

## 537: Have a Resentment-Free Marriage with Natalie Clay



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Jody Moore**

## **537: Have a Resentment-Free Marriage with Natalie Clay**

Is resentment just a normal part of most everybody's marriage? Or is it optional? Is it possible to have a resentment free marriage? My guest today claims that it is. And she happens to be my sister, Natalie Clay. I'm so excited to have her back on the podcast. It's been a while since we've heard from Natalie who is our resident couples coach. And today she's teaching us how to have a resentment free marriage.

Now, before we dive into my conversation with Natalie, I want to tell you about something I'm really excited about that we're offering around the first of the year, but it's available now. And it is my get it all done without feeling overwhelmed system that I call Better Than Busy. I pride myself on not being busy and also accomplishing all the things I want to in my life. I don't like to say no to things that I want to do. I don't like to have to minimize and sacrifice things in my life. Obviously, I do have to make some sacrifices. But overall, I feel like I get to do most of the things I want to do. I get to be there with my kids and be a very present mother. And I've built this massively successful business and I have lots of time for self care and I take naps, y'all. It's a new thing I started. I've always taken Sunday naps, but now I'm taking naps midweek, like a 20 minute nap, just kind of hits the spot.

So the reason I'm able to do all that is not because I'm super organized or because I'm such a planner or because I'm just so focused and dialed in. It's because I have a system. It's called Better Than Busy. And I'm going to be teaching it to you in a five day challenge in January, but I want you to go sign up now because along with it, I'm going to send you my exclusive planner. I have my own system for a planner that works the way the human brain works. And I know many of you have used this planner. Every year it's the number one request we get is when is the planner coming out? How do I get my next year's version of it? Because once you start using it, you won't want to use any other system. And yes, I still have an online calendar, but I like this in addition to it, and I'll tell you why is because it works with my brain.

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So when you sign up for Better Than Busy, you're going to get the planner sent right to your door. You're also going to get to come to the five day challenge that happens in January where I'm going to teach you the system. I'm going to teach you how to use the planner, but also all the other things I do that make my life better than busy. So head to [JodyMoore.com/busy](http://JodyMoore.com/busy) to register. Again, it's [JodyMoore.com/busy](http://JodyMoore.com/busy). It also makes for a great holiday gift. Give the planner and they're going to get the five day challenge and they'll be thrilled. So [JodyMoore.com/busy](http://JodyMoore.com/busy). All right, here's my conversation with Natalie Clay. Let's go.

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](http://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](http://JodyMoore.com/freecoaching). I'll see you there.

Jody Moore: Okay, hello everybody. Welcome to the podcast. I have Natalie Clay with me today. So I think first we should apologize because everybody always complains that they can't tell who's talking when you and

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I are on together because you sound so similar. Sorry, everyone. But I'm so happy that you're here, Nats. Thanks for coming back on the show.

Natalie Clay: Thanks for letting me come back.

Jody Moore: Okay. So, Natalie is our resident couples coach. She has been couples coaching for many, many years now. And every time I bring her on, I get so many messages from you all saying you want more Natalie. So I decided to bring her back on today and we're going to talk a little bit about resentment. Now, Natalie and I have not really flushed this out. It's going to be a very organic conversation, but Natalie has told me that she can teach us how to have a resentment free marriage. Is this true, Natalie?

Natalie Clay: Easier than you think and 100%. Yes.

Jody Moore: Okay. All right. So everybody, listen up. We're going to start by just talking about what you even mean by resentment. Let's begin with a quick definition. Would you?

Natalie Clay: Yes. So the way I define resentment is expecting someone else to take care of needs that are actually our own responsibility. So, do you want me to give you an example?

Jody Moore: Please, yes.

Natalie Clay: Okay. So let's say that you come home one night and you say, "Hey, I forgot it's Suzy's birthday and I'm going out to dinner with the girls tonight. But I told the kids I was going to take them to the trampoline park. Do you mind taking them?" And if you're the husband and you say, "Yeah, I'll take them." But you don't really want to go. It's kind of the last thing you want to do. And then you start having that kind of not great feeling of disconnection from your partner, then that can easily start to turn into some resentment, which is all the reasons why your partner shouldn't have done that, shouldn't have asked you to do it, shouldn't have just assumed that you would be okay going, shouldn't have told the kids yet. And so then

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we start feeling upset with our partner, even though he's the one that said yes.

Jody Moore: Okay. So say the definition again, it's say it one more time.

Natalie Clay: It's expecting someone else to take care of needs that are actually our own responsibility.

Jody Moore: So in this example, it's the husband in this example that might be feeling resentment. I mean, the wife might have some, but we're talking about the husband here, right? Feeling resentful. What is the need then that's not being met, would you say?

Natalie Clay: Well, I think he wanted to say yes more than saying no, because I think we can usually trust our initial response in that moment. But in that moment, he's not really wanting to go and do that. And instead of dealing with that, because we agree to do a lot of things that we don't want to do, but instead of owning that and allowing himself to not like it, or we can talk about different ways to manage our resentment and that those feelings that we don't like. But instead of taking responsibility for that, he's shifting that blame over to her and to basically say like, this shouldn't happen. Something's gone wrong, right? In the future, you should just talk to me beforehand. I don't want to, I don't want this thrown on me right when I get home from work. Those are the approaches that we tend to take that do not work long term. But yeah, so his need is he didn't want to make a decision last minute, or he didn't want to go, but he felt like he had to say yes. So he feels like he's - loss of a little bit of personal freedom essentially.

Jody Moore: I was gonna say, it feels like an agency thing a little bit. Like I, and that is often what I feel like for me anyway, resentment sounds like in my head is like, I have to do this. Why do I always have to be the one? Or why does he not do this thing or do this thing that then means I have to do this thing. And so you're saying that resentment comes from me not owning that like protecting my agency is my job, I guess. Is that right?

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Natalie Clay: Yes, exactly.

