

Ep #62: The Importance of Celebrating Yourself



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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.

My friends, I am so excited to be here with you today. This is going to be a really fun episode for me, and I think for you as well as you're listening. It's just going to be one big celebration because I'm going to be talking to you about the importance of celebrating. So last week I spoke to you about values. And I shared how one of our company values is that we take the time to celebrate everything. And that spread through into our community inside The Flow Collective, so kind of got me thinking about this.

And I want to talk about why I've been so intentional about celebrating, the impact that it has as well as the challenges because it sounds great. On paper, celebrating sounds fun, it sounds great. But it can actually be very uncomfortable and really challenging. So I wanted to get some other people's perspective on this. So I asked the members of The Flow Collective to weigh in on it. And I'm excited to share some of their thoughts and experiences with you as we talk today.

And also my friend, my bestie, Mars Lord who's been on the podcast before. She's a member of The Flow Collective, she also coaches inside The Flow Collective. She's amazing. And she said something in this discussion that is going to blow your mind when I share it with you. So stay tuned for that. But basically this is a midweek celebration for you. You're going to feel so uplifted and inspired by what I'm going to share with you today.

And I really encourage you to actively celebrate yourself more because our brains just have this negativity bias. They always go to what's wrong, what isn't working, and it's so important to see what is working, what you have

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succeeded in, if only for a little bit of balance otherwise we're just living in the land of doom and gloom, and criticism, and I think that's pretty crap.

So this is what my client Rachel shared. So I just asked them all to share what they have found hard about celebrating or what they still find hard about celebrating and also the difference it's made. And this is what Rachel said. She said, "I love the celebrations. It's too common for our brains to focus on all the things we still need to do, or what we didn't do. Intentionally spending time celebrating all the awesome things we did do or what we decided to do differently for ourselves, or simply celebrating who we are helps to balance the score. I find it is a way to create more joy, safety and presence."

Yes, couldn't agree more, Rachel. And the other reason to do this is that when you take the time to do it you can figure out how you've created these amazing results so that then you can recreate those results again or you can spread it into other areas of your life. So it's worth not only standing in your achievements and celebrating them but really taking the time to unpack them and figure out how you do it. And I recommend doing this in excruciating detail because our brains want to just breeze past this basically.

And the more you can be in the celebration and experience that for yourself but also take some time to reflect on why you created this result, how you did it. Because then you can just keep doing it and keep doing it. Okay, the other thing to consider is that it's important that we give our nervous system signals that it's safe for us to be seen in our brilliance and to be celebrated. If you don't do this your nervous system is more likely to take the standpoint of standing out being dangerous.

And my colleague and friend, Else Kramer, we're doing master coach training together. She recently told me about something called tall poppy syndrome which is described as a cultural phenomenon in which there's a perceived tendency to discredit or disparage those who have achieved success. So basically their achievements make them stand out so they're

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more likely to be chopped back down to whatever the acceptable size is. And it really resonated with me when I heard her talking about it.

Now, this is a point that someone, one of my clients made but they want to remain anonymous. And they shared, "I have had and still have a hard time with weekly wins." Because we post the weekly wins thread every Friday in our community. "But it's been an amazing opportunity to get curious and think about why. I realise I'm so wired to focus on the things that go or have gone wrong and a large part of that is neurodivergence. And it feeds into my global thinking, i.e. why does this always happen to me? Nothing ever goes right etc, etc, not helpful.

Initially I thought I had no wins to celebrate at all, but I loved your encouragement that even the smallest things can count as a win and even a fail can be a win. I think I'm still having a hard time posting because I'm realising I have a hard time believing I deserve to be celebrated and that I'm scared of taking up space. What if I get hurt? So I protect myself from celebrating myself. I am learning that I'm actually perpetuating ideas that harm me more.

So I love being able to practice with The Flow Collective where I can celebrate with fellow Flowers as well as be celebrated in the most wholesome environment. My biggest win to memory was last week after a storm of a week." There has been, I will say, an actual storm in the UK. This isn't what this person is referring to. They're talking about what's been going on in their lives.

"So my biggest win to memory was last week after a storm of a week deciding to choose to have a lovely birthday and feel good, which honestly I didn't think I had a drop of joy in me. Then having a wholesome and joyful day, you can choose", was their final comment because we talk all the time how you can choose. And I think this just illustrates the point so well that standing out can really feel unsafe.

I understand this so much. This has been a lot of my work that I have done and overcome, because we think it's better to just keep ourselves small by

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minimising and diminishing our achievements. And that's actually what isn't safe because we cause harm to ourselves in the process. And one way of addressing this is to just practice celebrating yourself in environments where it's welcomed so that you can build those neural pathways that it's safe for you to do this, that nothing bad is going to happen if you do this.

