

50. The People of Influence Series: Vikki Louise



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 excited to be continuing the person of – I think it's people of influence, not person of influence, people of influence series with my very good friend, colleague, amazing woman, Vikki Louise who is a feminist time coach and a good friend of mine. So of course I had to get her on the podcast to talk about all the ways that she has influenced me and vice versa. So, welcome Vikki.

Vikki: Thank you. Thanks for having me. So happy to be here.

Maisie: Yeah. So I think it's helpful to give people context on how we know each other. And I knew of you, I'm pretty sure, before you knew of me. And I don't know if you even know this.

Vikki: I'm ready for it.

Maisie: But I stalked you for quite a while before we ever had any contact together because we have the same business coach, Stacey Boehman. And I was checking out her mastermind. And I was already sold on doing it. I really wanted to do it. I really loved her podcast etc, etc. But it was a big investment for me and quite a scary one initially. But I was an internal yes, but I thought I'm just going to check out the other people who take part in this. So I was combing my way through her social media, finding all the people who have attended the events.

And most people were Americans, not everyone but a lot of people, especially at that time were Americans. And then I found you. And I was like, oh my God, there's someone British who takes part in this mastermind. So then I started following you and your work and then we got in contact

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over Instagram because I said I was going to be taking part. And because COVID had happened, because originally, I think we were going to be doing it in New York.

So I thought, I'm going to meet everyone in New York. And then we found out, okay, that's not happening. We're going to be doing this as a virtual event and experience. And that's when we started talking because we were like, "Are you going to be at home doing it? Are you going to go and stay somewhere else?" That kind of thing. And that's where we started chatting to each other.

Vikki: Yes, I remember. I was like, "Maybe I'll come to England, and we'll get a hotel." And then obviously at the time it was like I couldn't even travel to England.

Maisie: Yeah. And then I remember the first time we spoke.

Vikki: So that's one of my things.

Maisie: Is it? Okay, do you want to start with that then?

Vikki: So I remember the first time we spoke on the phone, and it was around the time of the mastermind, it was during it. And I was in France. And you said, "Can I call", or whatever and we spoke. And it was just a really good conversation. And I think, well, this is one of the things I admire about you is I feel you will create relationships that you want. You are not shy to be like, "Hi, let's talk." Or even message on Instagram, "Hi, you're in this mastermind." That you didn't just stalk. You decided that you wanted to build a relationship and you did it.

And the reason this is such a big deal for me, so I mean we've been – I consider you one of my closest friends and we've never met in person. And that's been a particularly big deal for me the last 18 months as you know I've been in France and away from community and don't speak the language and all of this stuff and experiencing loneliness. And my business before coaching, I don't know if you know this was to solve loneliness and it

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was all about in person events. And I've spent years in my head in the belief that real friendships happen in person, really believing it.

And you have taught me that it's just not true. And I can get it in theory and understand that our thoughts creates our results. But this was something for me, I love being with people. And I think – I keep saying I think, but I know I really respected how you opened up that relationship and continued to. And now I'm so lucky and so grateful and have received so much benefit, not just from having my eyes opened to the possibilities of relationships outside of in person, but also for actually having your friendship.

And I think it's just such a strong powerful thing to do, to put yourself in front of people and in front of friends. And I can tell you from when I worked in that industry, it's so difficult as older women to really build friendships. It's one of the things that I heard so often over and over again. So I think it's something you are phenomenal at. And I think it's something that I'm so grateful to have been on the receiving end of. So I really thank you for that.

Maisie: You're welcome. I'm very amused by this. I just need a moment to let that sink in. Because phone calls are such a big deal for me. And I was sharing this on my Instagram stories recently. And this is quite a common trait in people who are autistic, that it can take a lot to do things that are probably straightforward to a lot of people. And so if I am ordering a takeaway, firstly I will try to get out of it and I'll try to text Paul or get him to do it, or I will order it online, all of these other things.

And if I do need to make the phone call then I'll usually script it and I'll write down what I need to say. And then I need to kind of self-coach myself a bit to actually make the phone call. And then I'm going it through all whilst I'm on the phone. I had to do this yesterday. And if there had been a video camera on me it would have been just so hilarious to watch. And I say that because I'm very up for laughing at myself even though this is a very kind of serious thing.

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But I remember that first phone call because I was walking around London. And I had been really thinking, okay, this is a virtual experience. But I want to feel connected to the other people taking part. And how can I take full responsibility for that myself without putting it on anyone else? And I thought, well, I'm going to reach out to you because most other people taking part were still asleep because it was morning in the UK and in Europe. Okay, everyone else was asleep and I'm there like, there's stuff I want to talk about. I want to reach out to someone.

So we spoke and I think we actually spoke several times during those three days basically. And the first way that you really influenced me is I was telling you about something that I had been doing with one of my clients from the membership who had been going through something really tough. And they were kind of right in the middle of it. And I had reached out to them and said, "Do you want to hop on the phone and talk this over?" And one-on-one support was not a feature of the membership, and it isn't.

