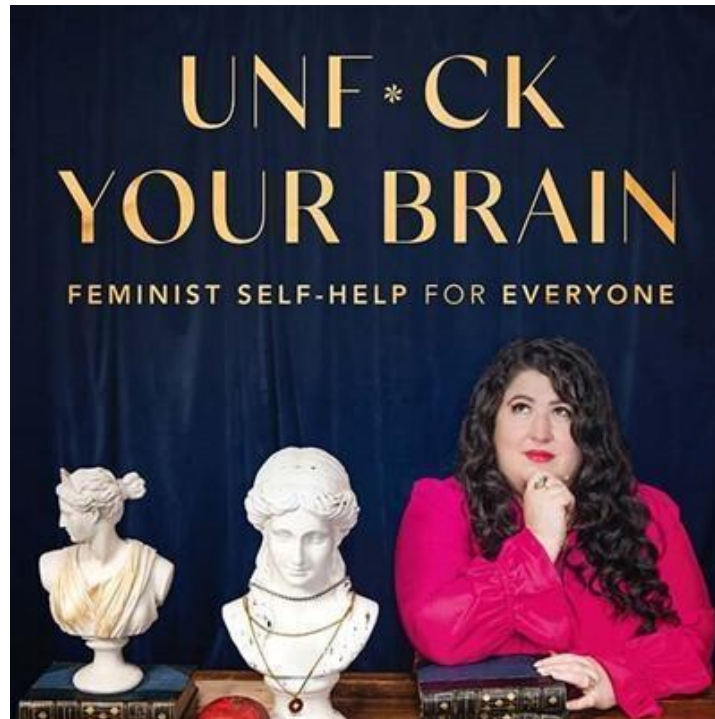


**UFYB 208: Patriarchy and Religious Conditioning:
A Conversation with Advanced Certification in
Feminist Coaching Graduate Amy Logan**



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.

Kara: All right my chickens. If you had asked me five years ago would I be interviewing an ex-Mormon coach or just in fact would I have as much familiarity with the Church of Latter-day Saints as I do now, I would have said no.

It turns out that actually for a variety of reasons, quite a lot of I would say disproportionate number of members of the Church of Latter-day Saints in the coaching world. For actually kind of fascinating ideological reasons I think in the general coaching world. A little less common here in the feminist world. But my amazing coaching student, and call yourself an ex-Mormon coach? Is that right?

Amy: Yes. I do. Yes.

Kara: Amy Logan. I'm going to let her introduce herself. We are going to talk about Amy's journey through questioning and then eventually choose to leave. I always say this wrong. Is it the Church of?

Amy: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Kara: Jesus Christ. I kept leaving out Jesus. That's what a Jew would do. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Trying to be respectful as I have been told Mormon is not the preferred term anymore, at least for

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outsiders. So her experience of leaving the church and how kind of feminism and patriarchy and women's own authority kind of showed up in that journey.

Obviously, I feel like it's always good to do a disclaimer. We're talking about Amy's experience and what she experienced in the church. This is not a condemnation of any particular religion. Lord knows Judaism has plenty of patriarchs too. So it's not about singling out any particular religion. Both the specific conversation about Amy's experience and a kind of more general conversation about how being raised in a patriarchal religion, which many people are, kind of impacts a lot of things. So tell us a little bit about yourself Amy.

Amy: I would put a disclaimer too. Yes, I am an on purpose ex-Mormon coach, and maybe we'll get to why I use that term. My family's still in the church. I love so many Mormons they are countless. Mormon people are still my people. I love them to forever and ever. But yeah. I grew up in the Mormon faith. I was born into it. My mom was a convert at 16.

Kara: Wait, that's so interesting. Okay, I already have so many questions. Sorry you finish, but then we've got to talk about what made your mother convert at 16.

Amy: Okay yeah. I don't know all the details, but it is interesting to me. My mom's personality, my personality, it's an interesting thing. So the cliff notes of my story. Born into it, 100% in, believing member, did all the Mormon rights of passage. Married in the Temple, went to BYU, all of that kind of thing. Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Married in the Temple, had

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children, was all in. Did all the things, held all the callings, which would be the way we served within the church.

I had what was commonly known as a faith crisis. That's kind of the main term we use for it. It's morphing into truth crisis, some people say. I still use the word and verbiage Mormon because when I left the church, the church themselves were still using that term. So to me, that was me in the church. I was a Mormon. There was even a marketing campaign. It was called "I am the Mormon." Everything was very much around that. So that's how I identify as an ex-Mormon.

Kara: Well also I just think in-group/out-group is different. If you're a member of a group. Like I will call myself whatever kind of Jew I want when you're on the outside.

