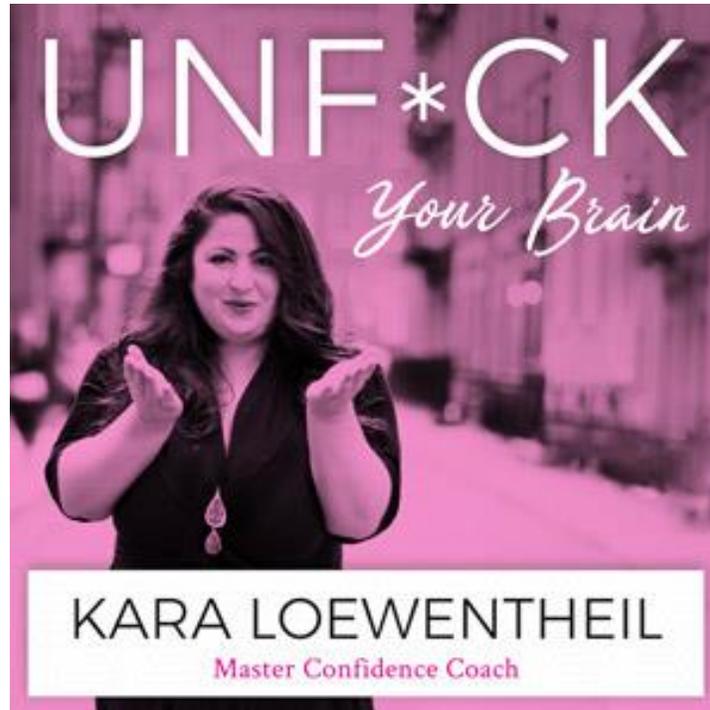


UFYB 198: Everyone is Creative – Yes, Even You



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

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

UFYB 198: Everyone is Creative – Yes, Even You

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.

Kara: Hello my chickens. I am so excited for this conversation today. You will be hearing a series of podcasts over the next little while let's say in which I have different conversations with the incredible coaches who went through my Advanced Certification in Feminist Coaching, which is going to be opening up again soon.

So if you want to get on the waitlist for that, we are getting ready for open up registration for Clutch College Live. I can't hit the high note but I'm so excited to finally be doing another Clutch College in person.

We will have a virtual attendance option for those of you who can't or don't want to travel, but we will also be gathering together. I'm so excited to actually teach and coach in person again. It has been so long.

This Clutch College is going to be all about setting goals, how to set big goals, how to achieve them, how to get over imposter syndrome and procrastination, how to really implement massive action. It is going to get you set to accomplish whatever you want to accomplish.

Obviously, a topic that I feel extremely passionately about, having built this entire business from scratch. So I'm super excited about it. If you are in The Clutch, just keep an eye out. We are going to be opening up registration on August 19th. You will get an email about it.

I'm going to teach a webinar, give you all the information, so just keep your eyes out. So excited. If you are not in The Clutch and you have been thinking about joining The Clutch, now is the time because coming to Clutch College Live will really jumpstart your entire Clutch experience.

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It's like going to France for six months for your language immersion instead of going to class once a week in a dusty basement somewhere. So if you have been thinking about joining and you were just waiting for a really good reason, this is your really good reason. Text your email to +13479348861 and you will get a link to join The Clutch and then you will be eligible to try to grab a spot at Clutch College Live, which is only for Clutch members.

So today we have several incredible coaches. We're going to talk about creativity. So I'm going to leave it mysterious like that and let them introduce themselves. And then we're going to see what they have to say. Elana, you want to start us off?

Elana: My name is Elana McKernan and I am a life coach for artists. Should I say more?

Kara: I mean, you know, what's your favorite color? What are you wearing? Many of you have also heard of Elana because she is one of my employees. And she is a perfect example of what happens when you hire someone with creativity, which is they do a great job and then they decide to become a life coach. So let that be a lesson to all of you. Judith, tell us what's up.

Judith: Yeah, so I'm Judith Gatton. I'm a style coach for curvy women.

Kara: And that's it, that's all.

Judith: I can tell you what I'm wearing if that works.

Kara: Judith first of all messaged us to ask if this would be recorded, then claimed that she was not dressed up and then nevertheless showed up looking more chic than the rest of us with makeup on and an amazing turban on her hair.

Judith: There are pin curls under here. There are.

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Kara: There are pin curls under there. Judith and I met - we met at that podcast live thing, right?

Judith: Yeah, podcast live.

