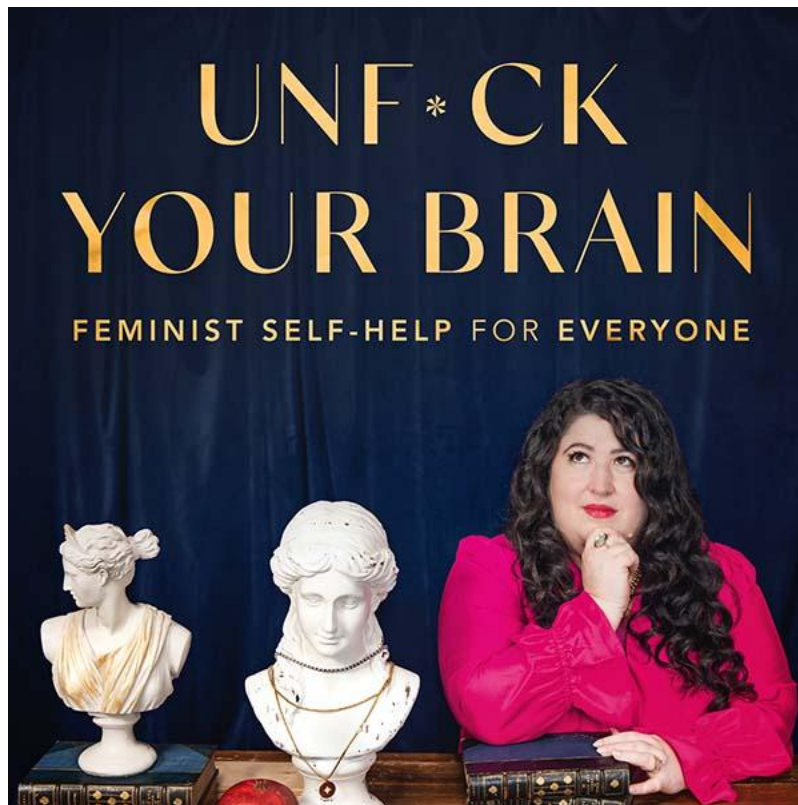


# UFYB 529: Coaching Hotline: What's Really Stopping You from Speaking Up in Your Business



## 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](https://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 here's the question. "Thoughts about being a provocative thought leader. I'm noticing a big resistance to it in my own business life. And I want to know what helpful thoughts you had when you were starting in business."

So I have some good and bad news for you. This does not go away in my experience. I still have resistance to being a provocative thought leader. It just scales up as you scale up. So to tell you the truth, I think this is something I dealt with, but I was very committed, I'm obviously very committed to my feminist beliefs. I really felt like thought work was an answer to that. But I did come up against the same thought pattern that I'm still coming up against at a different scale, which is basically like, some feminists are going to be upset by this. I'm going to be rejected by the feminists, or the feminists are going to come after me on the internet, you know, even though I am a feminist, right?

But you can see how there's a lot of room to disagree about thought work, especially when applied to structural inequalities or violence or, you know, the other things that we as a society deem to be particularly serious or

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troubling or traumatic or whatever. So, and I'm not saying they aren't those things. I'm just saying there are certain areas that are more sensitive in different political movements and in feminism, obviously inequality, violence against women, sexual trauma, like all of these things have a heightened importance because of the role they play in the political movement and in the raising of consciousness around gender and sex and equality.

So I did not come up with perfect thoughts and then not worry about it again. You just have to be willing to be scared. I definitely, in the beginning and still now, I think, see the tendency in myself to try to keep, play it a little bit safe, even though, you know, it's all relative. Like some people would look at my business and say, what are you talking about? You were way out there, right? But like I put off doing podcast episodes on sexism, on trauma, on toxic people because that one really pushes people's buttons. Like there are definitely areas in my teaching that I did avoid for a while because I was scared to put the episode out there and scared of having a backlash. And I think the thoughts that I used to be willing to do that were mostly like, I'm going to feel horrible and do it anyway. Like I think the biggest mistake we make is thinking, well, I need to feel confident before I can do this thing.

