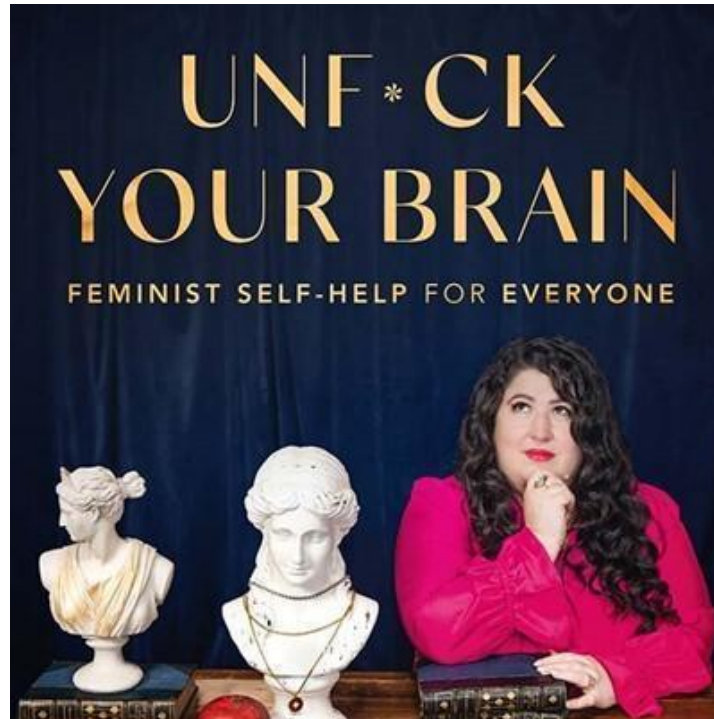


UFYB 269: Creating My New Style Self Live on the Podcast with Judith Gaton



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

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Welcome to *Unf*ck Your Brain*. I'm your host, Kara Loewentheil, Master Certified Coach and founder of The School of New Feminist Thought. I'm here to help you turn down your anxiety, turn up your confidence, and create a life on your own terms. One that you're truly excited to live. Let's go.

Alright my chickens, today we have a treat. She's going to laugh when I identify her this way but one of my first one-on-one clients, the only one-on-one client to ever fire me. And my brilliant colleague, and ACFC graduate and master coach, and style coach extraordinaire, Judith Gaton. I wish you could see her. She's wearing an amazing hat. Judith has an incredible hat collection. And she's wearing, what do you call this kind of hat?

Judith: It's not quite a fascinator but it's almost like a fascinator because it sits on top of your head as opposed to like...

Kara: But it's very large for a fascinator.

Judith: Yeah. Well, most of my fascinators are large because I have a huge head.

Kara: Okay. [Inaudible], it's like a fur fascinator, a vintage fur fascinator I think. Okay, so here's how we ended up here. This is not a hat podcast although we will probably talk about hats. I just went through this really interesting experience where I for a birthday gift for my partner got him sort of a package to work with a stylist. So a men's stylist who helps you come up with your style and takes you through the process of developing your style, takes you shopping blah, blah, blah.

I totally need to do this now I've realized, I'm having a style crisis after going through this with my partner. But one of the things I thought was

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really interesting about it was that I hadn't really, when I thought about this it was more just like, okay, well, it's somebody who helps you source things or knows what colors are going to look good on you or knows how things should fit you. And he does all that but the initial thing he did was take my partner through this process of sort of developing what his style, almost archetype or style alter ego was.

So it was coming up with a description, so for instance the style, so we worked with, his brand is called The Essential Man if anybody wants to look him up on Instagram, his name is Peter. He describes his own as a Yakuza member who went to Paris to teach art. And then my partner's that he came up with was...

Judith: I love that.

Kara: Yeah, so good. My partner's was, I think it was a midwestern college professor who used to box. My partner's actually weirdly good at coming up with these. We were trying to come up with mine and we were having a hard time. Maybe we'll do it on this episode. So as we were going through, it's like you start with that archetype or that alter ego. And then as we went through the style and then shopping process we were calling on that archetype. And said, "Okay, would that person wear this? Does this seem like it fits with that person?"

And it just reminded me so much of something that I honestly used to do more and should do now more which was when I was trying to make the first \$100,000 in my business it was somebody who makes a 100K in her coaching business. How does she think about things? Or I think it was when I was trying to make the first million, the CEO of a million dollar business, how did they think? It was calling on that kind of future self or idea self, whatever it was and this process with the stylist reminded me so much of that.

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And I was like, “Okay, this is fascinating, we’ve got to talk to Judith about this.” So that’s how we got here.