Kara: I was in my master coach training in 2017, we did this event, like in the third quarter I think basically our coach and teacher was just like, I don't know what to do with you people, why don't you put on an event? So we put on the podcast live, The Life Coach School podcast live, which was basically just teaching and coaching and stuff but free or like, 50 bucks or something reasonable.

Judith: Yeah, I think they have - the lure was it was \$100, that's what it was, and then we could put that towards chatting with you all, depending on which coach you...

Kara: A one-on-one session, that's what it was.

Judith: So I got a one-on-one session with you in that courtyard and I cried the whole time.

Kara: Oh yeah, that's standard. I was just outside on my balcony, we'll get Kori to introduce herself in a second, and the people who just moved in next door came out and was like hey. And I was like, oh hi, and I managed to do what's your name, what's your name, and then I was just like, I don't know what to do if I'm not basically them being like, so what are you struggling with today? What brought you here? Why are you crying?

That's all the interactions I have with strangers, especially during the pandemic are just them immediately sobbing to me about whatever's happening in their lives and now I don't know how to have normal conversations with people anymore.

Judith: What would you like coaching on today, perfect stranger?

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Kara: I remember that courtyard. And then Judith worked with me one-on-one and then she ghosted me and then we made up. My favorite stories.

Judith: I did. I totally did. I had a dramatic moment and I think you were in the parking lot somewhere and...

Kara: I was in California with Rachel Hart pulling up to like a pottery store. This was very early in my business. This was the first time any of my clients had freaked out and wanted a refund.

Judith: Yes. I totally freaked, which is funny because what I created with you, I still use today, which is fascinating.

Kara: Yeah, so where's my \$1000, Judith?

Judith: Yeah, I owe you a grand definitely.

Kara: Here's the reason I love this story is that at the time, I was so freaked out because it was very early in my coaching career. That was the first person who had ever asked me for a refund, all the thoughts you can imagine, and then here you are, now you did the advanced certification with me and we're pals and it was so not about me at all.

Judith: Oh, totally, 100% not about you for all your baby coaches out there who get requests for refunds. We promise you, it's not about you. I was in the thick of so much drama, and since then, I did the Nashville retreat with you...

Kara: Oh yeah, that's right. We did that also.

Judith: I've taught at Clutch College for you.

Kara: Just managed to not freak out. Give the person their refund and let them go figure it out on their own that they need to calm down. Then they come back.

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Judith: They'll totally be back.

Kara: Kori, what's up with you?

Kori: First of all I love that story. I had no idea about that. My new favorite thought is like, yeah, you never know who's going to be with you for the long term, even if they ask for a refund. This is so amazing.

Kara: The one client I had who I felt like hated me the most, it was like, every session we both were clearly like, why are we doing this? This is so terrible. She was resistant to everything I said, she hated me, she hated the process, I hated myself, I hated her, the whole thing was horrible. I had to coach myself a lot. She didn't coach herself about it probably at all.

And you know what, she joined The Clutch maybe six months after it opened, she's still in there, she does the work. You just truly never have any idea what's going on. And when you cannot operate out of that ego and that freak out, you hold the space for the person to come back in their own time when they're ready. Not everybody will, but some people will.

Kori: Yeah, that's really powerful. Okay, I'm Kori Linn. I coach high-achieving women in corporate who want to have a really meaningful, satisfying career but that's not the experience that they're currently having. Sometimes they're super burnt out, they're super anxious, sometimes they just hate their job and want to go get a different job. Often, they've already done that, sometimes three or four times.

So then they come hire me because they've figured out getting a new job isn't doing the thing. So I really love to coach my clients about work because we spend so much time at work and I just would love for everyone to have a wonderful experience of that.

Kara: Alright. So that's who everybody is and we're talking about creativity. So what do you guys have to say about creativity? I got a lot of pitches for

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the podcast and this one was the one which we all discussed where I was most like, this is a big topic. What are we going to talk about here?

So I guess let's try this. I'll start us off with a question but then you guys are really in charge. I'm just here to be the MC. What patterns do you see around the way that women think about creativity in the work that you do, or people socialized as women?

Judith: Yeah, I think the cool evolution of this idea was we kind of all three of us realized that what we do is actually really creative in helping our clients.

And a lot of it, at least I'll speak for me personally is what I notice is a lot of my clients have a clear idea of what they don't want, but they very seldom without tons of drama and lots of coaching allow themselves to want what they want and to create an outfit even that they want, to create a wardrobe that they want, to wear the lipstick shade that they want.

They have all these rules that they carry around with them about what it's supposed to look like, what they should do, and that is sort of the mind fuck cycle that they're in a lot of times. Just allowing themselves the pleasure of what they want.

