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Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

Period Power with Maisie Hill

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If you are in the horrors with menstrual cycle issues or you want to learn how to harness your hormones then you are in the right place.

Welcome to the *Period Power* podcast. I'm your host Maisie Hill menstrual health expert, acupuncturist, certified life coach and author of *Period Power*. I'm on a mission to help you get your cycle working for you so that you can use it to get what you want out of life. Are you ready? Let's go.

Hello, hello my lovelies. What is going on in your world? I hope that you're having a fantastic summer or a fantastic winter, it could be winter where you are. I am feeling my body today. It's day 16 for me and I do feel more aware of what's going on internally on a physical level once I'm in the second half of my cycle which is where I am now.

But the real reason I'm feeling my body today is that I've started working with a personal trainer. My friend, Nat and I have been working with Emily our trainer on Saturday mornings the past couple of weeks. And I have just started doing a session on my own on Tuesdays as of this week. And today is Wednesday which means I'm starting to be very aware of all my muscles and I kind of like it.

I am really wanting to go for a swim in the tidal pool as well but there's been yet another sewage leak so I'm staying out of the water for now. I think that's wise. There was one leak happened a couple of weeks ago apparently because of lightning but we're all very dubious about that. And I got one swim in and then there was a second leak that's happened. So, I'm not very happy with the water company basically.

But this week has been a fantastic week for me because enrolment for The Flow Collective has been open. I am recording this on the day the doors close. So, if you're listening to this the doors are already shut. But I'm really looking forward to our welcome call for new members which is happening tomorrow.

It's so exciting when new people join because I get to watch them go through Harness Your Hormones, which is the course you get as a member

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when you sign up. And things shift often very quickly for people. That's a really common experience. And what they do in Harness Your Hormones really lays the foundation for everything that follows and all the other things that we do inside The Flow Collective. So, I can't wait to see how that all unfolds for all the new people who have joined. Welcome.

Today's episode is a Q&A. And I've got a real mixed bag of questions for you. I'm going to be covering if cycle tracking becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the cycle syncs with the moon. What qualifications I have. And what might be going on if you're feeling terrible on days 15 to 17. So, let's get into it.

The first question is as follows. Sometimes tracking my cycle feels freeing and other times it feels constricting like if I'm expecting to feel anxious in my autumn I start to dread it. Or if my job interview is scheduled for the same day I expect to bleed I worry endlessly that it will disrupt my ability to perform. Do you have advice for how to find the balance of knowing and caring for your body without letting this knowledge control you?

I love this question and I suspect lots of you listening will have run into this issue. So, it's great to have an opportunity to address this. So, thank you to the person who submitted this one. Right, let's start here. The reason it sometimes feels freeing and sometimes feels constricting is because you're having different sets of thoughts about it. So, I want you to be aware that the only reason it feels one thing, or another is because of the thoughts that you have about it. And you get to decide how you want to think and feel about cycle tracking.

And if you worry that it's going to disrupt your ability to perform then it absolutely will but that has nothing to do with you tracking your cycle and everything to do with your thoughts about tracking your cycle. Can you see the difference? It might actually help to put this into another context. So, I often talk about cycle tracking as being like the weather forecast. It's a rough idea of what to expect, sometimes it's more accurate than others and

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you don't have to live your life by it. It's nice if you can but you don't have to. And you won't always be able to is the main point here.

It's just giving you information like if you look at the weather forecast for the weekend and it's due to rain, that might inform what you do but it doesn't have to be the be all and end all. It's just information. So, the knowledge that you have about yourself can't control you but your thoughts about that knowledge can. If you have an idea that where you are in your cycle will mean that you'll succeed or fail at something then that's really unhelpful clearly.

Remember that your hormones do influence things. They don't get to run the show though. What runs the show is your mind, the thoughts that you have because your thoughts create your feelings. And they influence your behaviour. So yes there are hormonal influences going on for sure. Pay attention to those. Tend to them, work with them, but also know that your mind is what's largely determining your experience of your life.

Okay there's another question that was similar to this one which I'll read out. How can I better accept and work with my changing moods and energy in my cycle without it becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy? If I know I have a difficult task on day 18 when I'm usually tired and prefer to stay quiet I panic well in advance. Thank you for some ideas and thank you for all the great work you do. You are welcome.

Okay, again, use your knowledge of cycle tracking to support you because panicking is 100% optional. And I'm going to guess that you're panicking because you have a bunch of thoughts about what it means to be on day 18. You mentioned that you're usually tired and prefer to stay quiet. How can you create space for that and still do what you need to do? Assuming that you do actually need to do it. The other thing I want to point out here is I have a difficult task is just a thought. It's not factual. And you get to decide if you want to change your story about whatever that particular task is.

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Right, moving on, this one, it's, Hi Maisie. I wondered what qualifications you have. You've got such a broad knowledge on all sorts of topics, it's incredible. Well, thank you. I would love to get more into menstrual health as a career and mainly just help women partly because I feel like I've been let down so many times by my doctors when it comes to cycle health. And finding your book really changed my life. And I'm just really interested in how you got where you are now.

Okay, the short answer to this is that I've done a lot of training and I'll share what those things were in a moment. But first I want to say that what's been most valuable to me is working with women and people with periods, having conversations with friends, with clients and just sharing stories. And also working with my own cycle.

So yes trainings are fantastic, but I just want before I go into my long list of qualifications to say that you don't need a qualification to start doing those things. You can start having those conversations now. You probably already are actually. So just know that you can do that now.

