

Ep #84: The Secrets of My Success: Permission



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.

Hi everyone. I am thrilled to be with you today however you're listening to me. Maybe we are going for a walk together or I'm accompanying you in your car or on a bus. Maybe you're making a dinner, but I really hope that wherever you are you are managing to stay cool.

We are in the midst of a heatwave here in the UK and The Met Office which if you're not in the UK is where the official weather warnings come from. They have issued an extreme heat weather warning which is the first time in the history of the UK that they've ever had to do that. Because the temperatures are expected to hit 40 degrees which is 104 degrees if you measure in Fahrenheit. I used to live in New York, so I have experienced that kind of summer heat, but I have never had to parent in that kind of heat.

So it's going to be a good test run because we are off to Sicily in a couple of weeks' time and I may have shared this on a podcast already, I'm a little nervous about the heat because I know that temperature can really impact me. So we're just going to have to see how it goes. Like I said it will just be a bit of a test run. So here we are in the summer and when I think about the qualities of summer I think about courage, and risk, and just doing it. Just make a decision and go for it. Be bold, think abundantly and do the thing.

So a lot of what we're going to be coaching on over the course of the summer in The Flow Collective is about that. And at the heart of that is knowing what you want. And once you know what you want you have to give yourself permission to want it and to do it which is what today's episode is all about, giving yourself permission because we are continuing

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The Secrets of My Success series and so much of my success is down to not waiting for someone else to give me permission.

But before we get into I want to give a listener shout out to Martina Rousseau who left me this review on iTunes. Informative, inspiring, and incredibly uplifting. I love this podcast for many reasons but especially because of how it makes me feel each time I listen. I feel there's always a solution, another way, another perspective to look at my issues that I'm going through whether it's at work or my personal life. I often listen whilst walking so it's my walking therapy/coaching/laughing with Maisie weekly treat.

It has helped me to be kinder to myself, work on my perfectionist tendencies and to reflect on my daily routines, thoughts and learnt behaviours that are not helpful instead of being stuck in a vicious cycle on autopilot. A big thank you to Maisie and everyone who features on the podcast. That is incredible to hear. I'm glad you're finding the podcast so useful, Martina. And it's amazing that you've been able to use what I share here to get unstuck like that, so congratulations.

And thank you to all of you for the lovely reviews that you've been leaving. They really help other people to discover the podcast and I appreciate you for leaving them so much.

Okay let's dive into today's topic of giving yourself permission. Actually before I start talking about it I would love for you to consider where in your life you're waiting for someone to give you permission. Where are you waiting for someone to just say, "Yes, you can do that?" Maybe there's something that you really need to do or really want to do but you hold back from moving forwards and doing it or not doing something as the case may be.

Because when I think about it, the number of clients I've worked with over the years who are waiting for someone to give them permission to lie down, and rest is astonishing. In fact as I'm thinking about it I'm trying to think of someone who that hasn't been the case for and nobody's springing to

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mind. So waiting for permission can be about the day-to-day, can be about resting, eating certain foods, working in a certain way. And it can be also about the bigger stuff. I mean it's all big. But when I mean bigger stuff, like career direction, personal choices.

And as I reflect on my work over the years I think part of what I do is that I help my clients to give themselves permission. I don't think I give them permission, but I know I can help them to give themselves permission. I can influence that. So sometimes I might float the idea of a certain thing and then that can influence their ability to give themselves permission. And as a practitioner I would often suggest resting to someone or saying no to things that they felt obligated to do even in the midst of pain and exhaustion.

And sometimes when a client was trying to conceive I might suggest that they actually stop trying for a few months partly because it would give us a chance to address things because often at this point in someone's fertility journey, they're very depleted or they've got substantial things going on at lots of levels. And so if someone stops trying then that really gives us a chance to address that and to optimize things. But it would also give them permission to just step off that rollercoaster.

And I don't want to say that in the way that when you stop trying you're necessarily off that rollercoaster when you're trying to conceive but it's different. And women would often just burst into tears in relief just at the idea of this, that it was okay to do that. And I say that to illustrate that sometimes it is very useful for someone else to 'give us permission' because when you're in the thick of things it can be harder to see what's what. And sometimes options don't seem available to us, and we don't even come up with them.

So there's that aspect of the conversation but this is all about you giving yourself permission. And I've actually just realised something as I've been saying this, there's a process to this or maybe it's a cycle actually. And for those of you who don't know, I'm very into processes. I have a process for

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everything. But it comes so easily to me, and it happens so rapidly in my brain that I don't realise that I have these processes.