Judith: I love it and I was following along Gentleman Consort’s journey. And I was just like, “The shoes are fabulous, I love the coat.” I was stalking, and then I messaged you and was like this is amazing because we had a little kind of glimpse of his look of glee but not fully.

Kara: Yeah, we didn’t have a picture. For those who don’t follow me on social media, you can, it’s @karaloewentheil. He tried on these velvet slippers from Crockett and something which is the British shoemaker to the queen or whatever. And he just was like a kid at Christmas, just I’ve never seen the look of glee on somebody’s face like that. So anyway, I would love for you to do this because I know you do a process that has some similarities to this but you do it kind of differently than most people do not surprisingly since you are also a coach.

Can you talk to us about what that process looks like for style the way that you do it because I think some people listening to this will want to just do that for themselves with their style. But also I think there’s so much to learn about how we imagine our future self or the self we want to be in any area.

Judith: Yeah. So I think we’ll go bigger picture and then I’ll ask you if you want to play.

Kara: Yeah, let’s do it. I need it. I feel like I’m in a crisis. I’m in a style crisis.

Judith: And any time you want me to come and dress you and shop with you, I just want to put that in there, I am so down.

Kara: Once we move to the new apartment I’m in, sold.

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Judith: Yeah. No, seriously, let's do it, it'll be fun. And then we'll organize your closet [inaudible]. Okay, anyway, I digress.

Kara: Shira is already coming to organize my closet and to get rid of all the things, then you come and shop and we refill the closet, perfect.

Judith: Yes, I'll fill it, she'll organize it, a match made in heaven. So bigger picture because you and I work with a similar model, a framework, your thoughts create your feelings, from your feelings you take action and don't take action. So I love to play with style archetypes, or as I like to say, a personal style statement by putting it in your thought line and seeing what emotions come up for you. And then taking action from that place by creating an emotional state on purpose using your personal style statement.

The other fun way I think of playing with it, and this, I know my model adherence, I love you, I'm going to break the model.

Kara: It's okay, we can handle it, I feel strong today, let's do it.

Judith: Right, you've got this, you've got this. If we put your style statement in the F line, if we play with it as an emotional state of being, or we're just using it as a way of describing an emotional state, then what thoughts you need to think to create that emotional state and then what actions will you take from that place. So that we're always – and you used the word 'meta' in our sort of pre conversation. We're taking our personal style statement and applying it in a really meta way.

So yes, it can guide a shopping experience or how we get ourselves ready in the morning, what we choose to put on our body or don't choose to put on our body. But then we also get to, if I showed up as the woman who, or the human who embodies this statement, how different do I show up to

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conversations, to my finances, to my business, to business decisions? Then it gets really delicious and juicy and fun. And I find that when my clients have found something that feels like it fits, they get that magic moment, that little glee moment that your partner was experiencing.

So I think this is just the most fun work in the world and I get to do it with my clients in Modern Charm School and I get to do it with my clients in Style Masterclass, my program. So I'm going to play with your statement, if you're game.

Kara: Yeah, let's do it. So shall I tell you where I am and where I think I feel I'm [crosstalk].

Judith: Yeah, tell me all the things of where you're at currently.

Kara: Okay, I wish I'd written down, my partner and I came up with some really funny ones for our attempts to describe me. I was New York architecture moves to the south and shows up to garden parties as a succubus. We had a lot of funny ones. Okay, so here's what I'll tell you, and not surprisingly I think, this is why it all ties together. I'm going through things in my business in the same way that I'm going through in my – I know that I'm going through this stuff in my personal life. And then I was having a conversation with Brooke, our joint teacher, mentor, Brooke Castillo in a mastermind I'm in.

And we were talking about the kind of more adult version of me, and my brand, and my business also. So it's all together. So I think I came from spending all of my 30s being single, living in the city, very – what would be the right – I mean let's be real, it's not like I was dancing on tables at two in the morning. I don't like being out late and I'm still an introvert. But I think especially New York, it's like people can be sort of 'young' or dress that way into their 60s. There's kind of no rules to fashion here which I love.

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Judith: Yes, agree.

Kara: So I felt very comfortable in that style, I felt my style was kind of sort of feminine, classic with a twist, feminine, classic, sexy maybe. And also I think there's the systemic analysis comes in here with the reality of what the plus size clothing market is and what the options are. And there not being the same huge range of options that you have if you are not plus size. So the options of what's available to you also influence, I mean, Judith makes her own clothes but I'm not a seamstress and I'm not yet just wearing handmade couture only.