Qualifications, I'm going to skip the school stuff. I presume you don't want to know about English literature and things. So, I trained as birth doula in my early 20s whilst I was managing a rock bar in Soho. And at the same time, I started training in what I refer to as complementary therapy. So, I've got diplomas in various types of massage, and aromatherapy, reflexology. Then I did my Bachelor of Science in Chinese medicine acupuncture, which was four years full-time, and included a semester in a hospital in China.

And in my final year I also did a postgraduate diploma in paediatric acupuncture. I then apprenticed with Nicole Jardim and I did another apprenticeship with Red School. I did health coaching at the Integrative Women's Health Institute. I started my training in nutritional therapy but halfway through I put that on pause because Period Power came out and my mum got ill. And my life coach training. So, there's other bits and pieces in there as well. But what you don't see in that are the multiple attempts at things before that.

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Various degrees were attempted including nursing, anthropology, history of art in Africa of Asia, I think something along those lines. I have an unfinished degree in fine arts that I did when I was in New York. And what else is there? Yeah, I tried training as a gardener and as a tattooist.

Alright, moving swiftly on, next question. Around days 15 to 17 of my cycle I start to feel terrible. I'm sensitive to criticism, reactive and intense. I feel driven and determined but that often shows up as stubbornness and aggression and I pick fights with my partner. I thought this time was supposed to be summer, full of positivity, buoyancy and feeling invincible. Any advice on why this is happening and how to keep my cool in what is supposed to be a fun time of the cycle?

Okay listener, whoever you are, I wish I could coach you on this. There's so many things in here that I would love to coach you on. But let's start with dropping the expectation of what your cycle should be because it's not helpful and I suspect that you're getting stuck with this because you're playing the comparison game. Now, let's look at what could be going on here. You haven't mentioned how long your cycle is. So, it's hard to comment because for some people days 15 to 17 could be before ovulation, for some it will be after.

I'm going to guess, and I could be wrong but I'm going to guess that this is directly after ovulation. The reason that's my guess is that happens to be when a lot of my clients tell me that they feel similarly to you. And I've also had a personal experience of this too, so you're not the only one. So, some folks will enter their autumn as soon as they ovulate. And it will last for two weeks or however long their luteal phase lasts because there is some variation. Others won't enter their autumn until they're halfway through their luteal phase. So that would be around the time progesterone is peaking.

So, where your seasons lie will play into this and there will be variations amongst all of you for where your seasons lie. Now, let's look at what's going on hormonally at this time. So, in the run up to ovulation your hormones are peaking. And by hormones I mean oestrogen and

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testosterone specifically. So, they're peaking and you're responding to them, maybe you're feeling really good.

I know not all of you experience it like this but for this example let's just say you feel confident and powerful, maybe you're all loved up on your partner and feeling really connected and you're just loving life and you ovulate. And those hormone levels drop and for a day or two your hormone levels are low until progesterone levels climb and oestrogen gets going again. So, some of you won't notice much of a difference when this is going on. And some of you, your energy and mood will tank.

What's important to know is it doesn't have to be this way because you can influence things through diet and lifestyle changes. And I would really love to ask you what's driving the stubbornness and aggression that you've described and coach you on that because that's where it feels like the work is and some of the ways that you've been describing yourself.

Okay, next question. *Period Power* is now my Bible and I'd like to gift it to Spanish speaking friends. When are your books going to be available in the Spanish language? Well, I really hope it is at some point and you're not the first to ask. But there aren't any plans for it to be translated into Spanish. It is available in German, Dutch, Italian, Norwegian, Russian, Polish and it's being translated into Estonian too. So, some of those translations are already out and available and some of them are going to be coming out imminently.

There's also something special going on with *Period Power* behind the scenes that I know you're all going to love. And I will reveal all when I can.

Right, next question. Is it true that the cycle synchronises with the moon? So, I talk about this in *Period Power* but it's worth revisiting, so thank you for this question. Clue, the cycle tracking app, they analysed over seven and a half million cycles, so a fair few. And they found that the menstrual cycle does not sync with the lunar cycle. I mean can you imagine if it did? And some people's cycles will occur in tandem with the moon, or the lunar

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cycle and some people do experience things more intensely. So, I hold space for that as a possibility.

I remember coming across a study years ago about how the lunar cycle influences sleep just across the population. And apparently we all get 20 minutes less sleep when there's a full moon. But on the whole I stay clear of this side of things. It's not my area of expertise. So, I don't feel I can comment on it in a useful way. But the other reason is that in my experience it can end up being another stick with which we measure ourselves.

And what I see particularly on social media platforms is posts and comments about syncing your cycle up with the moon. And my starting point is why? Why do you want to do this? I mean I genuinely have no idea. Maybe I'm missing something but I'm very confused about why this would be helpful.

And my next question is how, how am I meant to sync my cycle up with the moon? Because some people talk about that as an actual possibility. And even if it were possible what's in it for me? Would the effort be warranted? I'm going to say no it wouldn't.

Okay, that's it for today, thank you to everyone who's been submitting questions. I'm going to be answering more in future episodes. And if you're wondering how you can ask me a question you need to be on my email list because I send emails out with the link to the form. So, head to maisiehill.com and add yourself. Just make sure that you add hello@maisiehill.com to your contact list because if you don't your email provider is probably going to hide my very helpful emails in your junk folder, and you'll miss out on all of that goodness.

So, head to my website, sign up, have a fantastic week and I'll catch you next time.

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Thanks for listening to this week's episode of the *Period Power* podcast. If you enjoyed learning how to make your cycle work for you, head over to maisiehill.com for more.