Amy: Yeah.

Kara: Okay. So many questions, and obviously I want to talk about your journey and what led you to there. But can we talk about your mother converting at 16? Fell in love with a Mormon boy?

Amy: You don't know, I don't know the order of things, but yes. She did fall in love with a Mormon boy. My mom was always and has always been a very spiritual person. Her parents, my grandparents, weren't religious at all. As a little girl, she would walk herself down to the Mormon church so she could attend.

Kara: Wow. Was that just like the closest church? Or did she always have some kind of pull towards this religion in particular?

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Amy: No, I don't think she had a pull towards it. There was a time, when my mom married my dad, and my dad was a never member, NeverMormon. They went to the Lutheran church when I was like itty, itty bitty. She always felt a connection with God and Jesus and just Christianity in general. I think there were a few people in her neighborhood that were Mormon and kind of scooped her under their wings. But she's always had a very strong spiritual pull.

Kara: But your father was not religious and not a member of the church.

Amy: Correct. He had a very opposite upbringing with some, what would you say? The word is very extreme...

Kara: Fundamentalist?

Amy: Fundamentalist Christianity backwards Kentucky, that kind of thing. So he had a very abusive religious upbringing. You know spare the rod, spoil the child kind of thing. So she did meet a Mormon boy. I'm going to be all over the place.

Kara: That's okay.

Amy: So just keep me on track if I go off track too far. She did meet a young man who went on a mission. Mormon boys go on missions. Back in the day it was around age 19. It's since changed to 18. He went on a mission, and I think during that time she met my dad.

Kara: Oh wow. Okay.

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Amy: Yeah. One of those stories.

Kara: So you were raised very participatory in the church. So at some point she started going to Temple, participating in Mormon life more, and your father was just like, “Nope, not me.”

Amy: Nope. His big reasoning was up until 1978, people of color but specifically Black people of African descent were not allowed to have the Mormon priesthood.

Kara: Like can you explain for people what the priesthood is though? Because they may think that just means being a priest.

Amy: Okay. No, yeah, no not at all. Boys through the church go through certain rights of passage where they receive different levels of priesthood, which give them special keys in order to perform certain ceremonies. They can go on a mission. They can bless people with laying on of hands. They can hold positions in the church, whether it's a bishop or state president and kind of going up through the authority of the church with the priesthood, which women are not allowed to hold.

Kara: And until 1978, men of color but particularly Black men were not allowed to hold.

Amy: Correct. Yes, yes.

Kara: Could you still attend the church if you were not a priesthood holder.

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Amy: Yes. Anyone could attend the church, but they just didn't have the priesthood. That's key to being able to make it to the Celestial Kingdom, which is the highest degree in the Mormon hierarchy of heaven.

Kara: Wait, so there are no women in the Celestial Kingdom?

Amy: Yes, yes, but they have to be married to a priesthood holder.

Kara: Okay. You have to be sealed to a priesthood holder.

Amy: Yes. You have to be sealed to a priesthood holder.

Kara: Okay. So just a tiny bit patriarchal.

Amy: Just a little bit.

Kara: The religion. So I'm curious of when you were growing up, did you feel like you noticed that? Did it just seem totally normal to you?

Amy: It was just what I knew. It was what it was. I didn't ever question. Like I said at the beginning of this, I was the—I don't want to say perfect Mormon girl, but I was the exemplary Mormon girl. I did all the things.

Kara: Even though your father. Were your parents still married?

Amy: They divorced when I was nine, almost 10.

Kara: But did you have a relationship with your dad?

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Amy: Spotty.

Kara: I see. Okay.

Amy: So my mom quickly remarried in the Temple.

Kara: I see.

Amy: Then we were kind of this family, and my dad was peripheral.

Kara: Okay. I was like imagining you in a house where one person is talking the whole time about how it's ridiculous and one person is completely in it.

Amy: Right, yeah.

Kara: But you were really in like a nuclear family basically that as oriented towards the Church.

Amy: Yes, yeah. We were all in. It was just our life. I didn't question it. We had the truth. I thought how was I so lucky to be blessed into this family that had all the truth. This family and then this church at a higher level.

Kara: So then when did that start to change for you? What happened?

Amy: That's the interesting thing. My life in the church was good. I loved growing up in the church. We had a very strong youth program, and it was life. It was everything. We're kept pretty busy in the Mormon church. They give you what are called callings. So it's considered a lay ministry from a certain point down where everyone teaches Sunday school, teaches what

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we call primary which is where the young children go. You teach young mens, young womens, just the different parts of the Church.