So just think for a moment, is there a place, a particular community you're a part of, maybe a person that you know where you can do that? If you really don't have a place or a person where you can do that, really, then you can do it for you. You can find that safety, create that safety within yourself.

So my friend Mars and I, we send each other these daily brags over WhatsApp every day pretty much without fail, sometimes there's a bit of a backlog and we go back several days of what all our brags have been. But we send each other daily brags. And I won't speak for her, but it's made a massive difference to me.

So speaking of Mars, Naomi said, "One of the things I think about on a day-to-day basis is Mars' pronouns being she, her, goddess. It's something that is small and easy to remember. When I think of Maisie, and Mars I think of people who celebrate themselves unashamedly but somehow manage to do it without putting others down. For me the difficulty in taking up space is that I equate space taking with harming others. And I know this is something I need to tease apart."

Okay, Naomi, we are going to need to coach on this. You know I wasn't going to let that one slide. We're going to post about this in the community. But this is so common, so, so common that we think if we take up space that we're taking it away from someone else. So Naomi continues, "When others celebrate me I feel exposed and seen which makes me want to shrink down. I feel unsafe which is pretty illogical because people are celebrating me."

What Maisie's done in The Flow Collective is create a space where it's very clear that we are safe and that helps me to open up and actually feel the benefits of celebrating myself." Well, congratulations, Naomi, on going for

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it. Okay, now, this is what Mars replied to Naomi, are you ready for this? Mars said, “When we take up space we create space.” Isn’t that amazing? I’m going to say it again for you.

“When we take up space we create space. Let’s look at Maisie, she took up space to talk, teach and educate on menstrual health. In taking up space she created space. So come, take your space, and do what you’ve seen, create space.” Mars just blew everyone’s mind with that comment on the thread. The number of responses were huge. But it’s so true but we just don’t think about it that way because we’ve been socialised to think that it’s bad and we shouldn’t do it. And who do you think you are? What’s so special about you?

So it’s even better if you are in a community where it’s actively encouraged like The Flow Collective. And I would say it actually goes beyond being encouraged. We’re really big on this. And I particularly love it when the members post before the wins thread goes up because they just literally can’t hold it in. And it’s such a great example of taking up space which of course we want you all to be doing. And for me it’s always really interesting to note when people reach that point.

So they might start off feeling hesitant to post or downplaying their wins thinking they don’t have any, starting to find some. And then they kind of build that muscle and they do it more and more. And then all of a sudden they’re not even waiting for that thread. They’re just posting their celebrations whenever they’re happening. And I love to see that because that’s just an example of what happens in our community. But then the ripple effects of what’s going on outside The Flow Collective and in their own lives is huge.

So whether you’re in The Flow Collective or not, I really want you to celebrate yourself more, please do this for yourself. Because I know if you’re listening to the podcast and you’re using what I share here in your own life, there’s going to be things there to celebrate. And when you’re doing things that are challenging, that do require growth, that require you to step up somehow.

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And when you're unwinding decades long beliefs and behaviours, when you're doing things differently to those around you, when you're breaking a habit, when you're forming a habit. We want to give our brains that dopamine hit of some kind. And celebrating can do that if you're willing to get past perhaps some initial discomfort of doing so. But I promise it gets easier. This is a muscle that you will build.

The other thing we're in the habit of doing is minimising and dismissing, discounting our achievements. And I know, I see you. I know some of my clients don't post on our celebration threads because they don't think that their win is significant enough to justify posting about it. And that's a load of BS. And this goes for all of you who are listening as well. There will be places in your life where you do this too. There's places in my life where I do it too. I'm working on it. But never justify your successes, they all count.

And if I get a whiff of you doing this in our community, I have been known to ask members to edit their post or their comment and to change the language so that they're not playing it down. And I'm very willing to continue to do this for you all. And I've got to say, the community has really embraced this. And often I'll go to comment, and someone's actually already beaten me to it, which is amazing.

So my client, Celin shared, "For a long time I found it too uncomfortable to post a weekly win. I was stuck in compare and despair and felt anything I had to say would not be good enough. In recent months I've brought in some boundaries and now truly believe a win is a win no matter how big or small and they all deserve to be celebrated. I love seeing everyone else's so why can't mine be on there too? And why did I ever have one standard for others and another for myself?"

It's also helped to drop some unhelpful thoughts around posting the right way in the community thread and coming across as big-headed, whatever the fuck that means. Such an unhelpful bit of conditioning. The two most significant wins I've had and posted about were when I managed to leave a note for my partner to let him know my post-ovulation dip was coming. And

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the other was the week I finally decided that I'm not available for compare and despair." That is so cool.