It's only when someone else does something that interrupts or doesn't consider my process which of course happens quite a bit because why the hell would someone else know that I have all these processes. But this is just one of the amazing things about having an autistic brain.

And I was actually working with a coach, actually not a coach, she's a business astrologer earlier on this year. Her name is Leslie Tagorda and in our work together she pointed out that my brain comes up with these processes. And that it would really help the people in my world if I shared those processes. So I've been paying more attention to the steps that I go through which are very obvious to me but perhaps not so obvious but very helpful to you.

So here's the process that I've just spotted. You have to know what you want. And maybe it's been a while since you got in touch with what you want. So part of this is maybe going to require some exploration, and curiosity, and testing things out. And even this part might require you giving yourself permission to explore what you want. And then once you know what you want the next phase is deciding to go for it and committing to doing something about it. And each of these things are actually separate stages but I'm going to encourage my brain to stay focused here for a moment.

But essentially you can know what you want but never actually decide to do something about it. So inside there might be something that you want that you're yearning for, but you hold off on fully recognising that desire. And there are lots of reasons why you could be doing that. And before we go any further, if you are holding off or hold back, know why you are. So why are you doing that? You only have to know this answer for yourself, and you don't have to do anything with it but just know why.

And you also don't have to criticise yourself for whatever your answer is. So one of the reasons could be that you're waiting for someone to give you

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permission for someone else to say, “Yes, it’s okay for you to want to do that. It’s okay for you to do that. It’s okay for you to prioritise what you want.” And by the way, I have conversations with my friend sometimes where I’m like, “Wait, is that allowed. Are we allowed to just do that?” Because it can be fun to realise that.

And this is why having amazing role models around you and great peers is so important. Whether they’re people that you actually know or people that you know because you listen to them on podcasts or you follow them on social media. Because they can be an example of what’s possible. And part of that is breaking free from our conditioning and internalised limits about what we can and can’t do. So sometimes it’s very useful to see someone else doing that.

But you also don’t need other people to do it first. So I was coaching one of my clients on this in the community this week and saying that “Yeah, it’s helpful to have examples of people who have done certain things.” Especially if they’re things that you’ve never considered or feel scary to you. Because sometimes these things, they haven’t even entered your brain as an option until you see someone else doing it. But if you know that you want to do something and you don’t have examples of other people doing it you can just decide to be that example.

It might feel risky to do it initially, but you know what’s really risky? Ignoring and dismissing your self-leadership and delaying something you want whilst you wait for someone else to go first. So are you really willing to hand over control of your life to other people like that? That’s what feels risky to me. The big message here that I want you all to hear is that nobody is coming to give you permission, it’s just not going to happen. I mean of course it can but it’s dependent on lots of things.

And I really recommend that you don’t rely on someone else rocking up to approve your desires and your needs. If you do this, then you’ll just be stuck in limbo land. And it’s just unnecessarily unpleasant. You can get out of being stuck in limbo land by giving yourself permission. Just wave your own magic wand and decide that it’s great that you want this and that you

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can go for it and do whatever the hell you want. And I want you to be daring with this. I'm realising as I'm saying all of this that I'm essentially giving you permission but be daring.

I say this because for most of my clients what feels daring and very bold, very radical to them is just regular life for a lot of people. And sometimes it's helpful to know that when it feels like the earth is shaking to you it's like a whisper to everyone else. Nobody is even paying attention to you, not in a mean way. But nobody will even notice and on the occasions when they do it probably won't be a big deal. And on those rare occasions when it is a big deal you will move beyond that phase.

Isn't it interesting how we long out that phase when we want to do something but we're not out of fear what we think might happen if we do it? So we prolong that discomfort and in actuality the discomfort of actually doing it is pretty uneventful and short term compared to what we experience in the run up to it. And I know this feeling very well because I'm scared of heights. And my brain really struggles with anything that involves jumping.

So I am the person on top of the rock over the water who doesn't want to jump into the water and takes forever because I'm just bricking it. Whereas if you just jump it's done with, and you can move on with your life and it may even feel fantastic. So I want to offer that to you today, it may feel great. And even if it doesn't feel great it'll be done, and you can move on. So just give yourself permission. So in preparation for this episode I've been making a list of what I have given myself permission to do. Some of it's personal, some of it's professional.

The first thing I want to tell you is I gave myself permission to have pubic hair. I was brought up in an era where it was apparently offensive to have pubic hair and I had an unconscious thought that in order to be attractive and desirable I had to get rid of all my pubic hair. I find the idea completely appalling now. I'm just over here cringing and shaking my head. It was very understandable given what we're exposed to and the societal messages

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about certain bodies being attractive or unattractive which is essentially there are some bodies that are right and some bodies that are wrong.

