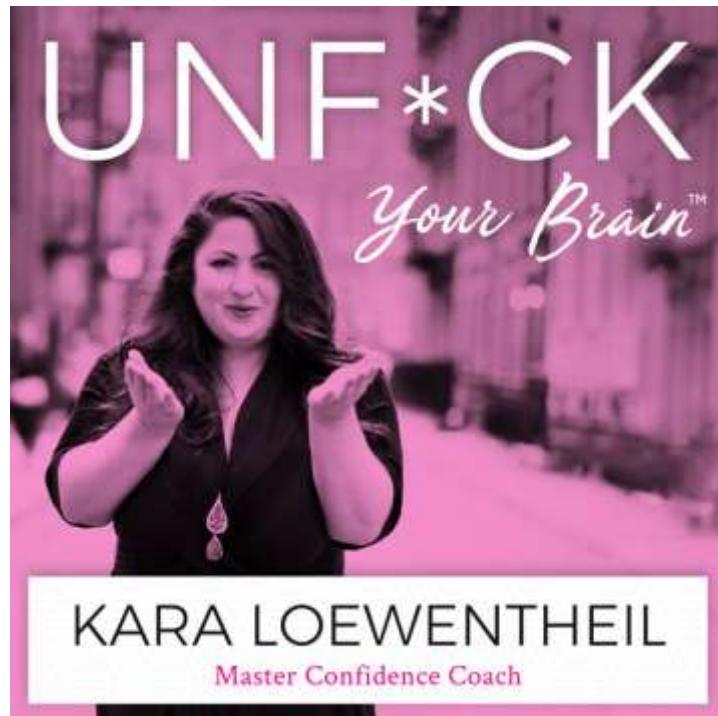


UFYB 103: Abundance & Scarcity



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

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Welcome to *Unf*ck Your Brain*, the only podcast that teaches you how to use psychology, feminism, and coaching, to rewire your brain and get what you want in life. And now here's your host, Harvard law school grad, feminist rockstar, and master coach, Kara Loewenthal.

Hello my chickens. You may notice it sounds a little bit different on the podcast today. That's because I'm not at home in my cozy little New York apartment recording. I'm actually in New Orleans for the week and the ceilings here are super high. I really miss this about New Orleans.

I used to live in New Orleans and I really miss having 11 and 13 – 16-foot ceilings. Currently in an Airbnb. I'm in an apartment and I think the ceilings are possibly 15 feet tall. They are really, really tall. So the audio might sound a little bit different and you might hear a freight train going by because this place is near the train tracks in New Orleans.

So just a different background, different vibe, but it's really nice to be here even though it's 90 degrees in October, but it's just getting me prepared for Miami, which is where I'm going this weekend for a meeting with my mastermind, which is the group that I'm in with some of the other coaches I know who are also making over seven figures and who studied with my teacher and our teacher is also there with us.

And I'm just super excited to spend a day thinking about my business and my life from a bigger perspective. It's so easy, I think, to get lost in the day-to-day of dealing with your business or your job or your life and that's why I think it's so important to set aside time to step back and reflect and kind of do that bigger picture visioning.

That feeling that life is just so busy and keeps happening, it's like you start out a week and then all of a sudden, it's Friday and then all of a sudden it's Sunday. You got some stuff done but you didn't really enjoy it or you didn't get done what you wanted to do, and you're not even sure what your plan

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is. What are you doing in the next five years or what are you doing for the rest of your life? What are you doing this year?

Where is your life going and is it going there on purpose? I think when we're really caught up in the day-to-day hustle, we don't get to ask those questions. I've been thinking about this a lot this week, not only because of my mastermind meeting coming up and just getting ready for that, but also because of the Jewish holidays.

I think it's really interesting that some holidays have become, like the big ones that a lot of Jews still celebrate, even if they do nothing else, and Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the holidays that are clustered around the Jewish New Year.

