

## 571: Aim for B- Work



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With Your Host

**Jody Moore**

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

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Hey my friends, there's a reason why things are not moving fast enough for you. You're not showing up consistently or you're not achieving the results you wanted to as quickly and you can't figure out why it feels really slow. And it has nothing to do with anything being wrong with you. I'm going to tell you today how to speed up your success, how to be more consistent, and how to stick with things longer. This is *Better Than Happy*. We're talking about stop trying to do your best. I'm Jody Moore. Let's go.

Welcome to *Better Than Happy*, the podcast where we apply all the tools of psychology, human behavior, and mindfulness to live our best lives, navigate challenges, and achieve our goals. I'm Jody Moore and I'll be your coach today. Let's do it.

All right, so I want to begin with a story today. I want to tell you about a friend of mine who has a son named Harvey. And Harvey's teacher recently reached out to my friend and said, "I think Harvey cheated on his test." And she said, "Well, what do you mean? How do you know?" And she said, "Well, the first question on the test says, 'Who was the first president of the United States?' And the boy next to Harvey wrote 'George Washington,' and Harvey also wrote 'George Washington.'"

Of course, my friend said, "That proves nothing." Right? Well, she said, "The second question on the test says, 'Who, which president, excuse me, is on the ten-dollar bill?' And the boy next to Harvey wrote, 'Alexander Hamilton, who was never a president.' And Harvey wrote, 'Alexander Hamilton, who was never a president.'"

Now my friend said, "Okay, that's a little suspicious, but still, we don't know who copied off of who and they sound like some smart boys. Those are actually the right answers, right?" Well then the teacher went on to say, "Okay, but the third question on the test says, 'Who was the ninth president of the United States?' And the boy next to Harvey wrote, 'I don't know.' And Harvey wrote, 'Neither do I.'"

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Okay, so this is a made-up scenario. That is a joke I heard somewhere. I don't know if it's funny, but I thought it would be a good way to start because we can all relate to the idea that maybe some kids cheat on tests. Maybe we've even cheated on a test when we were in school or cheated on our homework or something. And all of us know that there's a reason why. And yes, maybe it means a child didn't study or learn or the teacher didn't do a good job teaching or whatever, but beneath it all is our culture's obsession with getting good grades.

Right? Most of us when we were kids were taught that one of the best things we could do would be to get good grades. Now, I'm a Gen Xer. So in my generation, it was all about getting straight A's. I remember I had friends whose parents would bribe them for their grades. Anybody else have this situation, right? They would get twenty dollars for every A they got and ten dollars for every B, and twenty dollars and ten dollars went a lot further back then than it goes today. Then if you got C's or certainly if you were getting D's or F's, you were not getting paid, you were getting a stern talking to about how you need to focus and buckle down and you need to get good grades, right?

All right, so move forward to maybe the Millennial generation and thereafter and maybe I think we got a little smarter, right? As parents, we stopped saying you need to get straight A's and we realized, all right, maybe that's not doable for all kids. Maybe we should consider different ability levels and things. And so we started saying, your grades don't matter that much as long as you try your very best. And if you're capable of A's, then you should absolutely be getting A's. If you're only capable of B's, then I'll take B's, but I just want you to try your very best. Still placing a lot of emphasis on getting good grades if you can or certainly putting your best effort in, right?

Now, what if this message that we were all taught is actually sabotaging us today? What if you are being less effective, less successful, and certainly going much, much slower than what's going to serve you because you still have that mentality that you should be getting A's or at least putting in your

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best effort? I want to talk to you today about a concept that I was taught by my original coach and teacher, Brooke Castillo. She said to me, "I want you aiming for B minus. I want you doing B minus work." Now, the first time I heard her say that, I reacted the way many of you probably are reacting, which is like, "What? What are you talking about? Why would we aim for B minus? Why wouldn't we aim for A's?" Well, today I want to give you three reasons why thinking about myself and my life and my work in this way has served me so well, and it might serve you as well.

First of all, in order to put in our best effort, we have to put our energy, our focus, our attention, and our time into things. That's how we do our "best work," right? I'm going to just call it your energy. Your energy and my energy is a limited resource. Now, there are things we can do to help it, like eating good food and getting enough sleep and taking care of ourselves in all kinds of ways can help us to have a little bit more energy. And when we run out of energy, we can replenish it through sleep and exercise and things like that, right? But still, it's a finite resource. It is not unlimited. I think we would all agree on that.