So also just sort of feeling of what's available also influences what my style expression can be plus my own weird sensory things of hating to wear pants basically. I wear leggings but I hate waistbands. Anyway, so I feel like I sort of had it fairly down but then I'm going through this transition in my life where I've gotten into a serious partnership with someone who has children. And we are moving in together. And I am a part-time parent in some way. And now I'm in my early 40s and I don't identify, I'm not like, this is my mom era. That doesn't feel like me.

And I don't feel like I'm, and my partner and I was joking that it feels like, I'm like, "Okay, so I can either be a sex vamp or a goddess." I'm not in my goddess era, I don't want to wear chunky amber beads and flowy skirts. But especially when you're a plus size it sort of feels like these are sometimes the options. And so I feel like, I've been thinking about this a lot more since he went through this process and looking in my closet and starting to be at an age where sometimes I put things on and I'm just like, "This just seems too young."

And not in a way where I'm like, "Older women shouldn't show their legs." Obviously I think you should wear whatever you want. It's just the whole energy of it can feel a little young. But then the stuff I see that feels more

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older, more sophisticated often seems to involve pieces, I don't want to wear slacks. I don't want to wear pants. I don't like how those feel. And given what the plus size options are and my figure which is very hourglass and very kind of femme.

That's why when my partner and I were trying to put these together they were so funny because it feels like I have two very separate things that could be happening. One of which is I was talking to my partner's stylist about this. And he was like, "I feel like you're at least, it's like you're wearing black, but when you get close you can see that the sweater cost \$500." That's sort of like I can imagine there's a winter version of me that is wearing, I want to say probably universal standard leggings but then an expensive cashmere sweater on top.

There's that version of me, but then the spring summer dressy version of me is wearing really Tanya Taylor dresses which I also love. And I haven't been able to figure out how to combine these two kind of. They both feel like parts of me and I haven't figured out how to kind of combine them together in a way that feels both a little more mature without being in my goddess years and also without, I'm not feeling like I'm in my mom era. I'm only a part-time bonus parent and I don't have a baby.

I don't need it to be like everything needs to be spit up proof and everything needs to be whatever, I need to be able to crawl on the floor in my pants. So that's where I am now, I feel like, I've only been aware of this I would say the last six months though is when I've started to kind of be like, "Okay, I don't know, something's changing."

Judith: Something's happening.

Kara: Yeah, but my style was pretty consistent for probably a decade. So it does feel like kind of uncharted territory.

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Judith: So a few things you said, just because we have eavesdroppers on our conversation. So I want to offer all of you this is what I love about using this kind of a system, an archetype or a statement because it evolves with you over time. I think often women are socialized to pigeonhole themselves into the typical tropes like you're classic, your bohemian, you're blah, blah, blah. I have so many thoughts about all of that. So when you play with it this way and we're using your brain and your own words reflected back at you, this allows you to evolve it and change it.

And I actually recommend my clients go through this process at least once a quarter just to get a new sense. Things change, your roles change. And I think for women, because we have so many different roles that we play we forget we're one human that plays a myriad of roles as opposed to we are the role. So clients will have this dichotomy in their brain, well, I feel like I'm two different persons or it's almost a split personality where I see my style so quickly here and it's then it's a little fuzzy over here.

But that's I think where the cool shit lives is if we can find a way to sort of juxtapose things that are seemingly opposite in the way that works for you.

Kara: Can I add one more thing into the mix?

Judith: Yeah.

Kara: Because I think what's happening on the business side because I am – not I am my business but my business is so me. I think there's also an analogous shift happening from a way of describing the style from that perspective is going from the kind of irreverence of hot pink, unfuck your brain which I love and is a part of me. And I'm not going to stop cursing. But moving into, as I'm writing my book and I'm really deep in the process right now, I'm like, "This is an upleveling. What does it look like to have the style of an international thought leader?"

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What does it look like to grow up in that way and for my work to grow up in that way?” Writing a book, not just the same as writing 12 blog posts in a row. You can’t just – it’s like everything having to uplevel. My editor’s probably listening to this thing, “Oh, Jesus, she just figured that out. This book is due at the end of January, what’s happening?” Don’t worry, Mina, it’s okay, I’m working on it.

Judith: Mina, she’s fine, she’s fine.

Kara: I’m going to hit my deadline, Mina, I swear to God, I’ve never missed a deadline. So I think, it’s that feels like part of it too. It’s all that same thing of how do I bring what I have liked about my style, my vibe, my energy but into a more mature, more powerful version.

Judith: Yeah. And I think maybe even just sticking with the word ‘powerful’ as opposed to the word ‘mature’ which has its own funny little bandwagon of friends that come along with it.

Kara: I’ve been mature since I was nine. I feel like it’s what I always heard growing up was, you’re so mature. So to me that doesn’t mean old, it means seasoned and powerful.

