

**Ep #91: Shifting Paradigms
with Flow Collective Member Hannah**



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.

Okay, hello everyone. I am feeling particularly excited about today's episode because sat in front of me is Hannah, one of my clients from The Flow Collective. Hannah, why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself and then we can get going with our conversation. So tell us about you, what you do, anything, your pronouns, that kind of thing.

Hannah: Hi. Thank you so much for having me, Maisie. So I'm Hannah, she, her. And I'm in my early 30s. I'm a gardener and I work with organic and biogenic gardening. So I really like how I can use the seasons and my lunar cycle to work with my internal seasons and cycles. And yeah, so that's me in a nutshell.

Maisie: I love it. And when did you decide to join The Flow Collective?

Hannah: I joined in November 2021, so just under a year ago.

Maisie: And I finally got to coach you recently.

Hannah: I know, and that's so funny, sort of in the side-lines sort of waiting for so long. Yeah, and I can't believe how exciting that was to actually do it. And yeah, so it's been almost a year that I've been in The Flow Collective which is crazy. I can't believe how quickly it's gone but also how much growth has happened in what seems like quite a short amount of time and yeah.

Maisie: Yeah. So why did you join in the first place, do you remember?

Hannah: Yeah. So years ago, it must have been when your book first came out, *Period Power*, my mum bought me a copy of it for Christmas.

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Maisie: Nice job, mum.

Hannah: Yeah. She has a nice little tradition where she always gets us a book and a bar of chocolate on Christmas Eve. We always have that as a present then and read it. And I absolutely inhaled the book. I think I read it within about three days which is quite unusual for me because I usually have a stack of 15 books that take me a long time to get through all of them. And I started thinking about it and I think your membership came out maybe six months later, maybe not, I don't know.

Maisie: Yeah, it probably was about that, yeah.

Hannah: And I knew that it was happening, but it took me quite a long time to actually be like, "No, this is what I want to do." Even though every time I heard you speak about it I was like, "Yeah, I'm going to do that." And then it was like this weird inner resistance. It was almost like I wouldn't allow myself to actually dive in.

Maisie: Do you know what that was about?

Hannah: I don't know. I mean probably through a lot of the work that I've been doing so far, it's probably just allowing myself to actually want something and do it. But then around – well, I joined in November and the actual catalyst was through grief. So I'd just found out a friend of mine had died a few days before and your doors had opened. And I remember listening to one of your podcasts whilst I was at work and just thinking, I need to do something for myself. I really need to figure a way that I can go inwards and a way to support myself more.

And knowing that I really liked thought work alongside ways to support my physical health. And it was just this kind of little moment. I remember it so vividly. I was working in the field, and it was November, and it was cold. And just feeling like this is what I'm going to do. And just going home and signing up for it that evening. And it was just the best timing because around that time that I signed up, the themes are around creating safety and being in emotional awareness.

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And I think learning how to sit with my emotions at that time of grief and learning how to regulate my nervous system it just was such a gift. And there was a somatic bonus with Victoria Albina which I go back to so often. And one of the practices that she taught us was a shaking exercise to just get rid of a building up in your body. And it was an incredible way for me to just let go and let my body release and then I could cry. And I did that repeatedly throughout this really initial period of grief and it was such an amazing thing to learn. And I do go back to those somatic tools quite often.

And I think also I work a very physical job and my inner autumn was starting to become more challenging. And I knew that I needed to figure out a way that I could support myself more with that as well. So it was all these little things lining up that I was like, yeah, The Flow Collective is for me.

Maisie: Yeah. How is your experience with your autumn now?

Hannah: I've really learnt to love it actually. I used to find it quite a challenging season. And there are moments, obviously nothing is ever perfect and there's times and cycles when things are a bit more difficult. And there's been a lot of change in my life over the last few months. So I think with moving house and moving jobs and all those kind of things. But I've really been able to work with my inner critic which has helped frame things that I need to sort of get clearer.

And I think with my energy levels as well I've also just made a lot of decisions about work and how I want to work which I didn't think was possible before. It was kind of like I have to just slog through it. And now I just choose to rest differently and think differently.

Maisie: That's really interesting because I think a lot of people feel stuck in that kind of place. So how were you approaching it and thinking about it versus what shifted for you?

Hannah: I had a lot of shame around it I think, in terms of being like, working as a gardener, I think a lot of the time, yeah, it's sort of this quite – it's a physical job. And I was around a very male team. And I think sort of

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seeing the way that they could just turn up, go to work, do the things they needed to do and be consistent every single day with that level of energy.

