

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

One of the first things I teach people when they first come to me is that there's a difference between circumstances and facts and stories or thoughts. Those two things are different: facts and thoughts. And when we just slow down for just a minute and think about it, it's not even hard to distinguish the difference.

And the reason this is so powerful is because you realize suddenly that a lot of what you've been believing or operating by or the lens by which you've been viewing the world is optional. It's moldable, and it is making a difference. And so, we always want to separate those two things out.

But sometimes what happens when I'm helping a client to do this is they discover that yes, this is a thought, but it's a true thought, they'll tell me. And I will even agree with them. It's true or it could be true. And then they say to me, "But what if it's true?" Or they'll ask questions like, "But am I just being delusional by ignoring this thought?" Even though they categorize it as a thought, or trying to think and believe a different thought, isn't that delusional? We're going to dive into all of that today because the answer might surprise you, and it will further empower you beyond the basics. This is episode 510, It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

Welcome to *Better Than Happy*, the podcast where we transform our lives by transforming ourselves. My name is Jody Moore. In the decade-plus I've been working with clients as a Master Certified Coach, I've helped tens of thousands of people to become empowered. And from empowered, the things that seemed hard become trivial, and the things that seemed impossible become available, and suddenly, a whole new world of desire and possibility open up to you. And what do you do with that?

Well, that's the question... what will you do? Let's find out.

Sometimes, listening to a podcast is enough. But sometimes, you'll feel inspired to go deeper. If you hear things that speak to you in today's episode, consider it your invitation to a complimentary coaching workshop.

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

On this live, interactive Zoom call with me, you'll get a taste of the power of this work when applied in real life. You can participate, or be a silent observer. But you have to take a step if you want to truly see change in your life... two steps, actually. Head to JodyMoore.com/freecoaching and register. Then you just have to show up. Your best life is waiting for you. Will you show up for it? JodyMoore.com/freecoaching. I'll see you there.

What's happening, friends? I hope everybody is healthy and well and finding some moments of peace, even if you're in a difficult time of life. I feel like life kind of like every six months, you know, evolves around a certain circle of things are easy and good, and then things get hard and challenging. And for me, it seems to go in six-month cycles. I don't know about you, maybe it's longer, maybe they're shorter than that for you.

At any rate, wherever you are in the experience of being a human being, I hope that you are finding beauty. I hope that you're finding moments of joy and pleasure because I promise they're always available. Anyway, I'm just sending you lots of best thoughts and wishes and energy. Today, we're going to talk about something that comes up all the time when I'm working with all of y'all, my clients, and especially when people are sort of new. Well, actually not even just new to this work. As people dive into this work, this comes up a lot. Okay?

And that is the idea that yes, okay, Jody, I can distinguish the difference between a fact and a thought, but this thought is true. And sometimes people say to me, "Well, it just feels true." And other times they say, "But that is true, right?" And sometimes they say, "But what if it's true?" If it's a thought about the future. It could be true. It might be true. It's even very likely or possible to be true. And so I want to dive into all of that today because this is an area where people tend to get stuck. Okay?

So I'm going to give you tons of examples, but here's where I want to begin. I want to make sure that we're very clear on what we mean by a thought. If we're going to call something a fact or a circumstance, it has to

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

be really simplified down to things that could be proven, that everybody would agree upon. Okay?

So, for example, "My husband loves me" is never going to be a fact. Even if my husband says, "Yes, I love you, dear," or tells other people, "I love her so much." It's still not a fact because we can't prove it. We couldn't take my husband to the doctor and be like, "Can you run a blood test on him? We just want to see if he's positive for love for me." And even if he overall has this, you know, story, which is his thoughts and his feelings about me, that is he loves me, then there's I guarantee moments when I get on his nerves, or when he's annoyed by me, or when he kind of even can't stand me or when he's mad at me. Right?

So how do we know someone loves us or that we love someone else? And this is really empowering to understand because of the way our thoughts provide a lens by which we're viewing the world and they are directing the way we show up. Our brains have this thing called the reticular activating system that says, "Hey, filter out anything that doesn't align with this story, this thought, this lens." Now, our brains aren't perfect at doing it, so some things get through. And they're doing that to try to save us energy, right?

