

Ep #104: Congruency



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

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Welcome to episode 104. I am and sold I'm going to be talking about being congruent and doing things in alignment. The podcast has a new name and new music. Let's go.

If you want to do things differently but need some help making it happen then tune in for your weekly dose of coaching from me, Maisie Hill, Master Life Coach and author of Period Power. Welcome to The Maisie Hill Experience.

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening, welcome to The Maisie Hill. Yeah, the rebrand has finally happened. It's been a long time coming and it hasn't happened exactly how I imagined it would all play out. And it's been a really interesting experience to go through. But before I dive into today's episode, I have a big announcement. On December 27th, 28th and 29th, I'm hosting an event called Recalibrate and Activate.

We're going to be meeting every day for three days and spending time together in community. So, whether you're feeling a bit alone at this time of year and you want to connect with likeminded people or you could do with a reason to escape your loved ones, now you have the perfect excuse. We're going to be reflecting on the year in a very specific intentional way. And I'll be guiding you to create your vision for the year ahead. It's going to be highly transformative. You will experience shifts during those three days. And those shifts will continue to ripple out into all of 2023.

You're going to activate your future self and bring some intentionality to the next 12 months. And it's completely free to take part. I highly recommend that you do take part because this is an opportunity to connect with who you are and what you want for your life. This is serious. I treat this very seriously. It is of the utmost importance. But that doesn't mean we're not going to have some fun along way. I've got some fun surprises planned. So, if you're already on my email list then just open up the emails about this, follow the instructions, they're there.

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If you're not on my list, then use the form in the show notes or via my website and social media so that you can take part. It's going to be a lot of fun and I can't wait to see how it unfolds in each of you.

Okay, if you've been listening to the previous episodes of the podcast then you'll know that I've been going through an identity shift for some time. Really, I'd say for the past couple of years, maybe actually longer than that. But I think I spent the first 12 months trying to resist it and then another year kind of straddling two worlds. And whilst all this was going on I was making things work and they did work but I had this sense of obligation that sometimes felt quite heavy and affected my decisions, and how I made decisions.

And I spoke about this in a previous episode, it might be last week's, I can't remember the order in which these are coming out, but it was with my coach, Robin, where we were speaking about the difference for me between feeling obligated to people and obligated to my work and by my work, I mean the things that I'm here to do in the world. So, things, they were going well but it was just requiring a lot for me to do it. And I'm not against hard work. I absolutely love hard work.

So, I'm not against doing it but you know when it's like the kind of hard work where it feels like you're putting in effort but it's like pushing a wheel up a hill and you can do it, you can get the wheel up the hill, but the nature of the wheel is that it wants to go downhill? That's what I mean. And once I realised this was what's going on, I decided to remember who I am. And I went through this very intentional process of coming back to myself. And here's how I would describe what this whole thing felt like.

It felt like rather than all the bits of me being inside of me and able to strengthen, and nourish, and support me, is like they just were kind of outside of me and not congruent. As if pieces of me had moved beyond my being and because of that they were no longer in alignment. And that was affecting how I was showing up and the things that I was doing. And this happens when you try to be anyone other than you, or when you contort

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yourself to fit other people's expectations of you and your expectations of yourself.

Those things aren't congruent with who you are. And what I was doing didn't feel entirely congruent with who I am and what I'm here to do. And congruence is what I want to talk about today and congruency means the quality or state of agreeing, coinciding and it can also be a congruence of values. And congruence is really important to me. I have a good sense of it in my body. It's something that I use to make decisions. It's something that I use when I'm coaching someone, especially when I'm coaching someone about their business.

So, if I'm coaching my business clients or my colleagues, then I'll often be thinking, is what they're proposing, is their idea, the things they're saying they want to do, congruent with their values, who they are, their brand position?

And recently I coached a couple of businessowners who had an idea for a process within their business. And as we spoke about it, I just had this sense, this doesn't feel congruent. So, we returned to their values, what they teach their clients. And as soon as I was asking them those questions it was really obvious to them that the strategy, they'd come up with wasn't congruent with who they are as people because there was two of them, and the identity of their business.