And at the time I was working alongside my partner as well. He's a farmer and a gardener as well. And I think I used to compare my energy levels to his and see how he was just able to do a morning's worth of training prior to work and do all of his weight training. And then go and do a day in the field. And then come back and I just couldn't do that at certain times of the month. And yeah, I think there was shame. So I was like but I'm young and I'm healthy, and fit, and I should be able to do this.

And it was the should, it was changing that part of it to be, to actually tune into how I wanted to feel and how I knew that I could feel but I just needed to allow myself to step into that rather than just kind of resisting it and feeling guilty about lying down on the sofa occasionally or just eating a different quantity of food, yeah.

Maisie: This is just so good. I hope everyone's taking notes on this because this is a very common kind of place for people to get stuck and just, and like you said, it's that word, should. No, but I should be able to do whatever it is. And usually it's this impossible measuring stick that we're holding up against ourselves. Whereas it sounds like for you, you recalibrating that measuring stick to something that is based on you. And how you feel and your experience of the world and how you want to be.

Hannah: Yeah. No, I think recalibrating is the perfect way to describe that. And it was just learning how to recalibrate and reconnect to my energy in the way that I want to and how it works with my body rather than figuring it a way against everybody else. It's sort of taking the responsibility to myself.

Maisie: How was that for you to do it?

Hannah: It took a lot of practice initially. I mean the whole concept of it kind of blew my mind. It took me a few months to get to that point I think partly through the things that were sort of challenging and a bit uncomfortable, that actually noticing parts of myself that maybe I was putting too much

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responsibility or blame on other people, or maybe on myself. Or even just sort of sitting with the emotions of things especially shame. Shame, it can be such a difficult one to process but just reminding myself that if I'm willing to experience it and just be with it that it will shift. That was huge.

And I think a really big part of working with shame actually came through acknowledging somebody else's coaching. She's now my Flow Collective friend, Heather and shout out to her, she's great. But she had her coaching around that. And I remember watching both of you go through it. It was a real light bulb moment and I think the fact that it wasn't even me that was receiving the coaching directly, but it still shifted so much. And a lot of it was to do with failure as well.

And how embracing failure was something that I was really scared of. And it was this idea of there's a certain point in my cycle, my autumn where I would feel very much more like things were – I was failing at things. And I had thoughts about, you know, inner critic coming up about how I wasn't very good at certain things and how I shouldn't be doing this because I've not got the energy for it and all of those kind of things. But I think just allowing to see that I could kind of just thrive on the opportunity to develop and thrive on ways that I could help myself.

And how I could do things differently, and just seeing opportunities rather than just beat myself down and yeah.

Maisie: Yes, I'm over here, you can't see me. Hannah can see me but if you're listening you can't see but I'm kind of fist pumping the air because this is just so important. And it's kind of like, it's the kind of thing that's so simple that we can kind of brush past and not see the impact of it. But deciding to see the opportunities and the things that you can do is such a great skill to have. And so many people for whatever reason, don't or can't.

And it is the brain's natural tendency to go to the struggle and the things that can't do, and to see those things because it just has that negativity bias. But if you're able in any way to just think, but what can I do? Well,

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how might I be able to do that? You're going to create a far better result than if you stay in, oh no, I can't do that. I can't, no, that's not possible. It's got a very different feeling. My body feels very different just in this moment saying those two different things.

Hannah: Definitely. And I think sort of just deciding that you can choose to do things to help yourself, which is so simple of being, I can eat protein and have a good breakfast. And that shouldn't be something that can radically change your health, but it is. And it does. And then you are set up and you're doing things consistently as well. It's sort of choosing to do something and telling yourself that you get to do it rather than you have to do it.

And that's been a big thing as well with a lot of the coaching, especially around the goals, of rather than turning things into a bit of a discipline and routines. And things that are, if I do this and I stick to this plan then everything will be fine. And shifting the way that I think about that has been huge.

Maisie: How do you think about it now?

Hannah: I've just actually been a bit more fluid with it, of being like, well, we can just see how it works. And it doesn't have to be that I have to write out. I was such a sucker for creating Excel spreadsheets, with putting all the different self-care things I was going to do. Just even down to being body brushing, what I'm going to eat for breakfast.

Maisie: I'm so curious, okay, I have to ask you this, did you think, when you signed up for The Flow Collective did you think it would be a bit like that, the kind of more prescriptive do this or did you think it is what it is?

