

577: How Successful People Make Decisions



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jody Moore

[Better Than Happy](#) with Jody Moore

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

Successful people are different in certain ways, right? Successful people think about things differently, and they show up differently. And in most areas, they are not the norm. They're not like everybody else. They're different. One way they are different is in how they make decisions. And if you want to learn how to make decisions like a successful person, you're in the right place. Welcome to *Better Than Happy*. I'm your coach, 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.

One of the reasons I love being a coach so much is because I get to work with human beings who are already amazing people. All people are amazing, but people who are healthy, who are succeeding in so many ways in life, and they want to do even more. They want to go next level. I am not trained as a therapist or a clinical specialist, so I don't work with people who are suffering from mental illness or who are nonfunctioning who need treatment of a clinical sort, okay? So that means I get to study and learn from and observe successful people.

They're already successful when they come to me, and then I get to observe what strategies and tools help them become even more so, help them to go next level. So in my over a decade that I've been a coach, I've coached people on growing their businesses. I've coached people through job situations, through careers in a more traditional corporate setting. I've coached people on their marriages, on their relationships with in-laws or elderly parents, adult children. I've coached people on their parenting, on raising young kids. I've coached people in their marriages, on their friendships. I've coached people on pretty much any problem you can imagine, again, that lives in the world of good to great.

So what I'm going to offer you today are not just my opinion and not just what I try to do, try being a key word. Not all of this is easy to do, okay? But

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

you don't have to be perfect at it is the good news. But these are patterns that I've observed in the hundreds, if not thousands, of people that I've seen go from where they are to next level.

So if you want to be successful in any area of your life, the quality of your ability to make decisions will directly impact the speed at which you will achieve success. Okay? One of the things that slows people down more than ever is their inability to make high quality decisions.

All right, so if you can relate to this and you find yourself saying, I'm just not a fast decision maker. I'm not decisive. I'm very indecisive, then guess what? Today's the day all of that changes. Just decide that you're no longer that person. You're no longer indecisive. You're a confident, strategic decision maker, and I'm going to give you eight strategies today that will help you to do it. Now, again, you don't have to execute all eight of them perfectly. You won't, especially if it's a big stretch for you.

Take one or two and think about it and push yourself a little bit outside of your comfort zone. Okay? That is the key to going next level. It is going to feel uncomfortable before it gets comfortable because there's a reason you've been making decisions the way you have, and it's not because you're broken, and it's not because you're weak or because anything's wrong with you. It's because your brain is trying to protect you. Your brain is just simply misinformed. But that changes today, right? Okay, so let's dive in.

The first thing that successful people do when it comes to making decisions is they make their decisions quickly. Quickly. Now, what does that mean, Jody? How long should I give myself to make a decision? I can't answer that for you. You're going to have to answer. All I know is it's pretty obvious when you're dragging a decision out and it's taking a very long time. You will know this, right? Some of you have decisions you've been lingering on for years, right? And you're just not making a decision, or months or weeks. And these are decisions that you know don't need to take that long.

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

I'm always so taken aback when I go to the grocery store because I walk up and down the aisles and I buy the same things I pretty much always buy, the same brands that I already know I like or my family likes, the kinds of foods that we eat. And I walk up and I pick the thing and I put it in my cart and I move on. And do you know what I notice is happening in the grocery store? Lots of indecision. I notice people standing by the yogurt section. How many kinds of yogurt do we need? I don't know, but we have a lot.

And I get it. If you're going to look at all the options every time and soak it all in and figure out what all these different kinds of yogurt are about, it's going to take a while. And maybe it's the first time these people have ever bought yogurt and they need to do that. All right. My guess is it's not. My guess is they've bought yogurt before and they're buying yogurt every week. Now, is there a time when you want to change the kind of yogurt you're buying? Sure, I get it. But again, probably not most of the time.

Why do we sit there and linger over decisions? Because we think there might be a better option. And we don't want to miss out on something. And so we stop and read all the kinds of yogurt that there are. This is a waste of your time and it's a waste of your brainpower. You want to make decisions quickly, especially the decisions that don't have super heavy stakes on the other side of them, like what kind of yogurt you're going to buy. Okay?