Judith: Yeah. But no, your face is different when you say seasoned and powerful versus mature. I’m watching your face. So it’s kind of funny, you’re seasoned and powerful. You had a whole head thing there.

Kara: Like I’m mature wine, okay, yeah, I see what you’re saying, okay, seasoned and powerful.

Judith: Yeah. Because this exercise, the words have power and they’re meaningful to you. So Kara’s going to give us some words, I have a list of words that she’s given us and adjectives. But no, these are going to have a

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different meaning to her than they are going to the next person, to the next person, to the next person which is why it's so important to not just wholesale adopt from an aspirational standpoint. I want to be like Kara's so I'm going to use hers. Kara's brain's totally different to yours, her experiences are different.

Her word 'mature' means something different to her than someone else who's listening. So, well, I want you to – maybe there's a word she uses that you're going to be like, "I kind of like that." Don't wholesale adopt hers because we're trying to inspire you to develop yours, not to aspire to be mini Kara's, although I'm sure to a certain degree.

Kara: That wouldn't have occurred to me to say so I'm glad you're here to say that.

Judith: Yeah. Well, I mean and this is something I work with my clients. They're like, "I like so and so's." I'm like, "But that means something totally different to her." Okay, so the first question I ask all my clients is, and it's going to sound funny and counterintuitive but I'll explain why I'm doing it this way once we've gone through the process a little bit. The first question is, what's your most favorite clothing item currently, the one you wear the most and you'd be bummed if it was dirty and you hopefully every Sunday make sure it's clean so it's available to you?

Kara: Interesting. I'm going to be difficult from the beginning. I feel like my favorite items are not things that I wear daily, they're more event dresses or things that aren't kind of daily wear. If it was daily wear, it's winter in New York right now.

Judith: Your most worn, let's start with that question, the most worn item.

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Kara: What would I be? Well, in the house it's actually, I'm wearing it right now, it's actually pretty cheap, it's a Torrid stretchy black dress but I just like it because it feels comfortable and form fitting, flattering in the way that I like. And it just makes me feel like I look cute when I'm just sitting around the house working but also it's super comfortable. If it's for going out, maybe my winter coat. The other day I was trying to put on an outfit that I felt my go to winter coat didn't go with which is a deep navy blue, Marina Rinaldi kind of down coat but very thin with a fake fur blue collar.

When that felt like it didn't go with my outfit I was like, "I hate all my other coats. I don't know what else I would want to wear."

Judith: So interesting, okay.

Kara: I don't really hate them all but they didn't go with what I was trying to wear.

Judith: Yeah. I actually did a podcast on this, when nothing matches, what's happening?

Kara: So I was having a lot of thoughts. As the stylist was telling my partner that all of his quasi neutrals could go together. I was like, "I have feelings."

Judith: Essentially since you wear a lot of print, you wear a lot of print.

Kara: I wear a lot of print in my – this is the thing, also you see me at coaching events and stuff. I wear a lot of print there but it feels like in the summer I do in my personal wardrobe too. I feel this real disconnect through my summer and my winter wardrobe is part of what's coming out here. But that's part of that architect in New York versus summer succubus party. I wear a lot of print in warmer months. I feel like I have found better

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options for that but in winter I have not given I hate anything on my neck and hate a waistband.

Judith: And sensory things are a real issue. And I've had a lot of clients who are on the spectrum or neurodiverse clients. So we talk a lot about seams and wearing certain specific types of fabric that are softer and aren't going to set off that cascade in your brain where you feel like your whole body's on fire.

Kara: Yeah exactly. I tried on a dress, I ordered this dress from Universal Standard and I was like, "This might be my perfect go to winter dress." Because it was just kind of a black [inaudible] but with a knot in the middle at the waist. It had long sleeves. I was like, "This is great." And then it came and the fabric, I was like, "No, never, I can't even put this on my body, so no."

Judith: So you're not alone in that. And friends, if you're listening, you're not alone in that. So I actually recommend for my peeps who have the sensory issues, you want to stick to cotton instead of Bamboo or Modal because they're so buttery soft and it's not going to set off that chemicals cascade. So okay, so we have your Torrid stretchy dress, we have your winter coat. So let's talk about the Torrid stretchy dress. I have some words you gave me but I want to hear. How do you feel about yourself when you're wearing it?

Kara: I feel, I think my thoughts are actually it's right on the line for me. I feel cute, I feel – I don't know if this is my thoughts on myself. I think that it looks like just pulled together enough. It's sort of like it feels comfortable but looks like I'm not just wearing, as my grandmother would say, some shmame, which means rag in Yiddish. And old Jewish women would be like, "What is the shmame you're wearing?" But I do think it's interesting as I think

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about it because I'm like, "I don't think I'd wear this out because it feels a little bit like it maybe would feel a little too young out."