But I just felt, okay, I've gone through the thing that you're going through and I know the value of support at this time. And I feel able to offer that to you. So I did. And I was just sharing that with you. You had said, "It's amazing that you are able to give her that support. And she must be so thankful to have that. And wouldn't it be amazing if every woman had that when they were going through something like this?"

And then you said, so that was the first half of the sentence. And then you went, "And how could you leverage that same amount of time to support her and anyone else who's going through that?" And that's when I was like, oh, okay. Because you're a feminist time coach so a lot of what you do is well, how can we make the most of our time? And how can we also work in a way that is sustainable for us when we're not burning ourselves out. And so you really look at all of these things together.

And I think at that time it hadn't been long since I'd- stopped working as a practitioner so I was very used to one-on-one stuff. And I was also used to giving my time away for free which was my choice to do. And I've kind of

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looked at that a lot and why it was so comfortable for me to do. But it was just really interesting for me to think about how do I use my time? How can I have the most impact? How can I help the most people? And it was just that one thing you said to me has stayed with me ever since.

I'm always thinking about when I see someone having a particular issue, how can I develop tools, concepts, processes and share them in a way where everyone can benefit from this, and it doesn't require me to be speaking to someone one-on-one? And that's been huge for me, and I think really transformed how I go about my work. And it requires more of me because it's easy for me to do, I'll hop on the phone, I'll hop on a call and do that. It's more challenging to think, how can I help the most people possible with this? So that's been a big one for me.

Vikki: I love that you remember that. And I think it is, I mean it is easier in the moment to just hop on a call and do the thing. The way I think of it is it's almost like someone who's amazing at cooking and their friends always call them. And how do I make the best shepherd's pie? How do I make the best stew, whatever it might be? And they're just taking the calls all the time and talking through how to make it versus having a cookbook. Being like, "Here you go", which is actually even better for everyone else because then they get to consume it on demand, pick and choose what parts they use.

And I feel that's the work that you do with your community, and I think it's so powerful. And I mean I'm sure you've experienced this too but for me being a coach, having coached hundreds of people it never ceases to amaze me how common our thinking is. For anyone listening who's like, I am the one that's different. I am the one that this isn't going to work for. I'm the one, my specific brain, or problems, or where I'm at, it's just having been in so many brains. Our brains are so similar, just maybe like our food tastes. And I think the opportunity for impact is so huge.

Maisie: Yeah. This is what we have in our community in The Flow Collective all the time when someone really thinks this is my issue, I'm the only one who thinks this way. I'm the only one with this particular problem

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or symptom. And then they come on a call, or they post in the community and share about it. And lo and behold, there's all these other people have got the same issue. And I think that's the power of having a community and being able to share our experiences, and our story, and to just grow that collective wisdom as well.

But yeah, so that's my number one. And I'm already getting bonus ones as we're going through this. I always find it so hard to constrain it to three even though I set that rule. But as Paul, my partner says, you're the rule maker and the rule breaker.

Vikki: Yes. No, it's true. Sometimes we set rules and then we become a victim to our rules. Well, I made that rule so I must stick with it versus just going with it.

Maisie: Yeah, I'm going to make him listen to that, so he hears that.

Vikki: Perfect. Okay, so I did actually also know about you before. And I don't know the timeline of who knew about who first. But my first ever impression of you was in Stacey's community, hearing the story around how you decided to invest in yourself over fixing a broken toilet. And now knowing you I feel I have 10 examples of this of you are such an example of going all in, of having valid excuses and being willing to overcome them. And being so committed to your future over your present even when it's uncomfortable.

And I think especially that last one, I mean it kind of ties in with what we were just speaking about with the community stuff. It's being willing to have that impact over just the call. And even the fact that you took that from our conversation and applied it is such an example of how you see life. And I think it's rare to just see it that way. And I think it's exactly why you are able to have the impact that you've had, and to create the knowledge base that you have, and do all the things that you do. I mean you do such incredible things all the time.

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I'm always in awe of all the things that you are creating and doing, and the ways you are serving and showing up in the world. And it's because you're really attached to that future bigger picture over and over again. And that was my first ever impression. Because I remember thinking, would I do that? I did a lot to get in that community, I took on a lot of debt and all of this stuff. But I had a toilet that was working. It was just so bold, and I think it's rare and it's something we need to speak about more.

How would we all show up for the world if we were committed to the impact that we could have in six months instead of what feels comfortable today? And I'm sure that was actually uncomfortable. I'm sure there were stories. I'm not sure what Paul thought about it. I don't know.

Maisie: Because I'm pretty sure most people listening to this have no idea about the story because I don't think I've ever shared it on the podcast before. I shared it on Stacey's podcast. But basically what was going on was our coach, Stacey has a programme that you can join and it's \$2,000. And I've been listening to her podcast for a while. And I really wanted to join that community, but I didn't have the – I don't know, what would it be £1600 to join? I just didn't have it, but I really wanted in to that community.

So I was like, as soon as I have the money I am going to join. But at the same time our toilet was broken. And you couldn't flush it, so you had to lift – I don't know, what's it called, the back of the toilet? You have to lift the back off and push something down and then the tank fills up with water and then the flush would work. And so then I had some extra money, and I could have got the toilet fixed. We could have got a new toilet, had it installed fantastic. But then I was like, but I really want to join her programme and learn how I can help more people and do all of the stuff that I've basically done since.