So let's take it to something a little bit bigger than your yogurt choice. Let's think about what program you're going to offer in your business, what problem you're going to solve or what course you're going to create or what's the next thing you're going to try in your business. Did you know that the faster you make that decision, the faster you will get to success?

How can I say that, Jody? Don't you need to think about it for a while? Don't you need to pray about it? Don't you need to do some research? Don't you need to get online and ask a bunch of people what they think? No. You don't need to do all that. Not for very long anyway. Maybe you want to do a little bit of thinking about it, a little bit of paying attention, but I

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

emphasize a little bit. You know why? Because all the data you collect, all the research you do online, all the people you talk to, even market research, if we want to call it that, where you go talk to your potential buyers, gets in your head as thoughts and stories. And then you're looking for the right decision and you're going to have to coach yourself around the drama that's going to create.

Okay, so I like to check in first and foremost with my gut and any data I have from my own business or, a little bit more tangible information coming from any work I've already done. But beyond that, I like to just pick something and go. Because once you put something out, that's when you're really going to get the real market research. That's the true feedback about whether or not this is a good idea. You put it out into the world, you offer it to people, and you see if anyone wants to buy it. If they don't, then we go back and start again.

Okay? So the faster you make decisions, the faster you get to that feedback loop of, is this a choice I want to stick with or not? So, are there some decisions you want to take a little longer with that you want to be more prayerful about or thoughtful about? Okay. Sure, do that. But I still think even with those, the faster you make the decision, the better off you are because you know when you're going to know with a little bit more certainty, after you make the decision and proceed forward, not before.

So, Jody, what if I get partway down a path and I realize I made the wrong choice? Well, then now you know, and you make a different choice and you go back and you change it. But before you make the decision is the hardest time to know. You got to go all in on something. You got to commit to something usually before you're actually going to get the kind of feedback, whether it be your own internal knowing, God guiding you in some way, or the world outside of you telling you. That's the way that you get to success faster. Make decisions quickly.

Number two, successful people make lots of decisions. Lots of decisions. I hate to break it to you, but there are lots of decisions to be made all day

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

long. We live in a world that has so many options. This is a beautiful thing and an unfortunate thing because it means we have lots of decisions to make. Now, as much as possible, you want to make your decisions ahead of time so that you can minimize how many you have to make. But I would just expect that you're going to have to make lots of decisions.

This kind of piggybacks off number one of making decisions quickly, but the more decisions you make, the faster you will head towards what you want in your life. Let's take a parenting example. Let's say you have a child who's struggling and now you have to make a bunch of decisions about where they're going to go to school next year, whether or not they're going to change schools and some things like this that you hope and think might help your child. Okay? Make those decisions quickly and make a lot of them.

In other words, if you just decide with whatever feels like a reasonable amount of research and thoughtfulness and discussion, and then you make a decision and you own it, then you can go all in on all the other decisions that will follow it. Like, how are we going to help the child acclimate to this new school if we decide that they're going to switch schools? And what are we going to do about anything else that's affected by this change? Make lots of decisions. Don't give the decision a lot of weight. We're going to talk about that in just a minute, but if you just make lots of decisions as quickly as possible, you will find that you head towards where you want to go as quickly as possible.

All right, the third thing that I want you to do that successful people do is they make decisions without attachment, without being overly attached to what happens next. How do we do that? How do we not be overly attached? Let's say I'm trying to decide if I should move to a new city and take a new job. Doesn't that feel like a big decision? Wouldn't I want to be attached to the decision? No. Don't be overly attached. Again, I'm not saying you wouldn't do a reasonable amount of researching and checking around and being thoughtful and being prayerful and discussing it with

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

anybody else involved. Do a reasonable amount of that. But do you know what? In the end, nothing's permanent. Very few things, I should say, are permanent, right? We can always make a different decision if necessary. So we don't need to be overly attached. Now, I know your brain's like, wait a second, if I pick my whole family up and move and we quit a job and we take a new job and we sell a house and buy a new house or whatever, just changing all that up is not as simple as that, Jody, so I should make the right decision.

Okay, but there is no right decision. There is no wrong decision. There's just the decision that you make. And then there's whatever happens next. You know how we know it was the right decision? It's the decision you made. It seemed like the best thing to do given the information you had and the way you felt at the time. And so therefore it was the right decision. Even if that decision was necessary for you to realize you want to make a different decision.

