

40. Shifting Seasons



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With Your Host

Maisie Hill

Period Power with Maisie Hill

40. Shifting Seasons

If you are in the horrors with menstrual cycle issues or you want to learn how to harness your hormones then you are in the right place.

Welcome to the *Period Power* podcast. I'm your host Maisie Hill menstrual health expert, acupuncturist, certified life coach and author of *Period Power*. I'm on a mission to help you get your cycle working for you so that you can use it to get what you want out of life. Are you ready? Let's go.

Hi lovelies, what's going on? How are you? Seriously, how are you? That's going to be basically the essence of today's episode because it is currently the start of September when I'm recording this which means that the autumn equinox is coming up in a few weeks' time. And of course if you're in the southern hemisphere it'll be the spring equinox. But wherever you are in the world there is definitely a seasonal shift going on right now.

In fact I have just checked, and the equinox is on the 22nd of September this year which with perfect timing will actually be when this episode comes out. Perfect. So today is all about shifting seasons both in relation to the seasons of the year and of course the seasons of your cycle. So as a reminder, your inner winter is the time of your period roughly speaking. Pre ovulation is your spring and once your hormones are close to peaking in the run up to ovulation you'll usually find yourself in your summer.

And then the premenstrual phase is your inner autumn. And this seasonal approach to the cycle was taught to me by Alexandra and Sjanie from Red School, incredible women who pioneered this approach. I know many of you have read their book, *Wild Power* which is amazing. The thing to remember with the seasons is that they aren't these distinct lengths of time. It all comes down to your experience of your cycle. Some people will enter their winter days before they actually start bleeding, for others it will be hours before they start or even as they start to bleed.

Some people will land in their autumn as soon as they ovulate. And for others it'll be a week before their period is due. So there's a lot of variation here depending on your experience and your experience of your seasons

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will probably also change as you move throughout your life. So there isn't a right way, that's what I want to kind of drive home here, there isn't a right way, there aren't right times. It's just your experience. And the best way to get to know that is to track your cycle of course.

So if you go to my website maisiehill.com you can sign up for the free cycle tracking guide there and get started with tracking yours today. There will be a link in the show notes as well to guide you to that. And also, it's like I'm [inaudible], there's also a worksheet that I've created for you that accompanies this episode in particular.

And you can get that in the show notes or if you just go to maisiehill.com/40, I'm pretty sure this is going to be episode 40 as in the number 40, so maisiehill.com/four zero. Because each episode I do actually has its own page on my website with any relevant links as well as the transcripts of the episode. So just go ahead and download that worksheet.

You can print it out or you can fill it in on a screen, it's up to you. My thought is that it's better to use it than not to use it at all, but I do think there's something about writing your responses with a pen compared to typing them. I personally find that more beneficial but it's really about what your body is able to do and what you have access to in terms of computers and printers.

Now, let's explore what you've been experiencing this month. So we're back to the how are you question. How have you been feeling physically? Have you been feeling energised, tired, are you moving slower or are you still going at the same momentum as the height of summer? And does that feel good to you or not? Maybe you have even more momentum, who knows. There's all sorts of experiences here, so it's just about taking stock of how you've been feeling physically.

And how does your body feel? Does it feel heavy? Does it feel light? Does it feel tight? Or does it feel open and relaxed, or soft maybe? And how

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about your mental and emotional health, what emotions are you feeling the most at the moment? Are there some kind of dominant emotions that you're prone to feeling right now? And what direction is your brain going in? What paths is your brain taking you down? What thought patterns are coming up for you?

And by the way, our aim here with taking stock of these things isn't to change anything. And we don't have to judge our answers to these questions. We're just taking stock. We're just noticing and bringing awareness. And you definitely don't have to leap into doing things, resist that urge to jump into action, just sit with what's going on.

I have been feeling a sense of urgency this week. My son just went back to school, and I noticed this urgency bubble up within me, this urge to rush and get back to it. And it's not like thinking I have to get back to it ever felt good. I can't think of a time where I've thought I've got to get back to it and that's felt delightful to me. But I was feeling this urge to rush, and I noticed I was kind of putting pressure on myself. And I think it's this kind of back to school mentality. Okay, back to school, time to be serious.