So I was like, "Bollocks, sod the toilet, I'm just going to join and do this." And it just became this story that we all kind of joke about. Because then what happened was COVID happened and then I did have the money again to sort the toilet out, but we couldn't. So we were stuck with this

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broken toilet for – I don't know – another six months until we could actually have someone come into the house and sort it out.

But as I've said to Stacey, every time I had to do that weird mechanism to flush the toilet, in my head I was thinking this was worth it. I'm completely willing every time I flush the toilet to go through this process. Because what I got from joining that community and taking my work deeper, learning how to help the most people I can, all of the self-growth that has come from that and then from joining her mastermind has been transformational, ridiculously so. The return on investment for that has been huge. I'm going to have to get her on the podcast at some point to talk about it all, yeah.

Vikki: Yeah. And I even think the whole idea that as women we can make these decisions and be like, I am making an investment in my business, in my growth, this is the maybe more obvious thing to spend the money on upfront which is the toilet. A lot of people in that situation would think, obviously I don't have an option. And you not only created an option but created so much success that the whole time it was so obvious that you'd made the right choice.

And I just think it's so powerful for everyone to hear that because I think as women, we aren't really taught to spend on ourselves, maybe unless it's material stuff, or makeup, or whatever it might be. But really to just spend on our brains, on our mindset, all of this stuff, I think it's quite radical still. A lot of people will still tell me it feels selfish like, but just for me. And I think it's so powerful that you made that strong decision and led that example of I have the money to fix the toilet and I'm going to invest in coaching.

Maisie: Yeah. Always, for me that's always, if I have the choice I will always invest in coaching because I know that's the thing that's going to solve the problems. That's what's going to help me to create the most results versus just focusing on the thing that's right in front of me.

Vikki: And how was it for you the first time you ever invested in coaching?

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Maisie: That's a good question. It was really scary the first time because I had hardly any money in my bank account. I was going into my overdraft every month. I was working as an acupuncturist and man, yeah, I had a few hundred pounds in my bank account. And I can't remember how much the coaching was that I invested in. But it was just at the point where I was thinking, I either need to invest in coaching and other things to really make this career work or I'm going to have to change. And at that point it's like, well, I've done a four-year degree. I've got all the student loans from that.

Let's just really give this a go and really make it work. So for me I was just at the point where, okay, it's time to just make a decision and go for it. So I went into my overdraft to pay for the coaching. But within a couple of months I'd paid for all of the coaching because we just addressed so many of my money mindset things and looking at running a business, my view of myself, how I worked with my clients. All of those things. So it was really scary to do but since then I've always invested in coaching in some way, yeah. What was the first coaching you invested in?

Vikki: Yeah. So I actually, one of my regrets is that I went straight into becoming a coach and then didn't set on getting coached for two years. The first coaching for me was also Stacey's. And so we'd just closed down the business. We were living in Austin, we'd closed up shop, we were moving back in with my parents. And I joined her programme and then she announced the mastermind. And I was like, "I want to be in that room. I'm going all in on that business." And then obviously took out all the credit card debt.

Really it was an irresponsible decision at the time, like anyone looking at my facts on paper would have been like, "This is wholly irresponsible. You are taking on multiple five figures of debt at a time when you don't have a job. Your husband doesn't have a job. You don't have a home", all of these things. But it was, I think for me having avoided investing in my brain for so long, it immediately changed how I took responsibility, like what you said earlier. I think I took such a deep responsibility for what I was creating.

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And I remember saying to my husband, I wasn't like, "Can I", or "Please." I was like, "This is what I'm doing. This is how I'm doing it." And I remember his response, he was like, "Okay." And afterwards I spoke to him about it, and he was like, "You just seemed sure." So if I'd have gone to him and said, "What do you think?" He would have been like, "No fucking way." And yeah, within two months I'd made the money back. I was like, "Oh." It was more money than I'd made in three years. Like, what's happening?

So yeah, it was terrifying, but I knew that I would rather be scared than be still. And that's where I'd been for so long.

Maisie: That's so powerful. I'd rather be scared than be still. Everyone, listen to that. Okay. Well, I don't know which one to go with next because they both kind of lead neatly on. Well, we've been talking about money. So I remember another conversation that we were having, and I can remember exactly where I was when we were having it. Because I often call you when I'm walking home from the studio that I work in. And then what happens when I get close to my home is I just start doing a circuit around the block.

And it was one of those circuits, and I can't remember. You were kind of coaching me about something to do with money and I can't remember what it was exactly. But you just said to me, "Maisie, do you want to live in a world where it's just bankers and lawyers who have money, or do you want to live in a world where every woman earns money?" And it was just so powerful. And shout out by the way to all the bankers and lawyers who are making money, love it. But I was very much in a like, this isn't for me. This is for other people.