Jody Moore: Okay. Okay. Interesting. I love that definition because, you know, it means that it's all on me. I don't have to change my spouse. The trampoline park example is an interesting one. It hits a little close to home for me. And I know for you because Natalie and I's kids love the trampoline park. And so maybe this has happened in our marriages a time or two, I'm just saying. So this is for our husbands. I hope they're listening that their resentment is their own fault.

Natalie Clay: Which actually, I think they're pretty good about not falling into resentment over this, maybe not everything, but...

Jody Moore: They are actually, both of our husbands are pretty good about it. And they also don't listen to our podcast. So that's fine, whatever.

Natalie Clay: And they're also pretty good at saying no to us, I think.

Jody Moore: That's true. That's true. They've got this pretty dialed. Yeah. Okay. So let's talk about then you mentioned that there is an upside to resentment.

Natalie Clay: Yes.

Jody Moore: Say more about that.

Natalie Clay: So everything we do is actually for our benefit or we wouldn't do it. So the upside of saying, yeah, I'll take the kids to the trampoline park when you don't want to is a should in your mind. So in this husband's mind, it's, of course I should. She already made plans with her friends to go out to dinner. That's what a husband should do. That's rooted in their somewhere. And I should be happy to spend time with my kids or, you know, these thoughts were not really consciously aware of, but so much of our decision making is subconscious and it's think how much data goes into if we say yes or no, it's insane. But luckily it's not conscious.

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So in that moment, he felt like, yeah, it's I would rather say yes than say no because there's pros and cons to each. So the upside of resentment though comes when he said yes and he doesn't really want to and he's telling himself, I should be okay with it, because if I think that's the thing I should do, then it shouldn't be bothering me. So there's some resistance to that feeling. Plus he doesn't want to go and we always want to resist those feelings that we don't like. We want to solve for it so we don't have to feel that again in the future.

And so resentment says, I've formulated a logical story why it's her fault, why she just sprung this on me last minute, or she should have checked with the kids first. And then that justifies the feeling of not wanting to go. So it's no longer about him not being a supportive husband or a good dad. It's just, no, I don't like this and that's okay. This isn't anything negative about me. And I can feel not, I cannot want to go and that doesn't make me a bad person and I've figured out a plan to not have to feel this way in the future. So that's really the upside.

Jody Moore: Is it an upside or is it a perceived upside? Is it like a, would you say like, yeah, that's a good reason to be resentful. You should do that. That's what I think of when I hear upside and maybe that's not how you mean it. Or is it just my brain believing this is a good thing because then I don't have to feel bad about not wanting to go?

Natalie Clay: No, that's a really good question. It's an upside in the moment because it gets you out of resistance or it gets you out of any sort of thoughts of maybe you're not fulfilling your role the way you should. But it does have long term consequences that cause, first of all, disconnection in yourself because that's not really honest. And it causes disconnection from your partner because in order to feel okay about the situation, you have to think poorly about your partner. Even in this example that is small, but we do this on much deeper issues, much more significant things as well. But



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yeah, long term, it's going to lead to a more disconnected relationship with yourself and your partner for sure.

Jody Moore: So it's like a temporary relief kind of upside with long term problem benefits or problems, I should say. Okay, let's talk about maybe some of those long term problems.

Natalie Clay: So some of the long term problems are if, first of all, if however we resolve it, right? This is a small example, but if we go to something maybe a little more significant that happens over the years where we develop some resentments. Actually resentment tends to teach us a lot about ourselves because we can start to identify what we're kind of hiding from when it comes to our own personal vulnerability. So the long term problems are that we then need to keep this story about our partner in order to feel justified for not wanting to go to the trampoline park or feel upset or feel wronged rather than face something that feels vulnerable to us.

And so it keeps us stuck. Like if we want to feel more connection, which people mention a lot to me that they want to feel more connection and most people have resentments and those two things go hand in hand because the resentment says I'm justified in not liking something. I'm justified in wanting something that there's not eternal right or wrong to it necessarily. There's just my preference and theirs. But it allows us to be more honest with how we feel and what we want and what we don't want, but at the expense of saying they are wronging me. And so it ensures disconnection because we need to think less of them in order to feel okay about ourselves. And that has massive detriment.

Jody Moore: Yeah, I think it might be helpful to define what you mean by connection too.

Natalie Clay: Sure. So that's a good question. So I think of connection as we feel like we can be honest with each other. We feel like we have each



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other's back. The best way to describe it is I think in a connected relationship, it kind of functions under the guise of, you know what, I'm here to kind of remind you that you're doing better than you're always telling yourself you're doing. And if we were both acting as that really good friend to each other, that's a pretty connected relationship. Where disconnection looks like some of these stories that we hold on to out of defense of our own insecurities essentially.

Jody Moore: Okay. So if I'm resentful, then I can't be lifting my spouse up, telling them they're doing a better job than they think they are, because I'm criticizing them, noticing what they're doing wrong.

Natalie Clay: But when we have a resentment towards them, right, then we kind of need that story to justify that it's okay that I don't want to go to the trampoline park, whereas if I'm always saying like, oh, it's okay, you don't want to go. You're tired. Of course, you don't want to go. You're not a bad dad. It's fine to say no. Then that puts the onus back on me of well, should I not? Should I this? Because when we're functioning from shoulds in that situation, it's simple enough of should we tell the kids no? They shouldn't go. Should I not go with my friends? Because I forgot, but I already committed to the kids. Should I go as a husband and just is that supporting my wife? So when we're functioning under the idea of shoulds and that there's an eternal right or wrong in terms of who should do what in this evening, then we're kind of stuck. We need these stories about each other. And I see this again with much deeper issues where people hang on to some resentments because they need that story about their partner in order to defend what they want or what they don't want.

Jody Moore: Okay. So what do you recommend for people that feel like stuck in this trap? And I, let me also throw out a couple of real questions I've gotten from people if you don't mind. Maybe you can speak to and maybe you want to speak to these before we go to solutions, but it feels to people disingenuous sometimes to let go of, right? To think, okay, like

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maybe my wife shouldn't, you know, double book herself like this and then ask me to take them to the trampoline park. Maybe or maybe she should do that. Like it's okay and she's going to do that.