Hannah: Yeah. That's a really good question. I don't know. I think it was sort of I was so built into the really quite prescriptive ways of self-care rather than this concept of radical self-care. That it was almost like I couldn't see another way to do it until it had been modelled to me. So the only way that I could see that I had to look after myself was through

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discipline. And even if it didn't feel very good, it was like you have to carry on because if you don't then you'll fall off the wagon and everything will, you know, absolute worst-case scenarios.

Maisie: It comes up a lot and once in a while we hear from people who have joined and that's what they are expecting or hoping because that's what, when it comes to health, and wellness, and self-care, that's what we see on Instagram or that's what we read in things. It becomes quite prescriptive rather than something that you get to cherry pick from. And be like, well, in this season of my life or in this season of my cycle this is what feels good to me. And this is how I want to approach things.

But like you said, being fluid, and dynamic, and in conversation with yourself always running it by your inner guidance system of is this working for me? Is this serving me or am I serving this thing, this routine? And often there's so much perfectionism tied up within it and it doesn't feel good. But we're kind of, it's this idea that this kind of self-care thing is going to feel good to us and be helpful.

But we're pressuring and punishing ourselves to go through it which for me even if the result of that self-care practice is good for your body like you said, eating protein, getting a good night's sleep. But if the way you're approaching it is through restriction and being strict with yourself and these kinds of things then we have to always consider the neural pathways that we're encouraging to go deeper, and deeper and the way that we're treating ourselves in that process.

Hannah: Yeah, definitely. And I think especially social media and Instagram. Having these lists of things that you do and at the end of it you'll feel amazing. And the shame, again going back to shame as an emotion around that. Because usually that's not what happens. But really working out that I'm valuable and worthy exactly as I am. I don't have to do anything to earn that. I think that was the key. The sort of learning actually I can have a really shit day and it doesn't matter and I can just decide to pick myself up and do something about it or not.

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Either way I just get to experience it and sort of stepping back of being like, how can I just decide, make a decision about this. Do I want to deal with it? Do I not want to deal with it? But either way I get to choose that. And I think prior, I was putting a lot more of all of that onto perhaps other people or allowing – I don't know how to describe this but just in a way of leaning on other people rather than using my own autonomy and responsibility to decide what I want to do to look after myself.

Maisie: So good. So that's such a big shift to go through to take like what we talk about all the time, 100% responsibility for yourself. And we're not talking about being over-responsible or anything like that but just for you. So that is a huge shift to go through. What's supported you in being able to make that shift. How did you do it?

Hannah: I think learning a lot about creating safety for myself through how to work with my nervous system. That was a gamechanger. Even just being able to identify it in the same way with cycle awareness, just to have words for it. To know what was happening in my body at a certain time and not to freak out about that. It's almost like an incredible secret power of putting nervous system awareness alongside cycle tracking. And just knowing how to plan what I'm doing around that.

Planning my cycle but then also if there's something that's coming up and I need to regulate myself, just having the tools to figure that out and even if it's just something as simple as finding a nice rock to hold, to kind of bring me back to myself. Or doing one of the somatic tools that we learn. And yeah, I think just acknowledging that we're in this kind of dance all the time with power in our bodies. I mean it just it's fascinating to me that we are so much creatures, we're in our bodies so little and we're in our brains so often.

And then using the tools that we've learnt through The Flow Collective of things like thought downloads and figuring out models. And then putting that alongside how we look after our bodies. The support of the thought downloads as well. I know that that whole thing is not very clear. So we

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might want to have to go through that again. But yeah, I think learning how to use the model.

Maisie: Yeah. So the model for everyone listening who isn't in The Flow Collective. The model is the thought work protocol that we use. And it's one of the key foundational tools where you learn how to coach yourself. And then it's something that we bring in on our calls along with nervous system awareness, the cycle awareness, and all sorts of other things as well.

Hannah: Yeah. I think using the model as a way to support myself as well. So doing things like a thought download if I was getting a little bit overwhelmed or a little bit busy in my head. Knowing that I can connect to my nervous system and do all the practices to kind of get back into my body. And then also doing a thought download to get clear on something. And then deciding from that how I want to feel or what kind of thought could help support me. And then the actions.

Just deciding what am I going to do about this? So an example that I had a few weeks ago of just feeling quite anxious and it was out of nowhere. And I really used to be quite an anxious person or used to deal with a lot of anxious thoughts. And I really don't find that that is the case anymore. Occasionally it'll pop up and when it does I can kind of control it and harness it. And I can figure out certain ways to process differently. Maybe part of that is just deciding that actually what I need to do is to rest, or what I need to do is to approach a conversation that I might be putting off again.

