with the angry/sad ones.

There are a lot of good people who want to stop this tragedy. How can I help? What good can I put into the world today?" That was it, I thought there was going to be one more, but that was the last one, which is such a good one to end on, you guys. Thank you to everyone who participated in this little Instagram experiment we did. It was fun. If you liked it, we'll do it again. Make sure you're following me, Jody Moore Coaching over on Instagram.

And otherwise, thanks for joining me today, you guys, have a beautiful rest of your week and I'll see you next week. Take care.

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Coaching changed my life and I've watched it change the lives of thousands of men and women since, but is it right for you? You'll only know by giving it a try. Try it out today at jodymoore.com/trial.