Any other resource in our life that is finite, we think strategically about how we're going to use. Let's talk about the most obvious example of money. Okay? We would never say to people, "Hey, you should pay the highest price possible for everything you buy. You should buy the most expensive version of anything you're going to spend money on." And yet we say that about our efforts. We say, "Anything you're going to do, do it at your best."

That would be like saying buy the most expensive of everything you can. We don't do that. We understand that we should be selective, that there are some things that we want to buy the most expensive version of because we want the highest quality, but not everything first of all is even worth it, but certainly not everything needs to be highest quality, right? We want to buy the best mattress we can afford, but we might want to buy the generic paper towels. This is how we think strategically about how we're going to

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use our money because we understand it's a finite resource. So we want to use it strategically.

What if you did the same thing with your energy, with your effort? I have a son who's in college who said something to me recently that might make many parents cringe, but I was so proud of him. He said, "Mom, I take a look at my classes. And if the class is like just a basic general ed requirement that's information that I'm not really interested in and isn't really that important for me to learn, but I've got to check the box to get my degree, then I do the minimal amount of work in there necessary to get the grade I need to get to get the degree I'm trying to get. That way, I save my energy for the classes that really matter, the courses in my major that I really want to learn more in depth because that will serve me in my career." I was so proud of my son when he said this, right? He understands how to examine his energy and use it strategically. And that will not only help him now as he earns his degree, but will help him in the rest of his life.

Now, maybe you've heard of a guy named Jeff Bezos and a little company called Amazon. Amazon runs their company based on a similar premise and Jeff Bezos built it based on a similar premise. He tells his team to put work out into the world when it is 70% complete. If they are creating a product or a service or a process even, they execute it at 70% so that they have the other 30% left over to get it to the level they want to, but they're not going to wait for that. They're going to move forward and put it out into the world at 70%, which is actually a C minus, right?

Why would they do this? Because Jeff Bezos is a smart guy and he understands that he wants the market to tell them what the last 30% should be, that without market research, without putting it out, without executing it, excuse me, and getting real-time feedback that the other 30%, we're just taking a guess at and we might be totally wrong. And that would be a waste of our resources if we got it wrong, which brings me to the second reason I want you to aim for B minus work on most things in your life. Because most things that are significant and that matter require some trial and error. And if

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you are shooting for A's on everything, you are wasting time because that trial and error will come back after you've put in too many resources.

So, I work with a lot of clients who are building businesses, other coaches building coaching businesses. And it's not uncommon for them to want to create a course or a podcast or put content out on social media in some way to serve people to both find clients and take care of their current clients. And some of them want to do the best job they can on that course, on that video, on that content. And I tell them, "Don't do that. Aim for B minus." You know why? I've seen it happen over and over again that people put in tons of time, even money and effort on creating a beautiful, amazing course or website, only to discover that they got it wrong. It's not exactly what their clients want, or they didn't describe it in the right way. And they didn't even nail the target market that they're going to want to work with. And now they're going back and throwing out so much hard work that they put in. That is a very painful process. Do not do that to yourself. Give yourself the space by doing it at B minus level, excuse me, and then as you learn more, as you get more information, more real-world feedback, you can go ahead and make it better.

This podcast is a great example of where I aim for B minus. I do. It's not that I don't care about it. I don't want it to be a D or an F, but I aim for B minus. And I've been publishing this podcast every week for 10 years, over 10 years actually, because I started when my daughter, when I was pregnant with my daughter, she's about to turn 11. Okay? The reason I've been able to do it for 10 years while many other podcasts that might have been higher quality have died out by now is because I aim for B minus. Okay? The reason that works for me is because I'm not trying to be an A-list podcaster. I'm trying to be a coach. This podcast is designed to support my coaching practice. It helps some of you get help who might never be able to go through my programs. It helps some of you decide that you want to work with me further and it helps some of you who are my paying clients get some additional supplemental knowledge and tools.

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In order to achieve those purposes, I only need to do this at B minus level. I could have a big fancy podcast studio, put lots of money into building out a big studio. I could have seven cameras and fancier lighting and fancier mics, and we could have a full audience here and it would be a better podcast if I did all that. It would be an A-level podcast. But I don't need it to be A level to accomplish my objectives. That's why I aim for B minus level, which brings me to the final point.