And this is stuff that we're all working on, I am at least. And I'm pretty good at celebrating myself but there is still areas of my life, there's still times where I catch myself not celebrating or minimising my achievements. So I am continually working on creating that safety for myself in order to celebrate. And if I don't catch myself usually one of my friends will pull me up on it and then I'll squirm in the awkwardness of the realisation, and they'll laugh at me, and I'll laugh at me.

It's the best thing about having coaches for friends, you just can't get anything past them, it's the best and it can be annoying.

So, Claire said, "Well, if you're not going to celebrate yourself, who else is going to? Honestly, it's been such a gamechanger because so often our culture only celebrates reaching milestones. But I've had a huge mindset shift where instead I celebrate the process of showing up to something." That's so good, Claire.

"I acknowledge realisation where old habits rear their head and just celebrate myself for noticing that rather than berating myself that yes, I am a recovering people pleaser. And also stepping out of the queue for the validation vending machine and making your own wins." Claire, I love that you said this because isn't it weird how it's socially acceptable for us to celebrate pregnancy and getting married? But when it comes to anything else it's kind of frowned on. So this is big work that we're doing here, this is why we want to be celebrating.

We don't want to just be valued because we can have a baby inside us and marry someone. I mean yeah, let's celebrate that as well when it happens. That's amazing too. But there's more to us than that. So this is where Celin also jumped back in and said, "I agree that it's another area we can be taking responsibility for ourselves." So all of you think about that for a moment. What would your life look like if you took responsibility for celebrating yourself? I think that would be a really powerful shift.

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So, Celin continues, “It’s such a big exercise in putting one’s values into action rather than waiting to be validated and recognised by others and valuing ourselves and the way we show up.” This is so good. I’m so glad we had this discussion and I get to share all these with everyone. Because that is the whole point of the wins thread really, that you celebrate yourself because of course other members will often comment and celebrate you but that’s not the point.

The point is that this becomes so natural to you that you don’t need other people to praise you. Of course it’s nice when they acknowledge you. Of course it feels good. But we want it to be the cherry on top instead of the whole thing, which is also what my client, Melanie said, “I’m not looking for validation from other people so much anymore. Of course it’s nice if you can celebrate with other people but I’ve realised that I can and deserve to celebrate the things that are important to me no matter what.

I see all the wins more easily and I look out for wins in situations that previously I maybe wouldn’t have associated with wins. And sometimes I can’t wait to share them even though it’s only Monday and we share our wins on Fridays.” This is so interesting because when you train your brain to look for the wins you will start to see them even in places you don’t think they’ll be. Think about the impact of that.

It kind of reminds me when I’m walking to school with my son and we do these challenges where we look for things that are a particular colour, or we’ll look for a certain number and there’s house numbers everywhere. So there’s numbers there and we can get into a bit of a rhythm with them. But then the impact of that is that we start seeing those numbers in other places. We see them on bins, on car registration license plates, we see them on drains, all sorts of places. And this is what happens when you’re in the practice of looking for wins and things to celebrate.

Okay, Inga said, “There’s a lot to celebrate even in hard times, even when I think everything is shit there’s always something to celebrate. For example, allowing myself to feel shit.” Inga, I love that you brought this up because it’s not always about feeling great and life going perfectly. Sometimes the

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win is being able to feel like shit without making it mean anything about you.

So as you're listening to this, what could you celebrate? Think about the last week and find all the things that you could choose to celebrate if you let yourself. And I know that if you're not in the habit of doing this you might struggle to find things initially. So what I've done is pulled some anonymous examples from this week's win thread in our community just to help get you thinking about what you could celebrate and just kind of get you started. So here we go. Are you ready for this? It was so hard. I've got quite a few for you but it's just a segment of it, there were so many more.

Okay, a big win for me is being kinder to myself especially during my luteal phase. A second win, I have become such a rockstar at saying bye to people pleasing habits. And I made another delicious set of fried eggs. I finished work at my actual contracted finish time every day. I went to bed with my kids last night. I haven't let myself do this since the new-born days, it was bliss.

I spoke to my husband every night for about half an hour before bed about my feelings and the day which involved me crying every time which I usually try to avoid. He listened, I didn't require saving and I felt seen and heard in a safe way, something I struggle with and I'm rewiring. I worked from my bed and in my pyjamas on day one. That's day one of the period. And felt no guilt, it allowed me to recover quickly from the cramps and intense fatigue. I'm meeting my massive action goal.

Last night at short notice I had to step into the president's role. I think this person was at a local meeting of some kind or a work meeting. So I had to step into the president's role and stand in front of the group to welcome them and talk through the business part of the meeting. After an initial panic I coached myself and did it and it went well. I have a sense of trust that I can face what life brings me without abandoning my needs. And that is a win I could endlessly cry tears of joy over.