So I think our bigger hope for the episode is talk about all the things as opposed to just starting at that place where I think we find most of our clients, at least for my experience, that's where I find most of my clients.

Kara: I have bad news. We cannot talk about all the things on the podcast. That's not how - you have your own podcast, don't you? You know how it works, episodes have to be about something.

Judith: Yes, of course.

Kara: Alright, what about the rest of you?

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Kori: Yeah, I can go next. I think even though I coach on a very different topic than Judith, I see a lot of the same experiences where clients come to me and they know the experience about work that they don't want, but they know all of these kind of social conditioning, cultural stories about what it means to have a good job.

Having a good job means you work at this kind of place, you make this kind of money, you have these kind of benefits, you do these kinds of activities, you have these kinds of relationships. And so a lot of what I do with them is about helping them redefine that.

And I've always identified as a highly creative person, even before thought work. That's been part of my self-identity, but a lot of my clients don't identify that way. So kind of using coaching to empower them to be able to tap into creativity, to think about what they actually want their career to look like, what would feel meaningful for them, and then helping them create the internal permission to begin to make those changes.

And sometimes that does mean changing their jobs. Some of my clients quit their jobs, launch businesses, but a lot of my clients stay in their jobs but they use the creativity and the freedom we create in coaching to really redefine how they work and redefine what their work looks like.

And so oriented around the things that matter to them instead of trying to live up to those cultural narratives about what it means to have a good job or do good work in the world.

Kara: One of the things that I feel like is coming up already is that creativity is such a broad word. I think when most people hear creativity, they think that means artistic creativity. Like I'm not a creative person because I don't draw or make pottery or whatever, that that's what people think creativity is.

But of course it's not. It's just using your imagination. We didn't even define it. Like using your imagination in some way. We talked at Clutch College

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this past weekend about the idea that we are all extremely creative because we've created a whole universe of insane rules in our own brains about how the world is supposed to be and it's like a whole little universe up in there that we all made up.

And then we'll be like, "But I'm just not creative," but here's my 17 part manual I have for how exactly everything in the world should be and how everybody should behave and what all the unconscious rules are I have for myself. That's a creative act. It's just not a super useful one but it's definitely generative. So I'm curious, what do you think creativity is Elana, since you're the artist coach among us?

Elana: Yeah, I mean, that was definitely a big question but I think it is literally just generating anything in your life. And that's actually something that I work with my clients on a lot is my clients tend to identify as artists and as creative people. So they have certain containers that they've given themselves in which they feel free to create.

But then when it comes to actually thinking outside of the box for their lives, or changing something in a relationship, suddenly it's like, they've botched themselves in again and don't feel that they have the freedom to be creative in that area.

So I think something that I try to do with my clients is generate the awareness that they're creating everything in their lives. They're even creating their thoughts about certain things, so they can see how they have the capacity to recreate any area of their lives as well.

Judith: Yeah, so to piggyback on that, I think I have the experience of a lot of my clients who are what I call lady bosses. These are women who have advanced in their careers, they're entrepreneurial, they're the boss of something.

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So a lot of times they tell me like, “I don’t have a personal style. I’ve never been good at this stuff, this beauty style stuff.” And then we look at how they operate in their career, or when they have their business hat on, and these are extremely creative women.

These are women who problem-solve on the regular, who’ve created something from nothing, meaning they’ve gone from a mere dream idea in their brain to a fully-fledged business with pieces and cogs. And I’m just like, how is it that you’re not creativity? Run that by me again boo-boo because that doesn’t make sense.

But we have to show them I think a lot of times where they are creative, where they have created something from nothing, meaning idea to a full-fledged tangible entity or a concept or a program, et cetera, and then sort of unlock that same meta skill they have there for what they would consider to be more artistic, maybe more silly, more frivolous sort of pursuits, like style and beauty and hair and makeup and all that fun stuff.

Kara: Why is it important for women to see themselves as creative? Why isn’t it fine to just be like, I’m not creative, that’s just not my jam?

Judith: I think it’s so important because I think a lot of times, we give away our agency to some external force. And that’s the reason why we have excelled. This piece of paper has declared that I have this amount of training, therefore now I’m qualified.

So we wait on all these external factors to give us license or permission to go do or to go create, as opposed to us realizing at some point, we are the magic bringers. I feel stylish not because my clothes are a particular way but because I’ve decided so. I have decided that I’m an artist, not necessarily because I can paint but because I have decided so.

I think getting to that place where we own that we’re the magic bringers I think is super fucking powerful because if we can own that we’re the one

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creating things, we can also be the ones to dismantle some shit and run some revolution, so pretty important I think.

