

515: It Starts With You



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With Your Host

Jody Moore

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Welcome back to *Better Than Happy*, the space where we slow down, look deeper, and ask better questions. Today, we're exploring something that's easy to overlook: the role each of us plays in the bigger challenges we see in our communities and in the world. It's tempting to point fingers or feel powerless when we're faced with things like division, injustice, or dysfunction. But what if we're actually more involved than we realize? Not just as bystanders, but as subtle contributors.

And more importantly, what if we hold more power than we think to shift things, simply by pausing, reflecting, and choosing to show up differently? In this episode, we'll talk about how awareness creates patience and how responsibility without shame can turn us into part of the solution. Let's do it. Welcome to episode 515, It Starts With You.

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.

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 up, everybody? Welcome to the podcast. Huge thank you for tuning in here, for listening, and for applying these tools in your life to improve

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yourself, improve your families, improve your communities. I love the good work you all are doing. I love when you write in to me and tell me about the things that you're implementing and the progress that you're seeing. That makes my job so rewarding. So, thank you for doing that. And thank you for sharing the podcast. Thank you for sending an episode to a friend or a relative who you think could use a pick-me-up.

And thank you for sharing it on your social media or wherever it is that you like to share. And if you haven't shared it yet, it's not too late. I would greatly appreciate it if you would share. Make sure that wherever you listen, that you have subscribed and/or are following our show so that you don't miss a beat. All of that helps you to get all the episodes, but it also helps the show to get more traction and more growth.

Today, I'm going to dive into a concept that I heard introduced in a slightly different way by Rob Bell, who I think is brilliant. I love to listen to his work from time to time. And it was a while ago that I heard him talk about this. And to be honest, he talked about it in a slightly different way, but I have thought about it so much ever since. And so I'm going to talk to you about what I learned from him and also kind of add my own thoughts, of course, as I always have something to add. Sorry about that, everyone around me, but that's just how my brain works.

So, the idea is that we have communities, we have social circles, family circles, we have institutions that we participate in. We have businesses that we interact with and purchase things for, or companies that we work for. We have all these sort of networks of people in our lives that we interact with. Even all the way out to the cities we live in, the states, the countries, and the world at large, right? That we are all a part of all of these different communities, and we interact with these different institutions.

And it's tempting to generalize and notice either strengths or weaknesses in these groups and organizations. And what it's difficult to do is pause and notice our contribution to all of it. But I have found, as I've thought about this concept and played with it, that it's super empowering to notice my role in all of it. It's empowering because it suddenly redirects me to what I can

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control, which is myself. But it's also something that has made me, I think, more patient, more compassionate, more understanding. And I do a lot less separating myself from others and more trying to connect with others.

So, overall, it makes me more of the person I want to be when I'm remembering this. And when I forget this, I do the opposite. I become full of judgment. Sometimes my judgment is for other people, sometimes it's for myself, but I separate myself and view myself as different from the other people in these communities or networks or organizations that I'm associated with when I forget that I'm part of it, just like everyone else.

So, let me tell you what I mean first of all by these communities or networks. So it literally might be your family. Okay? You might be thinking about your, you know, whatever family you happen to be living with right now, or you might be thinking about more extended family. But your family is made up of a bunch of people. And you are one of the people in that family. And if we were to remove you from the family somehow, if you never existed, that family would be slightly different than it is with you in there as part of that family.

Now, this you're like, okay, duh, Jody, this sounds very obvious, but stay with me, stay with me. I want to show you a few things here. Let's take an example like a grocery store. Okay? I don't know if you have a certain grocery store that you like to visit regularly. Maybe if you're like me, there's a couple that you kind of hit depending on where you are in town when you need to go. But there's, usually we kind of have our routine grocery store or maybe a couple grocery stores that we go to when we buy our groceries.

How do those grocery stores decide what items to stock? How do they decide? They decide based on the items that people are purchasing. So, if I go in there and I purchase a lot of a certain item, then the grocery store computer system, an algorithm, however that works, takes a note, this item sells, get more of that, or keep that in stock.