It's like that disconnect is happening in my brain when I think about going outside or my style presentation in public. It feels like this would maybe be a little young even though it's just a black scoop neck dress with an elastic empire waist.

Judith: Well, because it's never the clothes, it's always our thought about ourselves in them. Okay, so oh my gosh, this is so interesting. Okay. And I'll explain a little bit in a second.

Kara: I really should have thought this through before I committed to doing this live on a podcast but there we go.

Judith: I'm having the greatest time, I don't know about your listener. But listener, I want you to do the same process, notice how I asked her how she's feeling about herself when wearing an item. Because that's really the most important part. And we got some juicy thoughts from her. So winter coat, how do you feel about yourself when you're wearing it?

Kara: I think what's coming up from this is that one of the reasons I don't like winter clothes is I feel I don't know what to do with the bottom third of my body, figuring out winter shoes and tights combinations that I like. I don't think either of these items I feel when I put them I'm like, "I feel amazing in this." So it feels more my thoughts about that coat are, it feels kind of sleek. It feels like it's just enough but not too much in terms of fabric and bulkiness.

My partner was just asking me, he wanted to buy me for a holiday present, this kind of, from this beautiful custom robe company, this velvet coat. And I was just like, "Oh God, its going to be so heavy." It was another sensory

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thing kind of. I tried on another puffer coat the other day and I was like, "It's so big." I don't want too much fabric. I don't like heavy sweaters. And so that coat feels like, yeah, it's just enough but not too much is my thought about that coat.

And that every partner I've ever had has told me I look like a Russian princess in that coat. There's something about the faux fur around the face thing.

Judith: Is it an imperial vibe?

Kara: I think it's just I'm very pale skinned and dark curly hair and it's a fake, I mean it's fake fur but it's a fur collar, just immediately it looks like I should be on a sled in a Tolle Story novel basically.

Judith: Okay, so a novel heroine, I like it. Okay, so second question is favorite clothing item of all time, does it matter what era or when?

Kara: Of all time.

Judith: Or asked another way because sometimes this helps and if you're listening and you're like, "That doesn't work for me." Another version of that question is, when was the last time you felt your most stylish and confident and what were you wearing?

Kara: Of all time is I still think about the sweater dress from years ago. But I think when I think about my current self, the thing that feels the most, I'll just say the feeling that's coming up in my mind. Let's just do it like it's coaching, what's the word coming up? The thing that's coming up is this very bright pink dress I have, the brand is called, it's like Azeela, do you know what I'm talking about? They make the plus size. It's called the Thistle dress. I have worn it on stage.

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It's actually quite voluminous but it's up top there's a deep V and the sleeves have elastic at the wrists with a little frill. And then it's a voluminous skirt straight down kind of.

Judith: I know exactly what dress you're talking about, yeah.

Kara: Yeah, it comes in a couple of – they make it a couple of different fabrics. I only have it in one because it's just such a striking silhouette. I was like, "It seems weird to have in multiple." I think that, I wouldn't have thought that but I think that somehow feels, I don't know, that's what's coming up. Also very un-visual, so it's just kind of hard.

Judith: No, this is okay. That's why sometimes we – and this is why, and this way because I think sometimes for those of us who are like, "I'm not creative, or I'm not good at [crosstalk]."

Kara: I'm more just meaning, I don't even remember what's in my closet because I can't see it. I feel if we went to my closet I'd be like, "I love those five things also." But right now they have dropped out of my consciousness like they don't exist.

Judith: Yeah. And honestly, I want whatever is actually going to be your top of mind to see what words come up, what words you associate with it, what emotions you associate with it because it's thoughts you have in your brain. So when you're wearing the bright pink dress, how do you feel about yourself?

Kara: I think I feel like fun and commanding maybe because I wear it to teach in often. It feels stylish. I think it feels especially with plus sized clothing and my figure, most of the stuff I wear follows a certain kind of silhouette. And I think this has a more kind of striking unusual silhouette. And so to me that makes it feel like it's something that is chosen more for

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style I guess or for aesthetics than for being flattering or it just feels different I guess than a lot.

I probably have six of Tanya Taylor Blaire dress and I wear those to teach in all the time and I love them but this feels like, this dress is very different from everything else I have.

Judith: Yeah. How do you show up differently when you're wearing that dress versus the Tanya Taylor dress?