Kara: I like that term magic bringers. I also would like to be called boo-boo now every time that I'm coached. That would just make things land a lot softer.

Judith: We can do that. We could make that happen.

Kara: What about the rest of you? What do you guys think?

Elana: I agree with Judith. I think for me, you can call it whatever you want. If you don't want to identify as creative, with that terminology, that's fine with me. But I think it's more about owning your power in any situation. When you're relating to yourself as not creative or not generative or not powerful, you're deferring to a slew of rules that you probably inherited from society or from your upbringing and you're relating to those as though they are just these inflexible things that are guiding your life.

So owning your capacity to shift your relationship to those things, whether you call it creativity, whether you call it owning your power, or being the magic bringer, that is what gives you the capacity to impact the world around you, to own your capacity to impact the world.

Kori: Yeah, I love what both of you have said. And then I think for career and for my work, there is such a tendency to think in sort of cookie cutters, like this is this kind of career and this is that kind of career and this is what it means to do this kind of work and these are the paths that are available to me.

And so owning the creativity and seeing our power and our magic-bringingness and our capacity to do that allows people to think outside the cookie cutter and think outside the possibilities that they maybe had previously imagined for themselves.

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I see a lot of people too and this happened earlier in my career where you get a certain kind of job and then you excel in it, you're kind of like, this is my career path now, I guess this is who I am and what I do. Versus thinking, who do I want to be? What do I want to do? And bringing that power back in, versus just following whatever track you're on to think about what you want, why you want it, and how you can create it for yourself, even if no one's done it before. You don't have examples.

Kara: I like that.

Kori: So one of the things that I think is really important when it comes to teaching our clients to tap into this creativity, at least for me and my clients is creating courage and creating confidence. With my clients, I see that a lot of times left to their own devices, they feel like they just have to sort of follow the rules in their workplace or follow the rules of what it means to have a career.

So when it comes to creativity, it's like that first step is understanding that we're all creative beings, we're all creating all the time anyway. And then once you realize that, beginning to cultivate okay, how can I take ownership of that? How can I build or tap into my courage and confidence to begin making small shifts and small changes so that I can create more of my vision versus whatever I've been living in or whatever rules I've been following.

Kara: Do you think there's any downside to sort of collapsing everything is creative? Like we're all being creative whenever we do anything?

Kori: I would love to hear what Elana thinks about this because she's the creative artist coach, but for me, that's how I think about absolutely everything in life, whether I'm making a dinner or I'm doing something in my coaching business, or I'm helping my clients do something in their careers, or with Judith's work, the outfits I'm choosing to wear and the shades of lipstick.

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I think to me, it's all creative because it's all me making a choice in our brain to think a certain thought, to feel a certain way, to take a certain action, and that always creates something.

Kara: Actually, what that's bringing up for me is that it's almost like it feels to me like it's more important to stop thinking you're not creative than necessarily to like have this sort of active positive identification as I am creative, I am a creative person, everybody's a creative person. Thinking you aren't creative, it's easy to see how that will kind of block you.

Kori: Right, your confirmation bias will come in and be like, yeah, here's some evidence you're not.

Kara: Right. Are some people more creative than others or no? We think everybody's equally creative?

Judith: I think it depends on I guess if we start with the framework of what do we define as creative and do we resonate with that definition. Because I think for some of my clients, they don't identify as stylish. That word is almost repulsive to them.

They have a visceral reaction and they're like, I don't want to be stylish, that's not a thing for me, it's not important for me. So I'm like, okay, insert positive adjective and attribute that you would like, and then we can work towards creating that if that resonates more with you.

So I think in the same context here, if the word creative does not resonate with you, insert positive adjective and then do the act of creation in terms of the thought work, the feeling work, and maybe even some A-line work to become insert positive adjective that you identify with.

Kori: I think that's actually a really good point because I think the word creative, some people are just like, oh, I'm not creative. But you don't have to identify with that language. It's more about realizing how much power

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you have and that models are always running. So you can choose them or not choose them but you're still doing it either way.

Kara: You want to get in on this, Elana? Because it sounds like what you're saying Kori is - I mean, that version of creative is like, we always talk about creating results. As opposed to thinking about creativity as like, some kind of artistic or generative on purpose process, right?

Elana: Yeah, I mean I think you will talk to five different artists and they'll all have five, probably more different opinions on this. In the arts itself, you have a lot of gatekeeping around what is creativity, what is good art, what is bad art, and that's a different conversation because there's a specific framework for what we're talking about creativity there.

