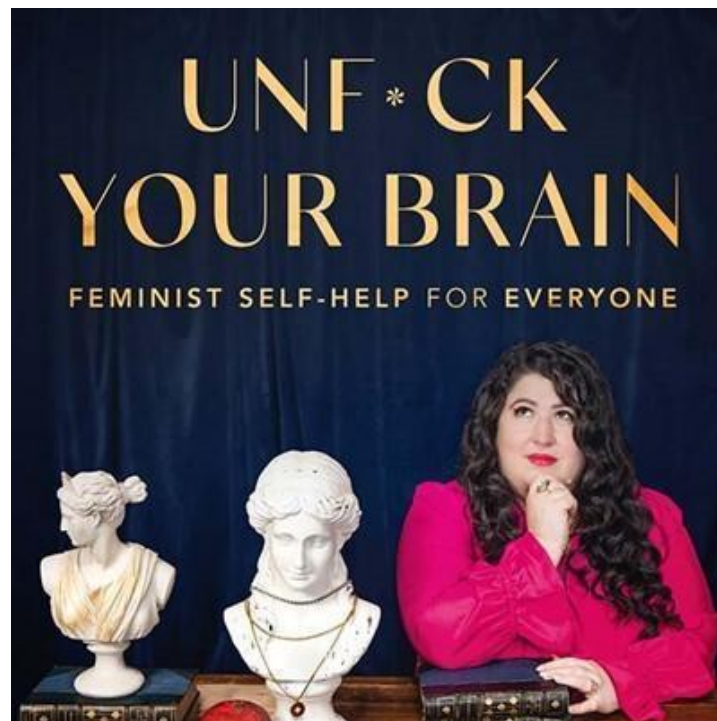


UFYB 507: Coaching Hotline: Why Feedback Sends You Into a Shame Spiral



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

[UnF*ck Your Brain with Kara Loewentheil](#)

UFYB 507: Coaching Hotline: Why Feedback Sends You Into a Shame Spiral

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's our listener question. "I always thought of myself as a confident person, but since I started doing this work, I've realized I attached my self-worth entirely to my professional achievements. Any slightly critical feedback sends me into intense anxiety and shame. I'm learning to apply thought work, but the feelings are still so intense. Do you have any thoughts on how to get there faster?"

This is a great question, and it's very common when we start trying to do thought work. Ironically, what we really experience is feelings that we have been avoiding or just trying to grit our teeth through and not deal with. And the truth is that the speed at which we can change our thinking is directly proportional to our willingness to experience our feelings.

So when this question asker says the feelings are so intense, "How can I get there faster?" it tells me that she wants to get through these feelings. She does not want to have the feelings. She wants them to go away as soon as possible. And sister, I empathize. I felt that way too. But the truth is that when we are in a race to get away from a feeling in our own body, we are actually not able to change our thinking. In order to change our

UFYB 507: Coaching Hotline: Why Feedback Sends You Into a Shame Spiral

thinking, you need to be able to activate or to access your prefrontal cortex. It's the part of your brain that can learn new things, among other things.

When we are reacting to our own feelings like they're a danger, we are creating nervous system activation, and then our prefrontal cortex gets harder to access. So it's totally the same thing as when you have a little kid having a meltdown. That's not the time that you can teach them something. They're in the middle of the meltdown. You have to teach them the lesson after when they've calmed down. The same is true for ourselves. So the most important thing is to practice allowing those emotions, and the key to allowing your emotions is self-compassion.

Having compassion for yourself is what allows us to get through difficult emotions. Just like with a little kid, it's easier for them to get through difficult emotions when they have a loving, supportive adult nearby who is not shushing them or yelling at them or shaming them, but is offering comfort and support and safety while they have this difficult time. We have to practice doing that for ourselves, right, practicing thoughts like, "It's okay to have this feeling. How human of me to have this feeling. I'm willing to have this feeling," or, "I'm trying to be willing to have this feeling," right? Creating self-compassion is what allows you to have that feeling, and then you will be able to change your thoughts more effectively.