When we think we need to do everything at A-level, it turns into all-or-nothing thinking in our brains. All or nothing almost always ends in nothing. Almost every time. I promise it does. Okay? I used to approach my health from this all-or-nothing mindset. It took me a long time to break out of it. I tried really hard to get A's on changing my eating habits so many times in the past. I tried to do really extreme things, like cut out flour and sugar, like start intermittent fasting with a whole bunch of other changes at once that were really drastic for me. But I had done the research, I listened to the experts. I believed them and I still do that cutting out flour and sugar and intermittent fasting and all the other things that I've tried doing would be ideal for my health.

The problem is I couldn't maintain it for more than maybe a few weeks, in most cases, a few days. And then I was back to my old ways, right? And what happens to all of us when we think we're going to change our eating and then suddenly we have a meal and everything goes off track and what do we do? We say we fell off the wagon. Side note, there is no wagon, right? But when we do this, we revert back to nothing. We go from all back to nothing. And that's because I thought I needed to get an A on my eating scorecard. It wasn't until I started hiring coaches, health coaches who I worked with, who taught me, "No, no, no, don't do that kind of drastic change. Make a small change. Aim for 80%." Here's your eating goals, Jody. They would give me calorie goals and macronutrient goals and we'd talk about some micronutrients and things like that. And they'd say, "Aim for 80%."

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And you know what? When I started celebrating myself at 80%, which is exactly B minus for the record, I suddenly was able to stick to the changes I was making. And if I couldn't hit it at 80%, I knew I was asking too much of myself, so I'd alter my plan until I could. And when I did hit it consistently at 90% or above, then I ratcheted up the expectations. And that's how I got to where I am today. Now, I, like anybody else, was very vain and wanted to lose a bunch of weight. And I like to think I've outgrown that, but I don't know that I have. I like being at a leaner weight, but even more importantly, I've always been at high risk for type two diabetes. I've always been flirting with it. I've always been in the pre-diabetes category until the last year when I've gotten my A1C down into the normal range. So many of my health markers have improved. And it's because I stopped trying to get A's on my eating report card. I started celebrating B's and B minuses.

I'm telling you, my friends, this will change everything. Now, you might be thinking, especially if you have a business you're going to apply this to like me and you're going to put out content, aim for B minus. You're going to do a podcast, you're going to do a YouTube channel, you're going to, whatever else it is that you're doing. If you're putting it out in the world for other people to see and you're aiming for B minus, then your brain might say to you, "Wait, hold on a second. What are people going to think? What if people judge me?" A big reason why we think we need to get A's at everything is because we don't want to be judged by other people. So I just want to give you a little spoiler alert about what people are going to think.

First of all, most people are not going to see it or pay attention to it at all. But some will, hopefully. And of the ones that do, many people will like it and appreciate it, but some people won't. Some people will judge it. There will be some haters and critics out there. Like I've had people Photoshop my eyebrows and send me pictures of what my eyebrows should look like. I've had people call me selfish for the way that I choose to spend my time or live my life. I've even had people tell me that my clothing is inappropriate or too revealing or my hair is wrong and too worldly. You name it, I've gotten the criticism.

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And maybe you're thinking, "Okay, that's fine for random strangers on the internet, but what if my friends, what if my family, what if my coworkers see my work and judge it?" And guess what? Some of them will. Even when you do it at A-level. It doesn't matter how good your work is or how bad your work is. Some people will like it and some people will judge it, but guess what? You're not for everyone. You're not. Even when it comes to your friends and family, not all of them are going to believe you or see the vision of what you're trying to do or think it's a good idea. Some of them are going to have judgments of you. They will.

Are you going to let that dictate how you're going to live your life? Are you going to slow yourself down because of it? Because doing everything at A-level will make it take two times, if not 10 times longer to get where you're trying to go. So, remember that the people who judge you, that's not about you, it's about them. And guess what else? The people who adore you and appreciate you and love what you're doing, that's also not about you. It's about them.

So, let's make strategic decisions about how we use our resources, like our energy. Let's put stuff out there and then get real feedback about what we need to do and improve the parts that we want to after that. And let's remember that all-or-nothing thinking almost always ends in nothing. Let's not do that. Let's aim for B minus work because aiming for all A's is not driven by excellence, it's driven by fear. And you, my friend, are done being afraid.

All right, have a beautiful rest of your day. I'll see you next time.

Hey everybody, thanks for listening today. Please do me a favor and make sure you're following or subscribed to the show if you got a lot out of this and share it with a friend. Make sure you never miss an episode and help me spread the message of mental and emotional health and creating your best life. I'll see you next time.