If we took in the stimulus of everything going on around us, we'd be exhausted. We wouldn't be able to function in our lives. So it's like, okay, let's look for what's relevant. And what's relevant to our brains is the things that we are thinking about and believing, the stories that are driving us. Okay?

So for example, if I am looking to buy a house, then suddenly my brain starts noticing for sale signs as I drive around town. If I'm not looking to buy a house, I try to filter out for sale signs. I don't notice most of them. Right? Because my brain says, "That's irrelevant. We don't need to be on the lookout for that." This is just how our amazing brains work, okay?

So what we think and believe is the filter by which our brains try to bring in or reject information, ideas. Okay? So it really matters what we're thinking.

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

This is why what we're focused on, what we expect, what we believe, we will most of the time find to be true. And we will most of the time create what we expect to create.

So I want you to think about like, it's mid-April, it's kind of getting towards the end of April now. So we're what? Four months into 2025? Okay? What did you expect for the year 2025? For these first four months? What did you expect would your life would be like, your finances would be like, your marriage, your business, your health? What did you really believe would happen in these first four months? What did you believe?

Now, some of you will be like, I didn't really think about it. I don't know. I didn't put a lot of focus on it. But you do this and we all do this, right? Somewhat unconsciously. I promise you had expectations, and those expectations have likely mostly played out. For example, when I decide, "Hey, we're running low on milk, I'm going to go to the store and get milk." I operate from a whole bunch of expectations and assumptions. I believe that there will be milk at the store that I choose to go to, that I won't get there and discover that there's no milk.

And I believe that I will arrive safely at the store. Even though I'm getting in a car, which can be dangerous, right? And I'm going to be on the road around a bunch of other drivers in cars, which can be very dangerous, but I believe and I expect that I will be able to get to the store. I'll be able to find the store, first of all. I'll be able to find a parking spot. I'll be able to go in and buy milk. My debit card or bank card will work. There will be a way for me to pay and it will work. The computer isn't going to shut down, we're not going to have a power outage, we're not going to have like, think about all the things that could go wrong when I go to get milk.

But I don't expect that. I expect that things are going to go smoothly and I'm going to be able to get milk. I know this sounds ridiculous because this is such a mundane, simple task, but I'm telling you, this is how we are living our lives. We are continuing to create what we expect. We are living out what we expect, and we are looking for proof that what we expect is true.

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

So this is why it's so powerful to understand what you're thinking and believing. Okay?

And the more you can think and believe that you are capable of achieving what you want to achieve, the more likely you are to achieve it. That's just the reality because I believe I can get milk, and I get milk. Even if I ran into road construction or something, or the store I was going to go to was closed. If something I didn't expect happened, I would quickly reassess and think of an alternative, right? I would go, "Oh, I thought I was going to get milk at that store, but I guess I'll go to this other store." Or I thought I was going to drive that way, but I guess I'll go a different way. And I wouldn't freak out about it and be like, "Who do I think I am thinking I can get milk?" Right? Because I expect that's an achievable task.

Now, we're doing this with all these little things, and we're doing it with bigger things too. What I expect my marriage is going to be like, the experience of my marriage is what I tend to get. What I think my husband's going to be like or how I think I'm going to be is what we tend to get. What I expect in terms of my bank account is what I tend to get. This is why we have this sort of thermostat, if you will, that says, "Uh oh, my money's getting low." And then we get stressed and we kind of hustle until it gets back up. But also if we start making more money, if we don't expect ourselves and envision ourselves as someone that can make more money, then we sort of put the brakes on or in some way kind of self-sabotage until it gets back down to what we expect.

We are most comfortable living in what we expect and what we believe. Okay, this is super important to understand because that is why I'm always talking to you about what you're thinking and believing. And that is why when we're coaching, I am trying to sell you on some thoughts and beliefs that I think will serve you better. After we discover what you're currently thinking and believing, we try to explore some alternatives that are going to create more of what you want.

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

Okay, that was a necessary foundation. Now, let's talk about if the thought is true. I hear this all the time when I'm coaching you guys. Let's say your thought is, "My child is struggling." Okay? My child is struggling. Now, I'm not going to put that in the fact line. That's not your circumstance or your fact because struggling is a subjective term. So my child is struggling is not a fact, it's a thought.

