

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

You are listening to episode 112. This one's all about shifting your mindset and thought upgrades.

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*.

Hi there, how are you doing? It has been a while since it was just you and me here together. I have had so much fun recording podcasts with the amazing guests that have been on recently. So thank you to Claire, Sade and Jewel. It's also been really great to hear how helpful those conversations have been for you all as we've been focusing on relationships. But today I want to come back to talking about mindset and the impact of your thoughts. And I'm going to be sharing a process that you can use instantly.

Now, if this is your first time listening to the podcast then welcome, hello, it is great to have you here. This is going to be more of an advanced conversation about thought work and mindset and specifically about thought upgrades. So if you have no clue what thought work is that doesn't mean this episode won't be useful to you. I'm going to lead you into it with some foundational principles. But if you're brand new here then I recommend that you also listen to episode 41 which is an introduction to thought work.

And also whether you've been around here from episode one or you found the podcast recently I want to take a moment to thank you for being here, especially because we recently crossed a huge milestone. A few weeks ago we reached one million downloads of the podcast, which is massive. And I am very thankful to myself for my ongoing commitment to creating it and the ongoing decision to enjoy it. So did you know that you can just decide to enjoy something?

And I also want to thank Pavel, Angelo, Devon and everyone else on the team at Digital Freedom Productions. They are a really high-calibre team to

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

work with. And thank you to all of you for listening. For reviewing the podcast, I love reading your reviews. And for sharing it with your friends and on social media. A million downloads is really something and I know it won't be long until it's one million downloads in a year and then one million a month because I'm just getting started over here.

And I'm thrilled to have you here doing this with me and everyone else taking part alongside you every week. I just love doing this so much.

Alright, let's talk about the impact of your thoughts. So I'm a life coach so I spend a lot of time asking my clients about themselves to help them understand why they do the things they do, to bring awareness to their most practised patterns. And from there they can decide if they want to make changes. Not everything has to be changed but sometimes there's shifts that we do. And in my membership, we help our clients to explore and understand their thoughts, their emotions, their bodily responses, their behaviours.

And it's just this beautiful blend of looking at mindset whilst also appreciating and working with whatever's going on in your body in terms of stress responses and how hormones influence things. And we don't just help them to do that. We actually teach our clients how to do that for themselves, how to self-coach, how to have that awareness, how to have a kind relationship with themselves. And it's just amazing to see the impact of that on their lives. And there's also nuance to what I teach which is what I want to share with you today.

So the foundation of this is that your thoughts, the sentences in your mind, they produce feelings. And if you build the skill of just watching your mind, just paying attention to the internal conversation that you have with yourself you'll bring awareness to how your thoughts impact you.

A really tangible example of this is let's say you have some plans to meet up with a friend or you're going on a date. If in the run-up to meeting up with them, you're thinking I can't wait to see them. It's always so great when we hang out or anything that's in that realm then you're going to feel

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

excited, eager or enthusiastic, something along those lines. If on the other hand, you're thinking, I'm not looking forward to this. Then you're not going to feel excited or eager or enthusiastic.

You're probably going to feel dread, discouraged or perhaps worried or anxious. And I know that some of your brains will be saying, yeah, but that's because they're just such a drag. Or there's no point in dating because it's never going to work out or whatever. But when you say these things you're actually the one being a drag. I hate to break it to you because you're making yourself feel that way because of your thoughts. Because you're not even there with this person. The event hasn't happened yet. You haven't met up with them.

The event is in the future and you're already feeling that in advance of it actually happening. And if you show up to meet a friend feeling something else, feeling open or feeling curious then you're going to have a completely different experience of that meetup than if you show up already decided that it's going to suck and that they're boring and only care about themselves. And if your brain wants to argue with me about this because I appreciate that some of your brains will be doing that and that's okay. That's not a problem whatsoever. I actually love it.

But what I would love for you to do is to experiment with this. when I'm in social settings, some of which I'm more comfortable with than others, a thought that I like to use as I approach other people, particularly new people and I'm having some kind of interaction with them. I like to think, I bet there's something interesting about this person. And that just creates a curiosity and a fascination in me as I approach that interaction. And it's fascinating because I may not discover what 's interesting about them.

