

Ep #96: What Nourishes You



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

Period Power with Maisie Hill

Ep #96: What Nourishes You

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.

My lovelies, we are getting close to 100 episodes. Can you believe it? It feels pretty epic for me. And I wanted to give you a heads up that at some point soon, I'm not sure when, I'm going to be renaming the podcast. I've been talking about this over on my Instagram stories and getting loads of great suggestions from all of you. So, thank you for weighing in. And I'm still very much open to suggestions.

And I never actually wanted to call the podcast, Period Power. But I was struggling to come up with a name. And the lack of a name was becoming the thing that was holding me back from just launching the podcast. And I just, I didn't want that to be the thing. For me that's just a silly reason to not do something. And I just thought, what the hell, let's just make it easy, we'll go with Period Power and just get going with it. And get the episodes out there. I didn't want to invest any more time or energy in thinking about a name.

I just really wanted to create the actual podcasts and get them out to you. So all along throughout these almost 100 episodes, the name's never sat great with me. Recently one of my one-on-one clients you know who you are, hello. She sent me this hilarious text which said – I can't remember her words exactly, but it was something along the lines of, "I know this is an unsolicited opinion, but the name of your podcast is such a disservice to what the podcast actually is, and it doesn't feel like a great match."

And she was completely correct in that because if you've been around here for a while, you'll know there I touch on the influence of hormones and the cycle but it's by no means the focus of the podcast. And my work is always going to be cycling informed. I'll always kind of bring that in but I have zero

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interest in exploring symptoms and conditions. And I know that some of you would love it if I did, but I don't want to. I literally put everything I could into my books about that. So the information is already out there for you to access. So for me that feels complete.

And I if I did podcasts about those topics, it would just feel like I'm reading my books out loud. And I already did that for the audiobooks. So the name needs to change to reflect the actual content of the podcast. So it was very helpful for me to get that text message because this had been on my mind and I was already thinking, okay, it's time to sort the podcast name out. Then that text that I received was the final thing I needed to be like, "Okay, we've got to sort this out now. It's time for a change."

But as I said, I still don't have a name. So if you're a regular listener, or even if you've just literally discovered the podcast and you have an idea, please feel free to share it with me. Okay, so that's going to be coming up at some point soon. And I want to talk to you today about nourishment, needs and thriving because when this episode comes out it'll be nourishment week in The Flow Collective. So nourishment is one of our four pillars during the reset month that we're doing.

And I know that some of you are maybe getting a bit excited because I've had this request a lot that I'm going to talk about food, and what to eat in each phase of the cycle. I get a lot of requests to talk about that but that's not what this episode is about. It's not something I want to explore and I'm unlikely to ever explore on the podcast.

Because when I think about nourishment, of course that relates to food, but for me it's so much more than the food we eat. It's how we eat as in the physical process of eating and the environment in which we actually eat. And that can relate to our internal environment at the time we're actually eating for example. Think about if you eat when you're feeling anxious or overwhelmed. It's likely to be a very different experience than if you're feeling safe, and regulated, and connected.

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This also relates to your external environment too because that's going to influence your internal state. So a prime example for my life of this is that eating with other people when I'm in a part of my cycle where my hormones have dipped down or if I'm feeling a bit dysregulated it's just a no. I'm not going to eat with other people because the sensory experience of hearing other people eat is awful for me. And it just leads to a level of tension in my body that is not conducive to eating and digesting.

And I think I've said this before, maybe not on the podcast actually, but I can have quite slow audio processing and different audio sources like someone who's talking whilst the kettle's boiling or talking to me whilst there's a radio or TV on. That's the kind of thing that completely messes with my brain. And I'm also just very sensitive to noises across the board, and probably the kind of noises that I imagine a lot of people are able to filter out. But one thing that's literally painful to me is the sound of other people eating.

And growing up I didn't understand that that was a thing. So it's called misophonia and I had no idea I was going to go off on this tangent today but here we are. And I know this kind of thing is helpful so let's just go down this rabbit hole. If you haven't heard of misophonia, I've just looked up the definition for you and here it is. People with misophonia are affected emotionally by common sounds, usually those made by others, and usually ones that other people don't pay attention to.

The examples they gave are breathing, yawning, chewing, they create a fight or flight response that triggers anger and a desire to escape. That's a really good description, certainly that reflects my experience. And it's a big deal. It has a huge impact on day-to-day life. Thankfully I know lots of tools that support me. And by the way this for me is one of the characteristics of my autism. But growing up I had no idea I was autistic. I had no idea that I had misophonia or that it even existed.