Kara: Well, I think there's something here. I don't know that I would wear, I will wear that hot, that Azeeza, the Thistle dress. I'm sure Azeeza's wrong, when I'm on stage. I don't really wear it in my regular life because I think it feels like – yeah, I don't know, it feels like it's a lot or if you're going to your cousin's baby shower, maybe commanding, is not supposed to be [inaudible].

Judith: Why not?

Kara: Okay, Judith, this is getting very deep for the podcast. I mean all the podcast is just me just talking about my thoughts.

Judith: Well, and here's what, you all, this is why this shit matters because just notice some of the things and I won't deeply coach her here. I'll message her later about some of these things.

Kara: I'm going to pay her later for the whole service.

Judith: Notice how different it was when she's like, "I'm on stage" and there's somehow a difference. Even just how she describes the Tanya Taylor dress just like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." To the pink dress, she shows up

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differently because she sees herself differently because she sees herself playing different roles.

Kara: But I think it has to do also with being a fat person in the world and how there's something about showing up in a – I don't know, why would I not wear that dress to my cousin's baby shower? I mean I think it feels like – there's something about it feeling like too much. There's something about adding a lot more volume to my body. There's something about showing up in a silhouette that is sort of – I mean I think these things are changing. But when I was in my 20s, when this stuff was getting set 15/20 years ago.

I think there is more allowance when you're dealing fat phobia, there's more allowance if you are presenting, you can present kind of hyper feminine and that is sort of semi permissible. I think my style is genuinely very feminine. I don't secretly wish to be wearing more androgynous clothing. I feel very, my gender presentation and my style are both kind of high femme in a way that feels authentic as much as things can, given socialization. But I think there's something about wearing clothes that are closer to the body that feels like it's part of that.

Judith: Yeah, because I mean the three things that we're socialized to think, we have to strive for with our clothing is slimming, flattering. And the third one which is totally escaping my brain right now.

Kara: So it's probably some version of those, yeah.

Judith: Some version of those but slimming or flattering is what we're told we're supposed to strive for with our clothing. So anything that floats away from the body or sort of the hyper version of femininity in a way that's not slimming or flattering, or smoothing, there's the other word. So I guess, yes, the third.

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Kara: Smoothing, yes, I at least do not do the smoothing. I have not done worn shapewear in a long time.

Judith: Yeah, but this is part of the programming. So no wonder why there's a little internal reaction when we're like, this dress that floats away from your body. It's super cute, you all, I've seen her in it. I just fucking love this dress on you. But it floats away from your body, it's a lot of color, it's all the things.

Kara: Yeah, this is interesting because the other dress I have that I feel like when I walk out, I'm like this seems chic to me is also not very form fitting, it's unfortunately not a very well-constructed dress so it sometimes feels like it's not going to last very long. And every time I put it on I'm fighting with the fact that it's cheap fabric. I think it's from ELOQUII but it's basically a long black satiny kind of – I don't know what you would call it even. It's not a shift dress, it's kind of like a sack dress, the whole sack life phenomenon.

But I think similarly like that, I don't wear it super often because the quality isn't great. The plat at the front won't lie flat but that kind of style I think I like for similar reasons.

Judith: Okay. So let's put it all together a little bit so you can understand.

Kara: Okay. So my new style archetype is sack life is what I'm hearing.

Judith: Sack life.

Kara: Is I am a flower, I am a miller's wife, I live in a burlap sack.

Judith: I mean it's a look, it's a vibe, it's a mood, if it's how you want to roll.

Kara: [Crosstalk] belt, just tie a little rope around it.

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Judith: A rope would be actually very on point, it would have made sense. Okay, so typically I'll take all the adjectives a client gave to me. And I'll repeat them back to them and see what comes up for them. And I'll offer them what I think it could be and we just play with it. So these are all the words you've said. There's sexy, vamp, goddess, which has a totally different conversation for you.

Kara: Yes, goddess is like you're a middle school art teacher and you wear large chunky necklaces.

Judith: You see, and I think of goddess, I think of something totally different. This is why it matters what it means to you.

Kara: Yeah. Well, we can call it our goddess era, it's like when you're in your 60s and you start wearing floating chiffon and lots of, yeah, lots of baubles, that's what it means in my relationship.

Judith: That's a whole other vibe. Cute came up for you which I think is interesting, cute. Pulled together, young, sleek, Russian princess. This is great. Fun, commanding, stylish and striking.

Kara: I like striking.

Judith: I like striking. I'm digging striking.

Kara: I don't even remember saying that. Did I actually say that?

Judith: You did, I wrote it down, you said it, came right out of your brain. How fun is that?

Kara: Yeah, I like striking.

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Judith: I also like sleek but not in the sense of squishing your body down. As like a mood.

Kara: Like I'm a seal. Seals can be quite large but they're very sleek in the water. So if I were a striking seal what would I wear?