Sort of coming back to being a bit more responsible about things. But yeah, just the sort of the power of using the model, using nervous system regulation and cycle tracking I think are the things that have really supported me.

Maisie: Yeah. I'm saying yes because I'm like, yeah, me too. Because all the stuff that I teach is all the stuff that I use all the time. And for me, anxiety isn't one of those emotions. Well, first of all I want to say, great catch because you were describing yourself as an anxious person. I

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noticed how you switched into I had anxious thoughts, and everyone take note of that. Because very commonly when you are experiencing anxiety or depression we can often then describe ourselves, or with any emotions like I'm upset, I'm depressed, I'm anxious.

And that's how emotional states can become part of our identity. And that's not to discount medical diagnoses and things like that. That's important. But when you can differentiate and say, "Well, I'm feeling anxious, I'm feeling excitement", then with any kind of emotion it's not getting entrenched into your identity. And that means it gives you space to work with your emotions in a different way. Anxiety isn't one of my go to emotions but when I do feel it, or kind of a flavour of that, now I'm just like, okay, there's some nervous system dysregulation going on.

And when I can tend to my body and recognise the thoughts that have been going on as well, and just the ability to pause and take stock of that which it can take a little bit of practice to give yourself that pause. And sometimes we're not recognising things until weeks after something happened, hours, and then gradually we start to notice when it's happening. And then eventually start to kind of see things happening in advance. And we can take pre-emptive action of things.

But I am curious about how your journey with these tools and things has evolved because when you joined, that's when we were really getting into the nervous system stuff and the emotional side of things which we're going to be dipping into again because we're going into autumn again. So we're going to be looking at decisions and feeling emotion. And we've got the wellness reset happening as well. So what's your journey with them been like?

Hannah: It's been really fun actually just reflecting prior to this podcast to just think about what has happened for myself over the past let's say year. I think one of the things that I feel really proud of is knowing that there have been things that have felt really quite uncomfortable. But it hasn't stopped me from showing up for myself and just deciding what to do about that. And

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then with that my self-trust and my inner knowing has really developed. I really like hanging out with myself now. And just learning how to be kind and loving towards myself even when things are challenging.

Maisie: That's just such an amazing, it's just incredible.

Hannah: Yeah. It sort of feels like I'm stepping a lot more into my true self rather than a sort of people pleasing version of myself of how I think other people want me to turn up as. It's like I'm letting that dissipate. And I'm just turning up as who I am. And I think as a result that's really strengthened a lot of my relationships as well because I'm able to give a lot more love and compassion to other people because I'm not so conscious about myself.

Maisie: Well, I think it's because you're giving that love and compassion to yourself first.

Hannah: Yeah, definitely. It's sort of the knock-on effect that that's had on my wider community has been huge. And even just making decisions of how I want to live in my community and how I believe that I've become a much better listener. And I'm a much more attentive person. I'm able to celebrate people more without feelings of inadequacy or jealousy. It's sort of, that's been a really big one as well of just acknowledging that everybody's on their own little path.

And we're all just doing really well and that's a really nice feeling. And I think like you were saying, I've being able to give that love and compassion to myself, I have so much more for other people. And learning how through that sort of self-trust and confidence that is built from developing love, basically recognising what my skills are and how I can help and use that for a community. And how I can work on the values that I have as well. So that's something that I'd never really considered. But actually acknowledging that respect and kindness is really quite a big thing for me.

And feeling heard and seen and knowing that through creating awareness for yourself is how you then use it for the greater good, I think.

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Maisie: So now I'd love for you to share with us how you have been doing that. How have you been working with those values and how are you bringing the inner impact you've had out into the communities that you're a part of?

Hannah: Yeah. So actually one of my spring goals, it was working on relationships. So I realised that I didn't really feel connected to the place I was living. I'd just kind of outgrown it and it wasn't working for me anymore. And kind of out of nowhere, it was very much, okay, well, we can do something about this which I didn't expect that would be the outcome for my goal at all. I thought maybe I'd just reconnect with a few old friends. And I moved house, we moved to Shropshire.

Maisie: Sorry, I'm just laughing because this is the kind of thing that happens a lot. And I think that's the thing of when we work with goals in the way that we do inside The Flow Collective, it is less prescriptive. Sometimes there are things that need to be done that are very clear from the outset. But when you have, I like to think of it as going on an adventure and you've got a destination in mind. But really, it's about that whole journey to get there and you can end up in a completely different place but still have that result that you set out to achieve.