I think fundamentally, it's about thinking about creativity in a way that creates the results that you want to create in your life. So for some people, it might be useful to think I am creative and everything that I do every day, making a sandwich for lunch is creative and that builds - Kori was just pointing to herself there.

So thinking of it in that way might build confidence in your own creativity to then go out and start a revolution. So in some terms, it might be useful for you to be thinking of yourself as creative in all of these different areas of your life, but I think for some people, they have a lot of baggage around the idea of creativity or only think of it in certain terms and so it may be less useful for them. As you teach Kara, it's all about what results you're creating with how you're thinking.

Judith: I think you drew sort of an interesting way of viewing it. Identifying as creative versus the actual action of creating, which I think is a distinction we had not heretofore really thought about or talked about before.

Kara: Now we have two ex-lawyer coaches on the podcast so we're going to get into a lot of definitions in here.

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Judith: And I did say heretofore, which is awesome. So I mean, I think this just kind of plays a bigger question, something I've explored in my work and sometimes I did during the advanced training with Kara was the idea of like, the concept of beauty as a thing itself, versus the adjective beautiful and then even if we made that a verb, like beautifying something, beautifying one self, and even if we took creativity in that form, is there creativity as a thing, a concept in and of itself versus an adjective we ascribe to ourselves, versus an act of things that we do, as an actual verb?

And I think it's kind of cool if we parsed in down in that terms. People could find in the model where they identify with creativity. They can think of it as a thing unto itself, they can conceptualize it that way, they can conceptualize it as an adjective I ascribe to myself, like a thought, or it's an actual action I do. And I think that might be a fun way to kind of make it more accessible, depending upon how you're wired.

Kara: This is making me want to Google the definition of creativity. But I'm curious for you Judith especially because you sort of coach on I think the realm that is traditionally given to women to express their creativity. Historically it's like the men are artists but then women can have dressmaking.

So I'm just curious how you, having gone through the Advanced Certification in Feminist Coaching, you obviously see focusing on creativity and personal style and appearance as a valuable creative process and something that's empowering, rather than kind of limiting or conforming. So I'd just be curious to hear your - how do you think about as a feminist having a business that's focused on this very traditional female domain of creativity that's all about appearance and style.

Judith: Yeah, there was some reconciling. I think early on, I went to an all women's college and I studied fashion at the women's college, as well as legal policy studies.

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Kara: Normal double major.

Judith: Of course.

Kara: Legal policy studies and fashion studies.

Judith: And I was taught feminism by nuns so it's all good, it's all amazing. But one of the interesting things in our women and fashion history course, because there's a whole course we did just on women and fashion, was women were really unrecognized for their talents as creative forces within fashion for a really, really long time.

If we look historically, yes, we were the work horses, we were the ones in the boutilliers and seamstresses. We didn't actually get credit for designing for a very, very long time. In fact we went through as one of our projects in that course was to count the number of women who had won the fashion design fund award. For decades, I think it was like 2% of women had won, or 98% of men had won.

I think again, it's like taking back from a feminist standpoint, our part in that history as artists is actually an act of revolution. Because for so long, we were merely the bottles in which these garments were draped. We were the work horses who created them but we didn't get credit for the actual artistic design of them, which I find super fascinating historically. And that to me is how I sort of reconciled this in a jim-jam mash that is now my business.

Kara: It makes sense. I think about this with my nail artist all the time where I'm like, nail artists are just the miniaturist portrait painters of the 18th century. And there's this sort of feminine creativity is so often prescribed to or put in these areas that are sort of like, grooming, daily, life. I think about all those nail art that gets done that all gets wiped away. It's like a mandala. It gets wiped away every two weeks. And the woman that I go to could draw a tiny portrait of you on your nail with a one hairbrush.

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So interesting that it's incorporated into beauty norms and standards and grooming and that it's sort of this extremely almost disposable art as opposed to the big scale portrait that we hang on the wall of the dude on the horse.

Judith: Right. I mean, one of my favorite books on this topic and I get all jazzed up because this is so fun. But What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution...

Kara: Wait, I'm sorry, oh that's the name of the book?

Judith: That's the name of the book.

Kara: I thought you were actually saying there's a dress she wore to the revolution, which I think would be like, oh, the revolution's at Tuesday at eight.

Judith: It was at 2pm, she had a change of outfit, which is extra as fuck and I secretly love that but no, that's not what I'm saying. The whole title of a book that's centered around how revolutionary her garments were and how she was actually saying a lot politically through the garments that she chose to wear, through the different types of hairstyles and the wigs that were created for her, some of the scandalous portmanteaus that she donned.

Kara: You've got to define portmanteaus for everybody. Not everybody knows what that means.