Rosh Hashanah is the New Year and Yom Kippur is the day of atonement. And they kind of work together and I think that's one of the reasons that they've stuck kind of is that Rosh Hashanah is the New Year, it's a celebration, you wish for a sweet new year, and then you have this 10-day period where you're supposed to be reflecting on the past year and you're supposed to atone for anything you've done wrong.

And one of the things that I think is really interesting about Judaism and its relational theories is that you atone to god for anything you've done wrong you've done against god – I personally am not a believer in this sense, but I think that the ritual and the theory behind it is super interesting and valuable.

So the idea is you – in some religions, if you've done something to someone else, like if you punch someone else in the face, you just tell god you're sorry or a priest or a minister or whoever you can get absolved. In Judaism, you have to – you're supposed to atone to god if you have "sinned."

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Obviously, I don't believe in sinning. But if you have done anything that goes against kind of god's rules for you about your relationship with god, you have to atone to god. But if you've done anything that goes against your fellow man, your fellow woman, your fellow person, you're supposed to atone directly to them, which I just always really liked.

Like that concept that you can't fix harm between people or you can't atone for or change your relationships without engaging with that other person. Anyway, that's a little bit of a digression.

The reason I wanted to talk about the Jewish holidays in the context of going to my mastermind is I think that that period of reflection and "atonement," I don't atone because I don't think that I've sinned, but that period of sort of a new year, a time to pause and reflect, and a time to decide in the tradition, it's like god decides what's going to happen to you for the next year.

We say like, on Rosh Hashanah, it's written and on Yom Kippur is sealed and then there's a whole long prayer of who will live, who will die, who will get richer, who will get poorer, who will be sick, who will be healthy. Obviously, I don't believe that personally. And if some of you do, that's a beautiful thing for you.

But I think that idea of one year has closed and here's this time for us to be thinking about what we want the next year to look like and what we want to create, I think that's really powerful and that humans need spaces and time carved out to do that kind of thinking.

And I think that's why you will see people in synagogues for Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur who never go to synagogue otherwise, don't believe, eat bacon-wrapped shrimp, don't keep kosher – keeping kosher is the dietary rules, for those of you don't know any Jews.

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You will see people there who don't do anything else. These holidays still resonate. And I'm not talking – of course you can make a doctrinal argument of like, well in the tradition, these are the important days, but I don't think that's why people show up. I think people continue to show up because there's something important about taking at least one or two days a year to step out of the daily hubbub and reflect and think about where you've been and where you want to go and what you want to change about yourself and how you're living in the world.

I think that's why they continue to have resonance for people. And that's one of the things that I think coaching offers, but in particular, one of the things that I think having a longer experience offers. This is why I love going to my mastermind and it's one of the reasons that I created Clutch College as well as I, as a coach, get to go to masterminds and coaching retreats.

It's like all part of my work so I can do that as much as I want. But I don't think you should have to be a professional coach in order to take advantage of taking a few days to step out of the daily hubbub of your life and really do some of that deeper thinking that you just don't have time to do day-to-day.

Five minutes a day of thought work will change your life. It's amazing. And for some people, that's enough. But if you feel like you want more time and space to dig in, like there are bigger problems that you kind of avoid in your day-to-day or that you're not sure how to tackle, or I think sometimes what happens is we use thought work kind of reactively.

I don't mean that in a bad way but it's like if we're doing our five minutes of thought work a day, we're usually doing it on what's stressing us out or what we're worried about coming up that day. But we don't have the time and the ability to take a whole bunch more time and space to step back and think like, okay, where am I in my life? Is this the life I want? Am I showing

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up in my life the way I want? What is the life I do want? How am I going to create that? How do I want this year to be different than the year that's come before?

And that's really what Clutch College is all about. For those of you who have not been listening to the podcast recently and are like, what the fuck is Clutch College? Clutch College is a three-day live teaching and coaching event that I am holding in Denver in November. It's November 8th to 11th.

And we still have a few spots left. I always do this when I fill events and it's a little unconventional but I just like doing it this way. I usually fill it two thirds of the way or three quarters of the way and then I hold some seats back because you fill an event for ahead of time, but there's always going to be people who just found the podcast or joined The Clutch or found your work in the meantime, or people who had just had found you when you first started opening it and they weren't ready yet.