I'm mostly working with women and so I tend to hear things like, you know, I'm always teaching similar to what you're talking about here, like you got to meet your own needs, you got to take care of what you want. And they're like, really? So he comes home from work, he doesn't do anything. He sits on the couch. I'm making dinner. I'm dealing with the kids. I'm doing all of it. And I'm doing way more than him. And yes, he's at work all day, but I need help when he gets home. And isn't it reasonable to expect that he helps out? Right? And so you can hear the resentment. And it just, I know to many people feels like an oversimplified, ignoring of their values and what feels like realistic to expect in a marriage. And so I don't know, maybe you can speak to that a little bit.

Natalie Clay: Yeah. So first of all, I think that's where I think resentment is really rooted in a lot of dishonesty with ourselves because again, it's operating from a lot of shoulds. So in that example that you just gave, this woman is deciding there's all these things that should be done as the wife and the mom. I should be taking care of the kids in this particular way. If she's making dinner, I should make dinner, right? Where if she's really honest and honesty really comes from, I'm going to choose to believe that I'm an inherently a good person that whether or not I make dinner doesn't determine that. That it's not actions based, that it's inherent. But that's tricky for a lot of us, maybe all of us to believe.

And so we have these stories where we're trying to like ourselves, right? And so if she is having this resentment towards her husband when he comes home and he just sits down, then absolutely we can make a case that he should come in and offer to help. And we can just as easily make a case that he's tired and he wants to just come in and sit down. And if we're

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assuming goodness about both people, then both things make perfect sense.

Now, if we go to more honesty instead of she's just upset, why does she choose to just be upset rather than ask for help? Well, that tells us there's a little part of her that's grappling with that. He's tired. He's had a long day. I should have had this all together better. Right? There's that self criticism going on. And then she makes a story about him like, I have all this going on and he can't just help with this one thing. Then it turns to the resentment because that allows her to stop attacking herself and to have a solution. Here's how we fix it, how I don't feel this way anymore. It's a really good logical story and I can tell it to him and then hopefully I don't have to feel and grapple with this any longer. But you see so much of it is grappling with our sense of self, like do we, are we good? Are we not good? And that's where I think we have to just really start by assuming goodness in both of you and then saying, you want to ask for his help? Ask for his help. 100% ask for help. But it's not about who's entitled to the help or who's entitled to sit down and rest. That doesn't exist. It's just, yeah, ask for help. And then he can help and he can be grumpy about it and that's okay. If he says yes, it's a yes. If he's not going to, then we can deal with that.

Jody Moore: Yeah. I think I'm just trying to play, you know, the role of these women that I have talked to about this. When I've published a lot of podcasts on this and I always get the most follow up questions. They're like, but what about this? Okay? And I get a lot of them saying, I am asking for his help. It's not that I'm not asking for help. I'm asking and maybe that's like a little bit of an exaggeration, right? Often when I dive into it, I'm like, what did you say? It's not a very clear direct. It's more like a passive aggressive or maybe they talked about it at one time and the husband agreed to help more.

And now that he came home from work and he's not paying attention, she's like, he should know because we talked about this. You know, sometimes

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it's not as direct as like what I think you're saying, which is if he comes home and he's sitting there and you want help, you need to go, Hey, I need your help. Can you come in here and stir the spaghetti or whatever, right? Or here, I need you to take the baby. Like, I think that's sometimes the case, but there are situations where the spouse is unwilling.

And, you know, we're talking about helping around the house, but this comes up in people's sex lives, right? Like somebody doesn't want to be intimate as frequently or what have you as the other person, or it comes up with all kinds of things. And that's the question I have is like, what if they're like, I am asking for help. I'm not getting it.

Natalie Clay: Yes. So again, that goes back to this obligation to take care of our own needs that it is our ultimate responsibility. But when people hear that, they think, so I'm just supposed to be okay with this. Where it's not one or the other. It's not our need is met or our need isn't met. So taking care of your own needs sometimes means I don't want to ask him again. I've asked so many times. A lot of people say that to me too. Like, I've told him a million times. I don't want to have to ask for his help. I want him to just come in and help. And I understand that, right? But at that same time, if you don't want to ask for the help again in that situation, then it's I want to allow myself to be irritated that I've told him so many times. Or if you do ask and they say no, it's I want to allow myself to feel upset about that for a minute.

But the difference is then you're not, you're allowing yourself to feel upset or feel bummed out by this aspect of your relationship in this moment without turning it into a bigger always story. And that's because you're not then assigning it to their intention because what I hear when they say, but I have asked for their help and they're not helping and we're upset about that. You're assuming that they could just help and they have energy to help and they don't have any good reason to not help, but they just don't care about you. That's where our brain takes us.

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But again, I think there's no upside to going that way because every time someone makes a case to me like that, I can say, that could be true, but then we could also make the case that you just don't care about them because they have a lot on their mind and they don't want to be nagged a lot and they're stressed about these things. And did you consider their stress? Where I don't think either one of those arguments are useful at all because it says you should feel different than you do.

So again, it's, you know what, we're going to have things come up that we don't want to do, or we want to do and the other person doesn't want to do. And that's super annoying. And we just have to let some moments be more annoying than they are. But when our brain says, but here's such a logical, easy fix that doesn't require vulnerability. If they just remember to come in and help because we've talked about it so many times and I've told them why I'm justified in that, then that solves it. So our brain wants to stay focused on that rather than having to say, okay, but in this moment I have to remind myself, I'm irritated and I had a good day and I don't want to feel irritated right now, but I do and that's okay. It's just allowing for more of those moments.