Now, the strategy they proposed was a good one. Had they used it I'm sure they would have got good results from it, done a decent job. It would have helped their clients. But it wasn't in alignment with their values, and their process, and just way of doing things. So, the image that I have of congruency, or rather the feeling of it is if you imagine a pole with lots of circular discs going up its length. And each of those discs has a hole in it so that when the discs are all lined up perfectly the holes in each of the discs form a tube that runs down the length of the pole that they're on.

So, it becomes like a marble run. A marble could travel through those holes but these discs, just because of the nature of life they're moving around the

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pole at different speeds and how far the marble can travel depends on how synced up each of those discs are. And there's that moment where they all line up in perfect synchronicity and the marble goes whoosh, all the way down. It's able to operate at its highest level. Its effect is at its greatest. It's doing what it's designed to do. And when that happens it, all feels more robust.

It's almost like a tightening happening but it's not a tightness, it's like a gathering, a gathering of coming together. And when that alignment happens it creates a source of strength and momentum, things just feel right. And I would love for you to think about a time when you have experienced this, which I hope you have, of things just settling into place, coming to a decision. It's almost like a sense of returning or arrival, that then creates some forward movement in that exact moment.

Or maybe there was a time when things haven't felt congruent. Try and remember that sense in your body, what did it feel like? And by way, I have to jump in and add a caveat here because I just mentioned congruence in relation to making decisions. You don't have to delay decisions because you don't feel this, please don't do that. I mean there might be times when it's a good idea too. But often we get to this place of alignment and congruence by making decisions and testing things out.

I have a feeling that some of you might use a lack of this feeling to avoid making decisions and taking actions. So, if that's you, just be on to yourself. So, when things haven't felt congruent to you, it's most likely because it went against your values in some way or your sense of yourself. You could think about this as the core version of you, your core identity.

For instance, once upon a time when my membership first started it wasn't profitable. I've shared this story before but to begin with there were months when I would use the money from my one-on-one clients to support the membership. And I was very intentional about investing in my business in order to support its long-term growth. I wasn't thinking about the first year. I was thinking about the first 10 years.

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And I knew that to grow a business I needed to invest in my brain and my development as a businessowner, and CEO, and coach and also invest in the business itself in paying contractors, paying for software and the many, many other things that an online membership requires. So, for that first year I didn't pay myself. There was nothing to pay myself with.

I was taking money from other places to pay for it. And I was able to do that because at the time Period Power was sold to a couple of publishers in other countries. They bought the rights to publish it. So, I received an advance from my second book deal as well. But it was still tight, there was enough to pay for childcare and stuff like that, but it was tight. And there was a point where our toilet broke. And we didn't have the money to get a new one and have it installed.

And then I did make some money, but I decided to spend it on a coaching programme which was the best decision ever because I started making more money as a result of that coaching. But then we couldn't get a new toilet because it was the first lockdown.

Anyway, at this time when I wasn't paying myself, a large company asked me to do a paid partnership with them on Instagram. And they offered me thousands of pounds to do it. It was very tempting because we needed a new toilet. Every time it needed to be flushed, we had to lift the back of the toilet up, press one of the parts down so it filled up with water so that we could flush it. So, I was faced with this decision, well, we could really do with this money, it would make a big difference to our lives right now. But I was holding back which was telling in and of itself.

So, I spoke about it with Paul. I also had a great conversation with Gabby Edlin who founded Bloody Good Period. She was incredibly helpful, and they both gave me the space to figure it out. As I said, even the fact that I was needing to talk it through with them is significant. So that's clue number one, that something was off, something isn't in alignment here. And basically, I just couldn't bring myself to take their money because it didn't feel congruent. Their values, the history of the company just felt out of alignment with my values and mission.

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So, when things feel incongruent to you, figure out why. See if you can trace it back to your values because that's often what's at play. And when you bring awareness to that it makes deciding what course of action to take, or what course of action not to take, very obvious. But it can also be about if you are living your mission, are you taking actions in alignment with your purpose in life?