Now, of course, I'm only one of many, many customers probably that go to that grocery store. And so my buying habits alone might only make a tiny

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impact. There might be something that I buy that nobody else buys. And at some point, the store might stop stocking it because my purchases alone may not be enough to tell them to keep it in the store. But still, I play a role in how that grocery store functions by the times of day that I shop, for example, which might play a role in how much staff they have at certain times, what is considered rush hour at the grocery store, right? The items that I buy.

Some of that determines even the way they organize the store, which items get put on the end caps or near the register or in really easy access versus the ones that are more buried in the store. All of this, the way the grocery store runs, I have somewhat of an impact on. I'm not saying it's a huge impact. I'm not saying that I'm responsible for all of it, but I am a part of that grocery store if I shop there with any consistency at all. Do you see what I'm saying?

Okay. Now, what about, let's go back to the family example. Okay? If I say things like, which I hear this all the time in coaching, my family is just very dramatic. Okay? I come from a family with lots of drama, or my family has lots of problems. Now, most people are self-aware enough that they wouldn't say, not me, I'm not at all dramatic. I don't have any problems. It's all them. We're not usually doing that.

But I want you to think a little bit deeper, not just like, I know sometimes I contribute to the problem. I know sometimes I can be dramatic. But like on a deeper level, understand in a more in-depth way how you bring drama to the family, if the family's dramatic. And here's a really simple place to start. Just the thought, my family is very dramatic, especially if I say it out loud, and I say it with any kind of emphasis, like if I add "very" to the word "dramatic," I just am thinking about it and creating some drama for myself in my own mind by thinking that my family is dramatic.

You see what I'm saying? Believing that they have lots of problems, we have lots of problems in our family, is a version of a problem because it's saying we shouldn't have problems. It's a problem that we have so many problems. I just added more problems by thinking about it this way. Now,

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again, I want you in this episode, I'm trying to bring you some awareness and some insight. And I'm hoping that in some area of your life, you will have some aha moments that will just sort of shift your perspective, okay?

What I don't want you to do is feel bad about it and tell yourself, okay, I shouldn't do this, then. I don't know that it's wrong. Like you're making observations, you have good reasons for what you're believing. I just want you to become a little bit more empowered, and I want you to see that you are contributing to that. Okay, let's do another like sort of more basic and not emotional, maybe we would say, example.

Let's say you're in traffic. Okay? You're driving on the highway, and there's traffic, and you've decided to label it that because that's a subjective term, but you're like, wow, traffic is really bad. Well, guess what? You being on the highway in your car is contributing to traffic. You are the traffic, right? Now, not just you, all the other cars, and the speeds at which people are able to go or not go, or maybe there's an accident on the side of the road, or whatever. All of that's part of the traffic, too.

But it's not without pause that if we got off the freeway, and if a bunch of other people got off the freeway, there wouldn't be traffic. We are traffic. Traffic isn't something that exists outside of us. Traffic is something we contribute to by getting on the highway and saying, gosh, traffic is really bad.

Is it just me, or does this kind of make you go, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, I can see that, and that's fascinating. And if you're like me, and you're like, so what do I do about that? I again, I don't know yet what to do with this. I just know that it's making me a lot less judgmental, a lot less quick to think that I have all the answers and that I'm doing such a better job than everyone else, and judge the world as being wrong or broken in some way. When I stop and acknowledge, wait a second, I'm part of this.

I'm either contributing to the problem or I'm bringing a possible solution. So for example, if there was lots of cars backed up on the highway and I decide to get off the highway and I think, well, there's too many cars here.

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You know what? I can't control that, but I can remove my car from the highway. First of all, maybe I just don't want to be stuck there anymore, and I want to take an alternate route, but I could even do it because I'm thinking, you know what would solve this traffic problem? Less cars. And I can remove my one car.