Okay, so you have to detach a little bit from what happens next. I like to go into it knowing there's no perfect decision. There's just a decision that is going to have pros and cons, that's going to have things I like that are easy and fun about it and things I don't like. And some of those I might know going into it, but most of them, I'm not going to know at all until I get there. Okay, so make the decision without a lot of attachment to what happens next.

Number four, make the decision with minimal drama. Drama? What is that? Drama is what happens in your mind when you play out a bunch of scenarios about the past or about the future. Drama is stories about who's to blame, who are the good guys, who are the bad guys, who did it right, who did it wrong, who's making this harder, who should be doing something different, and who we should feel sorry for. Okay? We are all prone to drama. We're very drawn to it. I love a good drama on TV or at the movie theater. I just try to keep the drama out of my life and out of my decisions.

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

Okay? Because drama is not going to serve you. It's going to stir up emotion. It's going to stir up shame or blame or guilt or judgment or resentment, and none of that's going to help you navigate any situation easier. So if you're constantly second guessing your past decisions, you're going to make it much harder to make quick, confident future decisions.

So I already have decided that any decision I made in the past was the right decision, even if it's a decision that I would never make again because I don't like where it led me or I don't like what I discovered on the other side of that decision. There are decisions I made in the past that I plan to never make again in my life. It still was the right decision. I had to make that decision and go down a path for a reason I don't even know, to learn something or discover something or become something or meet someone. So there were no wrong decisions in my past, right? Now I can make confident decisions about the future. Some of them will lead me down a road I want to keep going down. Some of them will lead me down a road I don't like and I will turn around and change course.

Which brings me to number five. Repeat the decisions when necessary. Successful people remake decisions when necessary. They might make the same decision again or they might make a different decision. Let's think about somebody's marriage. If I'm in a successful marriage, how would you define it? You get to define success for yourself in any area of your life, but especially in your marriage. But for me, a successful marriage means that I'm happy overall. Don't have to be happy all the time, right? But I enjoy being with my husband. I feel like he appreciates and enjoys being with me sometimes, not all the time. Okay? And that we are aligned in what we're trying to create in our family and in the shared parts of our life. That's what I want in my marriage, right?

So if I don't continue to make the decision to be in this marriage, I'm going to feel stuck or trapped. I see people all the time who have this feeling in their marriage that they're unhappy in their marriage. They're not having whatever they would define as success in their marriage, but they feel

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

stuck or trapped. And I don't know about you, but back when I got married, people told me advice like, divorce is not an option, which is actually a lie. Divorce is an option, unless there's some crazy reason I don't know about wherever you live, then divorce is an option. Okay?

So the reason I want you to remember divorce is an option is so that you can remake that decision. Sometimes you have to re-decide to be in that marriage. And it doesn't mean that the marriage has to be easy or amazing or successful all the time. You might be deciding to stay in that marriage because of your children or because you want to work on it and over time you want to make it better and you want it to become easier and more enjoyable. You might be staying in that marriage because staying in the marriage feels easier today than leaving the marriage. I don't care what your reason is, as long as it's a reason that you like well enough, then you're allowed to stay in your marriage or you're allowed to leave your marriage, right? You're allowed to leave your marriage for any reason that you deem a good enough reason. And that can be any reason.

So successful people understand this. People who are happiest in their marriage know that they could leave that marriage anytime they want to and they would be okay and it doesn't make them a terrible person. Most people are trying to do the opposite. They're trying to tell themselves like, no, that's bad to leave, that would be failure or something, and they think that's going to create success. It doesn't because successful people understand that they always have choices. Therefore, they are making the conscious choice to stay.

All right, let's go to number six. Successful people don't revisit decisions when it's not necessary to do. Okay, this is one thing that I've found has served me really well in my business is I might have like a software service that I'm using, like something that manages my email or manages my website or my calendar or something like that, right? And I'll be in a group of other entrepreneurs and hear somebody talking about a software platform that they use that they love. And I notice people all around me

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

going, now what is that? And they're writing it down. And I'm always curious like, do you not have a software that provides that service for you? And they'll say, no, I do, but that one just sounds so much better. And I'm like, okay, but if you're going to switch all of that over, that's a lot of work and that's a lot of resources and that's a lot of time and effort and energy. So tell me, is your current software platform dropping the ball in some way?