But in coaching, we don't necessarily need to go to, "My child is doing great," or even, "My child is not struggling." And this is what again, a client will say to me, "But it's true. What if it's true? I get that it's just a thought. We can't prove it in a court of law. We wouldn't ever all agree on what struggling means. Therefore, we can't all agree that the child is struggling. But what if it's just kind of true?" Like this child is telling me that they're struggling and that I have all this evidence and all these examples of how this child is struggling. And like what I'm saying is that your brain doesn't want to believe that it's not true. It has too much evidence to prove that it's true. Okay, that's fine.

My point is there's a thought in parentheses that is probably the real problem. And it goes back to should-free again. If we just went should-free, we could even keep the thought, "My child is struggling," but we would stop thinking that the child shouldn't be struggling. Or we would stop thinking, "I should do something about it," or "If I was a better mother," or "This isn't fair," or something like that. That's the real problem here, right?

Now, again, I'm not saying any of us want to go to, "My child is struggling and that's great. She's totally supposed to. I'm so glad she's struggling." I'm just saying when we drop the should, we can replace it with something like, "And maybe that's okay. Maybe she's meant to right now. Maybe she needs to be struggling right now for some reason. Maybe she's not struggling as much as I think. Maybe this is at least somewhat normal experience for a child this age."

We can play with all kinds of thoughts and parentheses, even if you want to keep the thought or you just for some reason your brain won't let go of the

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

thought, "My child is struggling," the original thought, right? So we can just take a look at the after part. And they're really just a handful of things that help so much.

My child is struggling and that's okay. My child is struggling and this is just temporary. My child is struggling and we will figure out what to do. Any one of these is going to feel better than if you don't pay attention to the thought in parentheses because the default one is, "And this is terrible, this isn't fair, this shouldn't be happening, something's gone wrong." You see what I'm saying?

Second thing I want to offer to you is that even if you want to keep believing it's true or you just need to keep believing it's true, doesn't mean that walking around focusing on it and thinking about it is serving you. There are so many things that we would say are thoughts, right? Because I again, can't prove them in this scientific linear way, but I just do believe they're true. Like, children are suffering in the world right now. That's not a fact because it's very subjective, but it's something that I believe is true. People are living in war zones and that would be terrible.

I have so much compassion for what people are going through in the world right now. Like, all of these are thoughts that I want to keep. But if I were to walk around focusing on everything that's going wrong, I would be a shell of a person and so would you. And I'm not saying we want to bury our heads in the sand and not be aware. I'm not saying we wouldn't want to contribute. If you want to contribute to a cause in a certain way, I want you to pay attention. Like I choose to contribute to helping with people's mental and emotional health.

And so I pay attention to where people are struggling with their mental and emotional health. But I don't walk around thinking people are really struggling with their mental and emotional health. I walk around thinking, I will help people. I have tools that can help people and I will continue to learn more so that I can get even better at helping people. Those are not the same thought, my friends. People are struggling or I am here to help.

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

I'm so glad I get to help. I hope someone will let me help. Those are very different thoughts.

They create a different experience for me personally and they drive me to show up differently and they drive me to look for different evidence. Instead of looking for evidence how people are struggling, I look for evidence of how I can help. It's so much more useful to look for that. Even though I still think it's true, there's a lot of people struggling and that's just a thought. Do you see what I'm saying? It's a focus on the so what about it. The so what is, how can I contribute? Or is this something that it just doesn't serve me to focus on?

There's so many people focusing on things that they have zero motivation to do anything about, and they're just sitting around feeling bad about it. And I promise you that is not making the world a better place. Compulsively watching the news and learning about everything that's going wrong in the world is not making you a better citizen of the world. You know why? You have amazing gifts to offer, talents, skills, goals, desires, gifts that you can bring to the world. But those gifts live in a part of your mind that is lit up by motivation and inspiration and creativity and playfulness.

Those gifts are really hard to access when you're discouraged and frustrated and afraid and anxious. And what you focus on determines how you're going to feel. I like to picture in my brain, there's like a giant house. And there's all these different rooms in the house. And I want to go into the room that's colorful and it has fun music and it's beautiful and peaceful and it's got some things that make me feel inspired and creative and motivated. And the doorway to that house is not a bunch of negativity, a bunch of things that make me sad and crush me.

