

UFYB 115: Listener Q&A: Confidence, Coaching, HSP, Other People's Emotions & Podcasting



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 Loewentheil.

Hello my chickens. So on this episode of listener Q&A, I am going to answer some questions about coaching and business and how I think about my own kind of growth process, all that kind of stuff. I was about to say like, my thoughts on things, but every episode is my thoughts on things.

But before I do that, let me remember to tell you, we have a giveaway this episode. If you follow me on social media, then you probably know that I do a lot of podcast interviews for other people's podcasts on all kind of issues. Like, on aging and body image and business and getting organized and creativity. I feel like I've done them all.

But I don't talk about them on the podcast that often and I don't usually really email about them, so you really only know about them if you're following me on social media. So that's one reason for you to follow me on social media. It's just my name at Instagram or Facebook.

But we are also giving away a clickable list of all of the podcast interviews I have done, which I need to look at how many there are. I think there's like - there's at least 35 of them. There might be a couple that aren't out, but there's between 30 and 35 that are out right now.

So that's a lot of extra teaching. So all you need to do if you want to get it is text your email to 347-997-1784. It's 347-997-1784. If you text that number your email address, it will text you back asking for your code and you just

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send back the word interview. All one word, interview. And then we will email you a list of the interviews with clickable links so you can catch up on every podcast I've been on.

I'm just looking at the list. There's so many good ones. So I was on the Million Dollar Badass with Rachel Rodgers talking about scaling to seven figures, I was on Do it Scared with Ruth Soukup, who's a national best-selling author, talking about confidence and fear. I was on the Trust Your Body project talking about body image work. I was on Women in the Middle talking about thoughts about mid-life and body image and age.

The Gen Y Lawyer, I've been on the podcast 51 First Dates talking about insecurities. Thought Leadership School talking about speaking, Body Positive Yoga Podcast, The Not Your Average Runner Podcast talking about loving race photos. So many good ones. I've forgotten about some of these. They're all really good.

Oh, Girl Boner Radio talking about orgasm-blocking thoughts. That's a good one. The Creativity School, so many good ones. So text your email to 347-997-1784 and then when you get prompted, text back the codeword interview and we will email you with a list to all of them. So fun. That should keep you guys set for a while.

Alright, so let me answer some questions about coaching and business first because I get a lot of these and I want to answer some of them. So first question is, "Do I need to be a certified master coach to start a credible podcast?" And the answer is no, nobody cares.

Seriously, I don't think any of you were like, oh well she's a certified master coach so I will listen to her podcast, right? You were like, Unfuck Your Brain? That sounds like what I need. The having a particular certification -

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obviously I think it's a very good idea to get certified as a coach if you want to coach people, 100%

But do you have to be certified as a master coach to start a podcast? No. What this question is really about is this person has doubts and fears about their own credibility. Being trained as a coach is important if you're going to coach people and being trained as a master coach is for sure even better if you're going to coach people.

But I don't think that that's the same question as what makes you credible as a podcast host. What makes you credible as a podcast host is that you're teaching something that people get value from. And I think when you hire a coach, you want to make sure that they are trained and certified, they're going to be working directly with you, I think when it comes to a podcast, you're just talking into the void and people can listen or not.

They can turn you off if they don't like you. So when you're talking about the podcast, nobody is sticking around my podcast because I'm a certified master coach. They're sticking around my podcast because what I'm teaching resonates and seems to help them. That's what gives me credibility to them and that's where I have to find my own credibility.

Because the truth is even being a certified master coach doesn't mean that I necessarily will believe in myself or that I necessarily have something useful to say. You need both. So the answer is no, but really the question for you is why are you doubting your own credibility? Where do you think that comes from? And why is that what you're focusing on?

My question when starting this podcast and in every episode is like, what can I teach that will help someone? It's not what do I need to do so other people think I'm credible? So that's such a big difference that you're focused on your own credibility, your own qualifications. That's all about

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you. You're not being focused on how can I show up and serve, what can I offer people.

It's a huge difference that impacts everything in your business because when you are focused on yourself, again, it's not because you're a bad person or you're self-involved. It's all actually just insecurity. But when you're focused on yourself, then that's all you're thinking of and it's this very cramped, defensive way of thinking and showing up.

