

438: Your Perfect Past



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

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438: Your Perfect Past

I'm Jody Moore and this is *Better Than Happy*, episode 438, Your Perfect Past.

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, thanks for joining me for the podcast today. Thanks for tuning in and thank you for all of the love that you give the podcast. You guys are so generous. I love reading your comments when you leave ratings and reviews. I love seeing when you post things that you're learning and share it on social media. So, thank you, thank you and please keep doing that. Please help me spread the word about emotional and mental fitness. It helps all of us when we make everybody emotionally and mentally stronger.

Also make sure before we dive into today's concept, which by the way, I'm so fired up about this topic. I have so many things I want to say about it. I hope I can articulate my ideas in a way that makes sense because it's one of those things that I'm so excited about that sometimes I just go on and on about it. And I have a lot I want to say to you about this topic. But before we do, make sure you've grabbed your \$59 *Better Than Happy Masterclass*. We're going to do some actual coaching in that masterclass. I'm going to apply a lot of the concepts here.

And it's going to be my best masterclass ever. And get one for yourself, but also get it for anybody you know who is a fan of personal development and growth and wants to achieve big things in 2024. We have packaged it all in such a way that it makes an amazing gift. You get this really gorgeously designed printable that explains to the person what you got them. And you get a link that you just will forward them after you give them the gift. It makes it really easy for them to pick from multiple times or dates so that they can find one that fits their schedule.

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And then you also get a link to a video you can send them that explains that the reason somebody purchased this class for them is because somebody thinks that they are phenomenal. So you can get that at jodymoore.com/gift.

Okay, so it's the end of the year. It's coming up on the end of the year pretty soon here. And it's going to be the beginning of a new year. And whenever we have endings and beginnings, it's a time to pause for reflection, if you will, for a moment. And whether you intentionally do it and pause or your brain is just doing it on default, we all have a tendency to think about our past. Most people, I will say, are not thinking about their past with much intention. Most people don't take the time to sit down and go, "Let's reflect back on the year." That's my assumption.

I should back up and say I don't believe most people do this, but maybe I'm wrong. Maybe people do. I hope so. I hope that you take just a minute at some point, doesn't have to be right now. If you have too much going on and you're busy with the holiday planning. And you don't want to think about it right now. Alright, alright, that's fine. But at some point take a minute and reflect on your year.

Because like I said, if you don't do it intentionally and think about your past in a useful way then your brain will do it in its own natural default way, which mostly is not going to serve you. Here's what I mean by that. We're all aware of our past. We all have memories. We all could look back and reflect and think about the past. But we all have highly selective memories, first of all. And when I say things that we remember, I mean the specific details surrounding certain events.

The research says that if we could get a more objective view of how skewed our memories of the past are, we would be shocked. Skewed, meaning we selectively filter out certain parts of our past, certain experiences overall or certain parts of a certain experience. And we selectively include in our memory other parts of our past. Such that we have this idea that we are just remembering something that happened in the past, but what we're actually remembering is the version of the past

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that our brain's decided to create. Do you follow me? You see what I'm saying?

Have you ever had this experience where you're talking with someone else, recalling a situation, an experience that you both went through together and you have a disagreement about some of the details? A disagreement about when it happened or who was the person that said this thing or where we were or what happened before it or what happened after it. Or even major components of the experience, we can disagree on, and both people can be highly committed to the idea that their memory is right. The other person is surely mistaken.

And that is because, again, our brains filter out certain parts of the past, keep in certain other parts of the past and thereby create a memory that is much more inaccurate than any of us realizes. And that's just interesting to know, don't you think? Now, the reason I'm explaining this to you is because the way you think about your past will create your experience currently. And the way you think about the past will determine how much progress you make in your future. I really do believe this is true.

I'm learning a lot about this right now from Dr. Benjamin Hardy. And if you want to learn more from him, go check out his work. One book in particular, I highly recommend *10X is Easier than 2X*. But what I want to say today is that the past, in terms of your own goals. I want to kind of frame this around your own goals, things that you want to work on, habits that you want to develop. Maybe you want to improve your habits around food or maybe you want to engage with people in your life. Maybe you want to improve certain parts of your relationship.

Maybe you have goals around your business if you're an entrepreneur or your job or your career path, around money in general. I want to talk about yourself and how you think about your own progress. So if I were to ask you, "Tell me how it went for you this past year?" And we picked an area, let's pick your business. Let's say you're an entrepreneur who owns a business. And if you don't own a business, it's fine, this is just an example.

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If I said to you, “How did it go this year in your business?” First of all, when I ask people that question, I pay very close attention to the first thing out of their mouth. Because usually the first thing out of our mouth is our summary of the year and then we might go into more detail. And your summary tells me so much about how you’re thinking about how it went in your business. The truth is, when I ask my clients, “Tell me what you’ve done this past year in your business.” I really don’t need to know at all, the facts.