And that can be about pubic hair, body shape, type. There's so many factors there but pubic hair was a big no, no in my late teens and throughout my 20s. And it wasn't until my 30s that I started to consider what I wanted and what my preferences were. So I gave myself permission to have pubic hair, and armpit hair too, and leg hair. And now my hairiness is purely about my preferences. And my preferences fluctuate, and those choices are largely based on my sensory experience of being in my body and what I want for me.

I gave myself permission to take time off and to work from bed. And I know all the sleep people say don't work from your bedroom. But I realised that it works for me. I'm a morning person and I also get, I describe it as being light thirsty, so I crave, and I need light exposure. I can walk in a room and just tell if a curtain hasn't been fully opened. If there's another inch that it could be opened to let in more light, very sensitive to it.

And our bedroom gets a lot of morning light, and also in the first half of the afternoon which is essentially my entire working day, so I love to work from bed, not all the time but I do work from bed. And I gave myself permission to work less. And this is a good example of how you can actually have other people giving you permission or at least asking you to not be so busy. But until you give yourself permission it won't happen, and you'll likely just be annoyed and irritated by their requests.

I gave myself permission to say no to other people's requests. A lot of you ask how I'm so productive and there are several reasons why. And I share a lot of my process and things that I've tried and tested in the bonus webinar called About Time inside The Flow Collective. So those of you who are members, you can find that in the bonus section. But one of them is that I say no to a lot of things, most things in fact. And a part of that is respecting my capacity and what I feel able to do and also what I want to do. So I gave myself permission to do that.

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I gave myself permission to stop being a practitioner, to do what felt like at the time walk away from decades of education and training. To stop practicing acupuncture even with 40K of student loans to pay off for studying it. Nobody else was going to do that. Nobody was going to call me up and say, “Hey, do you want to stop treating people and do something wildly different and more impactful instead? Because it’s okay if you do. You know you can do that, right?” No, I had to do that for myself, and it was so much more powerful to do so.

I gave myself permission to pivot in my work, to go from being a cycle coach to a life coach who uses the cycle as a tool. Even when people are just discovering Period Power and it’s radical and new to them. For me to be okay with saying yes, isn’t it amazing? So glad you found it. And it’s only one part of my work, it’s one tool that I use. And if you want the rest come and listen to the podcast, join The Flow Collective. Let’s go. But if you’re happy with the book and you want to focus on your cycle and you don’t want anything more then great. I trust that you know what you need.

And that involves me saying no to a lot of people who apply for one-on-one coaching with me. If they just want to focus on improving their cycle then I know that I’m not the coach for them. And it’s so important that you get that help if that’s where you are but I’m not the person to help you. In the past I would have been but I’m not now. My work has moved on, it’s evolved so let me refer you to my colleagues who just focus on the cycle instead. And we still do all the cycle work whether it’s one-on-one work or whether it’s in The Flow Collective.

Of course it informs so much of what we do but there’s all the other stuff as well. And I gave myself permission to make that pivot. I mean it didn’t really feel like a pivot, it was more like an opening up. When I think about it, it’s the difference between having a flashlight on where you just see where the light is shining and you kind of see some of the diffused light around it. There’s like this focus light and then a gentle kind of diffused light around it. But it’s the difference between that and turning an overhead light on. So with the flashlight my work was very focused. We’re looking at the cycle.

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And then some of the diffused light around it was me talking about boundaries, and people pleasing, and relationships, things like that. And I love that phase of my work so, so much. But now it's like I've switched the overhead light on and we're getting into all of it, the cycle, your nervous system, thought work, processing emotions, your relationships, your work, and all sorts of other things. It's so much fun. And it was great to be focused on reproductive health for all of those years and we're talking about 20 years.

And I still draw on all that knowledge. And I love being able to consider the impact of hormones and the cycle and I always will because how could I not? But now that the flashlight is in my backpack I can just whip it out any time I want to. I'm not relying on it because there's all this other stuff. And I will be honest with you, this has been an ongoing process of giving myself permission to be more expansive in my work and I'm fully embodying that now. But it hasn't happened overnight, it's been, I don't know, 18 months, a two year process.

And I remember getting coached on this at one point, I can't remember when it was, maybe a year or so ago. And looking back on that coaching exchange, my memory of it, I can totally see how I was looking for permission. That's what I wanted. I wanted that particular coach to give me permission to make these changes. So it's been an ongoing journey and I say that because sometimes it can be quick, like, wait, we can do that, okay, great, going to do it.