Jody Moore: That's good. I notice for me, one thing that's been helpful is also just like recognizing how I've contributed to the dynamic. I'm always curious about people who have more than one marriage, right? Because in our marriages, I feel like there are so many little routines and patterns that are just natural for us both that we fall into in terms of like who gets up like my husband always gets up before me in the morning and he always feeds the dogs. And if he doesn't, I'm just like, oh, I don't want to feed the dogs because I'm used to him doing it, right? And I don't know for all I know, he's like, why can't she feed the dogs every now and then? But I'm just used to it, right? And he takes the garbage out and I grocery shop and make dinner and we tend to both go to bed at the same time and we watch TV in bed and we just, we just have so many little routines and patterns in terms of how we run our life, how we run our family and our home. And I'm always

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curious like if suddenly we were married to different people, there's no way all those routines would be the same, right? There'd probably be so many differences that I haven't even considered because they just happen so automatically. And how fascinating that would be, right? To be like, oh, you don't do this like my last husband did, or you don't expect me to do this thing or whatever.

Anyway, here's my question is like when I start noticing myself being resentful because I, for example, some days I'm just like, why do I always have to be the one to do the dishes? Even though that's a total exaggeration. My husband does get up and do the dishes like most of the time I make dinner, he does the dishes. But all the in between times like the breakfast and lunch and the Saturday dishes and whatever. I feel like I do dishes two or three times a day. And sometimes if I it's totally true. If I were to say like, Hey, would you do the dishes? He would in a heartbeat my husband. But it just doesn't bother him or he doesn't notice it or whatever. And I find myself being like, I always, why am I always the one cleaning up the kitchen?

And sometimes I pause and go, yeah, Jody, why are you always the one? And what I realize is, oh, because that's our routine because on Saturday mornings, he gets up and does whatever he does and I get up and do the dishes because I want the kitchen cleaned up. And I've created this pattern and this habit where we live that way and it works great. And I'm actually kind of controlling in a lot of ways. So like, if he were to offer to start cleaning the kitchen every Saturday morning, I probably wouldn't like the way he did it. I would probably come in later still and do it to the way I think it should be done, right? And so sometimes that helps me get out of resentment. I'm just like, yeah, of course I do that. Or of course I grocery shop or of course I do whatever because I have specific ideas about how I want it done. It's easier for me to do it myself than to explain that to him, even though I happen to have a husband who's very open to doing it my way.

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But for me to be able to articulate it and communicate it and explain it, it's a lot harder than just doing it myself. So I can sit here and be mad about it, or I can let go of my control tendencies and let him do it his way, or there's a whole bunch of options. But that often gets me out of it when I recognize like, no, I've created or at least contributed to this dynamic. And so are you going to sit around and feel sorry for yourself or you're just going to go, yeah, this works well for us. Yeah. You know what I mean? Anyway.

Natalie Clay: And I really like that and the point I think that makes also is that whole premise is based on the idea that the dishes need to be done right now when you were doing them. And that's like what I hear from that is, yes, that's part of your routine, but also that the messy kitchen bugs you at a point where it doesn't bug him yet, not as much as it bugs you. And so you want it done. You're like, no, the dishes need to be done where if you, maybe if you were out of town or something, they might not get done as often as you do them because it might not bug him as much. So it's just a personality preference. But when we're it's based on the assumption of the dishes need to be done right now because there's dishes in the sink, then yeah, you have to do them, but it's because you want to have the kitchen clean.

Jody Moore: Yeah. I know. It's perplexing why it doesn't bother our husbands. And I do think about that when I go out of town. I'm like, oh, my house, my kitchen's going to be - and again, my husband is great and he helps a lot and it's not a terrible situation, but even little things like if I get home, you know, occasionally this isn't happen often, but sometimes if I get home after dark, usually my husband hasn't turned on a single light in the whole house. And it's just like dark. And I'm like, why is everyone just hanging out in pure darkness? Let's flip a light on people. And I do think about that when I go out of town and I think I, I worry about my kids even though they don't really care either, but I, I sometimes think that having an orderly home and a welcoming, that's what to me it feels like, is I, I want my home to feel safe and welcoming and that means we clean it to a certain



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extent and we turn a light on when it's pitch dark outside. But that is all my idea, right? It's not, it's all my story and my kids are safe and my husband's a great dad, but yeah, it's just interesting to notice. Anyway.

Natalie Clay: And there's nothing wrong with that, right? So you're applying what your idea of feeling safe and comfortable in your home, you're applying that to them where some people feel more comfortable in a place that isn't as put together because they feel like they can relax more and they don't have to keep up on every dish or whatever. Right? And so it's just a personality preference, but it's coming from a good place. But it's allowing for yourself to just have that moment of annoyance and because I think sometimes I think that can be so freeing like for in my situation, it's the garbage because I think our dad always took out the garbage. So every time the garbage is full.

Jody Moore: That's man's work.

Natalie Clay: That's man's work. Why do I have to take this out? It's annoying. And so I used to get so annoyed by that. Like at what point does he get it? Does Joseph get annoyed with the trash and take it out? Like how high does it have to be? And then just realizing like, no, you know, talking with you and realizing like, no, I'm just the one that takes out the trash. And that was so freeing because then I realized I'm doing that for me. I'm the one that takes it out before it gets too high and I'm just going to own that as my job so I don't have that brain chatter. That's great.

But what also I think helps is when you allow yourself just a little space, it doesn't have to be this big processing emotion session or anything. It's just like, oh, the trash, the trash is full again. Okay, I'm going to take it out and I'm just, I'm annoyed. Yeah, I'm annoyed. It's fine. And then you go and do it and it's not the resistance to the annoyance because as soon as we say, I shouldn't be bothered. My husband is so helpful in all these ways, then it has to be a deficit on my part. And if I don't like that, then it has to be a

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deficit on his part. And either one of those are not helpful when it comes to connection in our relationship.

Jody Moore: Yeah, I agree. I like that. Sometimes I do just say to myself, Oh, I just need to pout for a little while here. Yes. Or I just need to feel sorry for myself. That's fine. I'm just going to feel sorry for myself a little bit. And I know it doesn't, it's not going to last too long. And it's, yeah, it's just healthier than like overthinking who's fault is this or whatever.

