

## Ep #86: The Secrets of My Success: Q&A 2



### 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, it's great to have you back for this second part of the Q&A that's all about success as we finish off the Secrets of My Success series that I've been doing. So I'm going to dive right in with our next question which is from Amy who asked, "How do you practically find the balance between hard work and time off to avoid burning out other than working with your cycle and listening to your body? Do you separate times in your day? I get very focused on what I'm working on and although I enjoy it, it eventually leads to burnout as I have completely forgotten to do anything else."

Yeah, this is very familiar to me. I have definitely gone through phases in my life where I have been less aware or I've just got very involved in my work and kind of forgotten to drink, and be hydrated, and eat food, and go to the toilet and things like that. So yeah, that's a thing that happens. And I don't have set breaks in terms of my schedule, but I have what feels like set breaks just by going along with what my body is telling me basically.

So I think just from repetition and working, what began with the same hours that were available to me when we first started having childcare and Nelson would go to nursery in the mornings. That meant I had a set window of time to work in. And through that I think my ability to focus and my need for hydration, and food, and they're just kind of becoming a natural end with how much work I can get done. That just kind of became built in. So now my body and my schedule just they work together I suppose.

I love to do focused time in the morning. And that's when I do my most creative or kind of cognitively demanding work. So that usually tapers off after about two or three hours. So I know I've got that amount of time in me

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to do it. But it sounds like for you maybe you aren't aware of or maybe not getting signals from your body, or there's something going on. It sounds like maybe your body would like a break but you just kind of have gone past that point of recognizing it.

Or again this is a skill that we have, for some people it's more available to them. They can spot these things. Other people it kind of requires some effort to pick up on these signals. There's so many things that can be going on there. But I think this is the kind of thing that you could test out and just set alarms for a period of time. And then when the alarm goes off that's when you decide you're going to get up and move, you're going to have something to drink, you're going to eat, you're going to take a break, you're going to do whatever.

And you just start to test things out, see how it feels, you get to edit and refine things as you go. And then with repetition your body will just kind of come to expect certain things at certain times. And I think this might be a way for you to kind of course correct with what's going on here.

The next question is from Katie. "How do you fight resistance to doing a task you find really BORING (in capitals), but knowing that it's important to get done and you know you'll feel much better when it's done? I feel like this is holding me back at times at work. If I'm not interested in a task, I find it really hard to focus and get going even though I know how to do it and I know I'll feel accomplished when I can tick it off." So sometimes I will just think, well, can I hand this over to somebody else. And there are times when I can, sometimes it's something that I can't do.

But I'm getting better at this for sure. Many of you know this was part of my master coach project that I did over the course of the winter. And I am just kind of training my brain to be like is this something else that someone else can do? Should I be using my brain trying to figure this out at all? And yes, I have my own business, that doesn't make this process easy necessarily. And even if I were employed by someone else, I would still be asking this question. So is it relevant to my role? Am I operating in my zone of genius by doing this? Would someone else prefer to be doing this?

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Would it be better if someone else did this? And several of my one-on-one clients have done this at their respective workplaces because they realised, they were spending time on things that weren't creating results, things that weren't moving the needle and helpful to them in their role and helpful to the teams that they were a part of. So whether you own your business, whether you're self-employed, you work for someone else, or just in your homes, there's always ways to be playing around with this and seeing if you are in actual fact the person to be doing it. So I think that's a good starting point.

But there's always stuff that we don't want to do and there's two ways that I approach this, the first is to remind myself that if I don't do it, I will end up spending way more time, and mind management, and energy on this task, or rather than non-completion of the task. So the thing itself might only require two minutes of my time and decision-making. But if I don't just do it then I could end up being, you know, it would take up way more time. I'll probably be in my head.

It will be coming up in my head when I'm trying to fall asleep and not doing the task might cause issues that maybe weren't even there in the first place. So other people's timelines might get affected. I might get stressed out when I don't need to be. And it can impact working relationships, all of these kinds of things. And often when I start to kind of clock the impacts of these things, that's enough to kick my butt into gear.

But I can be pretty demand avoidant which means that even with tasks that I want to do. and that were my idea, and that I decided about once I perceive them as a demand of some kind of really resist doing them. So I play all sorts of games with my brain to get it to do things. So I just have to be really creative with that. And if I'm not doing something and I'm really not doing it we of course have to look at why. What is it about? What's going on? And sometimes I might have an immediate awareness of this but sometimes it might require hindsight to have that level of understanding.