Is that going to solve the whole problem? No. But I'm now part of the solution instead of part of the problem. Do you see what I'm saying? There are times when you may choose to become part of the solution instead of part of the problem, but you have to recognize first if you are a part of the problem. And I'm not saying you always are. In some ways, maybe you are already part of the solution, but you are making an impact in some way, either way, either on the problem side or the solution side. This is interesting to notice, don't you think?

How about your ward? I hear people sometimes say, I just don't like my ward. The people aren't very friendly, or they're not very open-minded, or they're they're too conservative, or whatever is the reason. I promise you that thinking about your ward like that is making you less friendly. It is you being closed-minded, right? We are doing the very thing when we notice the problem that we are not happy with. We are the ward. The ward is just a whole bunch of people.

So if I want to contribute to the solution, I could be more friendly. I could be more open. And again, I'm not saying you have to, but your ward is you. The Church is us. Now, it's not just you, it's not just us. Yes, there are a lot of other factors involved. There are some people and some decision makers and programs and policies, and things, whether it be at your church or your job or anywhere else, that make a bigger impact than what you make by just choosing to be friendly to someone. I get that. I'm not dismissing any of that.

I'm just saying we are a part of the thing. Are we pausing and acknowledging that? I want to take a kind of bigger example that I was thinking about with this the other day. I was thinking about the economy, right? And how for a while now, people have been saying that the economy

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is struggling and, you know, that's all a little bit subjective, I guess you would say. But it feels like people are a little bit more nervous about their money, maybe spending a little bit less money. And I was like, yeah.

You know what that does when we all buckle down and tighten up, and stop spending money? Do you know what that does for our economy? It makes the economy struggle more. What helps the economy to thrive, and I am no economist, so I know there's a lot of factors here, but one of the things that helps an economy to thrive in a country is people spending money. A bigger flow of money, because the more we all spend money, then the more we all make money because we are spending money on each other's products and services, and businesses.

And so when we stop spending money because we're worried about the economy, we are contributing to the economy slowing down. We are the economy. We are creating the economy. Again, we're not the only factor. We're not even maybe the most influential factor, but we are a factor. It's so interesting to notice this, don't you think?

Politics, right? How many of us have been walking around talking about how our country's so divided and people are so hateful and narrow-minded and so extreme in their views and blah, blah, blah. And the comments on social media are so out of hand, and people are just, people have lost their minds, right? But guess what? Us saying that, noticing that, is part of the problem. We're doing the exact same thing. That's us being judgmental. That's us othering, separating ourselves from others, believing that we're somehow above this or not a part of it. We are part of it. We are contributing to it unless we are actively working to do the opposite.

I'm just going to full confession mode. I was online shopping recently. I was looking at this very conservative, probably boring women's pantsuit from Dillard's. Okay? So I'm not talking about shopping for something crazy and bizarre and out there. I'm just talking about a basic, nice pantsuit from Dillard's. And I was looking at it online. And so I was reading the reviews to see how people say this fits and whether or not they like it, and is the color right in real life, and all that, right? So I'm reading some reviews.

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And I found myself going, oh my gosh, people are so ridiculous. Okay? Because one of the reviews, by the way, it was a five-star review, but the person said, "It fits and drapes beautifully. I ordered it in three colors. My only regret is that I discovered that Dillard's is headquartered in Arkansas. So I won't be ordering from them again, but the suit is lovely."

Okay, so my reaction was like, wait, what? What's your problem with Arkansas? I'm sure this is something political that I'm just not in the know about, right? I'm sure I could Google it and find out right away. But second of all, are you kidding me? Right? Somebody else wrote this comment, "It was refreshing to find a quality women's suit in a brick and mortar store. The suit is beautiful and fit beautifully. The one thing I'd change is the price. I would make it more affordable by reducing the price by about 25%."

And I thought to myself, okay, but you have zero information about what it costs for them to purchase the suit and then ship it to you and all the expenses that the store might have and you just made that number up out of thin air like it should be 25% less without having any understanding of the business or the objectives. And anyway, notice all my judgment. Okay? As I'm reading these comments, I'm separating myself, I'm othering myself, I'm elevating myself as though I'm better than these people, but look at what I'm doing.