Everyone kind of breaks off after the main meeting, which is Sacrament Meeting on Sundays. It was always a three hour Sunday block of time that we would go to church for. Then everyone had callings, and then you had activities. Just super, super busy. It's literally a lifestyle really.

So I didn't start questioning until I was about 30. It's funny because we just recently moved back to Utah from Texas, and I was going through an old journal. This was 2001. In that journal, I'd made a to do list. On the top of the to do list was to find out if the Church is true. I just found that.

Kara: You're like pick up the groceries and find out if the Church is true.

Amy: Find out if the Mormon Church is true.

Kara: But what sparked you beginning to have doubts or questions?

Amy: I would say the very first. We kind of call it a shelf. Like we probably do this with other parts of life too where we just go, "Well, I don't need to worry about that yet. I can put it on my shelf." When I was a young mom, had my first baby in '97. My husband was in the bishopric. The bishopric is like a congregation. The Mormon Church breaks, who you meet with at Church in congregations, which is kind of like boundaries in your neighborhood.

My husband was in the leadership of that ward, and there was a big project going on to where he was gone five days a week. My first thought was this

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is a family church. I rarely see my husband and we have a newborn. Because he also had a full time job. I didn't think too much about it. It was what it was. We ended up moving. It was fine. Of course he was also in other leadership positions in other words, but I just didn't think much about it.

It was around 2000 when—I would say my main reason for questioning was the concepts and teachings around polygamy. I was having a really hard time with that concept because it's in our canonized scripture that we will be polygamists in the next life. It just rubbed me the wrong way. I'll be on record. I have no problem with polygamy if everyone is of age and consenting.

Kara: With polyamory really.

Amy: Right, right. Like that's fine. I don't have a problem with it, but it was still in my religious studies. I would ask my husband. I would ask whoever I could. The answer I would always get was don't worry about it. It will work itself out in the next life. I'm like but I signed up for this, and it's no longer sitting well with me. So that was kind of my first heavy shelf item.

Kara: Interesting. Because it's like in the next life polygamy is...And they mean polygamy, not polyamory, right?

Amy: Yes.

Kara: It's like one man, multiple wives. It's like mandatory, right?

Amy: I'm like well.

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Kara: Right. You're like I support if people all want to consensually be involved in non-monogamous relationships, that's one thing.

Amy: Totally. I hadn't allowed myself to study what was outside of kind of canonized correlated Mormon material. So finally in 2006, I gave myself permission to read anything. I was 36. I had a couple kids. I thought if the Church is true, it won't matter what I read.

Kara: Totally.

Amy: So I went down a rabbit hole.

Kara: This is like spoiler alert. It turned out to be better.

Amy: Exactly. I went through probably a couple of years of intense research. Found out that, what my take on it is, is that we were taught a very whitewashed version of the history version of the Church. I felt very betrayed because what I had believed my whole life was literally the tip of the iceberg of what was underneath it.

Kara: What did you feel like had been left out or had been whitewashed?

Amy: For example, so Joseph Smith was the founder of the Church back in the 1800s. He was an advocate for polygamy, but he spent many years being in polygamist relationships without his legal wife knowing. Revelations seemed to come at convenient times for the Mormon Church. That seems to kind of be...I don't want to like break anyone else's shelf out there that might be listening.

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Kara: If they're listening to *UnF*ck Your Brain*, they're at least outside the canon. Even Jody Moore's students who listen to the podcast, they've encountered some things outside.

Amy: Okay. Well I think that more information is known than since I've left. I officially left in 2006. Had my name removed from the Church records in 2009, which is also a process you have to go through. Now the Church is coming up with what they called church essays to address some of these harder issues that people didn't know about. It's a little bit of an inoculation to start teaching the things that we, kind of my generation, that didn't know about because it was before the information age.

Kara: I was going to say. Do you think this is partly about the internet? It's so integral that I hadn't thought about it, but now people can get access to other resources.

Amy: Right, I think that's exactly what's going on.

Kara: Wow.

Amy: So they are trying to come clean with some of the information, but for me they weren't doing that at the time. I was told what I was reading was anti-Mormon literature. I'm like but it's literally just the history. The book I bought was at Deseret Book, which is a church owned bookstore.

Kara: That's so interesting really. So the church owned bookstore is publishing books that contain this information.

Amy: Right around that time.

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Kara: Interesting.

Amy: That book that was published, I think it was published in 2005 I want to say. I read it in 2006. So they were starting to. You know in every religion, you've got the people who know all the things. The keeper of the information.

Kara: Right. Of course some people know all of it and choose to be a member of the religion, right.

Amy: Right and that still happens today.