And they could be completely different to me but just thinking that makes me feel interested because how you think generates how you feel. And then that brings me into connection with another person rather than being closed off. Now, that never means that I make myself endure people or conversations that just aren't for me. But it gives me a way in particular with

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

people that I don't know or I'm less familiar with. But I also use this with someone that I know very well. So I use it in my relationship with Paul.

Years and years ago, as what happens in most long-term relationships, there's a spell or there was a spell for me where I was thinking, we don't have anything in common anymore. We don't have anything to talk about. I think he probably had the same thoughts at the same time.

And you know what that resulted in? It resulted in my brain finding all the evidence for how we don't have anything in common rather than what we do have in common. And that meant even less conversation because when you think we don't have anything to talk about you are for sure going to talk even less I can promise you that. And this is a man that I wanted and still want to be with. So those thoughts weren't serving me or our relationship.

So can you see the importance of being aware of your mindset and attuning how you think so that your mindset is in alignment with what it is that you actually want? That's the foundational principle for today. What you think impacts how you feel and how you behave. It's that think, feel, do cycle. Now, I want to talk to you about thought upgrades.

I've already given you some sneaky examples. So your brain is already nicely primed for what I'm about to share with you. But I'm going to give you some more examples from my own life and then give you a process that you can use. There's also a fillable worksheet that accompanies this episode that you can use on any device or print it out.

If you're already on my email list you will automatically receive it. You don't need to do anything. But if you're not on my list and you want it then go to the page on my website via the link in the show notes or just head to maisiehill.com/podcast. Click on this episode and there'll be a form that you can fill in so that you can get the worksheet.

Okay, we're going to take a trip back in time to my 20s when I made the switch in my early 20s from being employed and receiving a regular

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

paycheque to being self-employed and having a fluctuating income. Some weeks were better than others. Some months were better than others.

And there would be times where I would agree to work with several birth clients as a doula and sometimes that would all happen in one month so there would be an influx of larger payments in comparison to what I'd receive on a kind of weekly basis if I was giving someone a reflexology treatment or a massage.

So I'd like to think at that point in my career I did a reasonable job of managing my income and my expenditure. But it definitely wasn't as good as it could have been and I kind of found myself for years in a feast or famine cycle. Now, do pay attention because describing things as a feast or famine cycle is also a thought and I really caution you about adopting it as a way of describing your financial situation because it may feel very true to you as it did to me but it isn't helpful.

And during this period of time when I was in the so-called feast or famine cycle I adopted a particular thought, this was before I knew about thought work but I think I've always been quite psychologically minded. I knew about mindset and things like that and some of my clients were also coaches.

But one way or another I can't quite remember how, I decided to use the thought, money always arrives when I need it. Because the pattern that I was in was one where my bank account would get very low. I would feel tight and stressed, and because of that pressure, and by the way that was self-imposed pressure and stress because of my thoughts about the numbers in my bank account. They're just numbers. Numbers cannot create feelings. Newsflash. But your thoughts about numbers do.

And I wanted a different experience because when I was feeling stressed and worried, that actually took me out of my ability to create money and to make money. As a self-employed person, it was my responsibility to create clients and to give them a really amazing experience of working with me and to get paid for doing it. It's harder to do those things and all that's

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

involved with them when you're in survival mode. So I wanted to find a way to be less stressed when my bank account would get down to double or single digits or as was often the case when I was in my overdraft.

And the thought that created that space for me was money always arrives when I need it. And you know what it did? It did actually help me because money would always arrive when I needed it. Here's a nuance. At the time I thought that was so, so helpful. It felt really helpful and it was in some ways, it didn't take away all the stress but it gave me some wiggle room and a degree of self-trust that I'm able to create money in my business.

But whilst it was helpful on one hand it was unhelpful on another because it simultaneously perpetuated the belief that things would get to the point where I needed money to arrive. And it would also perpetuate the cycle of behaviour that would lead me to that point of need. Whereas a similar thought that I could have employed would be something like money is always available to me. I think that would have been more productive.

