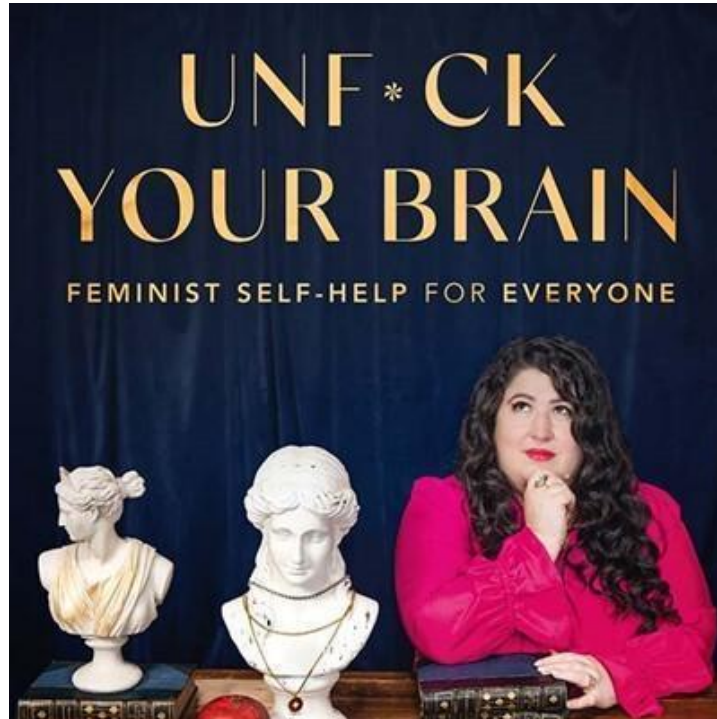


# UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kara Loewentheil**

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## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

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](http://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.

First question. "I struggle intensely with boundaries and trust with a dear friend who I've known for 20 years and who is closely integrated into my family. Our friendship has been fueled by competition, jealousy, envy, shame, guilt, and deteriorating trust." Sounds delightful, right? That part was my little interjection. "I've been holding intense grudges from events that happened two years ago when boundaries I didn't know I even had to articulate were violated. We were out in a group setting, a different friend was setting me up with a colleague, my first date, quote unquote, after a bitter end to a three-year relationship. My dear friend knew I was being set up with him, but she ended up getting his number.

"My lizard brain told me it was because she is prettier, smarter, more sociable than me. I know better than to let the patriarchy wedge its way into friendship. We've discussed the incident openly since then, but I can't seem to rebuild trust. I feel shame for carrying this old grudge and fixating on the past. How can I release this without invalidating my hurt and pain?"

So this is such a beautiful question, and that's because of that last sentence. How can I release this without invalidating my hurt and pain? So I'm going to rephrase that question. How can I continue to believe that my

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

friend did a bad, wrong thing that hurt me, and yet not care that she did that? That's what we're asking. When we want to keep all of our beliefs about something but feel better about it, that's what I call silver lining. It's so common.

And when you rephrase it as, how can I keep all my thoughts that she did something wrong, she hurt me, and she was bad, and she caused me pain, but not be upset about it now? You can hear how that's impossible, right? Because number one, when you think the thoughts, you cause the feelings now. What she did in the past does not cause your feelings at all. It was always your thoughts about it. And right now, the past doesn't exist. We are only in the present. And so your pain over this past incident is caused 100% by your current thoughts.

If you woke up from a coma and you had amnesia, you didn't have the thoughts about the incident, you wouldn't have the pain. Right? So you can't keep your thoughts from the past and feel differently about it now because those thoughts aren't even past thoughts, they're your thoughts now. You still think that she violated a boundary that she shouldn't have and she did something wrong. And so, of course, it's super painful. So you can't keep those thoughts and yet feel better about it.

And the reason you're so stuck and spinning, I think, is that you think that if you release yourself from this suffering, that you're invalidating your hurt and pain. So I want you to really consider what does that even mean? What does it mean to invalidate your hurt and pain? Because I think that the way you're thinking about it, if you ever feel okay about what happened, that's going to invalidate your hurt and pain. So what you're saying is I'd rather keep my hurt and pain forever. That's the other option. If you believe that changing your thoughts about what happened so that you don't feel hurt and pain now means invalidating your hurt and pain and that's a bad thing, then you're never going to be able to let it go.

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

And it's like this conundrum that you can't get out of. That's why you're stuck about this. That's because you don't see, it's like you're going back and forth between two doors and the real door is in the ceiling, which is that she never caused your hurt and pain. You caused your hurt and pain with your own thoughts, and you blame her for that. And so now you want to know how you can keep believing she did something wrong but feel okay about it. If you figure that out, you get to be the master coach who makes \$10 million because I don't know any way to do that.

I think that you are on to it a little bit when you say my lizard brain told me it was because she's prettier and smarter and more sociable than me. I want you to imagine a world in which you believe that you are irresistible to the right people, that there's plenty of men out there for you and that you are amazing and compelling and sexy and marvelous, right? And that so many men respond to that and that anyone who doesn't is just like missing out. If you really believed that, then your only thought about this story would be, "Oh, I guess they were a better fit than we were." You wouldn't resent her for this, you wouldn't think she did anything wrong.

All of your thoughts about why this is so wrong of her have to do with the scarcity that's underlying this about there being enough men for you. If you believed you were prettier and smarter and more sociable than her, even if you were equally, but especially, let's go to the place where you believe you're more of all those things. If he wanted her number, you would be like, "Oh good. I'm so glad she finally got someone." You'd be like, "I get all the men always because I'm so amazing. I'm glad that someone wanted her number." You have a totally different take on it.