And just, I've had to and continue to address my thoughts about money. And it is one of those areas where I have needed to do a lot of work in order to run a successful business and to want to grow and to create more of an impact. And it was just really powerful. So often when, now when I do come up against thoughts that do continue to come up about money and about running a business and all of these things, I'm just like, "Right. I want

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to live in a world where we all get to make money.” And I think actually I’m kind of remembering now.

I think it was probably that I’d been hearing, I’d been getting emails from people having a problem with me.

Vikki: I remember.

Maisie: For running a business basically. And now I’m just at such a different point with it because now I’m just like, well, what is the problem with me making money? I run a business. I pay my taxes. I pay other people great wages. And that’s the world I want to live in. Go and have a problem with the people, the businesses who don’t pay taxes and who don’t pay a living wage of any kind. So I just feel much more level-headed with it, just clear in my own mind that it’s okay for women to make money and it’s okay for me to make money.

Vikki: Yes. I love that. And I think it is. It’s about recognising, I mean I feel like we’re getting onto – we have a theme here but it’s in the short run then yes, maybe it seems the best thing you can do is offer something for free. But really by you making money you are building a business that is going to pay people properly, give people actual time off. Think about the impact that we can have on a socioeconomic level that’s way more necessary I think, and way more impactful even if there is the upfront discomfort of how as women, we’ve a 100% been socialised to give, and give, and give.

And even I know so many people look up to you and even for you to get to be that example for them of I can do what I want and make money from doing it instead of this whole narrative we have of you do what you want, or you make money. Why are we just accepting that narrative? It’s such bullshit. And I know that there’s so many people that are trapped. I mean this was my story. I’m a former banker by the way. So I am totally with you guys.

But I was in that story of if I want to have financial stability then I have to stay in this job because that’s what I’ve been told my whole life is the only

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option. And for me by then I was miserable. I was drinking a lot. It just wasn't conducive in all the other ways. And so I think to challenge that narrative that you can make money doing anything really and by creating value. And that's what I think you do in spades. And I hope you don't mind me saying this. You can edit it out if you don't.

But I think at the time there was a few people that had said something to you in your field around people charging money and it made you uncomfortable. And I just really wanted to offer that perspective for you at the time of, but what if they're wrong and what if you get to be the example for them, that they can make more? Instead of just believing because something's been how it's been means that's how it has to be in the future. And I just don't think that's true at all. I think we have to create different ways of doing things in the future.

Maisie: Yeah. I think that's what it was because – and for everyone who listened to the episode I did with Mars, she and I went through this in our work as doulas together when there was this limit of what you could charge. And everyone was struggling to survive and pay their bills charging that. And that was actually the first coach I invested in was like, "That's what you're charging for all of that work that you're doing for someone?" And I was like, "Yeah."

And he was just, "Okay, let's increase your rate." And I was like, "What? But there's no one else charging that." And he's like, "Great, you get to be the first one and show them all how it's done." And that did really change things. But Mars and I came up with resistance, and comments and things from other people.

But now I know that's just internalised patriarchy, that we just have this idea that if you're a woman or you've been socialised as female and you have something to offer the world that benefits other people and particularly benefits other women, then we should give that away for free. When actually that just devalues everything and it means that all of us end up struggling and exhausted. And this is what creates so many problems.

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Vikki: Yes, totally. And this is also exactly what I just went through with taking so much time off during my first trimester. And I reached the exact same point of well, I can either sit and think about all the women that manage to do it with jobs, and manage to do it with commutes, and manage to do it with kids, and manage, and manage, and manage. Or I can think what if there's a future where women don't have to work during their first trimester when they're ill and they don't get punished for it? I'm like, what if I got to be that example?

And I think, well, I know that's what turned it around for me, from all the judgement and shame, of which you were very supportive at the time. I was very fortunate to have you there then.

Maisie: Yeah. Because people don't realise that first trimester. I remember, I managed to hold back from kind of jumping on this person on the train once. But there was this group of people talking about the first trimester. Well, they were just talking about how someone would be wearing the – what's the badge that people wear? I've forgot what it says, it's just like carrying a baby or I'm pregnant or something.

Vikki: Yeah, baby on board or something.

Maisie: Baby on board, that's it. And so they were talking about that, "But they wear these badges but they're not showing. It must be really early on." And in my mind I'm like, that is literally the time when you need to sit down the most. But I managed to sit down and just keep my mouth shut. But it's, as you have discovered now being pregnant, it is just such a full-on time. And there is just this belief like, well, you're not showing, you should just be able to crack on as per usual, never mind all the extensive change that your body is going through.

And it's a struggle to just stay awake or keep your food down or any of those things.

Vikki: Yeah, exactly. And this leads very nicely to my third one for you by the way. Because it's a recent one but it just really blew my mind. And I

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think anyone that wants to find out more about this needs to get involved more in your work because it's just where you are an expert. And I was just so fortunate to, like I say, have you on the end of the phone and have you explain this to me. But really about being in different places in our nervous system.

And since I've been pregnant I was just suddenly experiencing lots more fear. And so I was believing it. And I was getting caught up in it and all of this stuff was happening and it was impacting all the different places in my life. And we spoke a few weeks ago and you just explained to me about how there's different states in our nervous system and how we can jump from one to the other. And then you said, "The most important thing which is no one is better or worse than the other."