And of course I'm always appreciating what's going on with my nervous system. So is it procrastination or is it a bit of a freeze state because

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there's some fear or some concern of some kind? And once I tend to myself in that state, once I meet myself there and I care for myself then I can usually go and do whatever it is. Or I can ask for help doing it because it may be something that I don't feel equipped to do.

So I actually had this happen this week. There was something very straightforward, most people would probably see it as very straightforward. But I have found it very hard to attend to, and I really needed someone else to help me. So sometimes even the 'simple or straightforward' things for certain people can require something of us. So I've kind of touched on this in various episodes but especially the spoon theory one.

And something that I'm really excited about that my assistant, Nicole and I are going to be doing are sessions every week where we just get together on an audio call over Zoom. And I do the things that she needs me to do, stuff that she needs my input on because I've just come to accept that some accountability helps me. And it helps her because then she gets what she needs from me. She doesn't have to chase; she doesn't have to wonder what's going on.

And it just means that there's time, boundary time where I'm focusing on the stuff that's probably the stuff that I don't really want to do, that I'd really rather not have to for whatever reason, but it does need to get done. And that might be an option for you with people that you work with, some kind of accountability system. Or you could even do it with someone that you don't work with. So it could be a friend, a partner, a family member. There's ways of doing this.

Alright, next up we have a question from Vanessa who said, "ADHD and perfectionism stops me from starting and taking the leap on so many things as I think I won't do it forever, and it won't be perfect so what's the point. Or I'll wait until I will feel better or in the exact right head space to do something which is just a reason to put it off and stay stagnant." Yes, I think you have a strong sense of Vanessa of what's going on. And you may not do this thing forever. But can you see how telling yourself that you won't do it forever means that you end up doing nothing at all?

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So you're not giving yourself, you're not giving this beautiful, tender, young genius idea a shot at actually getting going. And I would love for you to get curious about why you're doing that without judgement, just with curiosity, why are you doing that? But for the sake of this let's just say that it's true. And as I said, it may not be but whatever. Let's just say it's true and that it won't be forever. I would love for you to ask yourself, what are the benefits of you doing it, even if that's the case?

What are the long-term benefits of you taking a leap and starting something even if you're not going to do it forever? You could write pages on that. And also the exact right head space doesn't exist. I think you know this. Yes, there are certainly times when we are in that flow state, but we don't get in that flow state by waiting around for it to happen. It usually comes as a result of taking action. So I would ask you, if I was coaching you face-to-face now, I would ask you what you're getting out of telling yourself that because your brain is telling you this for a reason.

So let's ask your brain how it thinks it's being helpful in this instance. So again, we're not judging your brain for doing this. We're asking this question in a very genuine way because it's trying to help you out somehow. It might be a bit misguided in its attempt, but we can just get curious and be very genuine and say, "How are you trying to help me out here, brain, what's going on?"

And it might be that what you're getting out of telling yourself that you need to wait for the exact right head space is that you get to avoid failure which is really you trying to avoid thinking negative thoughts about yourself and experiencing shame etc. And so of course if that's the case then your brain is doing an amazing job of trying to protect you from that. So then we get to thank it instead of hating on it. And now what we have is data. So the reason that you're not taking action is because you don't know how to experience failure.

So then we can get to work on you increasing your capacity for failure. And this person is in The Flow Collective, so I know you know that we're all about that. It's one of the core skills that I want you all to be building. But

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that's why it's so important to be able to feel an emotion and to have the ability to watch your thoughts and see where your brain is going. And then put the reins on it like it's a wild horse and just direct it towards kind and helpful thoughts instead. And if it's not fear of failure then figure out what it is.

My guess is that your brain is just trying to take care of you somehow. So just ask it why and see what you come up with. And then you can post in the community or take it to Ask a Coach which is our personalised written coaching service in The Flow Collective. You just submit a request, and a coach replies with coaching. And then you can keep coming back for more coaching on that same topic or it can be a different topic. So I would love for you to head over there and explore this some more.

This question is from Maria who asked, "My question is about building safety and overcoming self-sabotage when you experience unexpected massive overwhelming success. I go into those places of deep fear and doubt when it happens to me, and I would love to hear your thoughts." First of all congratulations and I mean that, congratulations on your success but also congratulations on being human.