In other words, it doesn’t matter to me how much money you made. It doesn’t matter if you lost money and went into debt. It doesn’t matter if you made 10 times more money this past year than you have any other year or if you made a lot less money this past year than you have in previous years. None of that kind of information actually matters at all. What I mean by it doesn’t matter at all, is it doesn’t tell me anything about what’s going to happen next.

It doesn’t tell me anything about your potential to be successful this month or next year or even tomorrow or even today, for the rest of the day. What has happened in your past doesn’t matter at all. The only thing that matters is the story you’re telling yourself, the energy that you’re operating from when it comes to your past. Because that energy is what will predict your future. It is the place by which you will create whatever you’re creating for your future.

So back to what I said, when I ask clients, “Hey, tell me about what happened in your business this past year.” The reason I’m asking that question is because I want to hear what memories, details and overall thoughts and stories and summaries they have brought with them from the past to where we are today.

Now, most of us will think, I need to tell this person, I need to tell my coach, if I’m working with a client and I’m their coach. I need to tell my coach the accurate truth. I need her to know the truth so that she can help guide me. So maybe they’ll say, “It was amazing.” But I don’t hear that very often,

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even when, after they give me all the details, my summary of it is wow, what an amazing year. I rarely hear somebody say that.

What I mostly hear is either, “I’m so frustrated. I’m just stuck or I’ve tried a bunch of things and it’s not going how I wanted. It’s going a lot slower than I thought it would or that I think it should. I haven’t grown in years. I’m stalled out.” Or again, “I’ve gone backwards.” These are the things I hear most commonly. And then sometimes they’ll preface it with, “I mean, this part was good. This part went well, but.” And then there’s more focus on the negative.

Even the ones who on a chart we’re plotting metrics would say it was trending up, trending in the direction we want. Still really minimize the successful parts and bring in at least a little bit of negative with it. And maybe it’s in the name of trying to be humble. They don’t want to brag or whatever, but they’ll say something like, “We had a good year. We had a good year. I’m really proud of what we did but.”

And then there’s the, “I have this new challenge I wasn’t expecting or it was a lot harder, it costs more money. It didn’t happen the way we thought it would.” They always bring in some kind of negative. That is so common when I’m coaching people on business. So I want you to think about your life. Is this again with your relationships, does this have to do with your money in another way? Does it have to do with your health goals, your fitness goals? What is it?

Notice if your brain tends to do this. And then the next thing I want to say is, it’s so not necessary. I want to challenge you this year to just try something different. Obviously we all know being negative, being hard on ourselves isn’t good for us, it’s not useful. But then people are like, “I know, I know I shouldn’t, it’s just so hard not to.” No, it’s not hard not to. It’s actually not. You just have to give yourself permission to only look at the positive and to know that all of it is progress, all of it is forward movement.

There’s no such thing as backwards movement when it comes to your own development, your own growth, your own evolution, your own next step of

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your journey, even if you're like, "Well, I lost a bunch of money this year. I didn't make any money." And maybe relative to years past, that's really bad. Maybe you made a lot of money in the past. Now you're losing money. I still, I want to challenge you to think of it all as forward progress.

So let's think about it on the continuum of time for just a minute. There is no such thing as going back in time. So when people say to me, "Well, my business, I went backwards", they might say. And I'm like, "What do you mean went backwards?" If we were talking about time, there's no way to go backwards. There's only forward. And I want you to think about growth and awareness and your own development personally, and in this case your business is also only forward. Forward is the only thing that's possible.

So even if it didn't trend in the direction you wanted it to, you learned a bunch of stuff. You learned that what you thought was going to get you to your business goals maybe wasn't going to. It didn't at least, maybe it never could. Maybe it never will. You learned that that strategy doesn't work or the way you executed it at least, didn't work. You learned a bunch of stuff, you really did. You have so much more awareness now than you did before you tried whatever you tried in your business. You do, you know so much more.

You know, more in terms of, like I said, what works and what doesn't work. But you also maybe figured out some kind of online technology in the process or maybe you figured out some processes that you want to repeat or processes that don't work or the fact that you need some processes. Maybe you figured out that you have some skills you didn't know you had or maybe you figured out that you don't have some skills that you thought you did have. Maybe you figured out that you need bigger numbers at the front end of your marketing funnel than you thought you did.

There's so many things that you learned, things that you're not even aware of that you learned. And all of that is so valuable. Even if the only thing you got out of it is that you attempted something and you had your first try, attempts are where the value is, you guys. Listen to me. Attempts, whether it be again, in your business, in your health journey, in your marriage and

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your relationships, in your parenting, in anything you're trying to do. Attempts are where you are making the most progress.