And there's no perfect platform out there, right? They all have some shortcomings and weaknesses, but I guarantee the new one that you're going to switch to is going to have different shortcomings and weaknesses, just like if you switch husbands or you switch wives or you switch houses or almost anything that you change a circumstance in is going to have different strengths and weaknesses, okay? And I'm not saying you can never change a circumstance. I'm just saying constantly having to decide which one to use because you got wind of another option is exhausting.

Okay, so people will ask me all the time about certain systems I use or routines I use or processes that I use, especially in my business. And they'll say, what now, why do you do it that way? And I'll say, because it's working great. And I don't want to waste my brain making a decision about a different way to do it. So it's working well enough. It's getting the job done. I don't need to revisit that decision.

Now, there are times, like I said before, when we need to revisit a decision, but there are many, many times when you don't need to, even though somebody's suggesting another option. Great. But if that's not the thing that I think is going to move the needle the most in this area of my life, I'm not wasting my time on another decision that isn't necessary. Okay, so do not make decisions, new decisions, when it's not necessary. Let things be imperfect. The grass is not greener, as we like to say, right?

Number seven, people who are successful, and this is a really important one, and then the last one is probably the most important, so I'm glad you're with me still, stay with me. People who are successful make decisions by looking forward more than looking backwards. Okay, now this

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

is a tricky one. Your brain much prefers to look backwards, to say, hey, that thing I did before didn't work, that thing I experienced in the past was painful. That experience I had didn't lead where I wanted it to go. And yes, your past decisions provide you some data and some information. So I'm not saying it's irrelevant. I'm not saying we don't look at the past at all. I'm just saying I want you to spend a lot more time thinking about the future. What are you trying to create in the future? Because if you just make decisions from the past, which is what most people do, then at best, at best, you will make tiny little enhancements on things from the past.

That's only some of the time. Much of the time you will just continue to repeat patterns of the past. But if you make decisions from the future, you can make incremental leaps and changes, but it will mean letting go of some of the past, even some of the things that worked great in the past.

Okay, let me give you some real examples to help with this. Let's say you're trying to improve your health in some way. You want to get healthier, and so you're changing your eating habits or you're going to start exercising more, etcetera. People love to do this from the past. They'll say things like, I want to get back to the weight I was at, fill in the blank time of their life, before I had that baby or pre-menopause or whatever it was. They'll tell me, I want to get back to that weight. So immediately I see their brain going to the past, right?

Then they'll say, well, I've tried this strategy or eating plan or exercise routine. I've tried this thing, that didn't work. At one point, I lost some weight, then I gained it again. They'll tell me all about their past. To which I say, okay, well, interesting and all, but let's think about the future. What do you want in your future? Because what's available to you in your future is so much better and bigger and more beautiful than anything you can imagine right now. But you're going to have to stop dragging the past along with you.

Okay, so let's not try to get back to a certain weight. Let's move forward to your most ideal weight right now. Maybe that does happen to be numbers-

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

wise exactly the same as what it was at some other time. But it's your body's not the same. You're not the same. Your age is not the same. Maybe the composition is going to be different. Like the scale is just like such a boring only one metric that doesn't really paint a full picture, right? So let's think about the future. Let's think about what you want to have happen.

Again, not that the past is irrelevant, it can inform us a little bit, but now let's think about what we want in the future and paint a picture of that. This is really hard for your brain to do if you're anything like me because it requires imagination. It requires believing in something that part of your brain is going to go, well, that's probably not probably not possible for me. I'm sure other people can do that, but not you. You're not that kind of person, right? This is what your brain may try to tell you. So you'll have to put aside your own doubts. You'll have to believe in something that you've maybe never believed in before. You have to believe that you can achieve something you've never achieved before. Like, what if in the future it could be easier than it's ever been? What if you could create more success than you've ever even known? What if you could be your healthiest at whatever age you are right now than you've ever been in your entire life? You can. But you're going to have to start looking to the future.