So at mealtimes it would feel excruciating for me to sit there and hear other people eating and I would just feel trapped in the experience. And this is even if it was a calm kitchen, there's no issues or arguments going on. And

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if you add in any tension in the home, in family relationships and dynamics which there's always going to be because that's what families are. And this would just dial way the fuck up. So I would just be there feeling very trapped, experiencing so much emotion that I had no idea what to do with because nobody taught me that.

And experiencing a deep need to run away to just get away but I didn't know that was my nervous system. I didn't know how to deal with it, nobody else knew what was going on either because I didn't know how to communicate that. And I would use not so great coping mechanisms because I felt so frustrated, and angry, and had all this pent-up fight or flight energy in me. And these days I know what's going on and I know why it's going on. And I have multiple ways of taking care of myself and regulating myself.

But also, I'm just not going to put myself in situations where I have to use them. Why would I do that to myself? And a lot of the time I enjoy eating with my family and I'm able to. But if I'm feeling dysregulated or I'm at one of the points in my cycle where noises really affect me, I am intentional and unapologetic about my need to eat separately. So I either eat somewhere else in the house or I eat before or after my family. And it's just, it's not a big deal to me to do that, I don't think it is to them either. And I think it's just an incredibly loving thing to do.

So that's a great tangent and an example of one thing that can impact nourishment that comes via food and the experience of eating with other people. And you'll probably have things too. So it might not be that, but it might be using your phone whilst you're eating, that's going to have an impact. Or maybe watching the person you're sat down to eat with using their phone. That might be a huge trigger for your nervous system, actually for your brain as well in terms of, it can be your thoughts about it.

But your nervous system can also interpret it as biological rudeness. There's a moment of connection it's being missed and someone's opting to look at their phone instead. It can be other things as well, not always phones. So it can be technology related, it can be rushing to eat because

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you either don't have much time for the meal or because you've rushed to get there on time. And then you sit down to eat, or maybe you're worrying and ruminating on things whilst you're eating, that's a huge thing in Chinese medicine.

So, so far, I've mentioned this all still in relation to the nourishment that comes from meals. But I still think about it in an even broader sense that has nothing to do with food. Nourishment that comes from being in community and feeling a sense of belonging. That there is so much research about this, the importance of being in community. It's why we have a community in The Flow Collective because community is important. And so many people don't have community. So community is important.

We can think about the nourishment that comes from time alone because that's also important. That can be very nourishing. Think about endeavours that are meaningful to you and nourishment that comes from rest. Nourishment that comes from hard work. I think we're so used to thinking about hard work is depleting, all these things and it can be that for sure. But also hard work can be incredibly nourishing. I love hard work; it's so nourishing to me. We can get nourishment from switching off, nourishment that comes from engaging and challenging your brain.

Nourishment that comes from physical contact and intimacy, whether that's a hug, a massage, or holding hands. The nourishment that comes from being seen and heard from being witnessed. The nourishment that comes from feeling held and that can be physical holding, like I said, that closeness but it can also come from being held by others.

And I have this experience a lot, with people who I've never actually even met in person but they're my closest friends and we talk all the time. And I've never met them yet. Some of them I have met, and we've had a couple of examples and times when we've connected face-to-face. But most of those, my closest friendships are based on phone calls and voice notes via the internet. So I feel held by those friendships and held from the communities that I'm a part of.

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We can also get nourishment from having space, from connection to yourself, connection to others, connection to purpose in life, whatever you take that to mean. Because we all have needs, and wants, and desires and those things aren't fixed because you're not a robot, you're human being, a dynamic human being with cycles. And I don't just mean menstrual cycles because you'll go through seasons of life where there are certain things that are important to you and things that are supportive and enjoyable.

And then there's the influence of the seasons of the year, your cycle if you have one, and the seasons across your lifecycle, not to mention just what goes on in a 24-hour period and anything else that we can bring in. Because there's other cycles like the ones in Chinese medicine, and also in astrology and the lunar cycle.

And today I want to share something that I taught in the Unlock the Power of Autumn workshop that I did inside the membership recently. Because a while back I was thinking about the webinars in The Flow Collective that are about Chinese medicine and how in them I kind of talk about some of the concepts in Chinese medicine in relation to houseplants. So if the soil is dry in a houseplant it needs to be nourished and moistened. If it's waterlogged, it needs to be dried out. If it's getting too much heat from the sun then we need to cool it down, moving it into the shade, things along those lines.

And I was kind of mulling this over in my brain and just thinking about how when a houseplant is struggling or it's just not thriving or growing particularly well, we don't make it mean anything about the plant. You might make it mean things about you and your ability to take care of plants but that's a different thing. So some plants do well in partial shade, others morning sun, some love to be misted. Others you water from underneath. Recently I learned that the fiddle-leaf fig, you shake it, I love Instagram tips like that.