And if you have no clue what that is or you want to explore this in more depth then come to Recalibrate and Activate, the event I mentioned that's happening December 27th through 29th because we're going to be tapping into all of that. I will share another example of this from my own life. Before I jump into this I just want to say, notice how my belief about myself, my truth is that I am good at spotting when things don't feel in alignment and noticing things that aren't congruent. And yet this still happens to me. There's no getting away from this. This happens for everyone.

So, this other example is back to the beginnings of the membership. We were doing a lot of great things, things that were helping our clients to get results. But to go back to the image of the pole with the discs on it, looking back now it's so obvious to me that things weren't fully lined up. They were in places for large stretches but not entirely. And that's because I felt obligated to help people who had issues with their cycle rather than what I wanted to do was general life coaching through the lens of understanding how hormones and stress responses affect things.

But I didn't have the full awareness of that at the time. I was kind of jostling with it a bit, I had this inkling. But if you go back to the episode I did about identity shifts, I was in the early stages of that process. And I don't think I would have got there, as in here now if I wasn't willing to create it and test things out. And it's not even really about what I was doing. It was more about how I was doing it, the place, the energy from which the action I was taking was coming from.

And what's cool about coming back to congruency is that once you do that, you don't necessarily have to change what you're doing. You might decide to change some things, but some things will remain the same. So, the

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action you're taking might not change at all but how you do it, the place that you do it from will be different and you will feel that, and other people will feel it too.

And that first year of the membership was so close to being congruent and in alignment within me. It was just those few discs there were facing the wrong way and preventing the marble from travelling all the way down and creating the fullest expression of itself. So, whilst it was all working well, nothing wrong with it but there was even more available by coming into congruence. But I wouldn't have gotten to being congruent without doing it. If I just sat around waiting for congruency to arrive, we'd all still be waiting for the membership to exist. And this is where perfectionism trips us up.

Because imagine if I'd put myself first instead of being willing to risk failure, and this is what I point out to my business coaching clients and sometimes my colleagues as well. the whole time that you as a businessowner are umming and arring in your head, you're thinking about you. And the whole time you're thinking about you, your ideal clients are out there in need of your help, waiting for you to just get it together so that you can put their need for help above your need to play it safe. Which you can do once you realise that you can create safety for yourself, and that you can put yourself out there.

So, to come into congruence you need to have awareness. You need to sense when things are off. And here are some things that can help you with that. Space, space in your day, and that doesn't need to be four hour stretches by the way. It can be buffers of time in between things that you're doing so that you're not rushing all the time.

It can also be mental space, give yourself the mental bandwidth to actually figure things out and notice. And you can do that by doing thought downloads which is just getting what's going on in your brain onto paper, or doing a voice note, anything that works for you kind of in that realm. You can also get coached, and we can help you with this in the membership because you get so much coaching. We have the group calls. You can get

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individual written coaching that's included in your membership, unlimited amounts of it.

And it's only £69 a month, that's £2.30 a day to get personal coaching in addition to all the group calls and a course where I teach you how to coach yourself, and the webinars and workshops. So, what you get for what you pay for is massively skewed in your favour because I really want you to join. I know what's possible as a result of what we teach and the high level of coaching that we provide.

You can also get space from talking to someone else about what's going on and this can be a bit tricky because friends and loved ones tend to weigh in with their opinions. And they share what they would do or what they think you should do. And that can confuse things.

Sometimes it can help you to confirm your decisions, if you've got that inner conviction in the midst of what they're saying, or it might offer you other options that you haven't thought about and that can be helpful. But if you're unsure in any way then chances are you'll just get more confused or go along with what they recommend because that's what humans do. But this is the difference between a friendship and a coaching relationship. And as a coach I don't tell my client's what I think they should do. I ask them questions to help them see things clearly.

I mean I will say, sometimes I do throw a suggestion out there. But when I do that, it's intentional and I'm kind of doing it for a particular reason. But I won't say that because it'll spoil things for my clients. But being asked questions is helpful because it helps you return to congruence, gives you those opportunities.

So, you can request that your friends help you by asking questions which is basically asking them to coach you. But I would offer that that is more useful than them telling you what they think you should do. Because that's potentially going to bring you out of alignment. Remember how I said earlier about feeling like being out of alignment feels like the kind of pieces are out of you because you're doing stuff that's what other people would do

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or what you think you ought to be doing because of what other people are going to think of you, all of those things.