And other times it's an unravelling, an unwinding that we're doing without necessarily even naming it as that. And this is partly why I wanted to talk to you about this today because then you can name it as a process of giving yourself permission so that you can be more effective as you do that and kind to yourself as you give yourself permission. And sometimes we can tell ourselves that we can't do certain things because so and so expects us to be this way or that. But really what's holding us back is our expectation of ourselves.

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Like I said, most people will not even notice, think about how many people there are on the planet, how many are paying attention to you in any way shape, or form and then of those people who are paying some form of attention, how many will notice that you're doing things differently? And of those who notice how many will actually care? And of those who care who's going to say something about it? And this may sound ridiculous, but it is, this is ridiculous, but this is what our brains do.

So when you answer this question for yourself, who will notice and care about what you're worried they're going to say or do? Get very specific about this. It's probably a family member or someone close to you but it could be someone that you have zero contact with. I was exploring this recently with a client because she had this professional experience where she encountered someone whom she went to school with. And there was this running narrative of what this guy might be thinking about her.

And when we do this what we're really uncovering is our thoughts about ourselves. So maybe you're holding back because of some memory or experience in your past, maybe someone actually reacted a certain way to you doing what you want which of course we all have, let's not demonise that happening, those experiences. They're just part of being human.

But sometimes our fear about what will happen is about someone who's close to us, someone that we interact with on a regular basis but someone, it can be way from our past, someone who has no bearing on your life whatsoever. So it can be very freeing to realise this. But as I said, really it's all your own thoughts. I also gave myself permission to make more money. This one was huge. I realised I was literally waiting for someone to say, "Hey, Maisie, wanting to make more money doesn't make you a bad person. It's okay for you to make more money."

Same goes for investing. I spoke about that in last week's episode. Those decisions were mine to make and that involved giving myself permission. I gave myself permission to do what works for my brain. Outside of The Flow Collective I rarely do video calls. I always request audio only ones with other people. And I switched to audio calls with my one-on-one clients. So

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when I trained as a life coach, everyone just did video calls, that was just the industry standard. But I realised they're not ideal for me.

So I either do phone calls or audio calls on Zoom and I love doing that. I often do them from my bed. It means I don't have to think about eye contact, or looking a certain way, behaving a certain way, I can move my body. I can stretch. I can move my hands around in the way that feels good to me. I can play with sensory toys, and I actually do that on video calls as well. My hands are below the screen and I'm using fidget toys and things like that.

But when I do audio only calls I can just focus on what my clients are saying and that means that they get me at my best. And sometimes I do the calls in my garden or whilst I'm walking up and down quiet roads in Margate, or in the shade of a tree at a park and I love that. Because then my hands can be occupied and interacting with the grass. And I get to be outside, I love that. But nobody told me any of that was an option, I just figure it out and gave myself permission to do it.

I also gave myself permission to stop coaching in The Flow Collective around the time my period is due. Because whilst I can coach then I don't think it's the most useful thing for me to be doing. That's when I think very expansively, and I come up with lots of ideas. So I like to create space for me to go all in on that as well as resting and taking care of myself. Because that's when I really nourish myself, I come up with lots of things to teach and share.

So now we just always have amazing guest coaches which I love because then our clients get to experience other coaches, different coaching styles and specialities. So we have the incredible Mars Lord who coaches on the regular. Everyone always goes wild for her coaching. Mars coaches on calls for all of the members and she also does our monthly BIPOC coaching calls that are solely for the members who are black, indigenous or people of colour. They're the only ones who get to come to those calls and who has access to watching the calls as replays.

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Vikki Louise has also come in and done some time coaching. We've had Maggie Reyes do relationship coaching. Next week, well, next couple of weeks actually, some amazing money coaches coming in. We've got Serena Hicks and Debbie Sassen and there's probably amazing other wonderful coaches that we've had in that I'm forgetting about. But it's just great to have them come in, I love it. I love it for everyone.

Something else that's been really powerful is giving myself permission to get it wrong which happens on a regular basis. FYI for the most part you'll see the things that I get 'right' but I want you to consider that for each of those things there's probably something I got wrong. But the one thing that I gave myself permission for that's probably had the most impact is giving myself permission to want more, to not settle, and to go for what I want.

Now, I have a quick tip for you before we finish up, think about if there's an area of your life where you are worried about being told off. Because one way to discover what you can give yourself permission to do or not do is to ask what you would do if it was guaranteed that it would all work out, if there was no backlash, if nobody said anything other than, "I love that you're doing this." What would you do with your life? And part of giving yourself permission is also giving other people permission to think whatever it is that they're going to think about you which you're not in control of anyway.

Okay my loves, that's it for today. Have a cracking week and I'll 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.