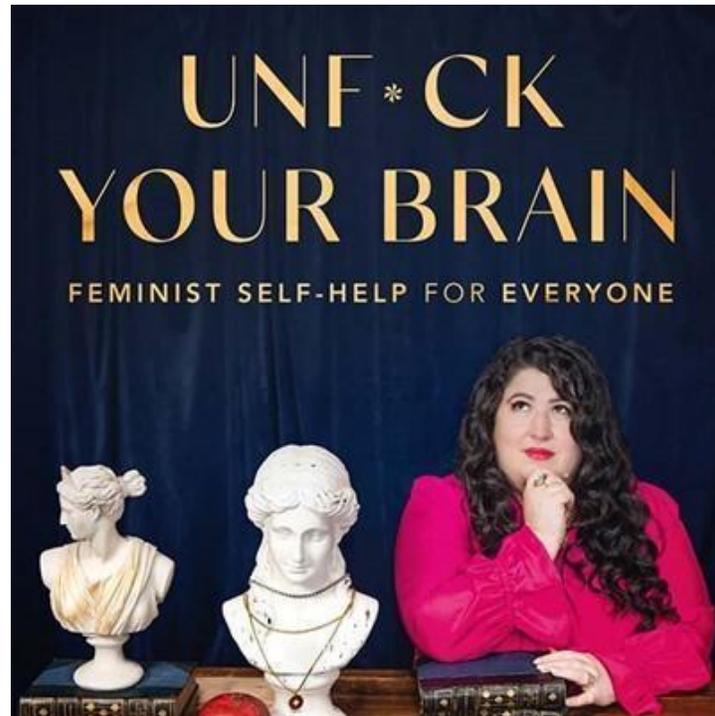


UFYB 473: Coaching Hotline: What If I'm Truly Ugly & Stupid - & Are Vibrations Real?



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.

Welcome to this week's coaching hotline episode where I answer real questions from real listeners and coach you from afar. If you want to submit your question for consideration, go to unfuckyourbrain.com/coachinghotline, all one word, or text your email to +1-347-997-1784 and when you get prompted for the code word, it's coaching hotline, all one word. Let's get into this week's questions.

Here is your first question, which I think a lot of you are going to identify with.

"Hi Kara, I've been listening to your podcast obsessively, but one thing keeps popping up. My lizard brain interferes with my thought work almost every single time I attempt to buckle down and address my negative self-talk, repeating on loop this heinous idea that no matter how much I dedicate myself to thought work, objectivity still dictates that I'm ugly, stupid, uninteresting, untalented, and incapable. My lizard brain feeds me this idea that thought work is merely an attempt to fight back against the objective, quantifiable, social Darwinian truth that some people are simply better than others, that thought work is simply a pathetic, self-soothing mechanism to make yourself feel better, all while avoiding this objective reality. How can I address this insidious thought and its associated feelings?"

So, here's what I think is so fascinating about this, right? Ugly, stupid, uninteresting, untalented, and incapable. Those are all words that humans have made up that have different definitions across different cultures or even in the same culture across different people. What is considered ugly

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today used to be considered beautiful and vice versa. The kind of intelligence that is considered to matter has changed over time. Talent, Van Gogh I think only sold one painting when he was alive. Everybody thought he was a hack. Now we think he's a genius.

These thoughts are so subjective. These are all obviously words that only humans made up. Your dog doesn't have any opinion about how talented one person is versus another, because it's not a concept that exists outside of a human mind. Only a human mind can evaluate and decide to assign one of these labels. So, it's completely, I was going to say unobjective. Subjective is what we call that. It's completely unquantifiable.

So, this is where you really have to logically test all your premises, not just take them for granted. One of the reasons I believe so deeply in thought work is that I really tested it from every angle, and I can see that there is no way to ever prove, like in any objective sense, who is beautiful or ugly, who is smart or stupid, who is interesting or uninteresting, who is talented or untalented, who's capable or incapable. Because those concepts only exist in a human mind. Only a human brain can conduct that evaluation. So, it has to be subjective. It is the opposite of objective and quantifiable. It has to be subjective because it can only exist in the human mind.

So, that's what I would say about that. Believing your brain that you can objectively be any of these things means you're not really taking it through to the logical conclusion. If only a human mind can make that evaluation, and if different human minds differ about different people, then there's no way that it's objective.