Rather than returning to you, returning to your truth, your inner guidance system and acting in alignment with that. Now, the thing about being congruent is it requires you to take risks. That's a good thing. Maybe might feel uncomfortable but it's a good thing. There are things that I don't want to do but I know I need to do them. It's what the work I do requires of me. And once I use thought work, and body awareness, and nervous system regulation I come into congruence. And that makes it easier to then do the things that I initially don't want to do because I know it's what's required.

When I was going through this identity shift, I realised the places where things felt out of alignment. And I just began addressing them one by one. And this is largely all stuff within myself by the way, not much actually changed externally on paper at least, but my experience of them shifted and probably I would guess my clients experience of them also shifted.

And this is an area where a previous version of me would have struggled because any time we change, whether that's coming into congruency or being incongruent. that means how we are being, will be different to other people. Some people will love it, some people will not. And it's fear of this that can prevent you from being congruent with who you are and your purpose or your calling in life. And the more you allow that to happen the further off track you'll be.

So, let's go back to that image of the pole with all the discs and when they're in alignment the marble travels through the tunnel. And it's all smooth, it's quick. When you're incongruent those discs start turning and the tunnel gets cut off in places.

Continue to act out of alignment and more and more discs turn and that's when you end up living a life that doesn't feel like yours. It can still be a good life, there might not be anything wrong with it, but it also doesn't feel right. It just doesn't allow you as an organism here on this planet to live to the fullest expression of you because this is about you being you. It's about

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not lying to yourself about who you are and what you want. That's where the risk comes in.

Congruence requires you to be honest with yourself and that may feel uncomfortable especially if you have unhelpful thoughts standing in your way. So, when I was figuring this out and I was in the messy middle of it all I was very intentional about giving myself a lot of space both in my head and in my schedule. Kind of actually helped that I got COVID at this time and as I was coming out of that and I could actually think straight, I was still very physically tired, but I went through this process of coming back to myself, to remember who I am, and just return to me.

I spent a lot of time by myself, I got coached, I coached myself. I processed a lot of feelings, let me tell you, there were a lot of feelings and I started over. I went back to scratch. I thought about what would I do if nobody knew anything about me, if I felt no obligation to others, if I had no obligations to myself? And I explored things in some one-off sessions, working with consultants who used different methods to me. I exposed myself to different ways of thinking.

I got curious, I listened to music that I haven't listened to in years. Paul my partner has an amazing record collection and a lot of it is music that I haven't listened to at all or a lot. So, most of the time I listen to whatever he puts on and I'm very happy with that, apart from maybe some of the more avantgarde jazz. My ear has developed but there's still some of it I'm like, "This is too much on a sensory level for me."

So, I've discovered a lot of artists that I'm really into but when this process of remembering myself was going on, I started listening to the stuff that I grew up with, the music that I grew up with. I'm a big Wu-Tang Clan fan. I remember hearing them for the first time and being like, "What the hell is this? This is amazing." And my favourite album of theirs is actually a live one. I don't know if it's an official album, but it was for X FM Radio. And it's with the El Michels Affair and it's just so good. And their music has just got this attitude. It's very quick. And I don't mean just in tempo, it's the delivery it's just so point, it's so sharp.

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And I also started listening to the metal and the stoner rock that I also grew up with. I kind of straddled metal, stoner rock and hip hop. I was very into Pantera, and Down, and Kayas. And if you don't know Kayas, they're fantastic. You might know some of the bands that the members went on to be a part of like Queens of the Stone Age and Them Crooked Vultures.

And I share this because it really helped me to tap into a lot of memories from when I was the bar manager of The Crowbar which is, well, it was a pretty legendary bar in Soho. It's no longer there but that place is the home of a lot of stories, many of which will be never publicly spoken about. But let's just say it was frequented by a lot of musicians when they were on tour. There was a lot of mischief that happened there by the customers and the staff alike. And I think I was maybe 20 when I first worked there behind the bar. And then I left, and I went to live New York.