I see this same thing with entrepreneurs. Coaches will say things to me like, well, I kind of want to make this change or I'm thinking about offering this program in my business, but my clients, they really like this part and they don't want to see this change or people keep wanting me to offer this thing. And I say, okay, but are you making decisions for your past clients or for your future clients? Because we love your past clients and they're all invited to come with us into the future, at least the ones that you want to bring with you, right? Probably most of them, they're more than welcome to come. But you're not the same person and you're not going to have the same business in the future that you have today, right? Your business is going to grow, you're going to grow, you're going to evolve, and we got to make decisions for your future clients, not for your past clients, unless you want to keep recreating the past.

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

Okay? Lastly, successful people make decisions knowing that they will be the ones ultimately to create their result, not the decision itself. This is the most important of all of the ones I'm giving you today. If you hear nothing else, please do me the favor and hear this one. There is no perfect decision. There's not even a right decision or a wrong decision when it comes to the types of things we're talking about today.

Should I homeschool my kids or keep them home? Should I take this job or should I not? Should I marry this guy or not? Should I leave my marriage? Should I, um, try this thing in my business or that thing? Should I, what should I do? We're not talking about, this is not a choose the right situation. This is not a, should I rob the bank or not? That's a choose the right situation, right? Do we steal or tell the truth? Tell the truth. That's the right decision. But that's not what we're talking about in most of our life here with these kinds of decisions. We're just talking about which path should I go down. They all have pros and cons. They all have things that will come easier to us, that we'll appreciate and like, and things that we'll hate.

Or maybe some of them have a lot more things we'll hate than others. But if I don't know that from where I am and I can't tell it with just a reasonable amount of research, then I wasn't meant to know it until I get there and discover it on my own. And I needed to discover it for some reason. I need to have an experience with it. I need to meet someone that I'm going to meet. I need to learn something that I could only learn in that way. And therefore they're all right decisions. Ultimately, I'm going to create my result.

So I remember two years ago when my husband and I decided that we wanted to move our family here to San Diego, California, where we now live. And we were looking at houses and we were trying to decide exactly what area we were going to live in, right? And I was so glad I understood this concept. Because yes, we're going to check out the house. We're going to check out the schools and things like that. And we're going to do a reasonable amount of research to figure out, is this an area we want to live

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

in? But guess what? Neither my husband nor I did, spend too long overthinking it. We don't spend too long overthinking it. We check in with what we feel inspired to do, what we feel God is telling it guiding us, if at all. Sometimes I think that in with most of our decisions, God's like, either way, you'll be good. Go ahead, right?

But then because I knew we're going to make it what it will be in the end. We're either going to make it a good place, meaning we're going to bring the kind of attitude and energy and contribution to that neighborhood that we want to bring, or we won't. And we will be able to find plenty of things to dislike about it if we want to do that too. So we don't need to overthink any of this. We ultimately create our result and our experiences.

Now, some of you will go, okay, I know that's true of me, but what about my kids? I don't want my kids to suffer. Well, again, your kids are also creating their own reality and their own result in the end. So you don't have to put tons of weight into the circumstance. The decision is the circumstance. Where you live is the circumstance, where they go to school is the circumstance. I'm not saying you can't change a circumstance if that seems like the easiest way. Do it. But ultimately it's the child themselves creating their own reality and their own result. This is why circumstance swapping ends up leading us right back to where we started in most cases.

Okay? So listen, I want you to make decisions quickly. I'm just going to run through these eight really fast. Make them much faster than you're used to. Sometimes I tell myself, it doesn't matter, let's just flip a coin. You can make a decision that way. Did you know that? Because you're the one that's going to create the result anyway. Make them quickly. Make lots of decisions. Make them without being attached to what happens next. Make them without drama as much as you can by managing your mind. Make them repeatedly and make them again when necessary. But don't make them again if not necessary. And how do you know the difference? You'll know. You know when it's time to recommit or when it's time to go, no, we're not even going to second guess that, that's a waste of our time. Make

577: How Successful People Make Decisions

them more from the future than from the past, and make them knowing that ultimately, you are going to create your own result or your own reality.

All right. If you like this episode, please, please do me a favor and share it. Share it on your social media, tag me in it, verbally share it with a friend. Make sure you're following the show on whatever platform you're listening today. Thanks for joining me and I'll see you next time. Take care.

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.