

Ep #60: Rejection



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With Your Host

Maisie Hill

Period Power with Maisie Hill

Ep #60: Rejection

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

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

Hello folks and welcome to episode 60. Today I'm going to be talking all about rejection because I have been coaching on this a whole bunch in The Flow Collective just over the past few months. It's come up on calls and in posts in the community. So I wanted to put together a specific episode for you to refer to and use. And this is what I love about having a community. I get to see kind of common threads that come up and then create something to help you. And then everyone gets to benefit from it on the podcast.

So we are spending February focusing on relationships at the moment. So this is particularly relevant to those of you who are in The Flow Collective. But those of you who aren't members yet your chance to join is coming up. The next time that new members will be able to join is March 2nd to 7th, so put those dates in your diary. Make sure you're on our wait list by going to my website maisiehill.com, click on The Flow Collective tab and just enter your details there so we can let you know when the doors are open.

We've been getting quite a lot of emails from folks who are very excited to join us, and we're excited for you to join as well especially given what we've got coming up this spring. So to all of you who have been waiting patiently and I know some of you have been emailing regularly since November which is when we last opened the doors. And I have to say, I love how committed you are. You're committed before you're even in there, it's amazing. And there's only a few more weeks to go so your time is coming.

But the other reason that rejection is on my mind personally is because I'm about to send out some rejection emails. I am in the midst of hiring. And today's the day where I am emailing some of the candidates to let them

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know that we won't be offering them an interview. And then next week I'll also be sending emails to the folks who weren't successful on this occasion. And me being me I just want to hire all the people. I want to bring everyone with me but of course I can't.

But it's really fascinating that I'm doing this right now at the same time that I've been preparing for this episode because it was months ago that I decided to cover this topic on the podcast in February because I wanted it to come out whilst we're working on relationships in the membership. But at the same time I had no idea I would also be sending out rejection letters. And being on this side of things has offered me a perspective that I don't think has been available to me before, not in this way at least.

So what I want to start off saying is that experiencing a rejection doesn't mean that you are being rejected. Let me say that again, experiencing a rejection doesn't mean that you are being rejected. It might feel like you are, and you might think that you are, and I'm going to talk about why that will feel so significant and painful to you in a moment. But the difference here is really important. So when I'm rejecting applications, I'm not rejecting the humans behind them. I'm not rejecting them as people.

So whether they were offered an interview, or a position, or not doesn't mean that they are being rejected. But as I said, rejection hurts. And there's a reason it hurts so much. And I'm saying hurt for a very good reason because researchers have simulated the experience of rejection, by having people who had recently experienced an unwanted breakup. Look at a photograph of their ex-partner and then they ask them to think about being rejected. And I want you to remember this part, they asked them to think about rejection.

And this was all going on whilst they were having an MRI scan. And what the researchers saw is that the areas of the brain that support the sensory components of physical pain became active when they were thinking about their ex-partner and being rejected. So this is why rejection feels so shitty. It's an intense emotion to feel. And we know from these images of the brain and these research studies that the experience of rejection is comparable

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to the level of physical pain that would have you reaching for painkillers like ibuprofen or paracetamol. It's significant.

So there's a reason why rejection feels like shit, it really does hurt. Now, you might be wondering, well why? How have we evolved with this happening? It doesn't make any sense. It's a good question to be asking. And basically back when our survival really was dependent on being in a group it helped to have mechanisms in place to help ensure that we stayed part of the group.

Because if we were rejected, we'd be kicked out of that community and then we'd be fending for ourselves rather than benefitting from everything that comes from living in a group which includes safety and sharing of resources and skills. So essentially experiencing social rejection makes us more inclined to make decisions to share our resources which in turn helps to ensure our safety and place within a group. And that's what has kept us alive historically.

As I said, I have coached several of my clients on this recently. And there's one example that I want to use and mention here because it's going to be so helpful to you. I'm not going to get into the details or share this person's name of course. But what they shared is literally the perfect example of how rejection comes up. So my client posted their self-coaching about dating and specifically about how people pleasing showed up when they were on dates. And maybe this is familiar to you. I certainly have memories of doing this myself.

So how this might show up when you're on a date is that you edit yourself a little bit here, a little bit there, or perhaps a lot. And of course the same could happen with work meetings, meeting clients, meeting your partner's family, meeting friends of friends. It's not just exclusive to dating. So you can take what I'm covering here and use it to understand and bring awareness to any kind of situation, whatever feels most applicable to you.