And then when I came back, so I must have been 24 I guess, and this was before I trained as a doula or any of the therapies that I'm now qualified in. I had a few tattoos back then but nowhere near as many as I have now. And The Crowbar was tiny. I think the capacity was 110 people maybe and it was this bottleneck shaped bar. It got crowded because it was open till 3:00am. So, most nights there was a queue to get in once it was after 11. And the amount of smoke before the smoking ban came in was ridiculous. It would be roasting hot there in the summer.

There was an amazing jukebox, it was off fun, but I have to tell you, I took no nonsense. I frequently threw people out of that place sometimes physically, grown men physically, kind of helped that the front door was like a western saloon door, you know, when there's two doors that swing in either direction? It's ideal for throwing people out of because the doors just move if a body is pushed up against them.

And I would cut people off from drinking if I thought they'd had too much to drink and I'd send people home because in a place like that you have to act swiftly, in any place really, whether it's a physical venue, or it's an online community, you have to act swiftly to things. Because what you don't want is a packed bar where everyone's getting on, enjoying the music to

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suddenly turn into something else. And it rarely did and that's because of how intentional the owners were with what they created.

As I'm saying this, I'm like, "That's exactly how I'm like with my community." I created it very intentionally and our clients feel that. We continually receive feedback about how different our online community is to most other places on the internet. We've been very intentional about how it's been created, and we also invite the members to show up in a certain way because my ask is that people interact in the community in a way that's congruent with the purpose and values of it.

So, this isn't a space where you can just come in and dump your stuff and complain and rant about things, no chance. Nobody signed up to experience other people complaining. And I wouldn't be in congruence if I let that shit fly. So, we don't allow that and credit to all of my clients because it happens so, so rarely. And when it does, we just ask someone to notice the energy from which they're posting and to consider how they want to show up and edit their post accordingly.

And that's not just acting in congruence with the purpose of the community, it's also being congruent with my role as their coach. Because pointing this out to someone is coaching. It might not be the coaching they thought they'd get but how we do one thing is how we do most things, and it almost always relates to the situation that they're posting about too. Now, to all of my clients in the membership, remember I said that this rarely happens. You're all doing a great job. I don't want anyone getting scared to post. You just need to keep doing what you're doing because it's great.

Where was I going with this? Yeah, 24-year-old Maisie and how she took no shit. And earlier on this year I was just loving on 24-year-old Maisie so much, just thinking about all of the stuff she did on a daily basis. And thinking I want to bring back some of her. There's definitely parts of younger Maisie that I'm very happy to leave in the past. Bless her cotton socks, love her to bits but no, we're going to keep those in the past.

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But there were parts of me back then that I'm like, "Oh, yeah, I love those bits of me. Let's turn up the dial on those bits of me." And that's what I mean by remembering who I am. I'm coming back to me thinking about the parts of me that have been dialled down that I want to dial up. And in doing so, becoming more congruent, more in alignment with myself and with my purpose and my vision for my life. And what's fascinating about this is that it shifted the energy in which I show up but what I do hasn't changed.

And even with the podcast, I can tell that I create this podcast differently now. I think probably from about August onwards my delivery is different. I don't know if it's different for you as a listener, but my experience of recording is different. So, I imagined that it would be for you receiving it even if it's not something that's fully in your awareness, I think it's probably shifted.

And that my friends is a very long way of sharing why I picked the new music for the podcast. It felt congruent with who I am and the purpose of my podcast, and a representation of who I am and what I am here to do. And as I was picking the music, it just felt like this is significant. I think this is going to be a useful thing for you all to hear about. And it's why the name had to change, and the intro, and the podcast description because they weren't in alignment with the content of the podcast. Many of you know me because of my books, but cycle awareness is a fraction of what I do.

And many of you have told me that when you share the podcast you always give the caveat that it's not really about periods to the people that you're sharing it with. So, I'm very happy, my body's very happy right now that the podcast has a new name and new music because it feels so in alignment with who I am and what I'm here to do.

So, thank you for being here. Thank you for listening. I love creating the podcast for you and I appreciate you all listening and sharing it. We're getting so close to a million downloads. And I would love it if you shared it with a friend or two who would find it helpful to listen. Okay my loves, I will catch you next week. Have a good one.

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