Kara: It's not like this information means you make a certain choice. It sounds like for you it felt like a betrayal because you felt like you hadn't been sort of told what was going on.

Amy: Right. I felt like I was going to all my meetings. I held leadership callings as I grew up and was a married woman in the Church. I was primary president. Young woman's president. I don't want to say authority, but I was over certain aspects of the Church as far as women can do.

I'm like I'm all in. I go to the temple. I wear my temple garments daily. I do all the things, and here I am 100% in. How did I not know this information? That's the part that felt like a betrayal to me because I just thought that's where I felt the deceiving was. Just teach us that. We believed a lot of crazy things. Why not just tell us all the things?

Kara: Just add this in. We can believe this too. It's fine.

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Amy: Exactly. Yeah.

Kara: So how did you, I'm curious what it was like to go from kind of living a life where men had decided pretty much everything for you and men had all of the authority, right. It sounds like women can't be priesthood holders, women can't hold Church positions, right. The whole thing is run by men. So how do you think that kind of impacted you?

I mean I actually just coached another person who had just recently left the Church about all the trouble she had claiming her own authority coming out of the Church. Because she felt like number one, women aren't the authority. But also seeing what she saw in the Church and feeling like there were abuses of power, which again happen in every religion for sure. What she then associated with authority was basically male abusive power. So she didn't even want any authority.

Amy: Right. It's very common to hear many Mormon women, maybe not all of them, saying, "It's okay. I don't even want the priesthood. That's like extra responsibility." It's such a psychological impact to where I went through all of my deconstruction. I kind of unraveled that. Quickly after that was the unraveling of Christianity. I was pretty good, but now I was in a space in my life where am I going to stay in my marriage or am I not? I was still in what I would consider crisis mode because I literally wanted nothing to do with anything Mormon.

Kara: How did you husband and kids handle that?

Amy: I kept it from my kids for a while. I finally got the nerve to tell my husband because here we entered—Like I got married at 20, right, like very

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young. We entered this agreement. So I still didn't see the patriarchal connection. I was going through this, and I was sharing information with him saying, "Please read this information." For some reason, he wasn't very interested in it. At the same time I was going through my Mormon master's program, that's what I call it, he was getting his executive MBA at BYU.

So he was definitely preoccupied. He worked full time and then did this program at night. I couldn't read enough. I couldn't study enough. Because part of me was like are we sure? Did I really not know these things that Mormons believed? That's why I felt so betrayed. Now I've forgot the question you asked me.

Kara: No, no, no. So how did he take it kind of when you told him these doubts?

Amy: Yeah. I mean we had lots and lots of different conversations, but at the end, for him, it came down to his belief in Jesus Christ. But there was this big disconnect. Because I started, as is my personality when I don't know what to do, I go quiet. This is, of course, me back then. I'm different now than I was.

Kara: Even quieter.

Amy: Yeah. Even more quiet. So what I thought was interesting, and the piece that was so great being in your ACFC program was making the connections. Like I said, I had already deconstructed Mormonism, Christianity, and I'm fine in the space that I'm in. But one of the things that I remember writing about as I was going through my faith crisis is, "I'm just

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going to let my husband continue raising the boys Mormon.” Almost like a default. Like he knows better. Like maybe I'm not smart enough.

Kara: Like you can leave, but everybody else is Mormon. So that's just got to continue.

Amy: Right. I think that's where I didn't see the patriarchal intersection of how that was instilled in my life. He's a good man. He's a good father. We're not married anymore, but he was never an authority abuser. We had a very good relationship actually.

I remember walking on the beach with a girlfriend in California one day. Of course we were living in Utah. So I was in California for a time. I was telling her this. I'm like I just don't think I should tell my kids. It was kind of like an identity crisis too. Because I'm like who am I if you strip the Mormon label from me? Who am I? I don't know. It made me reconstruct everything. I literally wanted to run away from my kids too. That's how difficult this was for me. I'm like anything, all the decisions I've made, everything. I want nothing to do with it.

Came to my senses. I didn't want to leave my kids, but it didn't cross my mind. Because I'm like, “I'll just leave. They'll be better. They can stay in that world.” Because we were living in Utah, everyone we knew was Mormon. My husband's family, his whole big family lived within 30 minutes of each other. My family, except for one brother, is still all Mormon. It's a very lonely time because you feel disconnected from everything that you knew.

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So I was talking to this friend who she had left the Church years before. I was telling her this story of well, I'm just going to kind of default to my husband. Let him lead the way. She's like, "Why would you think your children don't want to hear your side of the story?" I remember thinking, "Well, that's a good question?"