So let's say you're on a date and you're editing yourself in order to be a version of you that you perceive to be more acceptable, more likeable,

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more attractive, more lovable. And if this is ringing true for you, I invite you to look at how you do this, get very specific.

What are the exact things you do or don't do? What are the things that you say or don't say? Does your posture change? Does your body position or your expression change? Do you behave in a certain way? Does your tone of voice change? Are you more direct? Are you less direct? Do you discount your own opinions somehow? Do you leave out the details of your life that are meaningful to you because of fear of rejection?

So pay I would say excruciating attention to your own behaviour, really get to the specifics exactly how you might do this. And as you do this you don't have to be judging or criticising yourself, you can just be curious about it and just go on a hunt to find all the details. And then what we're going to do is work this backwards. So you're going to start off with finding all the things that you do or don't do when this is what's going on for you.

And then we want to find the emotion that you were experiencing that led you to behave this way. So were you feeling anxious, worried, embarrassed, unconfident, unsure? What is it? Hopeful maybe? So find the emotion that drove those specific behaviours, all the things that you did or didn't do. And there may be several emotions. But this is where thinking about a specific example is really useful because then you can think about, well, what was the dominant emotion that you were experiencing in that moment?

Alright, so now we've figured out the ways that you might be editing and censoring yourself. You've found the dominant emotion that led you to doing those things. Now we want to find the thought behind it. What was it that you were thinking that led you to feel that emotion and to do those things? And this is the think, feel, do cycle that I spoke about in episode 41 which is working it backwards. And we're doing that just to bring awareness to what's going on.

This is what we do all the time in The Flow Collective, figure things out, bring awareness and decide if we want to keep doing these same things,

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and sometimes we do. Or if we want to change things if we want to. So remember the study that I mentioned earlier on where they took images of the participants brains as they were thinking about a time when they experienced rejection. The key piece of that is that they were thinking about rejection which is why it's so important to figure out the thoughts you are having that are causing you to feel and experience rejection because it's all coming from your thoughts.

I'm going to talk in a moment about how that's actually optional. But let's return to this example that my client gave me. So she posted her self-coaching, and again I'm just going to generalise it for you. She shared on how dates she often censors herself and how this stems from a thought that she needs to be who they want her to be. And that when she's thinking that she feels fear because she's worried about being rejected. And what happens is she ends up not being herself and not connecting with the people that she's on dates with.

Now, I have a feeling that many of you are going to be nodding along to this because you've had the same experience somehow. This is why I'm such a big believer in group coaching and having a community where we can all share these stories and self-coaching. Because it's just such a relief to know that it's not just you, that other people's brains are doing the exact same things that yours is. So I read her self-coaching which is the process that I teach you how to do. And she'd already uncovered so much by herself which was amazing.

And then this is the coaching that I went on to offer her. So what I did was just point out what happens when she's in this cycle. And just to go through it again so it's really clear in your mind, the cycle is she's thinking that she can't be herself because if she is she'll be rejected. So then she feels fear. And of course that impacts her nervous system, and it impacts her behaviour, of course it would. It makes so much sense, very understandable. But what ultimately happens is three things.

She experiences rejection ahead of time. This happens so often with all sorts of emotions. We don't want to experience an emotion, so we try to

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avoid it by altering our behaviour in the world. And all that happens is that we experience it in our minds anyway. And instead of giving the other person a chance to reject you, you reject yourself. Let that sink in because when I pointed this out to my client her mind was blown. So instead of giving the other person a chance to reject you, you reject yourself.

I'm pausing so you can really let that sink in because you reject yourself by not being you. And the third thing that happens when you're in a cycle like this is you don't give the other person a chance to accept you because you're not being yourself around them. You're giving them this other version of you. I've actually just thought of a fourth thing. The whole time that this is going on, you're also deepening the belief that you aren't acceptable or lovable as you are. So think about what that does to your relationship with yourself. It's pretty crap.

So fear of rejection is crippling, and it costs us so much. So think for a moment about where fear of rejection shows up in your life. And I want to offer that this will likely appear any time you do something slightly out of the ordinary for you. Basically anything that draws attention to you will probably – or that could bring attention to you, it's not necessarily going to but in our minds, we make this a very big thing. So any time we do something that's slightly bigger than we're used to doing, or a bit different to how we usually do things, it probably brings up the fear of being rejected.

So just know that when that happens you don't have to make it mean anything. You can just think of it as step one in the process and then move on to whatever step two looks like for you. And when I'm saying out of the ordinary it might feel very you to you, it might not. But if you've been hiding parts of yourself in order to try and avoid rejection then it may be different for other people. They may not be used to you being this way.

