

35. When You Aren't Taking Responsibility



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

Period Power with Maisie Hill

35. When You Aren't Taking Responsibility

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.

You are listening to episode 35 of the *Period Power* podcast. And last week was all about being overly responsible. Today we are swinging in the opposite direction and looking at where you aren't taking responsibility. And your brain might not like this episode too much. That's okay. But I want you to notice how your brain and body respond to what I'm going to be sharing today, because that in itself is worth it. You will get so much value out of noticing how you respond to today's episode.

So pay attention especially to any defensiveness, or wanting to argue with me, which may happen. But do do that because it will tell you so much. So if you just tune in to when that happens rather than tune out or turn me off, which is a possibility, it's always a possibility but particularly so today. So the definition of responsibility, just to remind you is the state of being accountable or to blame for something. Now, I'm not actually wild about the latter part of that definition because blaming either yourself or someone else isn't particularly productive. And it usually causes more issues.

I'm going to talk more about that next week. But being accountable that's different to blame. And you might be wondering well, what is the difference. And here's how I see it. Being accountable is taking ownership of what we're response for. Blaming is when we say, "It's my fault," or, "It's so and so's fault." And that creates a very different emotional picture than being accountable for what is our responsibility. And abdicating is all about failing to fulfil a responsibility or a duty.

But you could also think about assigning responsibility to other people or to things like time, usually lack of it. Or what the weather's doing, or if you're

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having a bad day, or what your hormones are up to, that comes into the mix as well. Now, your brain might be telling you, "But, Maisie, those things do matter." So I came up with an example for us to play with just so that can explore what's really going on when we do this. And I say it's playful to me, but it could it actually be something that's very important to you. This is just my take on it, my experience of it.

We all have our own version of a situation along these lines, so here it is. Think of a time when you were celebrating a day that's important to you. And you didn't receive something that you wanted on that day. Maybe it was your birthday, and you didn't get taken out to dinner. Or you didn't get taken to the right kind of restaurant that would match your expectation of what a birthday dinner should be like. I hear this one a lot from my friends. Or maybe it was your anniversary, and you love to receive flowers on your anniversary, but you didn't get any, or they were the wrong kind of flowers.

When we're in a situation like this the tendency is to blame the other person. And you might then say to them or to one of your friends if you're having a bit of a moan to them. You might say that you feel hurt because you didn't celebrate me the way that I wanted. Or you basically make it mean that they don't care enough about you. And I use me as the example, you didn't celebrate me the way I wanted, even though with an anniversary you'd actually be celebrating both of you in your relationship. But really you still make it all about you.

And when you're blaming the other person you're making them responsible for two things, not just one, two things. Firstly, you're making them responsible for how you feel, and they are not responsible for your feelings. You feel hurt because you have a thought about what they should have done, them not knowing or not following the plan that you've constructed in your mind isn't what's hurting you. It's your thoughts about their actions or lack of actions that's causing you to feel hurt.

Feel free to pause, mull that one over, rewind it and replay it if you need to hear it two or 10 times for that to sink in.

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Secondly, as I've just hinted at, you're making them responsible for knowing what you want instead of explicitly letting them know what you'd like. And I know you might be thinking, but Maisie, that takes away the magic of the moment, the surprise, all of those things that you've told yourself are important. And listen, just listen to me for a moment, is what you're currently doing or not doing, getting you the result that you want? Because that's what I care about. It's far more useful to focus on that.

So would you rather get a gift that you want or one that you don't want, or none at all actually? Would you rather get flowers or not get flowers? Would you rather get carnations or the peonies that you love to look at and watch unfurl? I love peonies. Are you with me here, people? I love peonies and wildflowers. Lilies are just too much for me. I get a headache from their scent. I'd rather get flowers that I love and can appreciate and actually have in the house rather than having to give them away to someone else because I can't handle the smell.

And I've just got no problem asking for that. So I invite you to do the same. It makes such a difference because when we abdicate responsibility we fail to take responsibility for our actions and our emotional wellbeing. We just make others responsible for how we feel. Remember how in last week's episode I said that if your mum gets upset about you not going to hers for Christmas that's because of her thoughts, not because of you saying that you're not going. It goes both ways my friend, other people are not responsible for how you feel.

And I found a recent example of when I went through something like this to share with you. So last week I had this really annoying allergic response. I got really itchy eyes, intensely itchy nasal passages and I couldn't stop sneezing. It really wasn't pleasant and very understandably I would say I was irritated. And my partner, Paul wasn't around that evening, so I was doing bath and bedtime with our son, and I was getting annoyed at him. I was telling myself that he was annoying me and that he was being annoying. This was the internal conversation that was going on in my brain.

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But really the only reason that I was feeling annoyed, apart from my experience of the physical symptoms was that I had some thoughts about how he should be behaving a certain way. And that he should be able to see that I was struggling and that he should therefore adapt his behaviour in order to suit me. But because he wasn't following this plan that I'd made up in my brain, I was thinking things like I can't believe he's doing this to me.

And by the way I just want to be clear with everyone, he wasn't actually doing anything to me. He was just having a bath and wanting to play with me and asking me questions that were actually very reasonable. But I just wasn't in the mood to be answering them. I was busy sneezing and itching my eyes and being annoyed. So in that moment I was making him responsible for how I was feeling. I was abdicating responsibility and making my five year old responsible for my emotional wellbeing.