And it just released my judgement around myself at that point in time. And this has been happening for me my whole life, even around certain times of the month and so on. I've never really known anything about it. But at that moment to just have it be shown to me in such a neutral non-judgemental, which is how I think your permanent state is. I can say anything to you, come up with anything and it's this very calming natural voice that just explains things matter of fact. And my brain is like, we're going to die. So I think that's so powerful.

And I just think it's so important for everyone to really hear that and to really sit with that. It just gave me permission to be in a different state and not try and problem solve it which is what I'd been doing.

Maisie: Yeah, because we do move through these different states, whether we're feeling kind of safe and connected, or we're feeling a bit of fight or flight energy, or we're going into freeze. And we're always moving through these states. And they're all great. They all serve a purpose. And they're all just trying to keep us alive. But we do often judge these other states that our nervous system can take us in and make them a real problem. And then that's where the problems get layered in is that just a natural mechanism, suddenly we have a lot of judgement for it.

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And we make it more a problem and then we've got our thoughts on top of what our nervous system is doing. And then suddenly the wild horses are off.

Vikki: Yes. And it's like one of those things where with coaching I think sometimes I can convince myself that I should be able to coach myself out of things, or I should be able to see things instead of just allowing myself to experience them. And I think the shoulding exists for a lot of women. And like I say, it was like there's like this clasp around it and it just got unlocked in such a simple way. It was so simple. You just said two sentences and I just breathed into it. And now it's there.

And yeah, like you said, by the end of our conversation I was thinking more and more about how it's an amazing thing that this happens instead of it's a problem. That for me was not where my head was at for the three months prior.

Maisie: Yeah, because particularly when you're pregnant and whether it's first trimester or third trimester, perceived threats, the body's thinking, well, maybe we haven't got the ability to run as fast as we did before, so your nervous system is shifting and you're adapting. And so maybe you might feel more on alert because your body's going, well, if we pick up on danger quicker then we're more likely to survive whatever the threat is whereas before you're more able to run, more able to fight, you've got other tools available to you to deal with threats.

So I do think for some people, not for all people, their kind of level of alertness can go up. And it's just the body trying to take care of you.

Vikki: Yeah. And it's funny because another thing that I noticed that we've spoken about is my sense of smell has gotten so much sharper. But I didn't have any judgement around that. I was like, that's cool, I can see how that would be a survival mechanism. Whereas this I think I was like, "I've already done all this work on fear, all of this stuff." And this feels like just so heightened and wrong instead of why is this right? And why is this

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happening for me? And why this is an amazing thing? And that conversation you were just able to show me that, so [inaudible].

Maisie: I love it. I love all the opportunities to geek out on these things. Okay, so my next one is about making decisions. And I know you're really into this and you have a whole module in your programme, Time Hackers about this which is fantastic. But I really think for me the impact of a great coach is that they coach you even when you're not talking to them because they're just in your head. And it's just like I think I've shared before about Naomi Absalom, I did yoga with her for years.

I haven't done yoga with her for years but she's still my yoga teacher because it doesn't matter whose class I'm in, it's her voice in my head talking me through the adjustments and the postures. And it's the same with you, there's been so many times we've been on the phone where I've been talking through making a decision about something. And I've gone, "Well, you're a feminist time coach and you look at all of this kind of stuff."

And so I might say something like, "Well, yeah, I'm kind of figuring out what to do about this. And I'm just going to think about it the rest of today and come up with a plan for it." And then you just go, "Or you could just decide now and spend the day on something else." I'm like, "Yeah, that is also an option." And you've just said that to me so many times or you might just say, "Yeah, but you've actually already decided and you're just unwilling to implement that decision for some reason so you're biding time somehow."

And the combination of those two things you've just said to me on repeat in so many different scenarios that now I just have you in my head. And any time I catch myself going through that process and I'm putting off a decision, I don't even need to get you on the phone anymore, I'm just like, "Wait, I do know what I need to do here. Why am I trying to avoid this decision? Or what is it that I'm trying to get out of it", basically. So that's been really valuable to me.

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And I think another thing that you often say to me, we speak pretty frequently, and we have been for a while. So I think you've kind of drip-fed things to me, or there's just been these things that have come up in different situations but regularly enough where you've just pointed out things out to me so frequently. And for you being unwilling to let it go, for the sake of me, you've kept returning to it and just always pointed out, for instance, how hard I tend to make things, or how hard I tend to work when I don't need to just because it's the default setting.

And so often I'll talk to you about, "Okay, so I'm going to be doing this webinar and here's how I'm thinking I'm going to do it." And I'm just telling you information thinking we're just catching up as mates. And then you just go, "Yeah, or", and then you say nothing. And then I'm like, "Or I could make this a bite easier and do it this way instead." You're like, "Yeah, exactly." And so I just really appreciate your willingness to hold onto something for me to see it.

Because it would be easy for you not to and just be like, "Yeah, it sounds great, they're going to love it. That's going to help so many people." And that is probably quite comfortable in friendships when someone's doing that. But we are friends, and we're coaches so we kind of slip in and out of the two. But I just really appreciate that you often return to things on my behalf because it's a bit like our brains are just used to going a certain way.

