Episode 2 - If you're so smart, why is life still hard?

Welcome to the managing your smart mind podcast with me, Else Kramer, a.k.a. Coach Kramer.

Today I want to talk about something that a lot of people are confused about.

Because, if you're extremely smart, why can't you figure everything out?

Why aren't smart people always on top of things?
Successful at anything they try to do?
Leading a fairytale or incredibly Instagrammable life?

Now, I've already talked about this a little bit in the previous podcast.

First of all, smart humans are still human.

Things will happen that are completely out of our control. And we're going to have to deal with that.

But there is another reason.

To put it bluntly, your smart brain that is so good at problem solving is actually quite stupid.

Yep.

Does that sound contradictory? Then let me explain. Basically, your brain is just a machine that is very good at some things, and not so good at others, which, by the way, is a whole nother can of worms. And we'll definitely look into that. In other episodes.

Basically, think of your brain as a computer, which hasn't been updated for a very long time.

It is still wired to protect you from wild beasts and extremely unpredictable events.

Your hardware is so outdated, that it has a very hard time adapting to the relatively safe and predictable world we live in.

Odds are if you're listening to this podcast, you do not need to worry about finding berries to survive.

About tigers that are out to ambush you.

About being cast out of your tribe and being eaten alive by wolves or hyenas.

But your brain hasn't actually caught on to this. It still thinks that whenever you want to do something out of the ordinary or something that risks your relationships with other humans,you will die.

Now, how does this show up in real life?

For example, let's say you want to write a social media post. Immediately your primitive brain will kick in until it is not safe, people may hate it, it is extremely risky, you'll probably get canceled, right?

And this may not even be conscious.

But what you will notice is this massive resistance to doing it.

And instead, you'll do something safe, like clean your inbox or watch Netflix or whatever it is you do when you procrastinate.

Second example, you're in a meeting, and you want to speak up. Because you disagree with what someone's saying.

Your brain tells you people could disapprove of that. They will have opinions that people may not like, they may not be very positive about what you're about to say.

So your brain tells you 'don't say that', right?

It will backfire.

It will be dangerous, you're going to be kicked out of the tribe.

 And you probably believe it.

So you keep your mouth shut.

You don't say the thing you want to say.
You don't raise your hand.
And you may not even share your incredibly amazing idea, because you're afraid it is going to be shut down.

And in my opinion, having a smart mind makes it actually *harder* to override this primitive wiring of your brain.

Because your smart mind is able to create very, very clever arguments to dissuade you from taking any risks.

And this is the cause of so much unnecessary suffering.

The self-sabotage.
The endless procrastination.
The never getting projects out into the world.

The never showing up as your full amazing self.

So we have to stop doing that.

But the hardest thing about that, for a lot of smart humans, is that people need to start realising that, that amazing brain they have that is so much fun, so smart, actually *lies* a lot of the time.

Yes, your brain lies a lot, I'm sorry.

Basically, it can be a bit of a toxic relationship.

So the very first thing you have to do is actually stop believing everything your beloved brain tells you.

And it will tell you things like:

You don't know enough about this topic to write about it.
You shouldn't post this, because it isn't attractive enough.
Or you shouldn't change jobs, because it's going to be horrible. And you'll end under the bridge, or the scary things.

And basically, the more general underlying thought that plays, you know, underneath all this subconsciously is:

If you do this, you will not be safe.

And that thought generally goes unchallenged, because most people don't even notice it.

So how do you give that ancient hardware of yours an upgrade? And how do you start getting clear about what you should and shouldn't believe about the thoughts your brain is offering?

This is actually some of the work I do with my clients. And luckily, it is a lot easier than you might think.

It actually starts with awareness.

With observing your thoughts.

I want you to start noticing what you're actually thinking throughout the day.

And you can, for example, take a couple of minutes each morning to write down what you're thinking, that's a great way to start because then a lot of garbage,tends to come out like I suck at this or this is going to be so hard, etc, etc. So that's a great place to start.

But I also want you to notice, when you start feeling stressed, anxious, pressured, small, diminished, etc.

What are the thoughts you're thinking in that moment?

Because that's the moment your brain is probably telling you a lie to scare you out of doing something.

And then when you find these thoughts, ask yourself, Is this really true?

Am I really going to end on the bridge? Am I really going to be canceled?

Or is this just my brain misguidedly protecting me like some crazy helicopter parent is basically, let's face it, your brain just wants to wrap you in cotton war, and give you inside for the rest of your life. So nothing can happen to you. Right?

So if you're becoming aware of those thoughts, and you investigate them, and you notice, they're probably not true, you can actually start doing a more realistic risk analysis.

And you can tell your brain that yes, this is a scary thing. I do not know what is going to happen.

There may not be a guarantee of a successful outcome.

But no, we are not going to die. And yes, I'm going to do it anyway.

And if you would love how to learn to do that, how to manage that smart mind of yours. So you can do amazing things in the world. I can help you. To get it we can write the perfect user manual for your specific brain that will allow you to thrive instead of just survive.

Reach out to me via my website, coachkramer.org, or on send me a message on LinkedIn.

If there is a specific topic you'd love to see covered on this podcast, or someone you'd love to see interviewed, please let me know on: podcast@elsekramer.com.

And if you liked this episode I'd love for you to leave a review so more people can find the podcast and learn to manage their smart mind.