There's just always people who end up wanting to come and I like there to be space left for those people. So we have a few spots left and if you are interested in coming, if you think that taking a few days out of your daily life to really dig into this work to create that vision of what you want your life to be like, what kind of person you want to be, how you want to show up in the world and how you want 2020 to be different than 2019 or different than all the years that came before, I would encourage you to consider coming to join us.

I'm not going to go through all the amazing things we're going to do and all the details because we got some other stuff to talk about on the episode. But if you go to www.unfuckyourbrain.com/college or you can just go to the show notes, unfuckyourbrain.com/103.

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If you're in The Clutch, go look in the membership site. You have your special registration page in there in the membership site. If you're not in The Clutch and you'd like to come, unfuckyourbrain.com/college.

This is actually a great connection to today's podcast topic because if you have been thinking about joining The Clutch, or if you've been thinking about attending Clutch College but you're worried about not having enough time to do all the work perfectly, or if you're worried about the expense and whether it's going to be worth it for you, this episode will help you really look at those thoughts and decide if you want to believe and keep them.

So important to remember that decision is always up to you. I am not here to tell you what to think. I'm here to teach you how to think on purpose more skillfully. I'm here to teach you how to ask yourself the right questions. It's like I'm teaching you how to do equations but you get to decide what value to assign to all the symbols.

I just want to make sure you understand how to see when you take these three values and you perform this operation on them, what do you get? When you take these thoughts and these feelings and you have them in your life, how do you act? What kind of results do you get? How do you show up? What are your relationships like? What is your job like? How do you treat yourself? What are your behaviors like? That's what I want you to understand, that math.

So let's talk about scarcity, which is an equation that a lot of you spend a lot of time hanging out in. This is a huge topic in a way because it comes up in so many areas of people's lives. Scarcity around money, around time, around love, around employment, around children, around good, around material possessions.

It probably can come up in any context you can think of. And at the same time, I think it's quite simple in the sense that I can describe it very briefly,

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which is that scarcity is the belief that there isn't enough to go around and that you're not going to get enough of whatever limited amount there is.

So it's like there's a limited amount of something and you're not going to get enough of it. And this can apply in any area of your life. So if you feel like everyone else is lucky in love but you're always the one who's single or dates the wrong guys, or if you feel like there's never enough money and you'll always be in debt or you'll always be struggling.

Or if you think there's a cap on how much you earn or that it's really hard to make money. If you believe that your family or your friends don't love you enough, or as much as they love their other family and friends. Or if you think only a few people in your field can be successful and that doesn't include you.

I was laughing so much when I wrote this because it reminded me of this conversation I had with one of my best coaching lovely friends, and it was pretty soon after we were certified. Maybe a year afterwards. And she had a lot of scarcity around professional success and money, and so she was trying to convince me very strenuously with a lot of numbers she had made up about how there could only be a few coaches who could make \$100,000.

Like, in the world, there could only be a few of them. And for sure, out of our little certification group, there could be one at most. And so she thought I was going to do it so she couldn't also do it. And now I'm just thinking about that and laughing. It's now three years later.

Actually, we were in New Orleans when we had that conversation. Probably why I thought of it. And now just from our little cohort, our 25 people we got trained with, two of us at least have seven-figure businesses. Several of us have multiple six-figure businesses, and I'm sure

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there are other people in that group who I just have lost touch with who are also doing amazing.

But it's just so funny. She was so sure. And that's the thing about scarcity is it's such a kind of social conversation. We're always hearing about competition. Capitalism kind of thrives on that. Competition for scarce resources. And so it seems like such a fact and we try to employ math and statistics and things that we don't really understand in the context to prove it.

So obviously she was wrong about that. Thank goodness for her and the rest of us. She now makes multiple six-figures. But truly, anything you think you want that you believe other people have or you think like, other people don't have it yet but there's only so much of it and so other people are going to get it before you do, any of that is scarcity thinking.