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I self-coached before work and really thought about how I wanted to feel during and after it. I discussed some career goals with my boyfriend and went into it backing myself and feeling convinced. So any response from him would be okay and not mean anything about my goals. In the past I would make any glimmer of doubt from another person mean that it wasn't a good idea or too ambitious of a goal, or I just wouldn't share it at all.

I reminded myself throughout the week that I am my own best friend. I caught myself out in my need to please people and to put extra deadlines on myself, instead of replying, "Sure I can get those to you by the end of the day", I took a breath, asked what the delivery timeline was and gave myself an extra 10 days to do the task without the hassle. Nervous system says thanks. I had an uncomfortable talk with my man and did not go into desperation afterwards, managed with his help to really feel that this was safe and nothing bad is going to happen afterwards.

I masturbated. I've got to say I did that too this week and I think that's always such a great win. I got engaged and I learnt something new about my body, thanks to seeing people here post about post-ovulation dips, I paid attention and noticed this in myself this week.

I accepted that my back pain isn't minor, and something got trapped. In the past I would have pushed through the pain. Today I called in sick and made lots of phone calls to finally find an osteopath who is available today. I feel proud of myself for taking responsibility, for being kind to myself, and for literally having my own back. Acknowledging the disappointment that my husband is stuck away from home for the night due to the weather, because there's been this storm here. But then realising I can feel excited about having me time. I love that.

If we kind of acknowledge and make space for the emotions that maybe don't feel so good to us, it often paves the way for other ones. Okay, one of my clients posted a grand total of 15 wins for this week alone. So although I'm not going to mention their name I do want to publicly acknowledge and celebrate them for celebrating themselves so hard.

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Okay, someone else said, I got an early period this month after a late one last month. They do seem to be kind of regulating themselves. But rather than be hard on myself and blame myself I decided to just accept it. My relationship with and ability to show up for myself has moved forward a lot this week. I listened to my body and was active and decisive, and also rested when I wanted to. I didn't have feelings of hustling or the urgency of filling half term, it's been holidays here in the UK, with a long to do list.

I felt at home in my body this week and enjoyed my own company. I entered my winter on Tuesday and let myself feel all the feels without letting my brain think too long about the worst things. I heard my inner voice, my intuition, it's a result from working intensively on experiencing my emotions for about a year. Majorly good stuff happening at work and being reminded by Maisie's podcast on values that I've chosen my career path in line with my values and that makes my heart sing.

I cancelled a meeting with friends because of the storm, they still wanted to meet but I didn't feel comfortable at all with that, and I did not feel guilt or shame but just neutral. Coaching myself about how I want my relationship with work to be and feeling so much more spacious and less stressed as a result. I didn't judge myself for taking time off work when I was bleeding and in pain. I asked my boyfriend for support and allowed myself to feel vulnerable and it was good and helped the pain to go away.

Another client has got a new job and they shared, "Before joining The Flow Collective I never would have thought I would be so empowered to make this massive choice for me and my life. Serious transformation has been happening for me and it's all come to the surface this week." We also had someone else passing their driving test. Another person spoke to their partner about getting a vasectomy and he agreed. So isn't that amazing? My clients are the best. I love you all so much.

Alright, before we finish you up I want to remind you that our brains can be really ridiculous when it comes to celebrating ourselves. So this is something to be on the lookout for. Is your brain being ridiculous and telling you things that aren't true? There is no right amount of celebrating. It might

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feel like there's an acceptable amount. Other people around you, society may have told you that you can do it a little, but you can't do it more. I am inviting you to boldly go beyond that and to stretch your capacity for celebrating yourself.

I'm going to finish off with something Inga said which is, "What I love most about the wins is reading other people's wins. There's so much joy, pride and amazing stuff in there and I love how our community holds space for that and celebrates with others." I love that too. And I hope that in listening to today's episode you've been able to experience some of that inspiration and to get a sense of what being in The Flow Collective is like.

Friday is such an amazing day in our community. They all are pretty special, but Friday is when we all come together and intentionally celebrate. And you're going to be able to join us soon because the doors are opening to new members in a few weeks' time, in March. And we've got some big plans for the next few months. I have been thinking about how I can make it inevitable that you'll get results. And what's coming up in The Flow Collective over the next few months is reflective of that.

So if you want to be celebrating on our wins thread, there's going to be so many opportunities to do just that. And I'd love to have you join us. So make sure you head to the show notes and use the link to get on the wait list or you can just go to maisiehill.com click on The Flow Collective and stick your name on the wait list and we'll let you know when the doors open. And we look forward to celebrating with you.

Okay folks, that's it for today, I hope that has given you the biggest midweek boost. It has just lit me up reading through this today. And I hope that you've been able to get that too. Alright, I'll catch 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.