Which for you is all about connection and relationships and things. So that's why I'm laughing, because it's something that we see a lot of, of someone sets one goal and then they kind of, I don't want to say, overachieve because that's not the kind of language that I like to think about it. But do you know what I mean? It's like you've kind of got this idea and then it ends up being something that you probably didn't even imagine to begin with. Would that be fair?

Hannah: Yeah, definitely. I mean I couldn't have written that down as one of the objectives at all, it didn't come into my mind. And then we realised that we, yeah, we're sort of on this journey of finding a place. When I say we, I mean me and my partner. Finding a place that works for us and that

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we feel like we can build a community there. So we've moved to Shropshire and it's so beautiful in the hills.

And one of the things that I've been developing is women's circles. And that's been, again, that's been huge because the confidence for me to be able to facilitate something and hold a space that is welcomed, and encouraged, and treating people with respect, and kindness and the values that I was saying before. I've sort of been able to recognise my interpersonal skills. And celebrate them in a way like maybe before I would have just not even allowed myself to see that.

Yeah, so using them to develop a different approach to how I live in a place and hopefully will bring other people together.

Maisie: Yes. Well, it sounds like you already are, yeah. This is why I'm such a stickler for our weekly win threads because I love it, because well, you tell me, what's your experience been like of those threads?

Hannah: I get so excited on a Friday to just sit and read them. And it's one of – I think the community is one of the best things about The Flow Collective. And just feeling this work can be quite lonely sometimes and I think sort of traditionally a lot of self-development stuff you do it on your own. And yeah, just knowing that you have this community of people around you that are going through a similar thing. Or that you can see your stories in what they're doing and what they're developing.

So it's this sort of – I'm going to try and describe this in a different way. But yeah, the community feels like you're all in it together. And that it's like inner work has an edge of being quite lonely because you're experiencing quite a profound transformational growth and change. And I think that shift of identity sometimes can be quite alienating perhaps to the people that you're around. And having the community of others around you at the same time, just seeing that there is so much goodness that comes out of this shift, and growth, and change.

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And it keeps you on track in many ways to be like, each week there is so much to celebrate.

Maisie: And it does, kind of forces you to find things to celebrate. And it's really interesting how many people are like, "I really didn't want to do it." And we don't force people to do it. It's entirely optional. But there are people every week who are like, "Oh, I didn't think I had any wins, this was a real struggle. But they, just like you were saying earlier, when you were talking about seeing the opportunity in something, seeing what you can do. It's like, well, what can I celebrate. And it could be like using the hard day protocol or something like that.

And so it doesn't have to be like 'a huge celebration'. We have plenty of those, but we always talk about we celebrate everything. And we don't kind of quantify it as a big or a little thing.

Hannah: Yeah. And initially I think I was that person. So I don't know what I can celebrate this week. What have I done? And now I love it. I spend time probably every day, I use the notes feature on my phone and tend to spend a bit of time each day now going through wins, which at the beginning of this whole process I honestly did not know how to find or celebrate my wins at all. I didn't know where they were coming from, or what they were, or any of those things.

And now it's almost like everything that I'm observing or doing, it's become a game like trying to find wins and things. And so I think when we were speaking about failure but even shifting how I think about failures into wins and thinking about the feedback and the opportunity that I get to develop from things that I have 'failed at'. Yeah, it's become a very good game.

Maisie: And it's the ripple effect of. Well, first of all there's the impact on you because you have literally trained your brain to do something in a completely different way because before, I would guess, if you're anything like me or like every other human, you look for the things that you haven't done well that could have been done better, that you messed up, that you'd

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completely fell on your face with and not in a kind curious way, in a very judgemental shaming way.

So shifting that to the other side where you're so able to find the wins. And able to celebrate yourself as well because they're different things. You can find wins. But can you also celebrate yourself and let yourself be seen in the celebration and really feel it on a bodily level? What do you think about that?

Hannah: Yeah. I mean the shift of doing that is amazing. And I think like you were saying, sort of changing those pathways but perhaps initially I might have almost beaten myself up about something and like no, didn't do very well at that and here's all the reasons why. Now I'm just kind of like, cool, that didn't go how I expected but that's fine. And here's how I've learnt from it. Here's the things that I might do differently. Here's an example as well of how I can do things and turn up and try it. And that's great.

Yeah, just allowing myself to just be a bit more human and not be so perfectionistic about everything which that's been a big thing of recovering perfectionism. And celebrating for sure, taking time to celebrate where I am with things rather than just move on to the next bit or be like, okay, cool, I've done that. I'm going to drop it and then reach for the next milestone. It's actually taking the time to be with it and acknowledge it and celebrate it. And hopefully do the same for others that I love around me and celebrate them and help them see what they're achieving.