Judith: Okay. But let's think of it in terms of the model. So you're a woman, and we could play with these two words.

Kara: No, I kind of like it. I feel like if I was a seal, sleek like a seal makes sense to me as an archetype.

Judith: If that works for you, cool. Sleek like a seal.

Kara: We'll have to try some of these things out but I like striking, sleek is interesting just because I don't really feel like anything about me is all that sleek but yeah, I think it has a kind of – there is something I like about that. I don't really feel like – and I like the word 'powerful' but I don't really feel like I need – I feel like striking kind of does that in your face way.

Judith: Yeah. I don't think you need it, yeah. And it's not prescriptive, so it's not like every outfit needs to tick the boxes because on some hand you will have whatever is sleek to you. That's how you described your winter coat, by the way, it was the first word you used.

Kara: Yes. No, I remember saying that word, I do.

Judith: So sleek may come out in the outfit and then you are striking in terms of your personality. Sometimes the outfit will be more striking and you will be more sleek in your personality.

Kara: Okay, so we think it's a duo adjective, sleek and striking?

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Judith: Yeah. What do you think?

Kara: Okay, I like it. It's interesting. Because one of the things I wanted listeners to be thinking about is the way that once you come up with whatever that statement is for yourself you are then using it to make decisions. And I feel like one way of testing if it's useful is to think if I went through my closet could I identify what's sleek and striking and what's not? Any of these could. If I was like, "I'm a Russian princess, what is in my closet?"

I would have three velvet dresses left and nothing else. But I don't really think that's in general my style archetype. So yeah, I mean I think I like the idea of playing with sleek and striking.

Judith: Yeah. So if I'm the woman who is sleek and striking is in your T line, how does it feel in your F line?

Kara: Does it feel, where is my F line?

Judith: Your listener, she has closed her eyes and is thinking now, just so you know what's happening.

Kara: I was thinking. I don't know. I'm trying to think if I have a strong physical response to it. I feel like a shark.

Judith: Tell us more.

Kara: I don't know. I feel like a shark is sleek but can strike, but that's a different version of striking. I don't feel good about being – shark doesn't feel powerful to me, that feels like I meet somebody and not in a fun way. I think striking feels kind of strong and powerful. It feels like forward

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momentum and sort of assertive but not confrontational. Sleek feels – I don't know, I just feel like a seal going through the water.

Judith: You get to play with that image, whatever that means to you. I know some places where things seem to feel easier and some other...

Kara: Well, I think maybe the reason I like sleek is that that's really –what sleek is actually describing I think maybe is how clothes feel on my body, not so much what it looks like. Striking feels more like it describes what it looks like and sleek is more that's the sensory stuff of okay, if I feel like there's no hitches or interruptions in how things feel. So there's nothing that's too heavy or too itchy, or too whatever on my body. This dress I'm wearing right now – well, I mean potentially somewhat striking just as in I have a very large bosom in this dress, that's sort of obvious so I guess that's striking.

But it feels sleek in the sense that it doesn't bother any part, it feels – everything feels smooth kind of. So I think maybe my attraction to the word 'sleek' is less about silhouette and more about how it feels.

Judith: Which is cool because if we're using this as a way to make decisions or to think about other meta areas of our life, how does that phrase support some decision making, where could you use some more sleekness.

Kara: Yeah, I like that. I think even when I think about from the business perspective, not that these necessarily have to carry over but if I think about who am I evolving into as a thought leader, as an author, as a CEO, as an intellectual figure. I think those are also both words that I would want to apply to my work. I like it.

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Judith: It's fun to play with. And you just keep trying it on. I highly recommend to most of my clients and anyone who's doing this exercise with us, put it everywhere where you can see it, little sticky notes just as little reminders to yourself. If I were to drop into that in my thought line for a minute just to see how it feels. If I were to drop into it from an emotional place just to see how that changes maybe some decision was confronted with or something I was pondering over. If I was coming from that place, what would I do with my decision?

I also think it's fun to play with the words over and over because there might be some synonym that just feels better once you try it on but is very close. So you get to play with those as much as you want. And you get to do this exercise whenever something changes that you're like, "Okay, I feel like something's changing, it's time for a change." This is a great starting point, especially in light of the new year, when this comes out.

Kara: Yeah, maybe it's smooth and striking, I'll keep playing with it. Can you give us an example of how, you know, you talked in the beginning about how you use this not just for what you're going to wear but how you might show up in your business, how you show up in whatever, can you share sort of what is your current version of this and how you use it in those other ways?

Judith: Yeah. So for me right now it's elegant and svelte. And I dress very ultra-feminine. I also have things that have exaggerated features.