This is a very human thing to happen and it's basically your nervous system freaking out and going, oh my God, this is awful, everything is so amazing. And it's so awful because whatever its particular story is. So I would love for you to see if you can discern what feels so challenging for you in your success. Why do you feel so unsafe that you're self-sabotaging in order to get back to what's known and familiar even if it sucks and even if you've been working hard on achieving this success, why are you doing that?

And can you build your capacity to be in the awkwardness and the newness of your success? And FYI, I know that you can. But also why is this so unexpected. How did you not see this coming? I'm super curious about this, was your success really unexpected because I'm not sold on it being unexpected. I have a feeling it all makes perfect sense. It just feels

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so uncomfortable to you. And you could also ask yourself, what you're worried will happen next because that's where brains like to go.

Because it's so awkward to hang out in our success and celebrate ourselves, we'd rather focus on things going wrong again. That's just how our brains work. So now your brain might be like, oh, shit, that's worked out, I'm going to have to keep going and keep doing things really well and everyone's going to expect this of me. And I'm going to have to keep doing that or being the certain person that they all seem to think I am but I'm really not. Could be some classic imposter syndrome stuff showing up, all the fun stuff basically.

I'm so happy that you're experiencing this, this is perfect for you. But this is why celebrating everything is so important. This is why we have such a strong culture of celebration inside The Flow Collective. That's why I'm always banging on about it because I want you to experience success and to be willing to experience the discomfort that might come up with it, to experience being seen, to experience being celebrated in your magnificence. Because the more that you do that the more you build capacity for success.

And The Flow Collective is such a safe environment to do that in, but the idea is then that the impact of that starts to spill out into other areas of your life. And we see that happening all the time. And some of you have even been implementing these things in your workplaces and in your homes, all based around celebration which is so great to see.

This next question is from Rachel. "How do you actually focus on the right stuff, i.e. the stuff that will take you closer to your goal and not the easy/quick fix stuff that then will make you feel like you've made progress when you've actually just been titting about and procrastinating?" It's such a good description, "i.e. making notes for an article, buying tampons, and a chicken for dinner, paying bills, scrolling, sending an email, none of which are my rocks, and all of which I know are blockers, buffers and massively preventing me from moving forward.



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You said in your self-trust podcast that you've done this too, but it ultimately fed and built the determination for you to knuckle down and write the books. Was there a defining moment or final nudge that helped you move forward? I fear", I love this, "I fear you will tell me to go back to getting unstuck which is a webinar in The Flow Collective.

But I wonder if it's more deep seated for me right now after taking massive action, stepping off the corporate hamster wheel after 20 years and then joining the leadership team of a start-up only for it to go bankrupt six months later in pretty wild circumstances. They might be contributing more than I want to admit." Okay, where to start with this. We can get down with so much here. Okay, notice how your brain is going to, I wonder if it's more deep seated. Of course your brain is telling you this because as long as you're finding the deep-seated issue then you don't have to do anything.

I'm onto you. Now, your brain might want a break, your nervous system could maybe do with some TLC. You've kind of spoken about some stuff that's gone on. Maybe you could do with having a fun summer, and being in community, and taking care of yourself, and enjoying your summer. And if that's the case or some version of that then be honest with yourself and accept that instead of hiding behind menial tasks kind of things and searching for deeper reasons. And they might be there. But it might just be you need a bit of TLC.

I think there's just the general vibe in this answer of knuckling down and kind of forcing yourself to do something which as you know I'm not really into. I'm much more into the, well, let's be tender and actually take care of ourselves and then go from there. And I have no idea if this is true. I just have a hunch that you're not doing enough to nourish and take care of you. And if that's the case then go ahead and give yourself that permission to do this. And there's also no right stuff.

This is one way that we get to avoid making decisions, by telling ourselves that there's a right choice to make and then we just agonise over what the right choice is instead of just trying something out and seeing if that's the thing that's going to make a difference. But it sounds like there's some kind

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of pottering going on here, titting about as you called it. And I love to dedicate time to pottering because it's something that I really enjoy doing. And particularly towards the end of my cycle, that's the kind of thing that I love to do.

So I honour that, but I also keep it to that part of my cycle or a certain part of my day, maybe after I've had lunch or something, and I'm kind of digesting and I'm not really ready to get into any kind of work. And I just let myself do it and enjoy it. I'm not pottering my way around my studio or my home the whole time thinking, I should be doing this. I'm just actually really enjoying folding clothes, or whatever it may be. I find folding clothes very regulating; I do really enjoy tasks like that. So I just let myself do them. And when I'm ready I get back into the other stuff.