Recently I decided one morning to just take Nelson up to London for a couple of days, spur of the moment decision and Paul made a comment that he was surprised how spontaneous I was being. And I was just so shocked that he thinks I'm not spontaneous because I think of myself as being spontaneous. Now, it wasn't an occasion where I was fearing

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rejection but it's a good example of how we are and how other people think of us can be wildly different. And that goes in all kinds of directions, that's a podcast for another day.

But also just to mention, people think about you far less than you think they do. Again, that's a podcast for another day as well. But sticking with the theme of rejection, any time you have an idea, any time you create something or have a goal, a dream of some kind, even just the smallest of inclinations and ideas, fear of rejection will emerge somehow, it's just how we're wired.

But in order to lean into doing whatever it is, you will have to risk disapproval, perhaps risk being disliked, even risk having haters. But when you do that it's amazing because what happens is you will approve yourself. You don't need other people to approve of you, you will approve yourself. You will validate yourself. You will accept yourself. And then it matters far, far less what other people think. Please hear me when I say this because never in a million years did I ever think I would be able to deal with haters.

This is the kind of thing that used to completely rock me. It would paralyze me, I'd just descend into doom and gloom, obsessive thinking, and just think that I'm an awful person. So thank goodness for thought work and learning how to regulate my nervous system because without it, there's no way I'd be able to have these big audacious goals and dreams about the impact I want to have in the world and the life that I want to have. There's no way I'd be able to show up in the ways that I do on the podcast, having a membership, writing books.

And listen, it literally doesn't matter who you are or what you do, some people won't be into you, they won't like what you do or who you are, how you do things and there's nothing that you can do about it. Because even if you go to the lengths required for those people to like you, the other people who are actually your people won't like you. And think about how much time and energy you spend thinking about the people who just aren't into

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you versus the people who love you to bits and want more of you exactly as you are.

So think about your life and your goals. Are you ready to accept and love yourself, you? Forget about other people for a moment because that's the path to meeting those goals. If you stick with rejecting yourself in whatever ways you are currently doing that, it's going to take a long time to achieve those goals, or you never will. So are you willing to risk rejection from others in order to get there? Because here's the thing, other people can 'reject you' in terms of them saying or doing something but you don't have to feel rejected. You don't have to feel rejection, that's optional.

The only reason you would feel rejected is because you think thoughts that generate the emotion of feeling rejected because there will be times, I am sure, in your life where you have been told no and you didn't feel rejected, you were just told no. Last year I applied for two things that I was sold on doing, master coach training and taking part in my coach's mastermind group. And when I say sold, what I mean is that I had completely convinced myself 100% on doing those two things.

Now, had I been told no for either one of those things, I've thought about this a lot, and I was thinking, how would I have felt if I had been told no? And I actually went there in my mind in the application process and even just reflecting back on it now, if I'd have been told no, I don't think I would have felt rejection. For a start, there's no way I would have accepted a no, just to be clear. I would have fought for my place. I would have told them that they'd made a mistake and just sold them on why they should say yes and offer me a place because that's how sold I was on me doing those things.

I would have gone for it and just let them know, "I think you've made a mistake here, these are the reasons why I am the best person to take part in this. Here, let me sell you on why." Because I had that level of belief. The reason I would have been able to do that is because I'd self-coached the shit out of myself. I had developed that rock solid belief in who I am. So even if they'd still said no, I wouldn't have made that mean anything about

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me. Getting a no wouldn't have meant anything about me. Plus I also know that being told no is sometimes the seed of massive growth.

I would have been able to take that no and use it for fuel, not in a, well, I'm going to prove you wrong way. But I'm not going to lie, I'm sure there would have been a smidge of that. But I'm thinking about it more in a let me get curious about this kind of way. Why did they say no?

What are they seeing in my application that I am not seeing in myself? In what ways am I not ready to be in either of these groups? And what growth is available to me without being in those rooms? What do I need to do to ensure that I get to do it the next time I have a chance to apply? What haven't I addressed yet that I can? So sometimes what we're calling here is rejection can be the best thing for us. It can be such a gift.

Okay my loves that is it for today. If you found this helpful and you want to learn how to coach yourself as well as get coached and be part of our amazing community, definitely get your name on the wait list for The Flow Collective, put a reminder in your calendar for March 2nd to 7th. And I will see you next week. Have a good one.

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.