Kara: Okay, I have an exaggerated figure.

Judith: I have an exaggerated figure and I'm ultra-feminine in my presentation. I'm very comfortable that way. I also sometimes will wear a three piece suit and dress, what would be considered more masculine in my own feminine way. But svelte to me, and it's something I'm working on

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myself is learning how to deal with other people's attraction to me and not making it mean that I have done anything in my A line necessarily. They have their own model, I have my own model and it's something coming from abuse and coming through that.

Now I'm on the other side I'm like, "Well, what would it be like to just be svelte?" If I'm going to sell, and our coach, teacher, mentor, one of the things she told me, she's like, "You clearly don't like selling. So how about you just do what you naturally do well, which is you like to flirt and you're very good at it." So to me svelte kind of has that coquette sort of archetype and that flirtatious archetype. And I enjoy that.

So if I stepped into my business, my copy, my marketing from that kind of svelte energy, flirtatious energy, how differently might I show up without all the – around selling or people are saying things about my body to me because they're going to? I have a J cup, they're going to say things.

Kara: Sure. Listen, my partner always talks about this time that we went to – I was wearing something more low cut than I normally would out and we were sitting in a window bar of a ramen place, and he just watched everybody who walked by do a double take and turn around. And just every gender, every orientation, it was just like seeing a wonder of the world.

Judith: Yeah, the humans can't help themselves, I'm like, "Yes, they're real and please don't poke them [crosstalk]." But if I take that idea of svelte into my marketing, my copy, how I show up as a businesswoman and attracting clients. And I think it just got more fun for me.

Kara: I think coquette is a good description of what my 30s were like. That feels like what my energy was like that is now shifting. So that is also just interesting to see, I really love that energy. And that's the way I used to identify and now I don't, that doesn't feel like me anymore.

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Judith: To me because I'm in my late 30s, so that coquette energy I think will transform, and from mademoiselle coquette to madame coquette. And that's a different vibe. It still has the undercurrent of playfulness.

Kara: Yeah, I like it. Yeah, and I think I'm coming as somebody who is very comfortable with her sexuality, I did that part and I'm still. But evolving, yeah, I think for me, none of this is being the coquette is this time limited, or you evolve past it. I just mean for me and my life, I went through a period, it's just interesting to hear especially because this is I feel like where I was before I had been. So it's interesting to hear it come up.

And it's almost like an ex you think fondly of where I'm like, "That was good times, I did like that but no, I don't, don't get back together. I don't think just because that was good doesn't mean that's where you are now."

Judith: And I think too, with any of these style statements or thinking fondly of some other version of yourself, we can love her, she's a part of a long line of lovers that you have in your relationship with yourself. And now we go get to meet all these new and different versions of yourself over time. But they're not better than you and I think we have to say this as coaches because sometimes – and my clients are probably going [crosstalk].

Kara: Right, they just think chronological means moral evolution and it doesn't, yeah.

Judith: Right. As opposed to we're dropping in on a timeline and you're still very much a human which is why I start with your most worn item. So we're carrying a little bit of you that existed forward because she's still going to be there.

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Kara: What do you do if somebody is like – we have to wrap up but what you do if somebody's like, "My most worn item is my torn stained leggings because I can't deal with anything else in my closet?"

Judith: Honestly, I do get that sometimes and I think it's the best answer ever. There's no wrong way to answer that question because there is part of you right now that's seeking comfort, that's seeking ease, that's seeking versatility.

Kara: Yeah, right. It stills you something.

Judith: It still tells us something. So even if you're shame answering the question, you're like, "Oh my God, it's my holey stained sweater from the third grade." I'm like, "Yes, well, tell me everything about it." Because it's a wealth of knowledge and information into yourself. You've kept it for a reason. You're wearing it for a reason. There is not going to be better than here. You're going to carry a little piece of you forward. You're still a human, so what is that you're humaning around that we need to factor in?

For you, smoothness, that's going to be carried forward, we need to acknowledge that.

Kara: Humaning around. Alright my friends, my chickens. So obviously go check Judith out. Where can they find you, Judith?

Judith: You can go to judithgaton.com and just click on the Work with Me button to learn about things. Or you can check out my podcast, Style Masterclass.

Kara: And go do your style exercise, or you can do this for any area of your life. And I think obviously the same exercise, you can be using for how you want to be in your business, how you want to be in your relationship, how

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you want to show up in your job, as a parent, whatever it is? It's anchoring to, sometimes it's more value. Sometimes it's more aesthetics but having that kind of guiding principles. And then yes, you need to come to New York and we'll go shopping in the spring.

Judith: Yeah, count me in, oh my gosh.

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