Which I do not recommend you do this, those of you with kids, your mind might be blowing up with this right now and I get it, I've been there too. Those of you without kids, check in on where this shows up for you in your relationships. Do you do this with your partner or your family members, maybe a work colleagues that rubs you up the wrong way? I mean they don't actually rub you up the wrong way, it's your thoughts about them that rub you up the wrong way, but you get my point.

So that's what was going on for me. But I caught myself doing it in between all the sneezes and I was able to see what I was doing. So I just had a word with myself, adjusted how I was approaching the situation and completely changed the interaction that was going on between Nelson and I. So notice the difference between abdicating responsibility, taking responsibility and not blaming myself, that part is really key.

Because if I'd have let my brain go down the path of least resistance it would have gone down the blame pathway, the you're a shit mum, a horrible person. Look at how you're damaging your child, blah, blah, blah, you know that one. So I had to be really on to myself in the moment and

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keep my brain going down the route that was kind and useful to me and to him.

Another big one when it comes to abdicating responsibility that I hear a lot is blaming time. And I have done this a lot myself in the past. So how often do you hear yourself or hear other people saying, "I don't have time for that", or "I just ran out of time". Running out of time isn't a thing. That doesn't actually happen. You either didn't plan properly, you didn't give yourself enough time, especially if you're a people pleaser, or you're used to pushing yourself, which as a society I'd say most of us are in environments where that's normalised.

Or when you said yes what you really meant was no. So now you're over-committed. And everyone please hear me when I say that your hormones do not respond well to these things. It's why we have a bonus webinar in The Flow Collective about time management. Everyone loves it because it's just such a big topic. And it's so helpful to do that work when you're wanting to support your hormones and your mental health. So in this context when we're talking about time it could be that you abdicate responsibility to time by saying that you ran out of it.

But you could also be abdicating responsibility by saying, "But my team leader, or my boss, or my colleague asked me to do such and such." So you put the responsibility on them asking you rather than you being responsible for yourself, and your workload, and your schedule. All that happened is they made a request. They asked you something. They're presumably trusting that you are capable of being an adult and that you will respond honestly, otherwise they haven't got much to go on, have they?

And I coach my clients on this a lot, and it feels like such a big deal to be honest and to say no, or to say, "Yeah, I can do that but that will mean deprioritising what else I was going to work on. Are you happy with me to do that?" That's, it's just so radically different from saying yes and cramming extra work in, fucking up your sleep and your hormones, it impacting your personal life etc. But you can respond like this.

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And when my clients do this they quickly realise that it's totally okay. And their colleagues and those in senior roles to them usually respond very favourably to them saying no and being boundaried. This might also show up in your personal relationships and I would guess, especially with family members and your close friends. There was a time in my life where I really blamed someone for something that happened. And the consequences of that really damaged our relationship. And I spoke about this a bit in the boundaries episode.

And whilst they did do something that I didn't like, at the time I made it all about them and how they were entirely responsible or actually to blame for what happened. And whilst they were responsible for their actions, I was abdicating responsibility in the run up to the event and after it. Because these events don't happen in isolation. There are tens, and hundreds, and thousands of moments, decisions, actions, non-actions that all lead up to a particular event. And I assigned responsibility and blamed the other person for all of it. I made it all about them. I was just so busy blaming them.

And at the time I just wasn't able to pause and see what I was responsible for. It took me a while to be able to do that, to reflect on what happened with fresh eyes and to use what I learnt in my life coach training and apply it to this particular event, or really a long sequence of events that culminated in that one thing happening. But when I finally did that it was so empowering and liberating. It was such a relief to drop the story that I'd created in my mind about this person.

And it was the path that ultimately led me to forgiveness of them, but also of myself. And to be able to enter a new relationship with them. Had I not taken responsibility that wouldn't have happened. Now, let's get onto the classic, good day, bad day. Listen, I have been known to blame things on having a bad day, I get it. But when we do this we miss out on so much because it means you're always at the mercy of life happening to you rather than actively creating the life that you want to have.

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And you might do this in relation to your cycle. Some of you have mentally assigned particular days of your cycle as good or bad. So check in and consider is that helpful to you or not? I'd say that this kind of thing can be useful in the beginning of cycle tracking when you're getting to know your patterns. But after that I recommend dropping the idea of certain days being good or bad. Your hormones do influence things, of course they do. But they aren't running the show by themselves, your mind is involved too.

You have thoughts, they create emotions and that's what drives how you show up in the world and what your life looks like. And this is what I teach you how to do step by step in *Harness Your Hormones inside The Flow Collective*. So instead of being on a hormonal rollercoaster that you have no control over, you have a say in your experience.

So some questions for you all to reflect on if you wish to. Where aren't you taking responsibility? Where aren't you speaking up for what's important to you? Where aren't you being clear and explicit about what you need and want? Where are you blaming other things and other people? Where are blaming time, technology, the weather, and your hormones? Answer those questions for yourself and things will start to shift. Okay, my loves, I will be back next week with the third instalment in this responsibility series.

If you're finding these episodes helpful, I would love it if you took a moment to rate and review the podcast so that it's easier for other people to find it. I'm on a mission to help as many people as I can through the podcast. And I'd love your help in spreading the word. That might mean you can forward your favourite episode to a friend, share it on social media or leave a review. I appreciate you for doing so. Okay, have a cracking week. I will catch you next time.

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.