The second thing to notice is that you are going from qualities, right, like characteristics, even if, like let's pretend that it was true that some people were ugly or stupid or uninteresting or untalented or incapable. Let's pretend that's true. You are making it mean that some people are better

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than others, that there is a worth or value differential because of those things.

But there are ways you already don't believe that. If I said to you, "Listen, I think everybody who tests on an IQ test," look, it's really quantifiable, "if they test under 100 on an IQ test, we should just kill them all. If their facial features aren't symmetrical within this percentage, we should just kill them." You would not agree with that, because you know that on some fundamental level, what someone looks like or how quote-unquote smart or stupid they are or anything else, even if that was objective, doesn't have anything to do with their worth or value as a person. So that's the kind of second logical error here.

And then here's the third one and this is why I actually find thought work so powerful. Let's actually pretend all of that shit is true. Let's pretend you are all those things and it's objective and you're not as good as other people. So what? If you trick yourself into feeling better, and then because of that you feel more confident and then you go out and get a job that you want or you flirt with someone who turns into your partner or you write a novel or you just like make a friend and feel good about yourself, that's still a good outcome.

Honestly, even if it was true that I personally was ugly and stupid and uninteresting and untalented and incapable and other people were better than me, I would rather be delusional. I would rather believe that I was pretty and smart and interesting and talented and capable. And what's so wild is if you think about this, if I believe that, I would become that. If I believed I was capable, I would become capable. If I believed I was intelligent, I would do things that to refine my intelligence. I would tackle complex problem solving. I would learn new skills. I would read interesting things and I would become smarter. Like what you believe you will become. So to me, even if it were true that you could objectively be any of these

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things and even if it were true that mattered, I'd still rather have the placebo effect.

So, I don't choose to believe that's pathetic or self-soothing. I think it's just math. If I look at the model, I see that putting in the thought that I'm stupid just creates me not intellectually engaging and putting in the thought that I'm smart creates me intellectually engaging and getting smarter. So even if I were wrong, I'd rather believe that and then produce more of that thing that I want to be. So listen to that answer a few times, especially if you're the one who asked that question because it's operating on multiple levels here. But truly, really ask yourself, like, pay attention to everything I just talked about in terms of subjectivity, but even if any of that shit were true, so what? Why not believe a lie even? Why not believe a delusion that gets you a result that you want?

We have to really question this idea that it's important to like believe the truth. Right? We have to question it on the level of objectivity because there really isn't a truth that we all agree on and it's only created by a human mind. But I really think we have to take it all the way. Like let's say I know that I am in the bottom 10% of attractiveness. But what if I believe I'm beautiful? Then I'm going to feel great. Why is that a bad outcome? Probably my confidence will actually convince other people that I am attractive, but even if it doesn't.

So, let's say I hit on someone because I think I'm beautiful and then they don't reciprocate. I'm just going to be like, "Oh, that's weird. I'm beautiful." Why is that a problem? Right? Really push yourself. Why is it a problem for us to believe positive things about ourselves even if they weren't true? And I think what you will find is that there isn't a problem with that. The results you get are better than believing negative things that you think are true.

All right, y'all, I know you're as tired as I am of having the top podcasts in wellness or health and fitness categories be a bunch of dudes who don't

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know anything about socialization and who are not taking women's lived experiences into account. So if you are looking for ways to support the show and more importantly, make sure the show gets to more people, please leave us a review on Apple Podcast or Spotify. And bonus points if you include a few lines about the way you use thought work and self-coaching or anything you've learned from the podcast in your daily life. Those reviews are what teach the algorithms to show us to more new people. It helps us get new listeners all over the world. And I'll be reading one story from a recent review in each of these question and answer episodes.

This week's review comes from C Fredo who says, "Such great advice. As a mother, the parent blame boomerang episode was so insightful. We never truly realize how many good and toxic traits have been passed down through generations. I have my own experiences that have changed who I am and how I parent. But after listening, I will definitely think harder about how what I do and say can affect my daughter."

Okay. That one was very far into the there is no reality. And the next question is actually kind of like this too. This is like the theme for today.

"Hi Kara, thank you for all that you do. I'm really trying to wrap my mind around how energy, (vibrations), and thought work work together. I know you've mentioned we don't feel love from others. We create it with our thoughts. But how does this model explain instances of instant chemistry or, quote, listening to your heart? Or when people feel unexplainable physical reactions to others through things like Reiki and other energy healing modalities? Is it possible that our bodies provide us information before we actually have a thought to help us give it meaning?"