Okay? So even if it's "true" doesn't mean it's serving you to focus on it. Now, how do we not? Because the brain thinks that anything that's dangerous is the most important thing to focus on. I get it. I know your brain is sending that signal to you. Especially if we're not talking about things in the world, we're talking about something in your family. We're talking about

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

something right in your home, in your household. We're talking about your money in your bank account. I get it. The brain just wants to keep saying to you, "Hey, don't forget, you might run out of money, or your husband might leave you, or your child might never recover," or etc. All these thoughts the brain wants to offer you.

And this is where I want you to practice the skill of managing your brain. I want you to direct it to a certain extent. And the reason I say to a certain extent is because I still want you to be a human being. I still want you to allow feelings. I want you to process feelings, take deep breaths. I'm having a couple days this week where I've had to just completely open up to some really heavy, dark, uncomfortable, scary emotions.

But once my body has released those chemicals, the cortisol, the adrenaline, the whatever it is that's being released in my body, then just trying to run away from it doesn't do any good. So once I feel it, I just try to take deep breaths and be like, "I guess today is a day where we're doing some anger. Today's a day where we're doing some shock, some fear, some sadness, some whatever emotions." Okay? So that's what I've been doing this week. Super fun.

But there are other times when I have like a repeated thought. You know what I mean? These repeated thoughts like, what if I'm doing it wrong with my children? What if I'm not raising them correctly? What if I've made a terrible mistake? What if I married the wrong person? What if we run out of money?

Things like this that just kind of like the brain tries to fire at us thinking it's useful or some kind of warning. So with those, I like to stop and kind of have a little conversation with my brain and be like, "Listen, even though these thoughts are "true," like I could be doing it wrong. I could have made a mistake. I could have whatever."

Any thought actually could be true, you guys. Thoughts are both true and not true, I'm always saying, okay? But focusing on that, thinking that makes

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

it more likely that I'm going to contribute to that being true. I'm going to create that. I'm going to find evidence of it and I'm going to behave in such a way that creates it. And so, thanks for the warning, brain. Not useful, not necessary. We don't need to worry about this. There's no upside to worrying about it. Okay? So sometimes I still let it be true, but I'm like, we don't need to focus on that right now.

This is also true with thoughts about the future, right? This comes up a lot in coaching where people are like, okay, I hear what you're saying, like for some of my entrepreneurs they're like, what if it doesn't work? It's a favorite thought for entrepreneurs that are doing marketing and things. What if I launch this marketing campaign or I create this thing and I start posting or sharing or trying to help people or whatever, start trying to get clients. What if it doesn't work? Well, that's a very interesting thought because it's very vague and subjective, right? So that's where I always begin is like, what do you even mean by that? What would it not working mean?

And here's the irony. We did this just today on one of our calls in Coach Access with my coaches, right? She's like, "What if it doesn't work?" I'm like, "Well, what would that even mean?" She's like, "What if I fail?" I'm like, "What would failing look like to you in your mind? Are we talking about like you're 97 years old on your deathbed and you never had one paying client? Is that failing? Or is failing like I'm putting something on the internet next week and if nobody comments or likes it, then that's failing?" Like, what do we even mean by this? What if it doesn't work? It's so vague, it's so subjective, right?

And often what we find is that the answer, I'm like, well, let's answer it. What if it doesn't work? What if you don't get any clients? And she was like, "Well, I'm so much better off because I've learned all of this stuff. Like, my family's better, I'm happier, my marriage is better, I'm a better mom. My life is so much better because I've gone down this route." And I'm like, okay, so if you don't get any clients, if it doesn't "work," if you fail, then the worst-case scenario is what you're doing right now, which you're actually really

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

happy with. And she's like, yeah. This is almost always the case. Worst-case scenario is just what we're doing right now.

And I know some of you are like, yeah, but what's happening right now for me is not great, Jody. Okay, I get that, but stay with me for a minute here. When we're talking about fear of failure, what if I try this thing and it doesn't work? The answer is then you'll be right where you are right now. And that would be okay. Right?

Sometimes people say to me, what if I'm being delusional, right? Because then I'll say like, well, what if it does work? What if it does work? Tell me what that would look like. And usually they haven't spent very much time imagining that. They've spent time imagining what failure would look like, how they're going to feel if it doesn't work. But I'm like, but what if it does? What would that look like?