We do not learn by listening and reading. We learn by trying. I should say maybe you can learn 10 to 20% of what's possible to learn by listening or reading or studying. But the 80% only happens through trial, often trial and error. So do you see what I mean? There's no such thing as going backward. There's only forward. Now, some of you are like, "Okay, well, I didn't have any attempts. I didn't even go out and try what I thought I was going to try."

Okay, then what we know is you need some different strategies to motivate yourself. Maybe you need a different goal. Maybe you need a coach. Maybe you need, I don't know, but you need something different to get yourself moving. The way you did it last year doesn't get that done for you. This is very good to know that you don't have the amount of willpower you thought you would have or willpower isn't going to be the way to get you there or whatever. There's so many millions of things that you've learned.

Even through not attempting it, we learned something about you, very valuable. The more we can learn about you, the better. So do you see what I'm saying? It's all progress. It's all growth. It's all valuable information. Everything went perfectly. Nothing is off track here. And if that's true then we can get really excited about the future.

So I, in the past, used to assess my year by looking at my wins and successes. I always knew that was important to do and I always knew that I'm just like everyone else in that I tend to minimize my wins and just brush right over them and move on to the next goal and how am I going to hit that. So I've always done that part. And I've always encouraged you all here on the podcast to do that part.

But what I'm trying this year that I want to offer to you is to cut out the part where you then look at where you had some failures or setbacks. I don't think we need to do that part at all, do you know why? You're already as aware as you need to be of where you fell short because did you fall short?

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Of course, every one of us will continue to always fall short in that we always could have done more. We always could have done better. That's always a thing.

There is no point at which we're like, "I did it perfectly." That's just not a thing. We always could have done better. We always could have done more. So I don't think we need to spend any time on that. I think that you are as aware as you need to be of where you fell short. Where we need to spend more time is in identifying the wins and celebrating the wins.

So years ago I had a position where I was working with a lot of new life coaches, helping them get their business going and they would try something. We would give them some suggestions about certain things to try. They would go try some things. They'd come back, I'd say, "How did it go?" And some of them would say, "It didn't work", or some version of that. Most of them would say either it didn't work or like I said in the beginning, it was slow etc. Every now and then I would get one that went, "It was awesome."

Now, the ones who said it was awesome sometimes had some data behind that. Sometimes they'd say, "I signed a client or I was able to get this many people on my email list or this many people signed up to do a consultation with me", or whatever. We'd have certain metrics we're trying to achieve. And sometimes the person saying, this is awesome, had some of those metrics. Most of the time they didn't have metrics that were any different than the people saying, "It didn't work, it failed. I'm not sure this is ever going to work."

I'm not exaggerating, you guys, the people saying it was awesome had the exact same data 99% of the time. Because it was very rare that somebody just came along and got lucky and everything was easy and fun and fast, and they didn't have to experiment or trial that. I can't think of a time when I've ever actually seen that with the coaches I've worked with, the entrepreneurs I've worked with. They had the really similar metrics in terms of some things are trending the way we want them to, most things are not, we're going to go again.

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The person who's like, "It was awesome", let me tell you what the difference is. They are enjoying the process. They are more aware of and more focused on the good parts. There are good parts for everybody. Here's what I mean. Maybe you only got one person to reply to your email. The person who's like, "It was awesome", was so delighted that one person replied that they engaged with them again and they went back and forth and they ended up having a really powerful conversation getting to help that person.

And they're delighted by the idea that they got to help someone, even though they haven't even signed a client yet. The person didn't become a client, they just were delighted that one person wanted to hear what they had to say. The other person who said, "This is terrible", is frustrated because the numbers are too small and this is never going to work and they're impatient etc. That literally is the difference.

I know it's so cliché to be like, "The joy's in the journey." But I don't mean that you should be enjoying the journey, I mean, it's more fun when you do. But I mean, literally the way you succeed, the way you get to the finish line you want to get to is by enjoying the journey because when you can create that kind of energy. You've got to have energy and momentum and you've got to have excitement behind what you're doing, at least a little bit to compensate for what is commonly called the resistance.

And there's a book called *The War of Art*, it's by Steven Pressfield, you should definitely check it out. This is not just for entrepreneurs or writers or people trying to create something like that. Resistance according to Steven Pressfield, I love the way he describes it, shows up in our lives in all different ways. This is why you're like, "I totally understand nutrition and food, maybe I even teach it to people. Why can't I get myself to eat properly?"