Natalie Clay: Yes. So it's like we're different and that's okay. And the other thing I heard you say when you were talking about all the different things between you and Jake and the routines you're in is that it's funny because when we hone in on these things, like for me with the trash, it's I can list off so many things that Joseph does to help out. But my brain will focus in on this one thing. Why doesn't he do this? And then it wants to build a case for that to say that I'm right for being annoyed and I'm okay for wanting it him to just take out the trash so I don't have to do it, which is so silly. It's such a silly dumb thing. But that's what our brain does. It's like, okay, but this would be a better way to solve it is if he just knows that's the man's job and just does it, then I don't have to think about this anymore. Where we have to just like recognize what's happening. Be like, oh yeah, he doesn't do it and it has nothing to do with him as a person or how he feels about me. It's my job in this relationship. It's fine if I'm annoyed sometimes. Moving on.

Jody Moore: It's also really tempting like as your kids get older and start noticing things about your husband that bother you and they mentioned it and you're like, see, I knew it. I knew. I've, I know we've talked a little bit about having that experience. It's a good thing our husbands don't listen to this podcast. We love them both. But I think, again, I notice myself when I want to feel validated in whatever my frustration is. I'm just like, oh, that's interesting. Why do I want that to be true? Why do I kind of want to hold on? And it's like you said, the, I don't want to feel bad about being resentful. So it just justifies that it's okay that I'm feeling bad. I don't need to beat

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myself up for feeling frustrated or whatever. When the truth is, like you're saying, I don't have to beat myself anywhere up anyway. I don't need any validation in order to just go, it's fine. I'm just going to be frustrated about this.

Natalie Clay: Yes. And for that reason, I think it's good to own that. Like the level of cleanliness you like in your house or how often you like the dishes done, I think it's ideal and best for you and your relationship to say, yeah, that's how often the dishes should be done. And that's not an eternal truth. So my husband can have a different idea of that and that's right for him. But in my world, this is how often the dishes should be done, so this is how often they need to be done. And that's okay. But then it stops it short of, am I being too uptight with this? Should I be more relaxed? It's like, no, just let us have different personalities. That's actually really important.

Jody Moore: Yeah, I like that. That you can, you can keep your belief and even hold tight to it as long as you know it's not a universal truth. And your husband's also right about what he thinks. Like, I think it's so important to let yourself have those strong opinions, to be honest.

Natalie Clay: I do think that's really freeing though to keep the part where it's like, and his way is valid too, right? For him. Like I'm not going to live that way. I'm going to do the dishes this often, but his way could be fine too.

Jody Moore: I do, this is a little bit of a tangent, but I worry about with AI, I feel like AI is like the anti-coach because whatever you say, like if I went typed in right now, like, isn't it true that the dishes should be done this many times a day and my husband should help out and when he gets home from work, even though he's tired, he should help. It's going to go, yes, that's totally valid. A lot of women feel that same way and here are some things you could do to try to get your husband to help more. Like no matter what you put in, at least right now, the way it is, is it just validates and reinforces that you're right. I don't think that's a great idea.

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Natalie Clay: I don't either and that's exactly why it also doesn't work. The strategy is I don't believe work are, okay, from now on when I get home after work, I'm going to come in and ask you if you need help with anything. And that's a lot of what we do to try to problem solve, but that's never going to work because it's not about him not being considerate why he didn't offer help. He's busy. He didn't think about it. His mind is somewhere else, right? And so it all has to come back to the mindset piece and assuming the best about ourselves, assuming the best about each other.

But when we do that, it says, yeah, I'm annoyed by that because this is how often the dishes should be done. And they, and that's not true in his world. And I don't think any less of him because it's different. But my way is superior. Like my husband and I even kind of joke about that sometimes, like we were in the car once and I was like, oh, I think you want to go straight here. And he goes, mind your business, woman, just as a joke because he never says that. And so, that was his friendly way of being like, don't tell me where how to get there. I don't like it.

Jody Moore: Like I know how to get there.

Natalie Clay: Exactly. And I was like, okay, fair enough. But then once we get there, he's like, see, we got there just fine. I'm like, yeah, we would have been there 60 seconds ago if you had gone that way, but it's okay. It's fine if you want to have us get through the slow wave, totally fine. But so we kind of joke about it, right? Like my way is right and his way is right because they both are. But then it there is something empowering and freeing about just letting yourself be like, and I'm right and you're wrong on this, but it's okay. It's fine. But he needs to think the same. I want him to own his ideas and not, you know.

Jody Moore: Yeah, well, and when you say that though, you're saying it like kind of tongue in cheek because what you know is that you're both right and you're both wrong and there is no, like you said, there's no universal truth here. Like...

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Natalie Clay: That's right.

Jody Moore: But that, that's hard for people sometimes to, especially we're talking about little silly things here, but there are more serious things that even like how to raise kids and whether or not you should yell at your kids comes, you know, people like, no, no, no, this is the truth. This is what the parenting experts say. But that's just one person's opinion. And...

Natalie Clay: It changes all the time.

Jody Moore: It changes all the time. And anyway, I, I realize it gets more complicated when we start talking about issues that feel more important than keeping the kitchen clean.

Natalie Clay: Yes.

Jody Moore: The same principles apply, right?

Natalie Clay: Yes, and actually that takes us to a next important point that I think we should talk through is what our resentments teach us about ourselves.

Jody Moore: Okay.

Natalie Clay: Because first of all, yes, just like you said, I think we need to be honest with ourselves and that really means being able to balance our intuition on what feels right, say in terms of parenting and also expert advice that we're reading or taking in. We need to be able to have that freedom to have a strong opinion about something and that's okay. But what we have the opportunity to learn through our resentments is if someone says, like I hear that a lot of times like, you don't get my back when it comes to the kids. I say this and then you say we don't have to do that. Well, what does that teach us?