I mean, it actually kind of relates to the last question because I think this is one of the big misconceptions, is like, we think, well, we do all the models on paper and practice the thoughts until we have the feeling perfect and then we can go do the thing. Or we white knuckle and it feels terrible all the time. And it's like neither one of those, not to use the 100 cent word. I guess that would be a dollar, a dollar word. But it's a dialectic.

Like it's in your action and your models, your willingness to be uncomfortable and then your ability to change your thoughts. They're in a relationship to each other. I think of them as kind of, it's like if you had a circle that was cut in half and it's like it's rolling along. It makes progress as

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it goes along. It reinforces each other. I don't know if this metaphor is working, but like, you feel afraid, you think a thought that gives you the willingness to do it anyway, even though you're afraid. You get a little less afraid because your thought changes to like, okay, I survived that. That wasn't too bad. People were upset and I managed it. Now I'm willing to do the next thing.

So it's like as you go along, your thought work progresses, your ability to handle discomfort progresses. Those things are in conversation and in relationship with each other and they evolve and influence each other as you go along. Hopefully that makes sense. But so it's not like, well, I was terrified and then I thought these thoughts, so I had perfect confidence so I could do it. Nor is it, you have to white knuckle it and it will just feel terrible always and forever.

It's like you have to be willing to feel uncomfortable and take that first step. And then your thought work evolves and you can take another step and then it evolves and you can take another step and you keep going that way. But you'll keep coming up against it. You know, I'm working on a book proposal right now and all of those old thoughts are coming up about teaching what I teach on a much bigger level. And especially if you want to have a business, the truth is that like marketing is about emphasizing what is different about you.

So even if most feminists would, in my mind there's like the general feminist that I'm constantly scared of being rejected and ostracized by, right? Because that's how brains work. So if there's 95% of stuff in my book is stuff that feminists would agree with, it's the 5% that people would either love or hate that is what's going to grab people's attention. And for me, being mission driven, marketing is not just about business. It's not just about making money and earning revenue and, you know, being able to hire more employees and take care of my employees. Like it's not even

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about all of that, but it's also, I want the most people in the world to learn about this work.

So it's almost like how terrible am I personally willing to feel in service of my mission? Am I willing to feel the feelings of rejection and shame that I'm sure I will feel based on book reviews that will be written about me, if that means that more media publications want to talk about the book and more women read the book and what if a million women read my book and it changes even 10% of those people's lives? Like am I willing to have a painful human experience to make that happen?

So that's really how I think about it. I think you probably were hoping for thoughts about like how amazing it feels to be a provocative thought leader, but like most things, no, it's going to feel terrible and scary a lot of the time. And even when it feels good, it'll be like relief from the feeling of terrible mostly, but am I willing to do that for my mission? And for me, I am, but it's still a thing I have to coach myself about at every level. And like we've been talking about making the title of my book something like, you don't have to be an angry feminist or something. You know, I just can imagine the hate mail that I will get. Just saying that title makes me want to throw up a little bit.

But that's a title that people will read. And if people read the work, they read the work. So anyway, I'm not saying that's going to be the title. There's lots of considerations and titles, but I'm just trying to give you an example of like, it's not how do you feel amazing about stirring the pot? It's are you willing to feel terrible in order to stir the pot because you believe so strongly in your mission and in the people that you want to show up and serve that it's worth it to feel terrible starting the pot.

And the truth is, like that's true whether what you're working on is like bringing up environmental issues at the school PTA or trying to write a

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book that a million people buy. Like it's the same thing. Whatever it is that you believe in, that you think is important, yeah, it's great to just feel confident about going after it, and sometimes you can get there. But the next level of work is like, am I willing to be uncomfortable in service of that thing? Because I don't always want to wait until I'm able to coach myself to be totally self-confident. And sometimes that's not possible. Like I could coach myself to be as confident as I think I can be when dealing with the imaginary disapproval.

But I'm sure that then when I go and do it and real disapproval happens, I'll have to do that work all over again. So there's never really an end to it. I'm sorry to say, but also glad to say because this is what thought work is all about is enabling us to continue leveling up and keep making ourselves uncomfortable in service of living an intentional, purposeful life that matters to us.