Kara: Interesting point.

Amy: I'm still their mom.

Kara: Right.

Amy: They were 10 and 12 at the time. So they were still young. Maybe even younger than that. Probably 9 and 11. So I slowly, as it was age appropriate, started sharing things with them.

Kara: They stayed in the Church.

Amy: One is still in the Church, and one is out. So I have a son who's served a mission who has also gotten married in the temple, which I couldn't go to. Like there's a lot of things that you do give up when you leave, but I knew that consciously. I made that decision. Of course, they were young boys at the time.

But I fast forwarded, and I thought there may be a day when I can't go to the wedding. They did have a little ring ceremony as a side note. So it was fine. But it's still one of those things. There is some exclusion because you're no longer worthy to participate in going to the temple and the ordinances that go on in there.

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Kara: Yes, I'm curious. So you referenced ACFC. That's my advanced certification in feminist coaching. Amy went through it. I actually trained Amy in her first coaching certification when she went through the life coach school. She showed up being like, "What's this? Where am I? I just heard a podcast and showed up." And here you are.

Amy: Can I insert a little story there?

Kara: Of course.

Amy: So I think I was one of the last couple groups that got to go through live through the Life Coach School. We were put in groups ahead of time. So I was aware of you, and Christa St-Germain was my other.

Kara: Oh yeah.

Amy: You and Christa. I'm like who is this weird woman? Like you are so opposite of me. I just thought I don't know. She's kind of rubbing me the wrong way. Then I met you because I was just like observing you through social media.

Kara: I was rubbing you the wrong way from a distance.

Amy: Then I met you and instantly fell in love with you. I think it's such a funny little my brain was in such a weird space then. So then you're teaching me all this, and I'm like, "I have no clue what you're talking about.

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Kara: I know. I just remember being like oh wait. Most of these people just know the basic tools. You were like, "What do you mean circumstances are neutral? What are you talking about?"

Amy: What's this model thing? I don't understand.

Kara: I remember that.

Amy: But see that was an example of me trusting myself sooner. I'm like this seems like something I need to be doing. I don't know why, but I'm going to do it. So I kind of went in blind. I am glad I did.

Kara: Then there you are. You were right to trust yourself. So I'm curious sort of from the feminist perspective. At what point, if ever, did you start identifying as a feminist, for example. Like would you say you thought about this journey through the feminist lens before you kind of came through the coaching world or ACFC?

Amy: I would say somewhere in the back of my head I'm thinking, "I think I identify as a feminist." But it still had ties to being a dirty word.

Kara: Sure.

Amy: From my childhood. Like the ERA, the Church was against the ERA, all of that kind of thing. So that's still playing in the back of my head. Obviously, I am a student of yours. I follow you around wherever you go. I've loved everything that you do.

Kara: Just like a little train.

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Amy: A little puppy. So I'm like all of this is making sense. Maybe the term feminist isn't such a bad word. I remember I was debating whether to sign up. You were messaging me, and you were like, "I think this might be really good for what you do."

Kara: I was like I think if you're helping people leave an extremely patriarchal religion and most of your clients are women, feminism might come in handy.

Amy: Yes. It's one of the reoccurring patterns I see with my clients. They don't even see...I mean you can see patriarchy. All you have to look is the hierarchy of Mormonism, and you can see all the men. I don't think they internalize it that way. You can't see it when you're in it. So then when you leave, you're deconstructing so many things. I don't know if your brain is necessary going, "Well, now we will dismantle patriarchy."

Kara: You're like I'm tired. I've gotta lay down. I just dismantled Christianity.

Amy: I'm exhausted.

Kara: I'm curious now having gone through ACFC and really taking a deep dive into feminist theory and all of the kind of layers of intersectionality we've worked through, I'm curious how that's changed if it's changed your perspective on the work that you do and coaching people through these kids of faith crisis.

Amy: Yeah, definitely. I mean I've always used the term trusting yourself, which was you are your own authority. I wasn't even necessarily considering it in the Mormon patriarchy just because I left that behind me a

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long time ago. It was kind of missing piece in me being able to see, “Oh, that’s why my client is thinking that. It’s not just Mormonism, but it’s all the things.” The Mormon patriarchy hierarchy. I mean the term church authority is something people use all the time. Well, the church authority is men.

Kara: Right.

Amy: So in my project that I turned into for ACFC, I kind of outlined this hierarchy of men and then women are down at the bottom.

Kara: It’s so interesting because like even for someone like me who’s outside the church, when I hear church authority it’s just sort of a neutral phrase. It doesn’t mean anything to me. To imagine it as it’s so heavily male, for you or for someone who’s come through the church, right. Because even if you’re not conscious of it, the church authority is all male. It’s male authority.