So if the mom says you're undermining my parenting here, what does that have a chance to teach her? That says, oh, it's really it's hard for me to

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stand up for what I feel in a situation without you agreeing. And if we both just agreed with that and then talked about it later, that would be easier. But you see what that what you learn about this person in that situation is that's a hard thing for me. And that's something that they likely brought into the marriage with them from years back. It's like when you were saying, you know, it'd be interesting to see if I was married to someone else in different situations. It's like, yeah, there would be a lot of the same things, but a lot of the same things would still bug you because those are the things in you that I think marriage is giving you an opportunity to work through.

Let me give you a different example that might make a little bit more sense. So if somebody is saying, you know what, like it always goes back to self love. It's it's really fascinating to see. But so let's say in this situation, there's a woman that really avoids conflict. She does not like talking about any conflict in the relationship because her idea is he's always mad. No matter what he always gets mad at me and that's really uncomfortable for him. So she starts developing some resentment around that like that, you know what, he's always mad. And that justifies her not wanting to talk about things. But really, that's an opportunity for growth for her, which is why am I allowing this to be so uncomfortable?

So I was working with a woman the other day on this very topic and I said, okay, what do you, what are you worried about? Because first of all, if you are worried about your physical safety, that's something you for sure want to keep in mind and I'm never saying go against those instincts, right? But in her mind, I was like, what's the worst thing that might happen if he does get really mad? Because you could just see she's just feels all this fear when she thinks about it. And she's like, oh, there we're just going to have a really bad day. And it's just interesting, right? Because that's clearly stuff she's brought with her from who knows when and we're not trying to delve into any of that.

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But in her mind it's just really uncomfortable because first of all, he can verbally articulate himself better than her. And so he'll make an argument about why she should be okay talking through conflict and she's just not. And so that resentment of he's always mad gives her the chance to see like, oh, why is it so uncomfortable for me to be around people that are mad? Well, of course that's uncomfortable if they're blaming me, but this is an opportunity to learn and grow if I can face this and learn really get my back in this situation and know he can be mad at me and that doesn't mean I've done anything wrong. I don't have to be mad at me. I can still really be there for me even if he's making some really great points, I don't have to shame myself ever. It's not worth it.

And then the same is true over here. So for this person over here, when they're saying, you know, she never wants to talk about things. Well, what is he making that mean? Well, she just doesn't care. She'll prioritize everything else but this, right? He's making it mean something about him. It's like, okay, but if that wasn't true, right? Like what's really rooted in that if that's true, well, she doesn't really care about me. Maybe I'm not lovable. It's like, okay, here's a chance for you to trust more in this situation and marriage is giving you this great opportunity to learn to have more faith, more trust by trusting that maybe it has nothing to do with that, right? So anyway.

Jody Moore: It always comes back to like your relationship with yourself and your connection with yourself and your confidence and I feel like in the end with all of this stuff with marriage, with when I'm helping people build their businesses, like that's always at the core of it.

Natalie Clay: 100%.

Jody Moore: It's like just, yeah, being able to like yourself.

Natalie Clay: It's true because it's that fear, right? And that's, it's so fascinating to see like every problem really does go down to that. It's the



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fear of like, I'm not lovable. I'm not good enough. And it's just crazy the things we do to try to cover that up, try to account for that in false ways that don't work. But that's where marriage is this really great opportunity to have to face some of those vulnerabilities because I always say like in marriage, you're going to suffer or you're going to grow.

Jody Moore: Yeah, and what I think is interesting about doing that work on yourself, and that's work that you and I both are doing in different ways with our clients in these programs that we run, but I think people think that it sounds like going, yeah, I'm okay. I'm responsible or I'm reliable or I'm being honest here or I'm whatever is the thing you think you should be that you want to be, right? The positive thing. Let me try to give a more concrete example. If it's like, maybe my husband thinks I'm not doing a good, I'm not a good mom in some way, right? And people think if I do this work enough, then I'm going to feel, I'm going to believe I'm a good mom.

Natalie Clay: Yes.

Jody Moore: And I'm always like, yes, that's true, but also you're going to acknowledge that sometimes you're not a good mom. And that's okay. That you're both a good mom and not a good mom. And there are things about being a mom that you're really good at, and you have good days when you're just very patient and you show up how you want, and then you have bad days. And there are certain parts of it that are super hard for you or that you just don't do at all. And all of that is okay. And it doesn't make you less lovable. And if you worked on your weaknesses and became better, a better mother in this situation, it wouldn't make you more lovable. It means you've adjusted yourself to his preferences. And sometimes we want to do that, especially if we agree and we want to be the same thing he wants us to be. But none of it, like your worth is just infinite. You can't increase it or decrease it.

So it's really a matter of just choosing to believe that it is already a done deal. And that no achievement or improvement upon yourself is going to

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change that. And that is so mind blowing, I think sometimes to wrap your head around, but it's like I spend a lot of time trying to acknowledge my strengths and also acknowledge my weaknesses and go, it's cool. You know, I like me anyway. How very human of me is like one of my favorite thoughts. And people think then we're never going to grow and improve, but that's just not true. Like we're wired for growth and improvement. And so it's just so fascinating that work, I think.

Natalie Clay: It is. I was thinking about this actually just this morning and if you think about it in relation to children, it's so much clearer to see. Like if I tell my kids, you know, try to be kind to your sibling. And then I had, you know, one of my daughters was feeling really bad that she got really upset with her brother and she has all this, you know, she feels really bad about it. But it's like, I'm not telling you that to make you a good person. It's just you're happier when you're kind. You know, your life is going to be better. And yes, I do care about how he's being treated as well, but it's shaming yourself, you know, it's not a matter of, okay, I'm going to teach you this and you can see why it makes a lot of sense and now go out and try it and I'm going to I'm going to judge you for it, decide if you're doing a good job or a bad job.

It's just like, no, that shows you where you are in your development, but these things that we're trying to do are usually because we'll have more joy in our life. So we could make the argument that when we're falling short, it's to our detriment. It's because we're not going to be quite as happy if we're not showing love and kindness and, you know, unselfishness towards people. But we're human and we're not there yet. And anytime we shame ourselves for it, it has to go somewhere. And the first place it goes is those trusted relationships, our spouse, take it out on our kids.