Maisie: Yes. So what's the ripple effect been like? So there's been the effect on you and then is there anything you've noticed in your relationships or your working life, or in setting up the women's circle that you're doing now. What's the outer impact been?

Hannah: It's one of my favourite questions to ask people now actually. And it's become a big thing in my family chat. So I'm sure most families have a family chat with just any messages that are wonderful that go back and forth and occasional memes. But doing the weekly wins with my family has

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been such a nice way to connect with them and hear about what they're celebrating each week. And just really taking the time with them as well.

And yeah, just even with strangers, asking them what they're celebrating and maybe an achievement from their week as a way to start conversation, I think is a really lovely way to lift it up and actually get into a conversation that you can take in a really interesting direction, a really nice one for meeting new people.

Maisie: I'm really struck by how meta this is with your kind of goal of connecting and improving relationships. And now you are in your connection with someone, inviting them to connect with themselves. And in doing so, connect with you. It's beautiful. And it's such a simple straightforward thing.

Hannah: Yeah. And it's sort of seeing how all of the things with The Flow Collective have built on top of each other. I was just thinking about the relationship coaching and people pleasing coaching that we did with Maggie Reyes as one of the guest coaches. And oh gosh, she's amazing. I really love learning from her. And just knowing that kind of feeling of yeah, I'm choosing this. I'm choosing to have this conversation with you. And actually we can get so much more out of this if we're – we want to be in that dialogue.

And that sort of compassion and kindness, I think just through observing the different coaching that we've had from different people and seeing a similar perspective in terms of the approach of what a coach is and how they're going to ask really interesting questions, well crafted questions to get us to think about where we are, what we're doing, how we're going to get that and have that listening and encouragement that comes alongside it. And knowing that we're the ones that have that emancipatory learning experience, it's us, we're doing it.

We're doing the work but we're so guided and so helped. And seeing how a community like The Flow Collective and the coaches that work in The Flow

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Collective, how that works, seeing that modelled in that way basically and then using that in our own existence. And then how we can model that to other people. It's like this ripple effect, this domino effect that it has on a larger collective. And I think this is the kind of work on an individual level. This is the stuff that shifts paradigms without it making, it's what changes things.

As soon as we start taking that responsibility and also start treating ourselves with love and kindness, that's how it works. And I feel like because it's modelled so beautifully in The Flow Collective, and seeing the coaches, the way that they develop their concepts or the slightly different ways of phrasing things. Yeah, it just works.

Maisie: I know. And this is why I'm like whenever our doors are open, I'm like, "Yeah, I'm going to keep sending emails to let people know, this is your chance to join. Because when you see all the celebrations and the shifts happening for people, and often they're shifts that haven't even contemplated being an option. So when you see that happening of course you want that for everyone. And then it's literally my obligation as a businessowner to make sure I am shouting about it from the rooftops and helping people to come in if it's what they want to do, so yeah.

Hannah: And it's such a joy. It's fun. I think there's a lot of – I'm guilty of it I think as well of just sometimes with inner work and self-development, it can be quite heavy and serious, and there's elements of that. There's topics that can be quite, yeah, they're a little bit more difficult to perhaps unpick or emotions that don't feel as easy to sit with. But on the whole, this is really fun and enjoyable, and I actively want to do it. And I want to sit down and watch coaching after work. I want to be involved in this community.

And I think because of that light heartedness and the approach that you and the coaches have, it brings something lighter and allows that kind of playfulness and expansiveness to be there.

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Maisie: And so just for you as well to know, like you were saying, you're uncovering the values that are important to you, respect, and kindness. And for me one of my values is light heartedness and being playful. And so often when we have that clarity on our values, we're able to bring it into our work in a very intentional way. And my perspective is it's that light heartedness, and playfulness, and fun that means we can hold space for the stuff that is heavy and the trauma, and all the other things that often come up on our calls.

But there is this lightness there that enables us all to be vulnerable with those things and to be gentle with ourselves. And yeah, I've never wanted it to be one of those heavy kind of useful but maybe kind of sucks something out of you experiences for people. That's not how the way that we want things to go.

Hannah: Yeah. And I think one of the nicest sort of fun memories of The Flow Collective is just actively lying there and being really excited to spend some time with future me. And almost to a point it was a little bit ridiculous. I'd come home at the end of the day and be like, okay, cool, I'm just going to go and spend some time dreaming about what I want and just being intentional about it.