Okay, so there's a lot of different examples mixed up in here. So I'm going to kind of go one by one. I don't believe in vibrations in the sense that they are talked about in kind of contemporary self-help. You will hear people talk

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about the idea that vibrations are based on physics and that there's high and low frequency vibrations. I think that's usually a pretty sloppy bastardization of physics. In fact, I love somebody who's posted about this in my wall and there was a debate going on and one of my friends was like, "Well, the high frequency light is actually usually the more damaging kind." Like I don't think that people really understand the science. So that's not how I think about it.

So you say, "How do we explain instances of instant chemistry?" Okay. I'm not exactly sure what you mean when you say that, but if what you mean is sexual chemistry or friend chemistry, I think that's created by our thoughts. I think that when we connect to some, when we meet someone, we're like, "Oh, I think they're really great," it's because we have the thought, "I think they're really great." So I do think that is just our thoughts about the person. Like when I meet someone I immediately like them, it's because I'm thinking like, "Oh they seem really smart or they seem really cool or they're really funny or it looks like we have this in common or I love their style or I find them attractive." Whatever my thought is, that's what's creating that. I don't, just calling it instant chemistry doesn't mean that's what it is.

Or the other example you give here is listening to your heart. Again, I don't really know what that means. I mean, I don't know exactly what you mean when you say that, but I don't believe that's a thing. I think listening to your heart just means you're having a thought. I think when people say they need to listen to their heart, what they usually really mean is they have two different thoughts. They're trying to figure out which one to believe and then they label one of them as being from their heart. Which is fine. I'm not saying that's a problem. Like you could use whatever decision-making process you want. But I don't believe that when people say listening to your heart, they're actually naming something that is physical in a way that doesn't involve a thought.

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I think a more interesting question or not more interesting but just more to the point a little bit is the question of what about things like Reiki or other energy healing modalities. And I do think some of that is thoughts. Generally when someone is doing physical work on us, we know they're doing it. Right? If you really wanted to test if we could feel it without knowing that, if it really was not from our thoughts, you'd have to test somebody doing energy work without the recipient knowing that the person was doing it and see if they felt anything.

When somebody is giving us Reiki or giving us an energy healing modality, as the patient or the client, we know that's happening. And so I think that it is also our thoughts about what's happening, which also explains why some people will go to a Reiki practitioner and have an incredible experience and some people will go to a Reiki practitioner and have no experience.

Now to me, I think there's this like desire to validate energy work in order to be allowed to believe in it. And I don't think that's necessary. I'm all about the placebo effect. Right? If I go to someone and they do something and I think that it's working and healing me and it works because I told my body I was healing, I'm all in. I don't have a problem with that outcome.

And then the sort of last question here you ask is, "Is it possible that our bodies provide us information before we actually have a thought to help us give it meaning?" I don't know if that's exactly how I would say it. What I believe is that our brain is the organ that all of our sensory stuff has to pass through to be categorized. Right? Your eyes can't see something without the signals going into your brain for your brain to identify it. Right?

When you touch something, your brain is what tells you what it is. So yeah, my fingers are sending my brain information like, I'm touching my desk right now. I'm touching this thing. This is the temperature. It's sending some signal back, but then my brain is the one that's like drawing on all of its past

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experience to be like, "Okay, so that's probably the desk because that's where it is in the room and it has, you know, the feeling of this kind of density and in the past that density has been this kind of material." Whatever it is.

So, I do think our different sensory systems pull in information. They sense things, whether our eyes that's light waves or our ears that's sound waves or whatever it is, but then it's got to go in the brain. That's why if it's in a language we don't understand then we don't know what it means. It has to go through the brain in order to be analyzed and evaluated and categorized. So, that is really how I think about it. I just don't really think about energy and vibrations as, I'm not saying energy isn't real. Obviously energy exists in the world and I totally believe that there are things that we don't yet know how to explain, that science doesn't yet know how to explain and maybe someday they will discover there are high vibrations or whatever else. And that would be fine too.

I'm not particularly preoccupied with the question because I know that whatever I believe about it, I will make come true for myself. So, I just recommend that for all of you, you decide on purpose what you want to believe about this and see how it serves you. I generally don't find that it serves me to believe that other people's energy impacts me. Right? That makes me feel like a victim and like I have to try to control other people in order to feel okay. So whatever your thoughts are about it, you just want to put them in a model and make sure that you like the results.

All right my dears, that's it for the metaphysical this week. I'll talk to you next week.