Okay, so then we dive in exploring what that would look like and it usually makes people emotional and it makes them maybe they're kind of nervous to say it out loud or whatever, but I'm like, hey, why don't you watch the channel where it works? Because remember, what you focus on, what you believe, what you think is the lens by which you're viewing your world.

What you expect is what you're likely going to find. So what if you practiced expecting that it's going to work? Expecting that your child's going to be just fine? Expecting that you're going to have a great life? Expecting that your marriage is going to only get better? Like you're allowed to just expect whatever you want.

And then again, they say, well, what if I'm just being delusional? How do I know if I'm being delusional? Now, my coach Brooke Castillo always used to say, "Well, it's a delusion either way." Right? And that's the truth, my friends. I'm not just pretending, we're not just being Pollyanna here. Like, none of us know what the future holds. If we didn't learn anything from COVID, we learned that. Right? We all thought we knew what our lives

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

were going to be like in 2020 and we were sure wrong about that. None of us knows the future to the extent that we think we do.

What we know is the past. And when people say, am I being delusional? What they mean is, I don't have evidence in my past, or at least not strong evidence in my past, that I'm going to be able to create this in the future. And I say, "Yeah, we're going to have to get evidence from the future. We're going to have to shift from being someone who's focused on the past, thinking about the past, trying to decide what to believe and what's true based on the past." Instead, I want you to be someone who focuses on the future, thinks about the future, tries to decide what's true based on the future. And you're like, "But I don't know what's going to happen in the future." You just told me that, Jody.

This is what I was stuck on for the longest time, okay? I would try to think about my future. What's my future going to be like? And my answer was always, "I don't know. I don't know the future. How could I possibly know the future?" And it took me a really long time for it to sink in. I knew this intellectually, but I couldn't understand it really in my heart. I still have work to do on this of like, I just get to decide. Did you know that?

It's a delusion either way. When you think about yourself struggling and failing or giving up, that's just a vision in your mind. And you can create a different vision in your mind, and I recommend that you do. And if you can't get all the way to a really positive, really happy vision, okay, don't try to fool yourself here. I mean, actually I do want you to try to fool yourself, but I don't want you to walk around trying to think a story that you really don't believe because part of your brain will push back and try to prove it the other, right? Because remember, your brain wants to be right.

So you got to find one that you at least kind of believe, that you at least partially believe, that you at least believe when you redirect yourself. And then use that to practice thinking how you want to think, to practice watching the movie in your head of what you want, instead of watching the movie of what you don't want. That's what most people are doing, watching

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

the past, watching what they don't want. I want you to watch the future, watch what you do want. If you don't know, you need to spend time dreaming about it. You need to spend time imagining it.

Now, remember, we can't control other people, but if there are people in my life that I love or I'm worried about or what have you, I want to picture myself with them, enjoying them, showing up for them in the way that I want to, connecting with them in the way that I want to.

When I picture my future, I like to keep the people in my life like sort of out of focus because I want to remind myself that I don't get to have expectations of them really. Right? I don't get to envision their future, at least I don't want to do it in too tight of a way because then I'm likely going to be setting myself up for disappointment or resentment or something, right? But I picture myself like in hyperfocus and everything else is kind of blurry. That's what I want you to do.

Okay, so what if it's a true thought? I know it's just a thought, but Jody, it sure does feel true. Well, it feels true because you keep thinking it. And the longer you think it and believe it, the more evidence you'll gather and the more you'll think it's just reality. It's still just a thought.

But it's okay if it's just a thought. It may not be useful for you to focus on it. It may be something that you can create a new sort of thought in parentheses about. And we're all delusional. So you might as well choose a delusion that's going to serve you. Thanks for joining me today, everyone. I'll see you next week on another episode. Take care.

Oh wow, look at that. You made it to the end. Your time and attention is valuable, and I don't take it lightly that you made it this far. In fact, it tells me you might be like me; insatiably curious about people and life and potential and connection. Maybe you have big dreams but a small budget and no time. You're tired, but bored. You're content, but dissatisfied. Sound familiar? Come to a free coaching call and see for yourself what's possible:

510: It's Just a Thought, But What If It's True?

JodyMoore.com/freecoaching to register. That's JodyMoore.com/freecoaching.