And I think this is the thing is when we honour each of these things that we like to do then we do them all.

Alright, this next question is from Rachel, another Rachel. "What were some of your biggest fears that you had to step through? Okay, so each time the membership has evolved, with having a new platform, adjusting the format, how we do things, my brain always goes to, everyone's going to leave. And each time I've just made peace with that because everyone could leave. It's highly unlikely but it is a possibility, so I just like to go there to that possibility and meet myself in that place. If everyone left, what would I do? What emotions would I need to experience and how would I do that?"

And what would I think about myself if that did happen and what would I make it mean about me? So basically how would I treat myself in that experience? So I always find that really helpful, and then I think another thing that I love to do is just to think, well, why do I like this decision even if that happens? Why do I still want to do this even if everyone leaves because when I make decisions like this they're not made on a whim. There's always strong reasons behind any changes we make.

And I know that not everyone's going to like them, that's just the nature of change and you have to be okay with that. And even people that you love,

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some of them aren't going to like it. Some of them are going to leave and some will decide to stay even though it's not what they would choose if they had a say in it. And people always make the best decisions for themselves. And it's being okay with that that helps me to get through all of these kinds of things.

And another huge fear that I have had is what will people think if my business is financially successful, which as I've said multiple times, that's really my thoughts about me, my thoughts about money. Because I'm 99.999% sure that most of you want my business to succeed. I mean why wouldn't you want that. It doesn't make any logical sense; this is what brains do though. I mean the only reason this podcast exists is because my business generates enough revenue to pay for it every month, which means that I don't have to find sponsors and do ads and all those kinds of things.

And I'm sure you would like me to keep being able to do this work. But being logical and balanced isn't always where our brains go to. This is just what brains do. They come up with all the nonsense and mine was coming up with a whole bunch of thoughts about it not being safe for me to be successful which is very common. We've kind of touched on this in a bunch of ways throughout all of these questions. And that people would think that all I care about is money. And sometimes people do share their opinions about me with me.

But you know what? I do care about money. It would be very weird for me not to when I run a business, and when I've got taxes, and bills, and wages to pay. So I got past that fear by deciding how I wanted to respond to other people's thoughts, which as I said, is really about my own thoughts. And I just did a lot of self-coaching. I've gotten coached on this a lot because it really was a huge fear. And then I just started talking about money which has been really fun for me to do.

And I know it's been really helpful for so many of you because I really believe in the importance of us talking about money. So I think they're the two biggest things.

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Alright, this one is from Lara, “I’d love to hear how you work out conflicting priorities between work, partner, and child? I’ve recently discovered the concept of sticky floors. And I’m trying to balance the amount of mental load and low-level to-do, i.e. buying new toothbrushes, nursery bag etc., all with my partner, but I haven’t cracked it yet.” I so appreciate this question and I totally get what you’re saying here, Lara. This is very familiar to me.

So I want to share what helped me when I was in that place. But I also want to share something that’s been far bigger and impactful for me that’s kind of taken place recently. And the first thing is I let myself be annoyed, and fed up, and pissed off. And I didn’t judge myself for it. I just felt the annoyance, and the resentment, and the anger. And I was very fed up at one point. And then, well, there’s a bunch of things that happened, loads of things actually.

I actually did a really good Instagram post recently about how I improved my relationship so I’m going to direct you towards that as well because there’s some great things in that post. But I had to look at what I was ready to let go of. So my ‘standards’, the tasks that I loathe doing, the things that felt too much and I stopped doing them. And some of these things I communicated with Paul. And other things I just let slip. I didn’t have to make a big deal out of them. I just kind of let them drop and be willing to let other people figure it out because Paul does things in ways that I wouldn’t do them.

But is it more important for someone else to do them or is it more important that they’re done my way? And things can fall into either category. As I have said, being autistic, having a process, there are some things that I do really like done a certain way, that means I like to be the one who does them. I know, I’m doing them for me. And I just have to think about, am I willing for mistakes to be made? Because everyone makes mistakes in a relationship. And often we’re very focused on, well, they didn’t do it right. But, well, actually there’s plenty of things that I don’t do right.

And there’s plenty of ways that Paul picks up after me. So I just like to think that it all shakes out to be the same and I do firmly believe in my

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relationship that it does all shake out to be very balanced. And there are some areas where you might be willing for mistakes to be made and to kind of just muddle through. And you can ask if there are things, areas where you're willing for mistakes to be made. And there might be some areas of your life where you may not be and for good reasons.