And you say, "I know better than to let the patriarchy wedge its way into the friendship." But you don't know better. That's a total lie because it has. You're upset that he wanted to give his number to her and you're blaming her, and then you're blaming her for all your own thoughts and feelings about it. So there's no such thing here as rebuilding trust. She is someone

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

who, when you go out to a restaurant, even if she knows someone was there to meet you, might get his number if she's interested in him and he's interested in her.

You can totally decide that you only want to have friends who understand your unconscious rules about who's allowed to get whose number with other people's free will involved, right? You could totally decide that if you want, but I don't think it's going to feel very good because it comes from trying to control everyone. You could decide that, and then this person shouldn't be your friend because you guys don't agree about that. But I want you to imagine if you truly had your own back and felt amazing about yourself, whether this would be a problem at all. And you need to decide. I don't think it has anything to do with her, nor does like your current suffering have anything to do with her. Who cares about her in the friendship in the sense of the pain is the pain you're causing yourself by ruminating on how you've been done wrong.

So I really want you to consider whether it's useful to think that changing your thoughts about this, recognizing that you caused all your own pain and suffering for no reason, that it doesn't need to be there, that it doesn't mean anything, and that she didn't do anything wrong. Would you rather believe all of that and liberate yourself? Or do you want to believe that you have to keep feeling your hurt and pain forever just to make it valid? There's something super fruitful for you going on in this idea of invalidating the hurt and pain, and I really want you to think about that because believing that your hurt and pain are valid and need to be continually validated just means you are continuing to create your own suffering over and over, and I really don't see any upside of that for you.

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 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

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

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.

Today's review comes from the inimitably named Skittles Muncher, says, "The podcast is life-changing. I've done a lot of therapy and coaching, yet Kara always surprises me with nuggets of things I didn't know before or that I didn't see due to my socialization as a woman. That is what this podcast is all about, right, showing you the ways you're thinking that you weren't even aware were because of how society taught you to think."

Okay, second question, which actually, in some ways these are a little bit related. So this question is, "I have this belief that I control my attractiveness to other people based on what I do. If I style my hair, put on makeup, wear cute clothing, etc. I have a thought that I'm attractive to them. If I don't do these things, which I usually don't, I think that I'm not attractive, and there's some safety in this for me. If they aren't attracted to me, then I think I'm safe from them. My brain truly thinks someone else feeling attracted to me is within my control.

"While intellectually I know that's not true, it's hard for me to wrap my head around. When someone gives me cues that I'm attractive to them, either with a comment or a look, when I haven't done the things I mentioned above, it's very confusing to me. Also, when I don't feel attractive to myself, which is most of the time, that results in behaviors that don't serve me like overeating. Suggestions on where to go from here. I thought I would experiment with dressing up to see how my thoughts change. Thanks."

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

Okay, I don't suggest that we change the A or the C in order to change your T. Dressing up is either your action or you, you know, if you are dressed up, you could maybe call that the circumstance. It's kind of still a thought depending on what's dressed up. I don't think that's what we need to work out here. I think you got some stuff to tease apart. So number one, I think you got to figure out what is this safety issue? Why do you need to be safe from other people? Did you have a traumatic incident that this is about? Are you just uncomfortable when people think you're attractive or hit on you? Like what is this safety thing that's going on? Because I do think that seems like probably the root of why you're trying to control this.

And I think all this part about where you're confused when they don't follow the manual is all coming from the false assumption that you can control it. So I think we have to figure out why do you even want to? Like why do you want to think that you can control it? I think that's the crucial issue that you need to flush out. In terms of the, when I don't feel attractive to myself, you also have mixed up getting dressed and being attractive and whether they're attracted to you, you think other people are attracted to you, whether you feel attractive to yourself. When you say, "when I don't feel attractive to myself, which is most of the time, that results in behaviors that don't serve me like overeating."

You're like mixed up on this in a couple of ways, and so one is the safety thing that you have to sort out. Why is it dangerous for people to be attracted to you? Why do you want to be able to control that? Which you 100% can't control. Some people are really attracted to women in gym sweats without any makeup on. Some people are really attracted to women in heels and dresses. Like whichever one you pick, someone else is going to be attracted to the other one. So you got to sort out that safety thing, but I think you also have some more flushing out to do on, it's like you think that you control other people thinking you're attractive based on how you're dressed. And then you think you control you thinking you're attractive

## **UFYB 483: Coaching Hotline: Letting Go of Old Grudges & Beliefs About Attractiveness**

based on how you dress. So then you want to dress up so you'll think you're attractive and not overeat.

It's like all backwards. It's your thoughts about whether you're attractive that apparently are creating these behaviors that you want to change. So you have to work on those thoughts. But I think you've got yourself caught in a little trap because it's like you don't want to work on believing you're always attractive because you want to believe that you can turn it on or off to protect yourself. But then when you believe it's off, then you are buffering because of that belief, right? You've gotten yourself into a little like a catch 22.

So I want you to start on two different things. One, I want you to do some work on why you need to be safe from people being attracted to you. Why is it a problem if people are attracted to you when you don't want them to be? Remember that attracted to you just means they have thoughts that you're attractive. And then number two, do you want to believe you are attractive to yourself in that way? Like do you want to just believe full stop that you're attractive? Why or why not? It looks like when you believe you're not, you're getting behaviors you don't like. If you want to change that, you have to change your thoughts about whether you're attractive, not just change your outfit. Changing the outfit never solves the problem, my dears.