And scarcity thinking usually leads to feelings like anxiety, or fear, or jealousy, or envy, or kind of hopelessness. Just giving up, resignation. That platter of delightful feelings. It's a great example of how a certain way of thinking may have served you as a lizard, but doesn't serve you now.

And it's funny because when I first wrote this episode, I wrote that sentence and then I was going to use the example of how evolutionarily, probably lizards are mammals, organisms were competing for scarce resources. So it might have made sense that we'd be motivated by fear to get some.

But then I started thinking about how even that is just a story that we tell. I personally do believe in evolution, but of course, all of our ways of explaining whatever is going on in the world are heavily influenced by how we think about things. And that includes science.

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So for many years, women weren't included in medical studies because doctors just assumed you could extrapolate from men to women, which turned out to not be true. That seems ludicrous to us but it made total sense to them. So who knows? Maybe there never were scarce resources. Maybe scarcity has nothing to do with scarce resources.

Because maybe resources aren't scarce. Maybe that's just a thought that some scientist had that led to this particular explanation. Who knows? Thought work is like wormhole. The deeper you go, the more you realize it's all just thoughts that we've made up.

But we do not have to go that deep on this episode. For those of you who are like, rein it in Kara, what are you talking about? Just tell me about the lizards. What really matters is starting to get perspective on the ways in which your thoughts about how much there is out there for you and whatever your usual problem area is are optional thoughts.

And I think scarcity is such a perfect example of this because usually we're forecasting into the future about what is possible and available to us, which is something we truly cannot know. There is no way for you to know right now how much love you are capable of experiencing, how many partners you're capable of having, how much money you have the capacity to make.

There is no way for you to know. I will die on this hill. There is no way for you to know. And the kind of secret to the universe that I always teach but is so crucial when you think about scarcity is that whatever you believe is available to you is all you're going to see and create.

So you don't know what your true capacity to have is but if you believe that you can't have it, that's for sure what you're going to create. So let's get a little more concrete. So for instance, we'll think that a certain amount of money is not enough, and that if we just had more, we wouldn't feel anxious about not having enough.

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But of course, for any amount of money, there are people in the world who would be thrilled and think it was a fortune, and there are people who would think it was barely worth noticing. I know people who are making minimum wage who are not too stressed about money and I know incredibly wealthy people who worry about it all the time.

It's not a circumstance that there is or isn't enough. It's a thought. It's not tied to a specific amount of money that truly creates one or the other thought. And like any thought, you want to check and see what is it creating for your life before you decide to believe it's true.

Scarcity thoughts, like any thoughts, create our results. So when we believe there isn't enough out there for us, we act in ways that make that more likely to come true. And this is one of the things that we work on a lot in The Clutch and we'll be diving deep into at Clutch College.

The coaching model I teach you to really see how does your thinking play out in your life. So let's take a scarcity example and walk through it. Let's say you're trying to build a business. Whatever it is. Doesn't have to be coaching, it could be direct consumer radio sales or whatever.

If you believe there aren't enough clients out there for you, how do you feel? So you probably feel discouraged or hopeless, or maybe anxious, but then you want to numb out. And how do you act? You make a couple of half-hearted offers. Maybe you post two things on social media that aren't even that good.

Because you believe there aren't enough clients anyway, so why bother? So many other people are already ahead of you, they've already gotten all the clients. So what's your result? You don't get any clients. But then what you tell yourself is see, there just aren't any clients out there. There's not enough clients.

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But really, what's happening is that you are the reason you don't have any clients because of the way you're thinking, feeling, and acting. Let's look at money and debt and scarcity, which are fascinating. Such a good example of how we think that negative thoughts about lack will produce sensible, productive behavior for us, but it really doesn't.

I have helped a lot of my clients get out of debt through coaching, either by paying down their debt or by making more money, but it's always just because of their thoughts. It's not because I give them a budget or I tell them what to do.