Jody Moore: Yeah, and that work of just being comfortable and connected with yourself, I find makes it easier to tolerate other people having negative emotions.

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Natalie Clay: Oh, for sure, it does.

Jody Moore: And it's actually so simple what it looks like in the end because people are like, well I know, but that's hard to do, right? It's really complicated. And I'm not saying that it's not challenging to execute and to get to that point. It can be, right? But in the end, it's actually really simple. So for example, I was just talking to a client and this was about her business, but it's a similar dynamic. So she's worried about disappointing, she has a bunch of students that she teaches music to and she wants to shut that down to just have her coaching business be the full time business eventually. So she's worried about disappointing these music students, right? And that they're going to be disappointed, they're going to feel let down or whatever, right? And she's like, it's really complicated to shut down a business like that. And I was like, is it though? Or is it just like, hey everyone, it's been great working with you, but this is the last day that I'll be teaching and then I'm moving on to other things. Have a great life. Like it's actually really simple.

And I remembered that same thing happening in my marriage because Jake is also my business partner, right? So this was years ago, but I was doing these webinars every month that were part of marketing for our business and I was just kind of burned out and overwhelmed and exhausted. And this was when Brooke was coaching me and I was like, I just, I'm afraid to tell Jake. She's like, yeah, you need to stop doing webinars. Don't do those anymore. I'm like, but then we may not have the clients and our business may decline and I don't, I think Jake's gonna be really uncomfortable with that, right? I don't think he's gonna like this. And I really believe that. I was like, that's gonna stress him out, right? And I just don't know how to say it to him. And she's like, you just look at him and you say, Jake, I love you so much and I'm not doing webinars anymore. I was like, Oh, okay. Yeah, I get it now.

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But when she illustrated it that way, what I saw was like, if I don't have to be mad at him or be afraid of him or tiptoe around it and be like, no, I know you're gonna think this, but listen, I'm gonna come up with a plan and I promise we're not gonna, like I didn't have to do any of that. If I just was like, and so I did, I literally went home and was like, hey hun, I'm not gonna do webinars anymore, okay? And he goes, okay. And it was so crazy that I was like, okay, a lot of this isn't, now that doesn't always happen, I realize, but when you are just connected and grounded and you don't have to make good guys and bad guys and whatever, like you said, and you just assume everybody has the best of intention and I just assume that he's going to support me and we're going to figure it out together, then sometimes it really does just play out that way in the end.

Natalie Clay: Oh, so often. I think it will.

Jody Moore: Okay, so anything else that we're missing here on this topic?

Natalie Clay: Yes, we have to teach the simple tool.

Jody Moore: Oh, give us the simple tool.

Natalie Clay: Okay. So everything we talked about might get convoluted at times, but here is the really truly simplistic way to get out of resentment, to avoid resentment in all your relationships. Okay? We've got to start by just to get our head out of the shoulds of I shouldn't feel this way or I should be willing to do this is starting by remembering none of us do a single thing without a selfish motive. Our brain will not allow us to exert any effort, any energy unless there's something in it for us. Now, when we're doing something for someone else, truly for someone else, that's still for us because it feels great to help someone else and to serve someone. No better feeling maybe. But the result of that when you're doing it for them is you will feel more connection towards them. You will feel more love towards them after you've done something for them. And if you're not, that means

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you're actually just doing it for yourself so you can believe something about you.

So one quick example and then I'll give you the tool is a woman at church was just telling me that she's like, oh, my sister-in-law was in town and she does one of those things where she drops, you know, she'll offer to take the kids, but then I know she's going to expect me to take the kids on this day and I just don't know if I want to take them and, you know, it's like that. I love when people do this. They do this a lot in marriage too, where it's like this trade system we have going on, but we haven't communicated it. Like I'm doing all these things for you, so I expect this from you. It's like, no, I never agreed to that, but you're just, anyway.

And so she's like, so I watched her kids and this sister-in-law is just really hard. She's really annoying. So that tells you she said yes, I'll watch your kids because she felt like she should, because she had already watched her kids and that's what you should do, but she didn't want to. And then she feels like that's bad that she didn't want to. So now she has to make her sister-in-law the villain. Okay? So when we own that like, no, but there was a reason in it for you that you did that. It's because you didn't want her judgment. Who says that's not a good reason? Sometimes we just want to avoid the conflict or them challenging us on it. Okay, that's fine. But we have to remember why we chose to do it or else it will lead to disconnection instead of connection.

Now, for the way to simplify this, absolutely simplify this though, is before you do anything, right? Because we do a lot of things we don't want to do. Like when people hear take care of your own needs, they're like, oh, so I just shouldn't expect anything from my partner or I just do exactly what I want to do. We're going to see how they like that. But again, we always go to those extremes, but we want to do a lot of things to help each other out. And I think in most marriages, we do a lot of things to help each other out and to support each other and we do sacrifice a lot. So first of all, it's really

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good to notice that. But when something comes up and we don't want to, put it through this simple filter, okay? So I think it's our job to always make choices that help us feel the most love towards the people that we choose to have relationships with.

So if you just put it through that filter, it's, okay, if my sister-in-law asks me to watch her kids, am I going to feel like I like her less? Or am I going to feel closer to her because I'm doing this thing for her and it feels good to help her out? But it's really as simple as that. And sometimes maybe it's, ah, I don't really want to, so I might not feel super close to her, but I do still feel good about doing it. That's a good reason too. But is, if it's making you like them less, then it's got to be a no, and that's your honest truth in the moment. And we don't need to make it mean something big that you're selfish or you don't help people out. Like none of that garbage is true, but just let your truth be your truth and know it has nothing to do with are you a good person or not. It's just in this moment, it's complicated and I can just tell in my heart that it's a no, or I'm going to do this thing even though I know they don't want me to, because if I don't, it's going to be at the detriment of our relationship and our connection.