And some of it may feel like, yeah, it's okay if things get messed up here, we'll figure it out. And you can do that knowing that you will figure it out, that someone else will figure it out because often we're thinking, well, I'm the only one who can do this and most of the time that is not true. So just be on the lookout for that. I also did things like not being the person that the school sends emails to. So I am now but for the first, I want to say, 18 months of Nelson being in school, I didn't get their emails or texts. I had no clue what was going on. They had my number for emergencies and things.

But Paul got all those notifications and that worked out great. I loved that. But what's helped me, I mean there's so much that has helped, this is a whole episode I could do on this. But beyond the day-to-day practical things when I think about the biggest thing that has helped, it's that I stopped seeing all these different parts of my life as conflicting priorities. I decided that there was space for all of them. And I also decided that sometimes one thing would be a priority more than another and that that was okay.

If I'm in a launch or there's a big project going on with my work, then I just accept that that day, that week, my work is my priority and I'm not going to judge myself for that or feel guilty about not being the one who takes Nelson to school every day in the morning as much as I usually do or whatever. So instead I began seeing myself as someone who inhabits these roles all the time but in a helpful way because I used to have that same thought.

I'm being all these things to all these people all the time, which is not true anyway, but my brain was very attached to being right about that. It felt a lot of injustice but once I got over myself, I just became someone who is always a mum, who is always an entrepreneur, who is always a coach,

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always a friend, always a sister. Because that's just who I am all the time. And that means that I'm steady in that. There's no competing, there's space for all of these parts of me in my life. And that has been the biggest shift.

Alright, final question is from Anahita who asked, "How do you work through envy or comparison in your professional life and stay focused on you?" What a great question. So this is something that rarely affects me. I spoke about this on a call recently in The Flow Collective, I was coaching someone, I can remember who it was, but I can't remember exactly what they said. But we ended up talking about competition. And I shared that my thought is that I don't have any competition.

And I explained that in a couple of ways. The first is that nobody does it like me. Someone could have the exact same training as me, as far as I know nobody does but it is possible. And there are definitely people, lots of people with very similar skillsets and careers to mine. But even so they're not me. So nobody can do it like me.

And the second part of this is that I don't ever want to see my friends and colleagues, and my peers as competition, that just feels yucky. Although I will say I did go on a Peloton ride with my friend Keena who is a coach, and a friend, and a colleague. And I have to say that ride was the best ride I have ever done. I have not been able to beat my numbers from that ride because I was chasing Keena so hard for the whole ride. So that for me is healthy competition because we're bringing the best out of each other.

We're spurring each other on to do our best. And when we do that then we're increasing the whole profession and industry and it benefits everyone. It benefits us, our clients, our profession. That for me is healthy competition. But I'm struggling to think of a time where there is that competitive vibe going on and I'm very ambitious and so are plenty of my peers and my colleagues.

But even when we've been in rooms where we start off a meeting and we're writing down our revenue and our financial numbers on a board in

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front of everyone in descending order, nobody's every jostling to get to the top. We're all just rooting for each other and delighted by each other's success. But there are times, there are occasions where I do compare myself. And here's what I know about those times. When I'm comparing myself to someone else it's always because, well, first of all, it's always because I'm in not enough-ness.

Because when I am feeling enough, I don't do this. It's always just when I've dipped down into not enough-ness. And it's usually because there's a part of myself that I'm not honouring, or giving voice to, or using in some way. So even if it presents as me wishing I could do something like so and so, when I take the time to actually explore that I realise that there's something in me that I've wanted to do or an instinct, an idea, and I just haven't fully honoured that part of me in the fullest way that I can.

And I just want to say because I know that the whole compare and despair thing is strong for many of you. It gets easier, I promise. The more you do this work the less and less you will think about others and compare yourself.

And on the rare occasion where you do, for me typically happens when something goes wrong or my period is due, my hormones have dipped, something like that. And when that happens you will be able to spot it quickly and return to who you are, loving yourself and thinking about how you want to do things, how you want to roll because there is nobody like you out there. We don't want some not you version of you, we want you.

Alright my friends, that's it for this week. I'm actually going to be on holiday in Sicily when this episode airs and actually last week's one or maybe I'll be back. I think I'm actually going to be back when this one's out. Either way, I can't wait to tell you all about it, so I'll see you later.

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](http://maisiehill.com) for more.