Amy: Well and to go a little deeper in that. For example, twice a year the Church holds what they call a general conference where they have speakers, and mostly male speakers. They do have some women speakers, but women weren’t even allowed to pray publicly in general conference until 2013. I didn’t even think about that when I was in. I mean I wasn’t in in 2013. But those are the types of things when it’s just the way things are done, it just was like well this is how things are done. I didn’t question it.

Kara: Yeah. Well, I do think there's that interesting—I was thinking about how you said like that Mormon women are like well, obviously not all of

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them, but there's sort of this shared joke of like, "Well, we don't even want that authority."

I think about my obviously being Jewish, that's my perspective. I grew up in what's called conservative, which doesn't mean politically conservative. It just means like sort of basically keep some of the traditions. You're not completely reformed. You haven't completely gotten rid of all the rules. Obviously, there's Orthodox, there's ultra-Orthodox. I have relatives on the whole spectrum everywhere from basically no practice to like live in upstate communities of only the ultra-Orthodox and our Haredi and all of that.

There is this similar kind of like women have less spiritual obligations, right. Like men have to pray this much a day. Women, they don't have to do all the same prayers.

I feel like this comes up when talking about patriarchy a lot where it's almost like people misunderstand patriarchy as being like it means that everything operates to women's disadvantage, right. Or like in a system of white supremacy, everything operates with people of color's disadvantage. The reality is always more nuanced than that in some ways, right. Like it's a "benefit" for most women to not be in a draft for the army, right?

Amy: Right.

Kara: But that's a signal of patriarchy that the men are drafted, and women aren't. Obviously, there are places where it may look like well it's not oppressive. This is a benefit. I don't have to do this thing. I don't have to go to synagogue at this time, but it's like because you're supposed to be in the

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home on your traditional role preparing dinner for all the children you've had, right.

So sort of just seeing that, I do feel like sometimes one of the blocks people have to seeing the system and why it's a problem is they see these sort of bits and pieces to where it operates to their advantage. Or seems like who wants to have to be an authority and go to the extra meetings? Who wants to have to go on the mission to the middle of nowhere? We don't want to have to do those things.

Amy: Yeah.

Kara: But you always have to take a step back and be like, "Okay, but what am I trading for that?" Like with authority comes responsibility. With privilege comes responsibility. With benefit comes responsibility. What are you being left out of?

Amy: Hearing you kind of rephrase it like that. I think for me, we're taught in the church that our role as a woman, our highest purpose is to be a mother. Being a mother is great and I love my kids and I wouldn't change it. At the same time I look back and I think, "What would I be like if I was taught I could do and be anything?"

I mean I even picked a degree, teaching high school, that was something that was safe to fall back on if something happened to my husband. Because teaching hours would be similar to what my kids would be in school. That is how my brain worked. I didn't know that I could do whatever and be whatever. There are people who grow up women and they're like,

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“Well fuck that. I'm going to go do this.” Well, they wouldn't say that word. They would say not that word.

Kara: Fuck that. I'm going to go do this. Yeah Jody Moore's podcast is the only one I've ever done where I didn't curse.

Amy: I'm like wait. Oh I can curse here. This is fine.

Kara: Yeah, you can curse here.

Amy: But that is how Mormon I was. I didn't think outside the box. I just did all the things I was supposed to. I had a good life. Everything was just lovely. It's when I started going, “But why? Why is it this way?” I think that's what I look back on. I didn't know someone could choose to have children or not. That didn't enter my brain. I don't know if I would have chosen that.

Kara: Yeah. Especially so young.

Amy: So it's just like every paradigm. I think that's what I love so much about what I've learned with coaching. If a belief is a thought on repeat and Mormonism is very repetitive. The way you do everything is very—I mean religion kind of is. What other paradigms can I bust through that I have beliefs that keep me held back?

I mean that's a lot of the work that I've done with you over the years is busting through some of those old paradigms. I think that was the piece that I so fell in love with. I'm like, “Oh, but I did this already. Look what I did. I busted through.”

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Kara: Right. It's like a superpower. You're like, "I now don't believe this thing that I used to believe so hard." This is actually making me think like, as you know, I coached you a lot on your money mindset. We did finally break through it.

Amy: Yes.

Kara: I'm wondering if did you feel like you got the message that men are the ones who earned money?

Amy: 100%.

Kara: Yeah, that's so interesting.