Jody Moore: Yeah, and that's so healthy for everyone involved, right? Because you start being more honest and authentic and so it's if I'm saying yes, even if I'm saying yes because I it's easier for me to say yes than to deal with where my brain might go afterwards of thinking that you're judging me or you're mad at me or whatever or feeling guilty because I think I should have. Saying yes is I'd rather say yes than deal with that in my own mind. That's okay. You don't have to feel bad about it, but then we're owning it, right? It was just reminding me of yesterday I had a hair appointment at two and in the morning my hair girl texted me and said, can you come in at noon instead? And I had another appointment. So I was like, I can get there by 12:30. And she's like, okay, great. And so then later on as she's doing my hair, she said, I had this conversation with my husband because I don't know exactly why she moved my appointment,

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but I gathered from what she said that she just had maybe like a personal thing come up that she wanted to be done with work earlier or whatever, right?

And she's like, I told my husband like with a lot of my other clients, I wouldn't have even asked them to move their time because I know that a lot of them would have gone out of their way, moved their schedule around, then maybe they'd be resentful and angry. And I wouldn't even know it. And they could have just said no, but she's like, I know that you will say no if you can't or don't want to. And therefore if you say yes, I know you mean yes. And I was like, that is such a compliment. Thank you. I can't say I'm perfect at that, but I do try to live that way. We're like, then when people, when I do say yes, and they're like, are you sure? I'm like, don't worry. I will say no if I, not even if I can't, but if I don't want to. Or if I don't say no, I'm not going to blame you for it. I own that that was on me. I am people pleasing here or I it I just would rather say yes than deal with my brain afterwards. And so anyway, that was like, such a compliment. Not to toot my own horn here, but I was like, I'm so glad you feel that way about me because that is how I'm trying to live my life.

Natalie Clay: And you do live that way and it is so much more comfortable to have interactions with you because of that. Like when you're dropping kids or something, like when you know someone will say no and if they say yes, it's a yes. I mean, all that honesty is so important and it is so freeing and allows you to just trust each other more.

Jody Moore: Yeah. Yeah, it's a win, even though our brains are like, oh, they're not going to like it. I'm like, no, actually we all prefer to feel like we can believe what people are saying.

Natalie Clay: So it's so much better. And it is interesting though, that's what goes back to that, you know, the upside of resentment is allowing us to avoid some vulnerabilities where, you know, sometimes people will say, well, I don't want to do that. I don't want to say no because they're going to



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be really mad or I really need some more time with friends, but my husband is not going to like that. He's going to think that I'm not making him a priority. That's okay, but then you have to know you're choosing to be upset with him, so he's not upset with you. We put it in those terms it's like, oh yeah, I am just avoiding that vulnerability, which again is fine if you want to choose that, but you can't put that on him. Right? He's much more comfortable with you being upset with him than you are. So he'll say he doesn't want you to do that. That's kind of bottom line.

But that's where it gives us the chance to trust more and I think increase our emotional intimacy because when we do start trusting just like he said that example with Jake when he's fine with it, it's like, I think you do find that so many things are a story like they're not going to like it, or they always do this, or they never this. And you start to see that's just made up and it's your brain trying to protect you from judgment. It all comes back to like because you're not getting your back. And if you judge you when you're feeling like someone's judging you, then there's no one there watching out for you. So it's so important to just be like, yeah, I don't want to take the kids to the trampoline park tonight. I'm going to tell them no and they're disappointed and that's okay. I can feel bad for the kids and not shame myself. It's so important to be more honest in our interactions.

Jody Moore: Yeah, so good. All right, Natalie, well, if people want more help with their marriages, where can they go to find you?

Natalie Clay: You can go to [NatalieClay.com](http://NatalieClay.com). You can also just go to [NatalieClay.com/meet](http://NatalieClay.com/meet) and sign up for a consultation if you are looking for help. I work with couples and I also work with people one on one when, you know, not everyone is, both people aren't always open to getting help at the same time. And if you're the one that's struggling, you're probably the one that needs coaching. And so we can make a lot of attraction and helping just one person out at times.

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Jody Moore: One of the things I'll just say as Natalie's sister who has like inside access to the work that she does is it's not uncommon for you to tell me, I had this couple today that came to a consultation or a person or whatever. And I told them, no, I don't think you're a good fit for coaching. And most people are a good fit, but if they're not, I love how honest you are with people and you're able to assess like if there's something more serious going on that requires therapy or whatever might be the reason or maybe one or both people are just not in the right mindset to want to change. And so I would definitely just encourage people. I know people come away from that consultation with their minds blown. It's often even if they don't work with you for they're just having that experience has been really powerful for people. But Natalie also is really upfront about whether or not her program is going to help you and I know you've helped so many couples.

Natalie Clay: So fun. And again, I do really assume inherent goodness in both people because what I find is “bad behavior” is coming from some sort of insecurity. So it's not a matter of saying like, why are you acting this way towards your partner? Why are you so dismissive? Why are you so uncaring? And I think that's what a lot of people are nervous about that they're going to go in and someone's going to tell them that they're behaving badly when they're already telling themselves that might be true, but they don't not be a jerk. And it's not what it's about at all.

Jody Moore: Yeah, you're never like saying this person's right and you need to adjust yourself. It's not really about that. It's very unique the way you coach people. And I think I love too like whoever of the couple is the most resistant, often is the one that ends up loving it the most by the end and makes the most progress because it's surprising, like it's just not what people expect in many cases. So anyway, okay, so [NatalieClay.com/meet](https://NatalieClay.com/meet) and we'll throw that into the show notes if anybody wants to go get the link out of there. But otherwise, thanks for coming on, Nats.

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Natalie Clay: Yeah, thanks for having me. You can also check out NatalieClay.com. I offer Marriage Lab, which is my group coaching program. We just meet once a week and so there's those two different options if you want to check that out as well.

Jody Moore: Okay. Okay. Awesome. Thank you.

Natalie Clay: All right. Thanks for having me on.

Jody Moore: You bet.

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. That's JodyMoore.com/freecoaching.