Judith: Okay, so it's like a gown, a dressing gown I think is the most closest approximation in American vernacular. So it all got wiped away. She would have these amazing wigs made for her with these political statements that could have gotten her killed and eventually did, and they would just be used once and then gone the next day and the whole new thing would be fashion for her.

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Kara: I know Kori wants to get on this but I just want to add one other thing first, which is like, there's also the element of the history of women in color in dressmaking and couture and in fashion and in daily outfit making. There was just an article in The New Yorker, which I'm sure you read about Ann Lowe, the famous African-American seamstress who sort of - everybody was wearing her clothing but nobody would say it in public, and she wasn't recognized.

So there was all of this - even when somebody is - she was running her own shop, so she's not hidden in the background, but she's still - most people haven't heard of her who have heard of whatever white designers were working at the time, who had heard of Yves Saint-Laurent or whoever else was doing couture.

Judith: Yeah, there's so much forgotten history, erased history of the participation of women as designers but particularly women of color as designers. It's almost like that history is so often ignored, so seldom written that it's almost forgotten unless we make an active effort to speak her name and show the garments that she created and make a fuss, so to speak. One was not made at the appropriate time in history.

Kara: Make a fuss would be a great podcast name. Alright, Kori, what you got? I know we just went on a 10-minute dressmaking digression.

Kori: Well, I love the idea of a podcast called make a fuss. So somebody, get on that, let's make that happen. And I think what you're talking about's really important and I actually think it's interesting because when we bring up these things from history that we don't necessarily know about or weren't spoken about or bring light on to people who are doing important creative work that wasn't seen as important creative work, that is a beautiful proof of concept for people who want to do something similar who don't have narratives to turn to to say like, look someone else is doing it.

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But what I actually wanted to talk about was also - and this is something we talk about - I mean, you've talked about in your coaching work and I believe we talked about in the advanced certification too. But in addition to whether women are the creatives or men are the creatives that are being recognized, there's also the subject object thing, which you coach on as like, women are often taught to see ourselves as objects in the fashion industry.

We're the object of the fashion. The dress gets put on to us so we're not centered in the creative act. But if women are taking back their fashion, it's like moving yourself from the object to the subject. And I think that happens in the workplace too.

I think people think about this is just how work is, these are just the things that are available to me, versus moving ourselves back into the position of being the subject and designing life for ourselves, designing our fashion, not even necessarily like you're designing dresses, but designing the outfit you're putting on to yourself, designing your career trajectory based on what you want and what you care about.

And I think the same thing - Elana, I'd love to hear what you think but also designing how you do creativity and how you do art on your own terms, versus being like, well, this is how the men have always done it so we have to do it this way, or be receiving the thing that's happening.

Elana: Yeah, I think that raises one of the initial things that drew us to wanting to pitch this podcast to Kara of looking at even creating a vision for yourself as an act of claiming your creative authority over your life. And like, allowing yourself to step into that power and to give yourself freedom to play within that exploration. But kind of even defining your vision as an act of creativity.

Judith: Yeah, because I think a lot of times in terms of vision, I think there's a rulebook, right? Women are socialized to have a particular rulebook

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about what visions and dreams they're permitted to have for their selves, for their future, for their children. There's a very set, limited library that we're allowed to pull from, which is why for a long time there's the adage like, are you a nurse or a teacher?

There's only so much we were permitted to do, we're permitted to dress a particular way. So yeah, I think the bigger question of allowing yourself the space to vision something different something out of the library of rules you were handed is kind of cool.

Kori: Sorry, I got very excited and wanted to jump in and say there's the library of what's available as a woman. But for every marginalized identity and every intersection of a marginalized identity, there's these different libraries, like this is available to you as a white woman, but this other thing is available to you if you're a Black woman.

And those are the messages we get from culture so really, deciding that you can redefine that and build your own fucking library to choose from is such a powerful thing to do. But so many of us don't even realize we have this social conditioning. So I do think it's first understanding what those messages were and seeing that they're optional and that you get to create different messages for yourself if you want to, which is what thought work is all about.

Kara: I feel like that's a perfect place to kind of bring this to a close, but I want to hear from each of you guys and I will also do this, what is a thought that you really like about creativity, whether it's for yourself or in general about you or yourself?

I think for me, I definitely am somebody who grew up thinking I wasn't creative because I thought creativity was like, you can draw, you can paint, you can whatever. And I actually did write fictional poetry so it doesn't even make sense on my own terms, like most of our thoughts don't.