And I don't think the weather's helped that. It's kind of feeling in Margate at least that summer's over. I have hopes for an Indian summer this month and in October, but I have already heard people talking about putting the heating on. So maybe we're done for the year with summer. But I noticed this kind of light nervous system activation system going on, this light stress response kind of creating this energy, this urgency, which felt completely out of alignment with actually where my body is at.

And I know they're just different parts of my body. But my body is moving slower at the moment, personal training feels different, it feels a bit tougher, a bit harder. I did have a break from it in August but it's more than that. My body is shifting seasons. My body is asking to be treated differently. So moving slower, giving myself more time, having some empty space in the day. And that can literally just be five minutes before an appointment or

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giving yourself a bit of extra time for a journey. So don't go telling me it's not possible for you, it is.

But I'm doing simple things like filling the car up with petrol at the weekends so that nobody has to scramble and squeeze that into the week when we're trying to get somewhere. Giving myself an extra 10 minutes to get my son out of the house, which is challenging. And just to have some extra time for that walking to school. And I'm also noticing that I'm feeling a deep need to edit.

So currently I'm not in the autumn phase of my cycle which is where we typically see the need to organise, and sort, and edit. And that can literally be sorting your possessions out or sorting your inbox out. Or it can be about making decisions about your work and projects you're working on, your relationships. And tending to your life with this editing vibe. But for me it's not about my cycle right now, it is about the changing season of the year. And for you it might be both, when this episode comes out it might be, yeah, we're officially in autumn.

And you might also be in the autumn phase of your cycle. So you might have those two energies coming together in a really strong way. But as I look around, the leaves are starting to turn, we've had the last of the blackberries from our garden, and I mean I have to say that makes my garden sound like this really pretty, lovely English garden. It's really I would say more wildlife friendly, just to paint an accurate picture of what you're coming up with in your mind potentially. There's quite a lot of weeds, all of the buzzing creatures, all the bees and flies absolutely love.

And one day we will sort our garden out, but it hasn't been a priority the last couple of years. But we have blackberries, I did finally realise that we have blackberries growing after me actually thinking they were weeds and being the one thing that I was trimming down every year. Finally I just let it grow because of the pandemic and now we have blackberries. But they're done now.

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And I'm also going through my clothing, and my stuff, and my books, and taking things to the charity shop. Actually it's not me taking them to the shop, Paul is. I'm really great at putting them in piles next to the front door but it tends to be him that actually takes them out of the house, just to be very honest with you today. And I'm also looking at The Flow Collective and what's going on in my business and organising things there. I just have this need, this desire, this urge to get things shipshape before we head into the lean months of autumn and winter.

And the equinoxes are great times to reflect and make decisions, to reflect on your life and decide what will happen next. What do you want? What do you want to take action on now, right now in September that will carry you through to the next equinox which is in March? It's six months away but it will fly by and trust me. So this is the time to constrain. We're leaving behind the expansive energy of summer, which if you want to equate to the cycle would be around the time of ovulation. And we're heading into these leaner seasons.

So what do you want to take with you? Where do you want to focus your energy and see the fruits of that constraint and those choices when we roll around into the spring and the summer next year or in your next cycle if that's how you want to work with what I'm sharing today?

So I made some decisions in August that I've been sitting with. I haven't taken any action. I've just been sitting with those decisions and coaching myself on them and just letting them integrate with me physically. And I've explored them, I've got onboard with them, really got onboard with them. And this month, this September will be when I start to implement them and actually take action. And a few years ago these decisions would have terrified me. I don't think I would have even have made them, even have considered them as an option for me, much less implement them.

But I've made these decisions and they feel fucking great. And they will have huge consequences for the next six months of my life. I feel such relief at making them and for taking full responsibility for my life. And I

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spoke about this recently in the responsibility series that I did over the summer about how we think that being a 100% responsible will feel awful, so that's why we avoid doing it. But it actually feels great.

And this is a great time of year to get clear about what you want for the next six months. We're already losing light and transitioning into autumn, then it'll be winter, it'll be the shortest day at the winter solstice, then all the way around to the spring equinox in March. So the decisions that you make now, the focus you bring into your life, the stuff you leave behind and say goodbye to, the constrained action and effort you take will be what you see the impact of next spring and summer.