And like you were saying, once you get clear on those values and the things that you want to do, yeah, just actively just being so excited to spend an hour's worth of time just lying there and visualising what I want my life to be.

Maisie: But so many people don't do that at all. And we see it sometimes in The Flow Collective, asking people what they want, and they don't know. Or that they do know at some level but it's just they're so not used to accessing that or being asked that. So yes, I think that's really key, I love that you do that. Okay, is there anything that has surprised you or have you surprised yourself in any way?

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Hannah: Yeah, that's a good question. I'm surprised in that how much of a shift I've had internally, how I view myself and speak to myself, and the things that we've been going through. And how if I'd had written that down a year ago, I wouldn't have expected it to be so huge in just under a year. I think I would have expected that kind of growth to have taken maybe five to 10 years. Or had a thought that, I'm just surprised in how able I've been to do it. I think there was this idea that changing so much isn't possible.

Within society it's sort of seen maybe that those shifts can't happen, or you can't rewire your brain that quickly, or things like that.

Maisie: Yeah. It's almost like it's not possible, these things take time. It's really hard and I'm sure like you said, there's been things that have been challenging and uncomfortable for you.

Hannah: Yeah. And I think that's a really key one of being like, actually it doesn't have to be hard. And it doesn't have to be complicated. And that you can decide to step into it. That's been, yeah, just deciding.

Maisie: I love that because it literally is a decision. Yes, exactly, it's literally a decision that you make.

Hannah: Yeah, that's been a key thing, if I was to reflect a year ago, I wouldn't have been able to believe you that you could say you can decide to do, or be, or think something. I would have been like, "No, Maisie, it's far more complicated than that. It has to be. And it has to be really difficult, really hard work." And now I catch myself if I'm thinking, but it's so hard. I'm like, "But why is it, is it hard? Am I just telling myself that?" And I'm just noticing how different I can approach things by choosing if I'm just making it more complicated than it needs to be.

Maisie: It's so much more fun to go through life like this, isn't it?

Hannah: Yeah, definitely. Yeah, what an aha moment, a light bulb moment when I've just figured out that I'm allowed to just decide things, so simple.

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Maisie: I love that.

Hannah: It's so simple and it's been huge.

Maisie: Yeah. Well, this is why we're spending all the time in what, well, a couple of weeks after we record this, in the autumn workshop, spending time on decision. Because there are things involved, biological, emotional, mindset factors, societal factors as well that come into play. But I think once you understand that and you know why, and you can spot those responses and patterns in yourself, then you can start actually making decisions. And I'd love to hear what your experience has been like of once you start making the decisions, what's that process been like?

So going from kind of not thinking, I don't know how you might put it, but kind of being on one side of it and then starting to do it, and then where you are now.

Hannah: Yeah, this is making me laugh because I actually, I think I went to Ask a Coach three times about making the right decision about my spring goal. And how I had all these different decisions, and I didn't know which was the right one. And then being coached on whatever I choose is the right one and to accept that. And then working through that process of actually realising that there's no wrong decision, I get to choose.

And then all of the stuff that comes up regardless because that's the thing I hadn't quite realised, that each pathway of a decision, it brings up things that you're going to have to face either way.

Maisie: There's no getting away from it.

Hannah: Yeah. There's, well, you could do all of them and it still, yeah, just actually realising that it's a process. It's a way that you work with yourself and the resistance that you have for certain things will always come up and always be there with any decision, or any goal, or anything that you set yourself to be doing. You're going to encounter probably quite a similar

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thought pattern for each one because there are going to be internal thoughts that need to be looked at and actually picked apart.

Why is it there? What is it trying to keep me safe from? Why is that self-doubt tripping me up on this certain thing that I want to do? And actually it's nothing about the decision, it's all about the thought work that goes into getting to that place. And yeah, the amount of times, I was like, "I don't know if this is the right one, or if I should work on this, or if I should do an external goal, or internal goal, or whether I should do something", anyway, yeah.

Maisie: This is why we're doing it because I was like, okay, let's spend some time on decisions because then it's there as a resource that everyone always gets to come back to any time that they need it.

Hannah: Yeah, and what an amazing thing to learn, yeah, it's been so helpful in everything, in work, in life, in even just deciding what I want to eat, yeah, makes such a difference.

Maisie: Yes, completely. I was actually writing an email the other day that was exactly about the process of deciding what to eat when you go out for dinner and how that used to be my experience. I would always be the person who's like, "You all order first." And then frantically try and figure out what I wanted to eat whereas now I can look at a menu and go, "That's what I'm having." And make that choice very quickly.