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But especially since I have stopped writing that kind of stuff mostly in college, although sometimes I still write poems, but I think having now built this business, I think my definition of creativity has expanded, which is like, well, I created this whole body of work and that's been a creative process, although I do think that feels different to me than I think or I imagine - it certainly feels different to write a piece of coaching theory than to write a poem.

So maybe not part of this conversation, I still feel like there are different kinds of creativity or there should be some distinctions. I don't know that it feels helpful to collapse the whole thing into one category or one word. But thinking about creativity not as art but as what have I actually created, is there something in my life I've created is a kind of powerful shift.

Judith: Yeah. And I think for you, so when we had sort of talked about in the A line, if we put creativity in your A line, then it resonates with you. The idea of creating something, or body of work, that resonates with you. And I think maybe a lot of your listeners might find the same. Identifying as a creative as a thought about themselves may not, but in terms of what they have accomplished, created, done in their A line, that might be where it hits home.

And then in terms of a thought that I like to think in terms of creativity is I like to think about old Hollywood movies because this just works for me and the way my brain works. But I like to think of the idea of I'm the leading lady, I move the plot forward.

So I have so much agency to move the plot forward, and picking out a fabulous outfit, creating some new concept for my people, writing a legal brief...

Kara: Always wear the perfect red lipstick, I move the plot forward with the perfect red lip.

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Judith: Exactly. So that's the thought that resonates with me. I move the plot forward.

Kara: Love it.

Kori: I really like that. It's interesting because Kara, when you were saying you think different things are creative in different ways, that resonated with me but I also had this moment where I was like, oh, I think for me it comes down not to the thing I'm doing but to the F line, to the feeling of it. And the narrative I have, the thought I have to myself about it.

Because sometimes cooking a dinner is like, yeah, am I creating something? Yeah, it wasn't there and now it is there. But sometimes when I make a dinner and I'm playing with flavors, I'm like, what would be wild? Let me put this kind of vinegar in here, I wonder what that's going to do.

It almost does feel like writing a poem or painting to me. It might be different to everyone else, but I kind of love that idea that it's the feeling of it. And then a thought, my thought is everyone's creative. I don't need everyone else to believe that thought, but to me, that feels really powerful to believe that everyone's creative and everyone has the capacity to, if life's not what you want, to make it different.

And I guess to add a second thought that kind of goes with Judith's, it's like, Judith wants to be the leading lady and I'm like, I want to be the writer, which makes sense because my background is in writing before coaching. So I'm like, if you don't like the script, write a new one. Just write a fucking new one.

Kara: Basically just planning a movie here is what's happening. This is actually like a development meeting for the first coaching movie. Yeah, I really like that. I think that distinction of there's some difference in qualitative process because I think that seems right no matter what. You

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can also write a poem that feels kind of perfunctory and you're like, okay yeah, I put the words on the paper, they weren't there before.

So to create something versus being creative do feel like different things to me. I like that. Thinking about the feeling is one possible way of understanding that distinction.

Kori: Yeah, I have a Master's in poetry and sometimes it did just feel like, just putting words on the page.

Kara: Elana, finish us off with the wisest final...

Elana: No pressure. Actually, I would say because I am also a writer and director and I have a side life in the theater arts, so I have a lot of thoughts about creativity. A lot of them are because I tend to be a perfectionist in my art, I have a background of perfectionism in my art that the most helpful thoughts that I have around generating art are I think I borrowed this from Simone Seol who's been on the podcast a few times.

The idea that I'm building a body of work. So one piece of work doesn't have to be everything. I can cumulatively create a whole landscape of work. And then also giving myself permission to just follow my curiosity because that is enough.

I can just follow my curiosity and that has led me to write an entire play just following my curiosity. And then when it comes to applying creativity to my own life, just reminding myself that my current life I have created and I always have the capacity to create something new.

Kara: I love that. That actually we can tie in a bow I feel like because that doesn't just apply to people who are - I mean Simone's talking about it in marketing and coaching, you're talking about it in art. But whatever it is you're doing, you're sending your sales emails in your business, or you are

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writing legal briefs, or you are giving somebody a style makeover, whatever it is you're doing, you're creating a body of work over time.

And so I think we can see in that way, we didn't really talk about the relationship or the antagonism between creativity and perfectionism that just came up in that last bit, but I feel like now 45 minutes in, we're in, oh, that's what the podcast should have been about. Perfectionism and creativity, given my audience. That will be the sequel.

But creativity is the sort of I think opposite of perfectionism and any way you can find to hack around your perfectionism is what will allow you to experiment and be creative. And that sort of like, this one thing is just one little piece of a bigger mosaic of a life I'm creating, or body of work I'm creating is what will allow you to let that creativity out a little bit.