Whereas when you're focused on how you can serve and how you can help people, it's very expansive and positive, and you are willing to go be uncomfortable. If you're out there just to try to prove to yourself that you're credible, you're never going to want to be uncomfortable.

But if you're out there to serve other people, you're going to be willing to be uncomfortable because you know that it matters more that you show up to serve them than that you feel comfortable. So, so much is embedded in the way you're even framing that question.

And kind of related, somebody asked, "What do you think draws people to coaches?" So I could answer this question two ways. Like, why do I think coaching is so popular? I think because a lot of people feel like life should not be as hard as it is, and they're right about that. We aren't taught these basic tools and skills that enable us to both have some more control over our life than we think we can, and to stop controlling the shit that we actually can't control and be okay with that uncertainty.

That's kind of the duality for me of the way that coaching is a blend of kind of these big spiritual questions that humans have been asking forever, and really concrete advice that helps you change your own thoughts and feelings and behaviors and gets you - it's like you get more control over the

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things you can control, and you relinquish trying to control the things you can't.

So it's really about discernment and seeing clearly. What's the difference between those two things? So I think that people are drawn to coaching in general because in this day and age, coaches are often the people who are offering that blend and answering those questions.

I really think from time in memorial, humans have had questions about what are we doing here? What is the good life? How should I live my life? What is happening in my brain? What is happening in my body? How do I make things happen? These are questions people have had for millennia.

And who answers those questions has changed over time. And maybe it used to be the village elder or the tribe's wise person, or a shaman, and then maybe it was the local priest or the teacher or the clergy, or maybe it was the professors or maybe it was - and then it was the therapist, and now maybe it's also coaches. In the ancient Greeks it was Socrates, it was philosophers.

Who it is has changed, but these questions have preoccupied humans forever. So I think that's kind of what draws people to coaching in general. And then it's much more kind of forward and action, results-oriented than some forms of talk therapy that people have experienced.

In terms of like - I don't know if this person meant individual coaches, like how can you become a coach that people are drawn to. It's not really the right question because you can't sort of try to become a person that other people are drawn to, as if that's the goal.

I think especially with coaching, I was talking about this with - I was out with my mom actually and a friend of hers, and she said like, they came to my

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live podcast taping with Bust Poptarts Podcast, which will be on the interview list. So they came to that taping and then afterwards - it was like, a small group. We only had 20 tickets available or something I think. And I think everybody who came ended up being either one of my students or a podcast listener.

And so people wanted to take pictures and were saying nice things about my work. It was all very lovely. Afterwards, my mom's friend was like, that must just like, feel so amazing that you're changing people's lives and that they're telling you that you've helped them so much and you must just feel like you're on a cloud. I was like, it's so interesting but not really.

Like, of course it's wonderful, I'm so happy for my students that this work is changing their lives, but in order to become a person that people look to, to learn to become confident and accept themselves, you have to have done that work yourself. And so in order to put myself out there to teach others this work, I had to do the work myself.

And then once you've done the work yourself and you truly feel confident and accept yourself, compliments, they're fine. They're nice, I of course think it's lovely that people want to give them to me, but they don't really change my mood. It's only when you're like, desperately insecure that a compliment feels so amazing because it's like, momentary relief and validation from all your negative self-critical thinking about yourself.

If you actually like or love yourself, then a compliment is just like, you're like, yeah, I know. Yeah, this work is great, I'm so glad that it's helping you and that's why I put it out there. I'm so proud of you for doing it. It's just like you don't take it personally. It's like I don't take the hating personally, and I don't take the loving personally. It's all other people's thoughts about me.

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So I don't know what draws people to coaches in general, but I think that what draws people to me is that I am clearly an example of this work. I put myself out there in a way that shows that I have done the work myself. So I really think it's that authenticity and confidence that comes through.

So somebody asked, "What's the best advice you can give to a new life coach who wants to be successful?" And the answer is kind of related. It is for anything, not just being a coach, the best advice I can give anyone who wants to be successful is learn to manage your mind, be willing to be uncomfortable, and go out there and do shit anyway.

