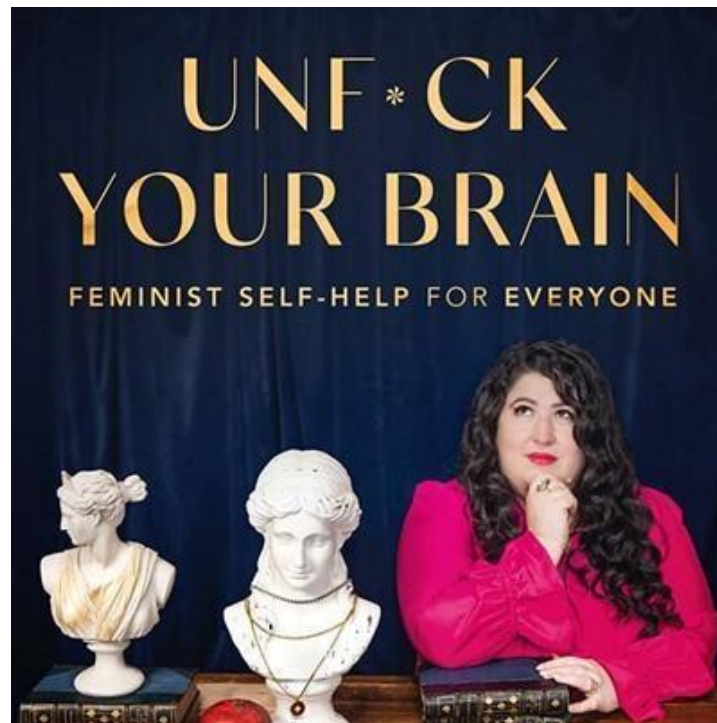


# UFYB 501: Coaching Hotline: Using Social Media to Change Your Body Image & When Your Partner Shuts Down in Arguments



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kara Loewentheil**

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# **UFYB 501: Coaching Hotline: Using Social Media to Change Your Body Image & When Your Partner Shuts Down in Arguments**

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.

So, two great questions today. Here's the first one, and I think this is a great question that I actually don't think has been asked. So, I think a lot of you will find this helpful.

Okay, "Hi, Kara. My question relates to intentional thoughts. I recently programmed my phone to remind me four times a day to think purposefully. Some thoughts I'm currently practicing include: fat women can look amazing, there are people in the world attracted to fat women, some fat women look great in bikinis, and some fat women love their bodies. Anytime I scroll through particular social media posts that are in some way devoted to body positivity, it seems I can have the above thoughts without even trying. I think this means I already believe these thoughts.

"My question is, do you see any problem with purposely engaging in actions I know result in my having positive thoughts and feelings every time my alarm goes off? Using the example above, do you see any problem with me purposely going on a plus-size model's Instagram page for three to five

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minutes as a way to practice thinking the cluster of intentional thoughts I'm currently working on? Thank you for existing. I love you and this work.”

Great question. So, I definitely don't think there's a problem with doing this. I think this is a great strategy. I wouldn't use this as your only strategy, and I will explain why, but I don't think there's anything wrong with doing this at all. And particularly, when it comes to visual programming, studies do show that your brain processes visual stimuli very, very fast, right? And some of that happens at an unconscious level. It'd be one thing if we were all starting from just neutral and not having been socialized or exposed to any set of images, but that's not where we're starting from. We're starting from living in a society where we're bombarded with one certain kind of image of a certain kind of body all the time.

And so, I am actually a very big fan of, in addition to practicing thoughts, resetting your visual diet, quote unquote, like what you see on a daily basis and having bodies that look like yours. To me, that's actually just like restoring what a normal human life would look like. Before mass advertising, you just saw lots of people who all looked different. Some of whom looked like you, maybe some were smaller, maybe some were bigger, some were taller, some were shorter. You just saw other people who looked human. You weren't constantly bombarded with airbrushed, unrealistic representations of what people should look like and told that if you don't look like that, you're worthless and invaluable. So, not invaluable in the good way, like non-valuable. So, I'm 100% in favor of taking some control over your visual diet. Since if you watch TV or read magazines or live in the world, you can't even control all of it.

And I think the psych studies back up the idea that doing this will help. There's studies showing that looking at mainstream women's magazines lowers women's body satisfaction and that looking at pictures of women, like real women in diverse bodies, raises it. So, I'm a big fan of this in

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general. And I think it's fine. I mean, that's the whole purpose, is to like reset what your brain thinks is the norm and what your brain sees as attractive, right? Humans, we will tend to start to see beauty in and become attached to things that we see regularly. It's just a weird mental quirk we have, but it's a good thing to hack for your own benefit by looking at images that look more like you and images of yourself.