Think if you were driving for example, a route that you take every day. But then there's a new route that's built, there's a new road that gets you there quicker and it's better. But still the default is probably to just go the route that you have always gone down. And so it just takes a while sometimes and it takes having other people remind you, "There's this other road, what are you doing, turning left? Just turn right."

And that's what steering your brain is like and that's what so many of my clients and your clients as well, we're just so used to our brains going a certain route that sometimes we need someone else to go, "Did you know, there's this other option?"

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Vikki: Yes, I love that example. And I also, I did a different example of the same thing on a coaching call recently where I spoke about, it's like when you're a kid and you've learnt to walk, and then you can run. And you're like, "Yeah, I can run." And someone's like, "Here's a bicycle." And you're like, "Why would I go on the bicycle? I'm going to fall over and I'm going to look like an idiot. And it's going to be hard. And it's going to hurt. And I'm going to have to feel embarrassment, and all of these things. I'm literally fine running." But the bicycle is just going to get you where you want to go so much faster.

So I love all of those kind of visual examples because I think it is, for me before I was actually getting coached, or knew about coaching, in my head I think all of these visual examples are so useful, like the car and the bicycle and all of that stuff, so I love them. And yeah, I think what we want to remember, another example, too many, I can't remember what the word is for these things where you use other examples, but I'll just use an example.

What you want to remember is it's like learning a language. Our brain is used to speaking English. You try and learn a language, it doesn't matter if you've heard it 10 times, or 20 times, or even – I got A star French when I was 16. Do I speak French while I'm here? No. It's not that simple. So we want to remember and give our brain credit and appreciation for like it's doing its job very well. And its job is to be efficient. And efficiency isn't every single time thinking the sentence in English, translating each word then forming it into a sentence and then saying it in French.

That's what's required. That's a lot of effort until it become natural and it's the same thing with coaching. And I think as you said, sometimes it's a simple pause and it can be even a one-word question. And your brain already knows what to do. And the more that we can allow for that and put ourselves in the rooms where people are teaching us how to allow for that, the sooner we're going to get there. And it's okay if we don't stay there and two years later we end up, even like for me with the pregnancy. I had done a lot of work on anxiety and fear.

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It was literally what I help people with, it's literally one-third of my module in Time Hackers is around fear and how I change my relationship with it and how people can. And when I was pregnant something else was happening and just allowing that experience to be there instead of I should know this already. So I think it's really powerful for you to share that also for people listening that are also in our community is to be like, yeah, you still get to flitter and be human.

Maisie: And I think that's something that I appreciate in both of us is that I think we are transparent with our communities and with the people around us, that we're not perfect.

Vikki: Yes. It's so important because there was actually a Hackers coaching call, I don't know if you were on it. And a few people said, literally said to me, "Well, I can't imagine you doing this", or "I can't imagine you being this." And I was like, "We have to stop putting the people that are guiding us on pedestals because I promise you every person that is guiding you, that is guiding you well in any way is guiding you well because they are living it like no other way."

Maisie: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, we have to be willing to work on these things ourselves in order to be able to hold space for other people and support them through it. And yeah, I know my kind of go to top two issues, people pleasing and money. Not really surprisingly given that I'm socialised as female and all the other kind of factors involved. Things really shifted for me when I was just willing to accept that those things will come up in various ways. I've already experienced such transformation in both of those multiple times really significantly.

And then something else will happen in another area of my life or at a different level and I'm like, "Oh, there's that issue again." But to be able to spot that and not make it a problem, because I think often was like, but I've done all this coaching on this. And I've looked at this so many times already. Why is it still showing up? And then there's frustration and

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resistance to it rather than just like now I'm just at the point where I'm amused. I'm just highly amused.

Hello people pleasing showing up here again. And it's just, it allows me to then move through it a lot quicker because there isn't that initial, what are you doing here? You shouldn't be here.

Vikki: Yeah. Or even the resistance to it and I think that's just our brain's very clever way of keeping us in it. It's like, if we tell her that we have to judge ourselves for it then we're not actually solving it. Yeah, I had one client, actually we created different characters to the different things, I just remember one being called Ursula. I can't remember much else, but it's like you can literally characterise them and talk, and have conversations with like, you said people pleaser or Ursula.

And I think unfortunately we can take ourselves so seriously sometimes. And so we take our brains so literally and I think this is the advantage of coaching.

Maisie: I think so, it's like that things can be serious, it can be a serious topic, but we can approach it in a fun way. It doesn't have to be this big heavy approach to something because then there's always the stories there, this is going to be hard. This is really complicated. And we have all these barriers already coming up for us.

Vikki: So because I break the rules I'm going to drop some bonus ones.

Maisie: Okay, go on.

Vikki: I am going to share the one I shared with you before we recorded because I do think it's such a powerful one as well. So I'll start with that one, which is so I don't have kids. And I heard Maisie on the phone, we were talking, and her son was around. And the way I overheard her speak to him was such a breath of fresh air. It was something I didn't even know was possible. It was this calmness and this meeting him at his level. And allowing him to – it's kind of like respecting him.