I'm criticizing them for criticizing the store or the suit or the price or the state of Arkansas, or whatever. I'm contributing to this what I'm calling a ridiculous dialogue that we have online when we leave comments about things. And I'm accusing these people of not knowing, the one especially, the 25% decrease person, right? Of not knowing what she's talking about. But guess what? I don't know what I'm talking about. I don't know what that woman's position is. Maybe she does have those figures, first of all. Or second of all, maybe she, I don't know, is going through something and she needs to be able to say this in some way to make herself feel better, like she probably has a hard life. I don't know what I'm talking about.

Just like I'm accusing her of not knowing what she's talking about. So all of us walking around creating these opinions and these ideas without enough

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information, I'm doing that. Right? It's not just these people doing that. We're doing that in the world. We're all doing it. So, again, what do we do about this? I don't know. I just know that we've got to stop separating ourselves, othering ourselves. Sometimes we lift ourselves up and think that we're better. Sometimes we put ourselves down and think that we're worse. We're not.

The same is true when you notice people that you love or things that you admire about an institution, okay? So if you, like, whenever people come and tell me that they appreciate this podcast, for example, and that they've gotten a lot out of it, and it's really helped them. I hope that you know that you are part of it. You listening to it, you downloading it, you even taking the time to talk about that or to comment on it or to apply it in your life, you are part of it. And you liking it or recognizing it says something about you. It means that you have this kind of truth and knowledge or insight or curiosity or what have you within you. If you didn't, you wouldn't be interested in this. You wouldn't find it useful. You would just move right on by.

Or maybe you would criticize it or whatever, right? So even the positive, all the good things, we are a part of. We are contributing to these bigger-scale things. In what way am I contributing? And what am I contributing? What am I bringing to the table? Am I bringing more of the thing that I'm claiming I don't like? Or am I going to bring something completely different? And if so, what is that going to be? And how am I going to bring it?

And it's so tempting to think it won't matter because I'm just one person and my little thing doesn't make a difference. It matters even if all it does is matter for your experience. Because the more you create actively, intentionally what you want in the world around you, whether it impacts the grocery store or your ward or the economy or not, it will impact you sometimes in ways you can't even predict. Many times in ways we didn't even plan for.

So I'm not talking about treating it like a transactional, I'm going to do this good thing so that I can get something good in return. I'm talking about who you're being and what you're creating by your attitude, by the choices you

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make, by the person you choose to show up as, is impacting you personally and the communities and social networks and institutions that you interact with in much more significant ways than you or I probably recognize. Okay?

So, one of my favorite questions of all time that I'm constantly asking myself because it's so tempting to just fall into this default status of separating and othering ourselves. I'm constantly asking myself, who do I want to be here? Who do I want to be now? I don't have to ask myself that question when I love the way people around me are behaving, and the line is moving quickly in the grocery store, and they have all the items in stock that I want, and the people online are making nice comments. I don't have to ask myself who do I want to be. I can just be her. It's very simple to do.

But when that stuff's not happening, when my family is arguing or whatever else is going on that I don't like, who do I want to be now? What do I want to bring to this scenario? How can I bring a little bit of love? Not that I go out and try to control them all. That's not what I'm saying. But how do I control me? How do I be loving and kind and generous if that's what I want to be? And that's what I feel up to being? How do I be that version of me when everybody else is being a different way?

How do I be generous? How do I be honest? How do I be kind? How do I be more loving, more patient, more compassionate? These are all the things we all want to be. How are we going to do that now? Don't shut it down with I don't know, because that will shut it down. Right? If your brain's like, I don't know. When I hear that answer come, I just say, but I'm just going to be open to finding the way. I will figure out the way. There is a way, and I will figure it out. In the meanwhile, I'm not expecting perfection on myself because that's not even possible. But I just want to stay empowered, and I want you to do the same, my friend.

Thanks for joining me today. Please share this episode with a friend if you found it helpful. And otherwise, I'll see you next week. Take care.

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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: JodyMoore.com/freecoaching to register.