The biggest hindrance to being successful in any field is believing that you should feel comfortable and good before you take action. Not being willing to feel uncomfortable. So being willing to feel uncomfortable and fail and feel negative emotion and keep going, that's how you become successful at anything. Being willing to suck and being willing for your experience to sometimes suck. That's what you have to do in order to be successful.

Then someone else asked - I got two questions that were kind of similar and they're a little bit related to this. One is, "How can we as coaches protect ourselves from carrying the emotions of our clients?" And the other is, "Are you an HSP? A highly sensitive person. How does that affect your coaching and self-coaching?"

So I think these questions are related and my answer to both of them is sort of the same. I don't think that we have to protect ourselves from carrying the emotions of our clients because I don't think that's a real thing. We don't carry the emotions of our clients. We carry our own emotions, which are caused by our own thoughts.

I spend all day coaching people who are in a lot of suffering, believing all of their own negative thoughts. I don't feel at all drained or tired or bad

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afterwards because I don't take their thoughts seriously. When you think that you are carrying someone else's emotion or that you have absorbed their vibe, it's just your own thought.

You may accurately perceive that they are upset, but that is not upsetting to you unless you have a thought about them being upset. I don't ever feel that way about my clients because I don't believe any of their thoughts. That's why I'm a good coach is that they come to me with their most painful, painful thought, and I just don't believe it.

I just know that it's an optional thought they have. It's not true, and that their pain and suffering is unnecessary. And so that's what makes me a good coach is my ability to believe that and show them that it's optional. I'm not trying to argue or rush them out of it because that's the other thing that happens sometimes. Coaches get too invested and try to make their clients feel better.

My clients don't have to feel better. They can do whatever they want. My job is to just show up and hold that space for them and show them that it is optional. If they want to put it down, they can. So I don't have to protect myself from carrying the emotion of my clients because there's no such thing. I can't carry them. It's only my own thoughts. That's the only thing that creates my own feelings.

So similarly, I don't identify as a highly sensitive person. I think that in the past, for sure, somebody else might have identified me that way and maybe I would have identified myself that way, but thought work has totally changed my reactions to things.

So yes, I still think that like, I seem to have an increased sensitivity to both physical pain and pleasure and noise, there's a lot of things that I just seem to find I need to manage my mind more about or it just sometimes seems

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like my physical body - I have a lot of proprioception for instance. I have a lot of internal ability to notice very subtle and nuanced physical sensations in my body.

But thinking of myself as a highly sensitive person in the way that most people talk about it I find is not very useful. Because it makes me feel like everything else is in charge of how I think and feel, and that's not my experience. And changing my thought patterns really alleviated a lot of the suffering that I would have blamed on being a highly sensitive person.

So as with anything, it's just like, does thinking that way help you or not? But for me, I just tend to think of myself as like, somebody with - I don't know, I just have a lot of physical sensitivity to the world, and that has good and bad things, but I don't make it mean like, so I can't be around certain people and I need to protect myself from certain things and I'm just naturally going to be more emotionally reactive and naturally going to get more upset about things.

None of that is helpful to me. So as always with everything, the question is how is it serving you to believe that? You want to really look at how it's playing out in your life and for me, identifying as a highly sensitive person does not have an upside that I can see.

So that is, as always, the case with everything. What is the thought? What feeling is it creating? What actions do you take? And what's the result you get? That's the best way to decide what you're going to think, regardless of any external framework that tries to explain you to yourself.

Alright my chickens, have a good week. And don't forget to text your email to 347-997-1784 and when you get the prompt, text back the codeword interview in order to get a clickable list of all of the interviews I've done on

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other podcasts. So you can binge more thought work in lots of different areas. I'll talk to you soon.

If you're loving what you're learning in the podcast, you have got to come check out The Clutch. The Clutch is the podcast community for all things *Unf*ck Your Brain*. It's where you can get individual help applying the concepts to your own life.

It's where you can learn new coaching tools not shared on the podcast that will blow your mind even more, and it's where you can hang out and connect over all things thought work with other podcast chickens just like you and me. It's my favorite place on earth and it will change your life, I guarantee it. Come join us at www.unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch. It's unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch. I can't wait to see you there.