Amy: See I know that I've had this part of my personality. So my husband was the breadwinner. We were a very traditional nuclear family. I was teaching until my first was born, and then my principal said, "I'll hold your position if you want to come back in a year." I'm like oh great. I have a year to make a decision. By that time I'm like I don't want to leave my baby. I had another baby pretty quickly after that.

There was still something in me. I'm like I still want to be doing something. So I started a home based business. I did little ceramic hand and foot impressions of clients.

Kara: Oh my God. I remember that. I forgot that when you came to training, that's what you were doing.

Amy: Yeah. Yeah. I had a ceramic business.

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Kara: I think that hits on like...I mean there's obviously some accidental, not accidental. But one of the reasons that a lot of members of the Church of Latter-day Saints come through, let's say Life Coach School training is of course because Jody Moore is a very prominent coach. She's a member of the church, and who coaches women in the church. She was one of Brooke's first employees. So there's that, but I also think that there is this sort of so many Mormon women are highly educated and intelligent.

Amy: Smart people.

Kara: Yeah. It is this funny mix when I think about some of the more fundamentalist Jewish communities, it obviously varies a lot, but often not as much secular education is happening. Where it seems like in the Church of Latter-day Saints, they're all going to college. They go to BYU. They're educated and smart. They have that intellectual or emotional or whatever energy. They want to do something. Then they get married and then they stay at home.

Amy: Yeah, and you put it on the back burner.

Kara: Yeah. They have a bunch of kids, and then they want something to do. Coaching is the sort of you can do it from anywhere. You know, of course there's like an overrepresentation of members of the Church of Latter-day Saints in multilevel marketing businesses. Same thing. It's like an outlet for this sort of entrepreneurial or intellectual spirit or effort that is compatible with this very traditional lifestyle.

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Amy: Yeah. The Church teaches us to be public speakers. We have to speak in our Sacrament Meeting, which is our Sunday meeting. I mean we do have opportunities to serve and to be leaders.

Kara: There's a lot of overlap in the ideology, right. Prosperity gospel and good people make money. There's this kind of overlap between the way that some coaching work on money is taught and some Christian prosperity gospel operates.

Amy: Yeah, I guess so. I think too though I'm seeing a difference. Like I'm a Gen Xer. I'm 51. So I was part of the Church when, like we were talking earlier, didn't have this information age where you could google anything. Even there was a big joke that women, girls, go to BYU to get their MRS degree.

Kara: Right. Which is like what they used to say about Radcliff in the 50s.

Amy: I would say that that's kind of when Mormonism flourished the most was kind of the 50s mindsets. Everyone has their role, everyone fits into it just perfectly. Then you've got people who are kind of like pushing at the seams where like what we were just talking about.

I'm like I'm going to start a business that I can do while my kids are sleeping. I wasn't going to put them in daycare. There was all of this type of thinking where I kept it in this space. I did make it work. I'm kind of proud of myself for that, but at the same time everything that I did was secondary. I had to make it work so it didn't upset the flow of our family where he was the breadwinner, and I was at home kind of thing.

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Kara: Right. So now you make some bread though.

Amy: Yes, now I do. Which was a huge thing to bust through.

Kara: Yeah. No, I know. I was there for the coaching.

Amy: Yes, you have been.

Kara: So how do you feel now about claiming your own authority or having your own ownership over your own life?

Amy: Truthfully busting through the Mormon paradigm is something that I'm the most proud of because I had to go against everything. All friends, all family, everything. I would say that because I trusted myself in something that was extremely painful. I mean I get a little teary. I can hear it coming. I won't go there.

Like I literally was on the floor wanting the Earth to swallow me up when I realized. Like the day that it all came like oh my God, the Church isn't true. I was laying on the floor in my house. Kids were at school, husband at work. My dog was sitting there next to me, and I'm just like I'd rather the Earth swallow me up knowing that it's going to be different going forward. Because I then had to be true to myself, which meant I couldn't fake it. I don't like faking anything. I don't like that.

Kara: My God. I'm like how did I even coach you about money? How do you not see what a badass you are that you went through this? This crisis of faith, this crisis of conviction. You chose to abandon everything comfortable to follow that you believe to be true.

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Amy: Yeah.

Kara: I feel like you should be waking up every morning like just play that on repeat. You should be waking up every morning like I am a fucking badass. Like look at what I've done.

Amy: Yeah. I guess those were just two different buckets. Because of the work I'm like oh, I now see how they kind of intersect.

Kara: I feel like what you did, the point of this conversation is not to be a feminist you would change your mind about the Church and leave the Church. Of course. It's like women being their own authority. So if you want to examine everything, whatever religious community you're in or family or political party or whatever, right, and decide that you want to stay.

