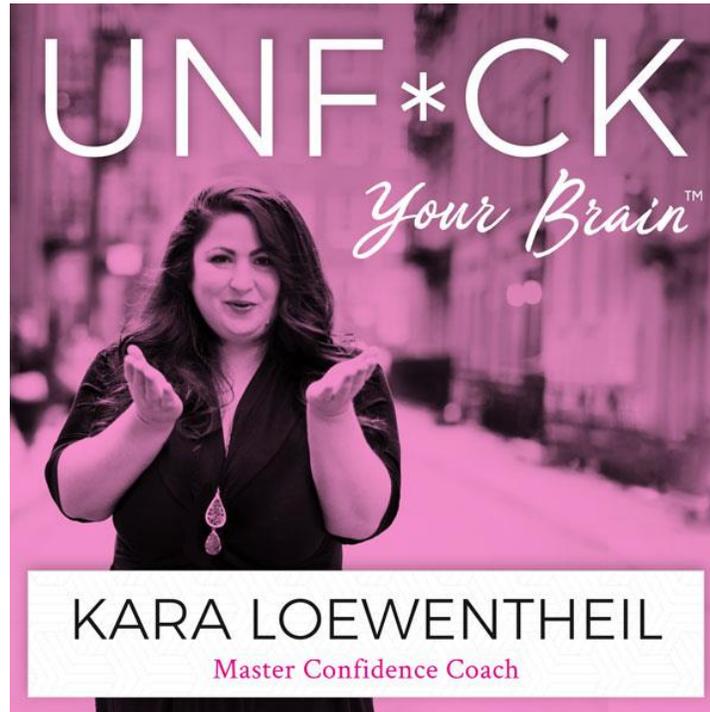


# UFYB 163: Loving Lightly



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kara Loewentheil**

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## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

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. How are you? I just got off a meeting with my team that was so much fun, so exciting. I know that's not words usually applied to meetings. We are planning some amazing upgrades for The Clutch that are just going to take everything to the next level and make it so much easier for all of my students, all of you to create the change you want in any area of your life.

And it's going to be so beautiful and a clean new design, it's going to be gorgeous. I'm so, so excited for my students who are already in The Clutch and those of you who are going to join. It feels like I'm renovating a house to make it even more amazing. So excited about that and I will of course share more as we get closer to the unveiling.

It has been a big season of changes personally really and in the business. Moving out from my little one-bedroom into a three-bedroom apartment with a view. My one little one-bedroom apartment had a view of a fire escape. And hiring to expand the business and up-leveling The Clutch experience to help my students get exactly what they want in life.

I feel like half of 2020 disappeared to kind of crisis and then recovery, and obviously we're not out of the woods with the pandemic crisis that the country is facing, but I do feel really ready to take on 2021 in a while new way. And I really want that for all of you guys too.

And here's what I think one of the secrets has been to all the growth and change I've been experiencing this past few months, which is now pouring out into my business and my relationships and my teaching. This is also

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

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

such a good example of how and why I teach that investing in your own mind management, time and money, benefits everybody else in your life.

I always have coaches and invest in coaching and invest in managing my mind, and every time I do that, I up-level what I can create in my life, in my world, in my mind, and then that benefits all of you. And everyone who listens to the podcast and everyone who's in The Clutch and learns with me, not to mention my family, my friends, my romantic partners.

Any money or time that I put into managing my mind, it pays me tenfold dividends in my own life, but it pays a hundredfold dividends for everyone else in the world. So one of the things that I have been really kind of working on but more just experiencing these past few months and practicing is the idea of loving lightly.

I think that most of us don't love lightly. We love hard. And we think that's a good thing. When we love, we get attached. That's how most of us love. When we love an apartment, we don't want to move. When we love a person, we don't want them to change. When we love a job, we don't want to lose it or to quit.

We think that loving hard is a sign of the depth of our love, or the specialness of the thing or person that we love. But of course it's neither of those things. It's not a sign of the specialness of the thing or the person, because the thing or the person itself doesn't create our love.

They don't create or it doesn't create any of our feelings. If we love something, it's because of our thoughts about the thing. That's why one person can find a dream home that 10 other people rejected before them. One person can love someone that another person hates. It's not the house or the person that causes the love. It's the brain that is perceiving it.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

And how hard we love is not a sign of the depth of our love either. I think we make that mistake a lot. Loving something hard doesn't mean it's truly important to us for our own sake or that we just truly appreciate it on such a deep level. It doesn't mean we're particularly loyal or particularly emotionally deep or sentimental or anything else.