So, all that being said, I'm totally a fan of this. The one thing I would say is that the way you're thinking about this is that the actions cause your thoughts. And that's not true in some like ultimate sense. Lots of people look at those images and have different thoughts. The action of looking at the image isn't what causes your thought. In this scenario, the image is the C, and then you have the thought about it. And yes, there are C's that we have an easier time having positive or negative thoughts about. And not because those C's are inherently positive or negative, right? Just because of like whatever thought patterns we've practiced.

So, I just want you to make sure that you're clear with yourself that it's not the action of doing it or even the images that like makes you have these specific positive thoughts that you're thinking. Fat women can look amazing. There's people in the world attracted to them. They can look great in bikinis. Some of them love their bodies, right? So, I'm fine with this. I think it's just a trigger. It's like if you practice thinking your thoughts every time you brush your teeth, then eventually that becomes habitual. The only thing I would say is I would not only do it this way, because you don't want to train your brain that like these are thoughts you only think when you're looking at images of other fat women.

You want to be practicing these thoughts at other times too, because you want these to be thoughts that you think when you look in the mirror at yourself also, or just when you're like driving down the street or you see a thin woman and start to feel jealous and you redirect or you see a fat

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woman and you want to appreciate her beauty. Like I want you to not just tie the thoughts only to this stimulus.

So, that's the bottom line. There's nothing wrong with doing it this way. I think it's a good idea to vary your visual diet in this way, but I would just say don't have this be the only time you practice those thoughts, because you don't want to tie them to like only that stimulus. These are the kind of thoughts you'd want to have in your brain as you go about your day because they're so important to you and your life. All right, great question.

Second question. "My husband tends to shut down and, quote unquote, sulk when we argue sometimes, which feels like he's ignoring me. I try and get him to talk. I feel like it's so urgent and imperative that he behave a certain way, which unsurprisingly doesn't work. How do I become okay with him ignoring me?"

Okay, so just the way you're asking this question shows that you're completely believing your own thoughts. You think that him ignoring you is a C. Right, first you called it a feeling, feels like he's ignoring me. But then you said, how do I become okay with him ignoring me? That's like, how do I become okay with the fact that he's ignoring me? But him, quote unquote, ignoring you is not a circumstance. It's a thought. It's a thought you have. It's an adjective that you have picked of the thousands of adjectives in the world to describe whatever the circumstance actually is of his behavior, which we have no idea from this question. All we know is that whatever he's doing, you call it sulking and ignoring.

We don't know what that means. We don't know if that means he leaves the room. We don't know if that means he stays there but doesn't make eye contact. We don't know if that means he stays there and makes eye contact and does answer your questions but not at the length you want. We

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don't know if that means he gets on his phone. We don't know if that means he says, I don't want to talk, right? We have no idea. We don't know what the circumstances are at all, because your perception of it, your thoughts about it are coloring it, and you're taking those to be the circumstances.

You're like, how do I keep my thought that he's sulking and ignoring me but just not care that he's doing that? That's not the work. The work is to see that your thoughts about whatever the actual circumstance is of his behavior or what he says are what's causing all your suffering. It's the thought that he's ignoring you that is causing all your suffering. So, you're not going to be able to become okay with him ignoring you. You have to deal with the fact that the ignoring is not a circumstance. It's a thought you have. He's ignoring me.

And what you make that mean. You have a whole bunch of thought work, even if that were a C, why is that a problem? You have a whole bunch of thought work to do about why it's a problem that he, quote unquote, ignores you. What are you making that mean about him and you and your relationship? All of that unexplicated work is why you feel so agitated and desperate to control his behavior.

That's the work you have to do on why you are choosing to describe his behavior as sulking and ignoring, why you are making it mean that, what you're making it mean that he does whatever he's doing, what you make it mean about him, about you, about your relationship. That is all of the work. The work is not become okay with him sulking and ignoring me. The work is sulking and ignoring are optional thoughts. Why am I choosing to think those? What am I making it mean that he's doing whatever this behavior is? And how can I clean up that thinking?

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Only when you've cleaned up that thinking and you are in emotional responsibility and emotional adulthood, taking responsibility for your own feelings, are you going to not feel so desperate. But as long as you think that he controls your feelings and how he's being is a problem for you and your feelings, then you're going to feel agitated and desperate about trying to control him. All right, my dears, that's it for this week. I'll talk to you next week.