It's time to do some life pruning and decide where you'll put your resources, whether it's your time, your energy, your money, your attention, and particularly so if you're finding that your energy is shifting with the seasons and it is slowing, if you're moving more internally and all this happens with the cycle too. So you can apply it to your cycle, you can apply it to the seasons of the year or both. But don't spend these next six months in indecision, and confusion, and changing your mind back and forth.

Focus on what you want for yourself, what you want for your life and what your body needs. And that's why I made the worksheet for you. If you take – I don't know – 10 minutes to answer the questions, longer if you want to, it'll help you to do everything that I've mentioned today. So just head to the show notes or [maisiehill.com/four zero, 40](https://maisiehill.com/four-zero-40). And I'll probably put a link up on my Instagram profile too. So you've got multiple ways in which you can find it. No excuses. But I would love for you to make use of that worksheet, it's free and my gift to you to help you prepare for the shift in seasons.

At the very least take a moment now to notice where you're at. How do you feel physically? How do you feel emotionally? What is the one thing that is going to support you the most this month as you shift seasons over the equinox? Or for your cycle, you can ask yourself the same question each time you transition in a cycle.

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And in fact this is what we do inside The Flow Collective every Sunday. I ask the members some questions, give them an opportunity to take stock of where they are in their cycle, the lunar cycle, if they're not cycling. And to state very simply what will help them most in the upcoming week. It's been fascinating to see the results of that and how that has shifted things for people. So what will support you the most? Find one thing, keep it simple, it works out much better. Do one thing and do it well.

I had this conversation with Paul the other day and I was saying how now is such a great time to consider how we are going to care for ourselves, for our health now that we're approaching autumn and heading into the winter. And I decided I want to improve my sleep because I've been feeling a bit tired. And I can't do much about my son feeling lonely in the night. We are pack mammals after all and in terms of our evolutionary history as pack mammals we're used to sleeping together, sleeping together in groups, that's what we have done through our history.

So I can't control, maybe that's what he wants but I can control my screen use in the evening. And that impacts my ability to fall asleep, to get good quality sleep and to feel alert in the mornings. So that's what I picked as my one thing because my screen use has crept up over the summer. So I downloaded this app which blocks apps and notifications. And I've set it so that it comes into effect at 8:00pm in the evening and it turns off at 8:00am in the morning.

And I've also been using it during blocks of time during the day when I want to really focus on my work and not have the temptation to look at my phone or be distracted. Or if I want to be present and hanging out with my family. And I will tell you the name of it by the way. It's called Opal, I'm pretty sure. I'm not an affiliate for them. It is a yearly fee. But I can tell you it's been well worth the investment for me already. And I'm only a few days into using it. So that's what I'm working on, that's how I'm going about it.

So once you find your one thing, whatever it is, you really want to sell yourself on why you want to do this. And by that I mean find your why.

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Convince yourself of why this is the thing that you're going to do, why it's important. And I ask the folks in The Flow Collective to do this a lot, to sell themselves on why because it impacts how you show up for yourself or how you don't show up for yourself. But I also teach them how to do that with compassion instead of beating themselves up and approaching it through a restriction.

And on that note, I do want to mention we have been getting a lot of messages, so many messages about when enrolment will be open again to join The Flow Collective. I had actually planned on doing that now at the start of September. But in line with everything that I've shared with you today, I decided to give myself and give my team some space at the end of summer so that we can tend to ourselves and also tend to our current members.

So the best thing that you can do if you do want to join is sign up to the wait list via my website or my Instagram profile so that we can let you know when the doors do open. Okay, so you've taken a moment to assess where you're at, you've decided what one thing will support you at the moment. You've also sold yourself on why it's important to do this.

But another way to think about this, particularly when it comes to the seasons of the cycle is to bring awareness to what's shifting internally for you. And what might need to change in your external world in order to support that internal shift. How can you alter and influence your external world to be a better match for your internal world?

Okay, that's it for today my lovelies. Make sure you download that free worksheet that accompanies the episode and answer the questions, it'll be worth it. And I hope this equinox is a fantastic one for you. It's a powerful time of year to take stock, so I encourage you to do just that in whatever way feels good to you. I'll catch you next week.

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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.