I think when we love something hard, it's because we think that we need it to be a certain way for us to feel okay. We think that our desire that someone stay in a relationship with us or that we keep a certain job or that a friend would want to spend time with us, we think that our desires for those things are because we love these people so much. We love them so hard. It's a sign of the depth of our love.

But it's not. It's a sign of the extent to which we've placed the responsibility for our happiness, our worth, our fundamental okay-ness with ourselves in their hands. When we "love" like that, and I have that in quotes, like love is in quotes in that sentence. When we love like that, we're not really loving.

Doesn't really have anything to do with the other person or the job or the apartment or the friendship or whatever it is. It's not just loving the person or the thing or the experience for being what it is. It's loving it for what we think it will do for us, for how we think it will make us feel.

We associate love so deeply with possession. And I don't mean it in a jealous or envious way necessarily, although that comes too sometimes. But we associate it with temporality, with currency, in the sense of being current in our current moment. Not currency as in money.

So what I mean by that is we think we need to be involved with someone, in a relationship with them to love them, or that a friendship has to be active or mutual for us to love the friend, or that we have to live in a certain place, a certain apartment or house to enjoy it, to enjoy loving it.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

But love is a feeling created by your thoughts. And when you believe that you must have possession of the thing or the person in order to enjoy it, or at least have access to it in certain ways, that's when you're loving it hard. And it's hard because you're making it hard for yourself.

It may feel great in the moment if you do have that possession or access, but when you love something hard, you become attached. And when I say attached, I mean in the Buddhist sense of attachments being desires for things to be a certain way and the belief that we must have certain possessions or outcomes or relationships or experiences in order to be happy.

Being attached to things being a certain way. And when it comes to living with a brain that has been socialized the way women are socialized in our society, it's very likely that when you're loving hard, you believe not only that you need something else to be happy, but really that you need it to be worthy, to be good enough, to know that you're good enough.

And one is often layered on top of the other. When I coach women about why they need a certain partner or relationship or professional success or whatever to be happy, they think it's because the relationship or the professional success or the house or whatever would make them happy.

But when we dig underneath that, imagine being happy because they have that thing, or when they bring up the thoughts that cause them to be happy now if they do have the thing, it's because underneath that, our thoughts about their worth and value, those thoughts are what create the feeling of security and happiness.

This job is a sign that I'm good enough and smart enough, this partner is a sign that I'm lovable. We want these external things to be the proof that we

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

are worthy and good enough underneath. And those are the thoughts that cause the happiness. Not the person.

And conversely, when my clients are single, they have thoughts about their worth and value that create unhappiness. Not having this is a reflection of my worth or value. This is often very subconscious, which is why coaching is so important. Because many of the times, a lot of us actually want to and think that we do believe the opposite from a feminist or liberated perspective.

But underneath, we still have this programming that's acting on us. Loving hard feels hard. Yes, it can feel amazing sometimes, but it also feels terrible, especially when things end or change. And for a lot of us who are anxious, even when we have the person or the job or the house or whatever, we don't actually feel happy and enjoy it. We're just scared to lose it. Because we've given it so much meaning that now we can't even just enjoy that meaning we've given it for ourselves. We're scared we'll lose it and therefore not be able to keep thinking that we're good enough or worthy enough.

So I want to propose that we think about loving lightly. What does that mean, to love lightly? We tend to associate the death or importance of our love for something with a degree of pain and suffering we think we would have if we lose it.

Let me say that again. It's so important. We associate the depth or importance or intensity of our love for something with the degree of pain and suffering we imagine we would have if we lost it. We do associate our love for something with how positive we feel about it to some extent, but I think we associate it to a greater extent with how upset we believe we would feel when we lose it, or how upset we actually are when we lose it.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

The human brain has a bias for negativity. Your human brain is more afraid of being unhappy than it is excited about being happy. So we do attribute some of the value we perceive in things based on the positive feelings we have about them, which again, are actually just caused by our thoughts. But we attribute more of it on how we imagine or how we feel when we lose access to them.

That pain and suffering aren't caused by the depth of your love. That's the thing though. They're caused by your painful thoughts. And the irony is that when we love something or someone hard, we actually make it harder to love them. It's harder on ourselves.

If you are making someone or something responsible for your happiness or fulfillment, now your love has become conditional. It's become manipulative. It becomes about requiring a certain behavior or outcome. It becomes about the thing or the person meeting your expectations and cooperating with your desires and your plans.

It makes your love conditional. It means you only love them or it when they or it are delivering happiness to you. Of course, they're never delivering happiness to you. It's always your own thoughts, but it's like a ventriloquist dummy. You pretend it's them and then you get mad at them when they're not pretend delivering the feelings to you.