So we've done all the creativity, but before we go, I would love to hear since I know so many people listening to this episode are coaches, are thinking about the Advanced Certification in Feminist Coaching or wondering if they should do it, what does it really add, what do you learn, is it really that big of a difference, so if any of you have thoughts about that, I would love for you to share them with the listeners. I know Kori, you said you came prepared.

Kori: I have so many thoughts about this. So just for some context, I went through Unf*ck Your Brain, three years, I think about three years ago. I worked in The Clutch as a Clutch coach...

Kara: People don't even know what Unf*ck Your Brain is.

Kori: Oh. Unf*ck Your Brain was Kara's small group program that used to exist and now doesn't. So I went through that six-month program. It started more than three years ago at this point. I went through that, I became a coach, I worked in The Clutch for not quite two years but over a year and a half.

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And I've just worked very closely with Kara for a long time and I still learned a metric fuck ton in the advanced certification. I am incredibly familiar with Kara's work, obsessed, I'll just own it. And still going through the certification took my knowledge to such a deeper level and I really wanted to point that out because I think if you've listened to all the podcasts and really follow Kara's work closely, you might be thinking okay, how much am I still going to get out of this?

And I just want to promise you, tons. Your coaching will improve in ways you can't even see ahead of time, and it's such a powerful experience. And honestly, just hearing Kara explain sort of the backend of the coaching, even though it's the coaching I'd been receiving for three years, hearing her explain here's why I'm making these choices in the coaching and here's why I'm doing this thing and this thing, it was transformational.

This is going to pay dividends for the rest of my coaching career and how I coach other people definitely, but also for how I coach myself and how I relate to coaching internally in my self-coaching. It's so good, y'all. I just want everyone to know it's so good. And the more you know about Kara's work, you're just going to know even more. There's no point at which you would already know all this stuff in my opinion.

Kara: Thank you.

Judith: Let's just gas her head up while she's here, let's just gas her head up. But even if you have a feminist background, this is what I would say, even if you've taken some feminism courses, women's studies courses, even if you went to an all women's college like myself...

Kara: Taught by nuns.

Judith: Yeah, taught by nuns. Learning feminism by Kara is a very different experience than being taught feminism by nuns, I'm just going to throw that out there. But really, even if you have a framework or a base knowledge of

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some of this information, it's not presented the way it would be in a course in your college.

This was master's level shit, y'all. And I remember reading some of the modules and having to be like, I need to walk away now and process because my brain is now broken and I can't unsee this now that I know what's happening in my background or why I've been feeling the way that I've been feeling, or the experiences of women of color around me.

Like oh shit. So even if you're coming from a framework and you're like, I don't really need that, no, this is a whole new level. It's not the same as when you learned it before. It's good to get this version of it, particularly with regard to how you show up as a coach or some sort of service provider in some way. It's fucking magic.

Kara: Thank you guys.

Elana: I will just say that obviously I have a pre-existing relationship with you, I certified last year in the fall and I can say that my coaching up-leveled so much during this process. On so many different levels. I would say if you're a coach who has a commitment to using coaching in service of liberation of any kind or social justice of any kind, this is such a vital way of learning how to reconcile the radical self-responsibility that we teach in coaching with this social responsibility.

I kind of went into this certification program feeling a little mixed up about how I could do that with integrity as a coach and now I feel fully like I am in integrity with my values as a coach. And then also just in terms of the conversation we've been having today about creativity and applying creativity to your life, I would say that going through this program, you learn so many arenas of life that just seem - you just kind of have accepted this is how things are.

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And this program opens the door to seeing how those systems have been created and can be recreated. And you learn the exact tools as a coach in order to impact that change.

Kara: I love that because especially I think that part about radical self-responsibility and social justice and social awareness is the piece that is often missing. And people end up in one extreme or the other.

It's like, bootstraps, pull yourself up by your bootstraps and it's all your thoughts, or it's everybody in the world is responsible for every feeling I've ever had and I can't make anything of my life because structural forces exist and so I'm a victim of every little thought I have about myself or anyone else is true, and to question any of that is a micro aggression.

I feel like those are the two very strong extremes. But learning how to integrate those things is so important I think, it's exactly the space that I was trying to fill in the coaching world with my work in general is how do we understand coaching as a tool for liberation in a liberatory political framework without it becoming kind of either extreme. Thanks for coming on, you guys.

Judith: Thank you for having us.

Kara: And all their links and things will be in the show notes. Wherever the show notes. I've never looked at the show notes before but we do have them. They're on our website I think, unfuckyourbrain.com/podcast. Alright, til next week, chickens.

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