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I mean I guess I love my parents but there was definitely this, I am the adult, and you are the child. And that was very dominant. I mean I love them and we're super close but hearing the way you communicate with him in a way that allows him to think for himself, it just blew my mind a little bit. And I'm so grateful to have had that opportunity and that exposure now a few times as I go into motherhood. I think it's so powerful. And I don't know if other people do this but for me it was like that's even a thing that you can do.

So I really learnt a lot from probably the three times I've heard you say two sentences to him which is a testament to things, so it will take time. And I just really, I think it speaks a lot about how you think about him and what you create for him to be able to discover himself which is really powerful. So I love that.

My other bonus one is just a really fun one which is magical to me and blew my minds which is – this is so crazy. When I told you I was pregnant, so bear in mind we don't do a lot of video calls. We do a lot of WhatsApp calls or WhatsApp messages, so you hadn't seen me. And I didn't know I was pregnant till week seven or eight. But you did. You could tell I was pregnant from my voice. And I just think it's magical. I didn't even know that that was possible. And it's just a reminder to everyone that what we think is normal is mind blowing to someone else.

And for the future you definitely have to tell me when I'm pregnant earlier, I would love to know earlier.

Maisie: I don't even know if it's a voice thing. I don't even have the words for it. But sometimes I can just tell when someone's pregnant. And sometimes it's before they know. And I've had clients before, when I used to treat people in their home, open the door to me and I just instantly, and they haven't even missed a period yet, it's in that two week wait. And they just open the door and I'm just like, "This cycle worked, you're pregnant." I don't say that to them. I would never say that to them. I just held it in for me.

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And I mean it just happens. It doesn't happen with everyone. But there's someone else that we know who recently announced that they were pregnant. And I was like, "Yeah, I knew." But it's the same with the women that I see frequently enough in my life, neighbours, friends, people on the school run etc, etc, I can often spot where they are in their cycle even people whose podcasts I listen to a lot. The podcasts that I listen to every week, I'm always like, "I'm pretty sure you're ovulating." I just, I can hear it and a lot of the time I don't know if I'm right or not by the way.

But I just have this sense and sometimes that is there with pregnancy as well. It was just like I was waiting for you to tell me.

Vikki: Next time you tell me, please.

Maisie: I really thought that you were doing that thing of it's being the first trimester so I can't tell anyone.

Vikki: I think you were the third person I told. We were recording a podcast on my podcast, and I waited till afterwards, I was like, "Guess what?" You were like, "Why did you wait to tell me?" I was like, "Wait, you know?" So that was really fun. I think it's just fun to see these kind of things that to my brain is impossible. I'm like it's not possible to be able to tell these things. And there's so much that's possible. For me it's a reminder that we are all more capable than we think we are. There is magic in the world.

There are so many things working for us and just to really lean into it even more. And I think you are a great example of that.

Maisie: Well, thank you. And yeah, I mean we're going to have all the talks about parenting, and raising children, and all of those things. But I think, yeah, I've just always spoken to Nelson like I'm speaking to you, minus the swear words. But I've never adjusted my language because thinking he's a baby I need to like, you know, and of course I modify some of the words. But it has been really important to me to treat him as my equal as a human whilst also being his mother and his parent, and being a leader for him, but that has been really important to me.

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And I love that now because I do feel like we were talking about before, that has allowed him to then come to me with stuff. And he feels able to communicate things to me like when I told him I was going to Mexico, which I never got to do anyway. But when I told him I was going to Mexico, and he was really upset. And I was like, "How are you feeling?" He was like, "I'm sad. I'm angry and I'm hurt." And I was like, "Oh, man." But inside I was also like, yes, I have a five-year-old who knows how to express his emotions.

And that for me is just so important in terms of long-term mental health and knowing that we are raising someone who is equipped to experience and express their emotions.

Vikki: Yeah. It's been really powerful to see. And a reminder that there's different ways of parenting out there.

Maisie: Yeah. And just to be clear for everyone listening, it's not like I am always able to use this level of communication. Sometimes I am not like that.

Vikki: So are you saying I shouldn't look at you like you're the perfect mum and then measure myself against that the whole time, that's not going to be a good thing?

Maisie: Yeah, exactly. All of this week he's been waking up a lot in the night and I am exhausted. And when he came in this morning and started asking me all sorts of questions, I was just like, "Please, just let me sleep."

Vikki: Yeah. But even that, I'm like, yeah, that's kind of tied into exactly it, I think. That's what I mean, it's not about pandering to everything. You don't pander to him. I've heard you say no to him on the phone. But the way you do it is not like, "No, because I said so", which was a little bit how I was raised. And it can just be communicating, even that exactly how you said that is how you would communicate probably to Paul as well. So it really is...

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Maisie: Well, I don't know. Paul might have other thoughts about how I communicate with him.

Vikki: Those words, it's not like you weren't talking down to him, or pandering, or thinking he couldn't experience whatever emotional reaction he could have to it. It was just like, "Please leave me alone." The system's so fun.