And all of that makes it harder to love them because the love is conditional on them making you feel a certain way forever, which they can't do. So what would loving lightly look like? It doesn't look like not caring. It doesn't look like not investing in a job or a relationship or an apartment or a friendship or whatever it is.

It doesn't mean loving just a little, not really caring about something. It means loving in a way that does not associate your own worth or

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

happiness with possession or access to the thing or person or job or experience in question.

To hold something lightly is not to grip it, not cage it, not to try to control it. To love something or someone lightly is the same. It means to hold your love lightly, to love without being attached to the person behaving a certain way or the job being a certain thing or the experience going a certain way, or to any certain outcome.

To love something or someone whether you're in their presence or in their country or in their life or not. To love because loving feels amazing. Not because you need the person or the thing or the experience in order to feel okay.

To love lightly is to love someone while they want to be with you and to love them just as lightly and just as well if they ever don't. To love lightly is to love a place you live, while knowing you would be equally happy anywhere else. To love lightly is to love your child at the age they are, and know you'll love them at the next age too, without regret or drama and without wanting them to behave or be a different child.

To love lightly is love in its purest form. Not pure as in it's a moral imperative or it means you're a bad person if you don't love that way. You just have a human brain. But it's pure in that it is not tinged with ego and attachment.

And again, it's not more moral. You're not a better person. You're not getting into heaven faster if you love with attachment. You just have a human brain. We all do. Loving lightly is a practice. It's not something people do automatically.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

How can we love someone so that we're happy to see them arrive and so that our love is not diminished or negated if we see them go? How can we love a place so that we are delighted to move in and delighted to leave?

Now, this is kind of a paradox, but loving lightly doesn't mean not having negative emotions. That doesn't mean when you love a person or a place and they leave or you leave or you leave it, that you wouldn't feel also sad or have any negative emotion.

It means not being stuck in them, not being stuck in your story, not being stuck in attachment to a certain experience or person or outcome, not resisting the reality of any change that happens and believing that it means that your feelings have to change.

To love lightly is to love what you have with delight and to also know that you'd be totally fundamentally fine without it. Doesn't mean you wouldn't feel sad in the transition, but you would be fine, it would mean nothing about your worth or value or what you could do in your life.

I love my business lightly because it's my mission in this world, I give it so much of my attention and heart. Clearly, my love for this work that I create is not light in the sense that I just don't really think about it much. Just doesn't matter to me. No, it's one of the most important things in my life. I think about it all the time and I give it so much of my time and energy.

I mean, I've been doing this free podcast once a week for three years now. But I love it lightly in that if it disappeared tomorrow, I would still be me. I would be fine. I would find a new way to teach and serve. Those are the fundamentals about me. I don't have to have a specific podcast or a business or whatever to do that.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

I love my partners lightly because when I love them hard, I make it hard for myself to love them. When I love them lightly, it feels easy to love them no matter what happens. I love my family lightly so that they can be themselves and I can be myself and I can love us all no matter what.

I love money lightly because it's convenient and makes my life easier in some ways, and it makes it possible for me to give back to causes and movements that I care about and to make my work more accessible to people, and also because if it disappeared tomorrow, I would be okay.

Money doesn't create my happiness and I know how to create more if I want, using my mind. Loving lightly is fundamentally an act of abundance. The only reason we love hard is when you fear that there isn't enough out there for you or you fear that you are unworthy. And so you have to put a leash on the thing you love to try to control it.

When you love lightly, you know that people and jobs and accomplishments and family can come and go, which they all will someday because we're all mortal, and that you will love them and love them well, but that you will always love yourself and love your life no matter what. That security, that stability of loving yourself, that grounding of loving your life on purpose, that's what allows you to love everything else lightly, and that is what will set you free.

Have a wonderful week, my chickens. Love something lightly. I'll talk to you next week.

If you're loving what you're learning in the podcast, you have got to come check out The Clutch. The Clutch is my feminist coaching community for all things Unfuck Your Brain. It's where you can get individual help applying all these concepts I teach to your own life and learning how to do thought work to blow your own mind.

## UFYB 163: Loving Lightly

It's where you can learn new coaching tools not shared on the podcast that will change your life even more. 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 everything, I guarantee it.

Come join us at [www.unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch](http://www.unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch). Or you can just text your email address to 347-934-8861. If you text your email address to that number, we'll text you right back with a link to check out everything you need to know about The Clutch. 347-934-8861 or again, just go online to [www.unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch](http://www.unfuckyourbrain.com/theclutch). I cannot wait to see you there.