Decide you believe it on purpose, or you don't believe some of what you were taught, but you're going to stay for these reasons, and you like them. Whatever it is, right. It's just women being empowered to make the intentional choice for themselves about how to live their lives and not just kind of live by somebody else's rules or live by what they've been taught or just assume.

I mean women have so much trouble embracing their own authority because we are taught to defer to male authority. Like you had an extreme example of it in some ways in the Church, but we all experience that on some levels. Like who's always the president? Who's most of the government? Who is most of the top of the companies? Who's most of whatever, right?

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Like we all still are socialized to see men as more authoritative than women. So I think for women, it's claiming your own authority whether you're going to leave a church or stay in a church, leave a relationship or stay in a relationship. Whatever you're going to do, right.

Amy: Yeah.

Kara: Like claiming that for yourself. Not I have to stay, or I have to be this way because men told me to and they're right. I don't think most of us think that. We just think that's why it's so sneaky, right? We're talking about this in the bootcamp this week. The Deprogram the Patriarchy From Your Brain bootcamp. Like it would be easy if in your brain there was just an announcement voice being like, "Men are right, and women are stupid." Then you would be like, "Oh wait, I don't think I want to think that."

Amy: Right.

Kara: That's not what you hear. What you hear is like, "I don't know. Maybe you're wrong. All these other people seem to think this. So and so is smart, and they know more than you do."

Amy: That's exactly. I would sit in the Sacrament Meeting with all these amazing smart people. I'd look around and go, "Well, they're smarter than me. So I'm just going to trust them."

Kara: Right.

Amy: So that shifting, it was that thought— "they're smarter than me"—that was producing the fear and keeping me. I'm like no. I have a brain, and I'm

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actually smart. I'm going to figure this out what's best for me. It might not be the best for the person sitting next to me, but for me, no. I'm no longer subscribing to this. Because the conditioning starts so young, and I couldn't see the conditioning until I was out.

I call it kind of that space of I knew I was done, but I was still going through the motions. So I was still going to church. I'd walk past the primary room, and I'd hear the children singing, "Follow the prophet, he knows the way. Follow the prophet, he won't leady you astray." Or something like that. I'm like that's it.

Kara: You see the matrix. You're like this is happening right now.

Amy: Yeah. Then once you see it that way, you can't unsee it. I couldn't unsee it anymore. So I was like well.

Kara: Right. Like the way you're describing it, it's like men also learn to sing that song, but men are also taught to see themselves as versions of the prophet, right. As a priesthood holder, as a prophet. Maybe they're not all the prophet, but as they're more like him than not. Then women are taught to see themselves as different.

Amy: Yeah. So to unravel it, it was everything for me. Definitely changed my life.

Kara: So amazing. Well, such a joy to have you in ACFC and on the podcast. Tell our listeners where they can find you.

Amy: Yeah. So I have a podcast called *Exmormonology*.

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Kara: Such a good title too. You need to write a book with that. It's such a good title. I'm obsessed with it.

Amy: Yeah, I love it. I remember I came up with one. I posted it on Instagram, and you immediately, you're like, "Amy, no. That's not going to be the one. You need to come up with something different."

Kara: Oh I remember that. I was like I hate this. Then you came up with something great.

Amy: And I did.

Kara: So there you go.

Amy: Yeah. So that's my podcast. This is what I do. I life coach people through faith crisis and after.

Kara: So you work with somebody in any faith crisis.

Amy: I do, yeah. I have worked with people of most faiths. We kind of call it high demand religion. Where it's a religion where it just is your life.

Kara: It's not like it's a once in a while to church. Don't worry about it. Because you don't really have to have a crisis to leave that.

Amy: Yeah, exactly. So yeah. I coach people through that. Obviously, I'm incorporating all of my feminist thoughts and teachings that you've helped me with.

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Kara: Yeah. So if you are having a faith crisis, high demand religion or moderate demand religion, and you're a feminist, check out *Exmormonology*. I assume they can find you from the podcast.

Amy: Yeah, they can find me there. My website is currently amyloganlife.com. I think I'm going to have exmormonology.com connect to it.

Kara: Okay. We will put that in the show notes either way.

Amy: Yes. That's how they can find me.

Kara: All right. Thank you for sharing.

Amy: Thank you.

If you're loving what you're learning on the podcast, you have got to come check out *The Feminist Self-Help Society*. It's our newly revamped community and classroom where you get individual help to better apply these concepts to your life along with a library of next level blow your mind coaching tools and concepts that I just can't fit in a podcast episode. It's also where you can hang out, get coached and nerd out about all things thought work and feminist mindset with other podcast listeners just like you and me.

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