Maisie: Yeah. Thank you so much for coming on. I mean we could just go on, and on, and on. I just love, I think what's just so cool about our relationship is now I'm thinking about it maybe because of that first time that I called you. And I'm just like, "Right, I'm just going to call you. I'm going to be the person who does that." And it is very straightforward for me to call you, I don't think about it. And that's very rare for me and I think it's a really good marker of the importance and the quality of our relationship.

Vikki: Yeah. I mean like I say, I do feel like this year it's been such a blessing. I'm so appreciative for having this relationship, having this friendship, having someone that I can speak to about all the things all the time. And also pull me back in check and also someone that likes the conversations where I might pull them back in check. And I think actually we're not people pleasing at all with each other. I think you might think that that's your thing. But I don't find you not at all like that. You're really willing to take that stand as well so I love that.

And I'm just so grateful because this year, the last 18 months I experienced like I said, loneliness which is something I've not really experienced in my life. And this has been such a gift and I am so thankful that you made that call.

Maisie: Me too. Well, thank you for coming on. You have to tell people about Time Hackers, doing a 15-hour work week, which I haven't even said but that's also the fact that you came up with that has also really shifted my brain. So tell people about this.

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Vikki: Okay. So Time Hackers is my group community coaching programme where you join, and we unlearn all of the bullshit time rules that have been fed to us. We drop all of the time tools and the time management to do's and all of these things that have turned the time industry into the diet industry with lots of illusions that create more problems. And we really focus on what I've identified as the three things that allow us to achieve more in less time, which is how we hack our brain. We hack our decision-making, and we hack our fear of failure.

And yeah, it's just a really special community for people that know that they want to move forward but they either don't have time, or they've sat in their head with the idea that they've had for a few years waiting for it to feel good. I say it's for people who want to work, maybe either want to create a 30-hour work week or want to achieve their one-year goal in 90 days.

And then the 15-hour work week, this is my new baby. So I decided I wanted to create a 15-hour work week for myself as I started a family because I mean I just looked at what the options were for women and how we've inherited this 40-hour work week that was decided before we were even allowed to vote, let alone work. And it sets us up to fail. We're either guilty because we're working when we should be mumming, or guilty because we're mumming when we should be working.

And actually a lot of the work, a lot of the technology allows us to achieve more in way less time when we know how to leverage it or even think in that way on purpose. And so I've created my 15-hour work week and now I am helping other people create theirs, other women I should say, sorry. And really, I think that there's no reason why we can't have 15-hour work weeks.

It just requires, like one of the things we've spoken about here today, riding that bike. It's going to require some upfront investing and failing and dealing with all the thoughts in our head that tell us that we're lazy and we should be doing more because we can do more. And basically, I've gone

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through it all myself, not only with the 15-hour work week but then taking three months off during my first trimester. It all came up again.

And I really want to help women create a life that they love and drop out of this, you know, we're like circles trying to shove ourselves into square shapes which is what men have defined as the work rules. So yeah, I could talk about it for ages, but I'll cut off there. The best thing to do is probably...

Maisie: When you first told me about it, I was just like – you'd had the idea and you were just sharing it with me. And I'm just like kind of, we're talking about it, I was kind of coaching you on some of the stuff. But in the back of my mind I'm like, okay, I need to sign up for this because this just sounds incredible. But just the fact that you have been able to see that for yourself and then create that reality. That's just huge because it's just sowed that seed in my brain that a 15-hour work week is possible at a time when I was also like, I don't know what the fuck she's talking about.

This sounds great but I don't know how that would be possible. And I definitely had lots of thoughts in my head, like oh, well, Vikki can probably do it, but I don't think I can because I've got this, and this, and this and coming up with all the things. But then just watching you go about the process of creating it and getting ready to birth it into the world and just me being like, "Oh." And just in that timeline I can see actually that is possible for me. And there's probably people listening who are thinking, well, it's possible for Maisie but it's not possible for me because of dah, dah, dah.

And I just encourage everyone to start considering how it could be possible, not if, but just how could that be possible for me. And then please go ahead and check out Vikki's work because she's amazing. I'm in her programme, Time Hackers and I love it. And I just love the direction that your work and your life has gone in. And you're just a very congruent person. The values that are important to you, and the things that you create, and the ways that you want to help other people are always that you live your life. And I love that.

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Vikki: Thank you. I'm going to cry, I'm so emotional. Thank you, I appreciate that.

Maisie: Well, website, Instagram, where do people find you?

Vikki: Yeah. Website is just vikkilouise.com, it's V-I-K-K-I-L-O-U-I-S-E.com. And Instagram is vikkilouise underscore, underscore, underscore. And the podcast is called Hack Your Time.

Maisie: Wonderful. And we will link to all of those in the show notes so that everyone can check them out. But thank you so much for coming. I love that I found things out about you that I didn't know before. These conversations are so much fun.

Vikki: This is so much fun. I love how we both had some stalking of each other.

Maisie: Yes. I love some stalking, pre relationship stalking. Okay, Vikki, thank you for coming on and I'll catch you next time. Alright, everyone, 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 for more.