Hannah: Yeah. And I think it's just self-trust really, isn't it? It's building self-trust.

Maisie: Yes. So I'm curious now that you've had this experience and these shifts, and it really sounds like a self-concept shift for you as well and how you see yourself. And I know you're shifting how you work and doing the women's circles and things. Well, first of all, let people know, for anyone who wants to come along, how shall they out about your women's circles and taking part?

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Hannah: So I have it on Eventbrite and the next one's going to be on the 23rd, which is a Friday and it's the autumn equinox so that's the reason why we're doing it then, just to kind of check-in and balance ourselves out with the light and the darkness. And we are based in Bishop's Castle which is in Shropshire. So if anyone wants to come along. It's at a beautiful venue called The Poetry Pharmacy which is a bookshop.

And their whole concept is around dispensing literature that can help, yeah, with different things that people are going through. So it's a really lovely concept that fits with the circle, so yeah.

Maisie: That sounds amazing. Can we add a link in the show notes for anyone who is local and wants to come along? Wonderful.

Hannah: Thank you.

Maisie: And is there anything else? What's next for you or is there anything else that you want to add?

Hannah: I'm just so excited to see how this journey will play out because I think probably shouldn't say this to you, Maisie, because you're the one that created it. But when I first signed up, I was like, "Yeah, I'll probably do it for a month and just see what it's like." Just be like, "Well, yeah. I'll try it for a month and then maybe quit." And then I can't believe that it's nearly been a year and I'm still so invested and I'm so happy to be part of this community and so willing to just keep doing the work and see how that continues to help, and develop, and build myself.

And I'm so proud of myself and everyone in this community and the work that you've done, and the coaches do. And I can't sing your praises enough. The amount of women that I come across, I'm like, "Firstly, have you read this book? Also you should join The Flow Collective." And yeah, just being able to share, it's so exciting.

Maisie: Well, I love that you've acknowledged yourself in that because it is an ongoing decision to stay invested in something and to keep showing up.

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And that doesn't mean it has to always be at the same level. We want to work with our own rhythm and what feels good. And it would have been fine also if you came along and had a month and went, "Okay, that's it." And I'm always absolutely fine with people doing it. It's always whatever feels good to you. If it's useful, if you're into it, if it's getting you the results that you want for yourself then I'd love it if you stayed.

But I also know that often we can teach people stuff and once you've got it there's no going back. Once you have these tools and you're building these skills, you're not going to go back to the previous way of doing things.

Hannah: Yeah, exactly, it's completely changed the way I approach everything in life which, yeah, what a gift.

Maisie: Yes. Because that's been my experience as well and that's why I teach all these things, because I've used them myself. And everything has shifted in my life and my life was pretty good before. It wasn't like I was in the horrors with anything. It was pretty good but also things can be good externally, but your internal world can still feel tricky to navigate, there can be emotions that feel intense, and scary, and big and you don't know what to do with.

You can be having nervous system responses that you don't even know you're having because no one's been able to name that for you. So you don't have that lens in which to look things through. And for me just all of that has just reduced so much of that internal criticism and all the judgement and things that comes along with it. And that's what I want for all of you.

Hannah: Even when you're just saying that I could feel how calming it is and how it just is sort of coming back to ourselves and yeah, being kind to ourselves.

Maisie: That's what it is, it is, it's just a process of coming back to yourself, being kind to yourself and using the things that are supportive and useful.

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Hannah: And then with that, taking on the world.

Maisie: Yes, I'm all for that. Amazing. Well, thank you so much, Hannah, for coming on and having this conversation. I feel like there's just been so many incredible nuggets for everyone listening to take away, lots of powerful thoughts you've offered. Feel free to steal, I'm sure you won't mind, steal Hannah's amazing thoughts. You can always go through the transcript. And also just so inspiring for people to hear what your experience has been like.

Hannah: Thank you. It's been so nice to be able to share it and reflect on this year and yeah, keep going with it, so thank you.

Maisie: You're welcome. Okay, so everyone head to the show notes, and you can find out about Hannah's women's circle and go along if you're in the local area. It sounds incredible. I wish you were closer to me so I could come along. And the doors to The Flow Collective are going to be opening very soon. So keep an eye on your inbox or get on the waitlist. What would you say to anyone who was on the fence about joining? Because you were on the fence it sounds like for a while.

Hannah: Yeah, just do it. Just go for it. I mean honestly, yeah, there's so many – it's like superpowers that you will learn, you have to try it.

Maisie: Okay, amazing. Alright, thank you so much, Hannah. We'll be back next week everyone, have a great week.

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.