If you believe you'll always be in debt or that it's impossible to pay off your debt, now, you have to always distinguish. You might not think intellectually – you might think well, I don't really believe it's impossible to pay off my debt, I mean, anything could happen. The question is like, emotionally, do you have that sense of resignation and sinking?

Do you secretly believe that you're always going to have it? Is it easy to imagine your life without it or do you just kind of imagine it will always be there? If that's the case, then you believe that you have to have it. You don't believe you can change it.

And so what do you do? First of all, how do you feel? If you believe you'll always be in debt, you feel resigned, you feel hopeless. You feel like fuck it, you stress yourself out, and then you want to spend money on comfort. And what do you do? You don't really budget.

You spend without really thinking about it because who cares? You think about how big your debt is and how it's impossible to get out of it, so you just don't pay attention to your money. And what's your result? You stay in debt and often, the debt grows. But you tell yourself a life is just too expensive. It's impossible to get out of debt. I can't afford to pay it off.

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When really, it is your resignation to the idea that you will always have debt. Your scarcity thinking around money that there isn't enough ever to be debt-free that's creating this result.

This is why people can be in debt and if they make more money, they just create more debt. Or their standard of living just goes up and up, so they always stay in debt. Or why lottery winners often blow all of their money and end up right back where they were.

If your belief is that you don't have enough money, you're the kind of person who doesn't have enough money, you can literally spend millions of dollars proving that true to yourself. The same thing with making money. If you believe you can't make money, that there isn't enough money out there for you, how do you feel?

You feel anxious and helpless and resigned. Seeing a pattern here. How do you act? Do you brainstorm ways to make extra money? No. Do you make a great case for getting a raise at work by writing up a memo valuing your accomplishments? No.

Do you go out and get clients if you're in sales? Do you think of new products or new ideas or new messages? No. You don't do any of that shit. Because you've decided you can't make more money, there's not enough out there. There's too much competition for it.

So you just keep the same amount of money you have or that you're making now and then you use that as proof that there isn't any more out there for you. And let's look at scarcity and dating. Another place I see this so much.

If you believe there isn't enough love out there for you or there aren't enough partners to go around, there aren't enough good guys or good girls

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or good people of whatever gender to go around, that you can't find a partner, that there aren't enough options for you, how do you feel? You feel hopeless, you feel resigned.

You feel sad. Maybe anxious. And so how do you act? Sometimes you just don't put yourself out there at all. You've decided it's truly helpless. Or if you do put yourself out there, if you're trying to fight that belief, you're constantly seeking evidence that there isn't enough out there for you.

And we've got to think about dating, especially online dating, which a lot of people are doing if they don't have a partner, it's like selling in the sense that far more people are going to say no to you implicitly or explicitly than will ever say yes. You're going to swipe on 100 people who don't like you back and then talk to 10 people and then maybe go out with one.

Far more people are going to be saying no to you implicitly or explicitly than will ever say yes. The same thing is happening on the other side. You're saying no to a whole bunch of people also who you don't even think about. Whatever bird is outside who is squawking really agrees with this point.

So if all you're looking for is evidence that there isn't an option for you, there's so much evidence there to misuse against yourself just because of the nature of the experience. And then you're going to give up. Or if you do match with someone, you're going to discount them.

You've already decided there isn't enough out there, there aren't enough good partners out there. Everybody who's out there is emotionally avoidant or immature or screwed up or cheating or lying or whatever. So you're just going to be super skeptical and always looking for what might be wrong with them and discounting them.

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Because you're so committed to believing there isn't enough out there for you, then you're not even going to recognize it when it's right in front of you. The same with selling if you're a coach or you have a business or in sales for someone else, the vast majority of potential clients who see a post from you or read an ad from you or whatever are never going to hire you.

That's just how it is. But if you focus on every single one of them and count that as evidence you can't succeed, you're going to give up so fast. Scarcity thinking is not a joke. It will fuck your life up if you don't deal with it.

In order to change this thought pattern, you have to work on number one, getting distance from your current thoughts and seeing how they are optional thoughts that are actually creating what your results are. Not just describing your life to you. Actually creating the lack that you're experiencing, seeing.