This is why you have really good intentions and for a minute you're motivated and follow through and then eventually it becomes more challenging, it's because of the resistance. So the best way to overcome the resistance and to move through the resistance and have some wins is

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to be more motivated, more excited, feeling more positive, more optimistic, believing that it's possible for you to get to where you're trying to go. That is the best defense against the resistance.

So for this reason you have to frame your past as a success. It's all a success. I was talking to a friend of mine who struggled over the last year or so with some mental health. And she was saying, "Yeah, I mean, there were so many things I wanted to do that I couldn't do because I couldn't even leave my house some days. I couldn't even bring myself to figure out how am I going to figure out what to eat for breakfast and how am I going to get myself dressed today, let alone really go after some of my goals?"

But as we framed it all in this way, she was like, "All of that is progress." All of that is like, oh my gosh, I had to go through that experience to discover some things, to seek some solutions, to meet some people, to figure out how to manage this condition. And even though I thought that my business was going to be further along by the end of this year. What's further along is my mental health, so that I'm now positioned to go do what I want to in my business. And that's exactly how this year was supposed to go.

I thought it was going to go differently but thank goodness it went that way so that I could be positioned now to go do what I want to do next. Do you see how we can frame all of it as a success? Success is people that you've met. For me, sometimes success is an app I learned about that's really helpful, software I figured out, companies I learned about that can help me. Like I said, I'm kind of talking about business here, but I do this same thing when it comes to my health and fitness goals.

So let me give you one other example. So during the pandemic I put a lot of focus on my health and I did get much healthier. I started eating so much better, way more protein. I became much stronger. I built some muscle. I lost some fat. And then I sort of neglected it and 'lost a lot of that progress'. But I have zero regrets about any of that. I would never say to myself, "Well, that didn't work."

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I'm like, "That was such an amazing experience. I learned so much about food. I learned about my body. I learned about my own hunger. I learned about just so many things. I made so much progress in terms of my own mindset, even things that I kind of knew intellectually. I really do believe in my heart now I have so much less drama around weight and the scale.

In fact I can look back at a past version of me and see that my mindset in terms of how healthy I am around all of these topics is so much further along than it was when I went through this a couple of years ago. Because I'm now recommitting myself to focus on my health. And thank goodness I went through that. Maybe I'll have to go through it five more times. Maybe I'll get healthy and I'll lose the focus again and go back to old habits.

Maybe I'll do this off and on until I die. I'm in, because I get healthier both mentally and physically and emotionally around this topic every time I do it, I do. And I'm so grateful for that. And I meet people, I meet people who are experts in this industry and I find even an Instagram account to follow that I like the way they're talking about it or what have you. And those people may be helpful to me directly with regards to the goals I'm working on or they may just be people that are blessing my life in other ways, or that will bless my life in ways I can't imagine, or whose lives I get to bless in some way.

It's all perfect. It's all happening exactly as it should. Do you see what I'm saying? If that were true, because it is true, then what? Then what do we want to do this week? What do we want to do next year? What do we want to do tomorrow? If it's all going perfectly then doesn't it feel way more exciting to think about the future? I'm just saying.

Now, last thing I want to address because in my mind, I sometimes try to think about what are you thinking as you listen to this, what is your pushback. And I welcome pushback, by the way. Come on over and let's be respectful of one another. I don't want to have us bashing each other on social media. But if you want to have respectful thought provoking further conversation about this, I'm in. Come on over to my Instagram account and let's continue discussing.

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But one of the things people say to me when I teach this topic is, “Well, don’t we need to look at where the gaps are in order to improve?” If we’re just like, “It was all perfect, it was all amazing, let’s move on.” Then aren’t we going to make the same mistakes again? Isn’t part of the success the lesson? So we need to go, “This part didn’t work. Let’s change it for next time.” So I just want to reiterate what I said earlier in case you missed it. You’re already aware of those parts. You’re as aware as you need to be.

There’s no such thing as perfection. So we don’t have to sit down and go, “Now, let’s make sure we didn’t miss any of the gaps.” There is no such thing as perfection. There are always going to be gaps, even it’s like trying to play Whack-a-mole. We’re going to plug some of them, but there are going to be new holes that pop up, new gaps that pop up. So I really don’t want you spending any time on that.

I want you to assume that you already remember whatever you need to in order to make it better. You’re already aware of that. All I want you to put your focus on is the wins and successes and why it was perfect and why you have only progressed and moved forward and grown and why that’s such a beautiful thing. I would get out a journal and write about it. That’s what I’ve been doing lately, journaling about it over and over again in any area of my life I want to focus on.

For me it’s usually in business and with my health but pick one area at least and do this exercise of framing it all as perfect forward progress. I would love to hear what you come up with. Thanks for joining me on the podcast today, you guys. Have a beautiful rest of your week and I’ll see you next time. Bye bye.

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.