And you are just like a houseplant, there are conditions in which you don't do well. And there are conditions in which you thrive. It's that simple. As I said, these conditions may change depending on what's going on with you,

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where you are in whatever cycle or season is influencing you. And it was so fun to talk about this with the members. And the question that I asked them that I'm now going to ask you is, if you were a houseplant what would your label say?

So you know how when you go to buy a plant, there's usually a bit of plastic stuck in the soil with the of the most important instructions on how to care for that plant and what its light, water, nourishment requirements are. So what would yours say? So I asked this to everyone in the workshop and everyone jumped in and started sharing what theirs would say and their examples were just so relatable. And I was cracking up at what they were coming up with because they were just so good.

So I'm going to share some anonymous examples of what the members came up with. Because I know when I did this with the Hard Day Protocols episode it really brought to life for you and gave you some examples. So I want to do the same thing here. But I'm going to go first. So here's what mine would say.

Needs to be fed to regularly, needs lots of space, needs direct sunlight. I've spoken before about how I get light thirsty. We recently switched our curtains to some blackout curtains which was great when the sun was coming up at four/five in the morning over the summer. And it's definitely better for retaining heat in the house now that it's getting colder. But I'm really struggling with how there's no light in the room in the morning.

It's like a continual battle between Paul and I, with me trying to open up the curtains just a little bit in places to let some light in. And him being annoyed that kind of people, not that I think anyone's out there, but people might be able to see into our bedroom before we're kind of dressed and ready for the day. So I'm sure there's practical options to resolve this ongoing battle. But I just love, I need light.

I mean there's so much research now on the benefits of exposure to morning light in terms of your metabolism, your hormones, your energy and focus in the day that impacts on sleep that evening. I mean if you can get

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exposure to sunlight, daylight even when it's cloudy and ideally not through a window, get yourself out there. That's going to make a huge difference. So I'm really, I love light, it's very important to me. So that's what my label would say.

It would also say time alone is essential but likes to be outside in the summer with other plants. Because when it's the summer season of the year, or of my cycle, I'm definitely, you know, and I'm learning more about astrology as well. Yeah, there's definitely times when I want to be with other people. Stick me outside, I want to be with other people, but it's a moment in time. It's not an ongoing need for me. And I'm best left to sprawl.

You know how some houseplants, they just, like vines and things just give them an opportunity to sprawl and they'll do their thing that's what I'm like. Give me an opportunity to lie down and sprawl, and that's when I think I'm so creative and come up with great ideas.

Now, my partner, Paul, he would have a different label sticking in his soil. So this is my best guess at some of the things that his would say. Enjoys lots of opportunities to socialise, loves a chat, needs to move on a regular basis. They're the kind of things that kind of bring him to life and he really thrives in those conditions. So he and I are different. So we both need time socialising and we both need time alone. But the ratio of those things, we're basically the opposite of each other.

And that's just who we are and who we are at this point in our lives. And there's of course going to be variation according to what's going on in our lives, my cycle, our nervous systems, the lifecycle, the lunar cycle etc. But we just have different requirements. Can you see how awful it would be for me with my requirements to think that I should be like him with his requirements? But this is what we do. We think, I should be like this person who can do this and is like this. No, they're just a different plant. They have different needs.

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It doesn't mean that if there's things that you want for your life that those things can't be changed and addressed, they absolutely can. But you're judging yourself because your label is different to someone else's. Okay, I'm going to give you some anonymous examples from my clients from the workshop.

Does best with some time on her own after spending time with others. Needs a lot of sun, green around her and silence. Best in isolation. Does best with exercise. Does best with lots of rest and play. Likes not to be rushed but has a tendency to rush herself. That's an interesting one, isn't it? Pretty common experience I'd say. And with something like that you could think about, well, what are your needs? If you do have a tendency to rush yourself, what are the things that would support you in not rushing yourself? And you could add that to your label.

Requires cuddles, canine and otherwise. And this one just cracks me up and I'm going to tell you who it is afterwards. If you know this person, then you'll probably guess. Does best in the hot sun with rum cocktails, alternatively does well with red wine, water optional. Yes, that is the fabulous Mars Lord. That's what her requirements are.

Okay my loves, that is it for today. What would you have on your label? Really think about that. What are the conditions that you thrive and grow in? And what would nourish your soil? What environment would you do best in? Because whilst we always have the option of managing our minds through thought work and tending to our nervous systems, we don't want to use those things against ourselves in order to stay in environments and situations that aren't good for us and we're just not thriving in.

Okay, have a fantastic nourishment week. And if you are not in The Flow Collective, consider how you can do this for yourself anyway. What would nourish you? I'm sure you have a good sense of what that is and then make it happen. Okay, that is it for this week, I'll be back next time.

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