Number two, you have to change the thought patterns. I want to give you one caution about that because there's a mistake I see come up a lot when people are trying to work on scarcity. So remember that the scarcity thought pattern is two parts.

The first is there isn't enough to go around, and the second is whatever limited amount there is, I personally am not going to get enough. It's important because sometimes people try to deal with scarcity thoughts by focusing on the thought that there isn't enough to go around.

So they're trying to believe there's plenty out there, but they ignore the part of the thought that is but I personally am not going to get any, or not going to get enough. So you could believe there's enough to go around. You could believe that there isn't enough to go around, but if you're confident that you are going to get a share of that limited thing, you wouldn't really be anxious or upset. You wouldn't have an emotional problem.

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If you believe there isn't enough love to go around, some people end up unloved – that's not really a real thing, right? But this is how your brain thinks. If you think oh, there's not enough partners for everyone but I'm totally amazing so I'm totally going to find one, you're not emotionally upset about it.

So it's both parts. You have to be looking at the thought that there isn't enough, but also the thought that whatever limited amount there is, you're going to be the one standing up when the musical chairs goes around. Whether it's money or partners or whatever else it is.

I tend to see scarcity mostly around money, love, and professional success. Those seem to be the three big ones. But there are for sure others, and I'm sure some of you experience it in other places.

So the point is you just want to remember both parts of that. You need to work on both parts. If you just try to think there's plenty of people out there to date or there's plenty of money out there and it's not really helping, it's probably because you're ignoring that second part of the thought.

This is some of the most challenging work you can do, but it's the most powerful work you can do as well. Because the opposite of scarcity is abundance. Now don't press pause. I think this word gets a bad rep because it's used in a lot of nonsense ways by people who are just telling you to manifest abundance and aren't really teaching you anything about how to change your brain.

But it's still a useful word. We can just call it plenty if that feels better, but it is a good word. So abundance, I don't think it's exactly a thought. I mean, sometimes you can practice a thought like love is abundant or money is abundant, and maybe that works for you.

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It's not a feeling. I think it's a way of describing a certain orientation towards a resource. So if you live in a place where there's plenty of air to breathe, you don't really think about it. You're not like, oh, there's not enough air, I might not get enough. You don't worry that there isn't enough out there or that you're not going to get enough of it.

Abundance is believing that there's plenty out there and there's plenty for you. It's not just believing that there's enough, although that can be kind of a ladder thought. But abundance is more than enough. It's plenty, it's more than you need, it's more than you could use. It's so much that you don't even have to think about whether there's enough or not.

Because enough isn't how you're measuring it. There's something about believing there's enough that is like, almost coming from scarcity just in thinking about that. Like oh no, I'm scared there's not enough so I'll try to believe there's enough.

What if there's so much more than enough that enough doesn't even enter the picture? That's the part of abundance thinking that will kind of break your brain and make your brain hurt, and let that hurt. It's okay for that to hurt your brain. Abundance is so much you don't even have to think about whether there's enough.

Enough is not the measure. There's as much as you could ever want or use or enjoy or delight in. That's what abundance feels like. You are not going to get there overnight most likely, but that is the destination.

So if you want a deep dive, if you really see this thought pattern coming up in your life and you want to stop living out of scarcity, stop living from this place of there's not enough and there's not enough for me, don't forget to check out Clutch College. Unfuckyourbrain.com/college.

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Whether you want to create more time – that's the other one. I knew I was forgetting one. Money, relationships, work, and time. So many people have scarcity around time. There's not enough time, I don't have enough time, I don't use my time well enough, I need more time.

So if you want to create more time, more love, more money, more health, whatever it is you want to change, it has to start with seeing how it's possible. And that is what Clutch College will teach you how to do. So I cannot wait to see you there and coach your face one.

One of the people coming, one of my Clutch chickens said, I want to keep my face. And I said, well, that depends how committed you are to the process. But I promise, you all get to keep your face. It's just your brain and your life that are going to change forever. I'll see you there.

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