So I'm going to share a few different thoughts with you. I would love as I say them for you to pay attention to how each of these thoughts feel in your body. Can you tell the difference in them, between how they feel? Money always arrives when I need it. Money is always available to me. Money is always coming to me. I tried to say those as neutrally as I could so that you can feel the difference because I have my bias. So at the time, I didn't have that kind of perspective. So I really took that thought on and I thought it so many times that it became a belief.

And years and years later I was getting coached on something and I realised that that thought was still there just running in the background, a bit like software that is just running on your computer. You don't know it's there until it either attracts your attention or you intentionally look for it. And that's what these most practised thoughts are doing, they're just running in the background. And with coaching, we find them, we look at them, we explore why they're there and if you want to keep them or upgrade them.

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

And when I was getting this coaching, this was with a six-figure business which just goes to show you that the circumstances of your life can be wildly different. But where your mind is at is going to dictate how you feel. And the thought, money away shows up when I need it was creating a cycle of behaviour that was, it just wasn't helpful.

Another example I'm going to give you is if you follow me on Instagram, I think I've probably spoken about it on the podcast as well. You've probably heard me talk about how the wind really dysregulates me. And dysregulated just simply means being in a stress response of some kind. And as an autistic person, I am affected by the wind. I didn't know this for most of my life though because I didn't know that I'm autistic. And not all autistic people are affected by the wind or affected by it in the way that I am.

But I realised a few years ago that windy days would really unsettle me and result in me feeling quite rattled and on edge, kind of a bit overwhelmed, irritable, just less able to cope with normal daily tasks and activities. And this was a major breakthrough for me. It was a huge realisation to have but saying, the wind dysregulates me or the wind really messes me up, it felt helpful and protective initially.

It meant that I would pay attention to the weather and look at the weather forecast or take a step outside in the morning. And then take the relevant steps that would support me on windy days like driving instead of walking. Or on days that I would have coaching calls on the same day as personal training which I would do outside. I would often just be thinking, well, I'm going to find it really hard to coach after being outside in the wind. So I would cancel the personal training sessions because I knew it would really throw me off and impact me.

So at that time saying the wind really messes me up was really powerful and supportive. But after two years of saying this on repeat, I realised that the wind was really messing me up far more than it ever had. And I knew that it wasn't because Margate had somehow got windier. It was because of my repeated thoughts about the wind because I had, through my thinking,

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

deepened the belief and that particular neural pathway in my body. So what started out as a helpful thought had become an unhelpful one.

And I mean there are so many nuances to this conversation that we want to be mindful of. We definitely don't want to stray over into toxic positivity and try to convince yourself that something is fantastic when it isn't or push yourself into doing something that's ultimately harmful for you in some way. Because that's just using thought work and coaching against yourself which is definitely not the point. And another nuance to be mindful of is that you also don't write off a really amazing thought if you come across one because describing your thoughts as toxic positivity is also a thought.

So many nuances. So much meta stuff here today. But occasionally I see my clients writing off a really great thought that they've come up with because they kind of question that it feels so good to them. And this is how you can discern the difference. Does it feel acceptable to you? And by accepting I mean does your body accept the thought? When you think about it, does it land in you? Does it light up when you say it or does it feel like you're a kid trying on your mum's high heels? And you kind of love the look of them but they don't fit you and you can't walk in them? That's the difference.

Does your body believe the thought? Does it feel true to you or is it like make-believe? And sometimes we all make the choice to intentionally work with thoughts that are a bit of a stretch, particularly when it's to do with identity shifts and kind of expanding your capacity for how you are, how you show up in your life, the things you want, all of those things. Sometimes we want to work with thoughts that are a bit of a stretch. But you all have the capacity to discern what's what here. And if you do need help I can help you with all of this.

Everything that I'm sharing in this episode and every other one here on the podcast is exactly what we get into inside the membership. Another example I've got for you, some time ago one of my clients shared some self-coaching that she had done about having an irregular cycle. We coach

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

on all sorts of things inside the membership, cycle-related stuff is just kind of a small portion of that.

But she had posted her self-coaching and exploration she'd done about having an irregular cycle. Now, it can be true that your cycle is irregular and there is of course an official definition of what that is but in addition to that, it's also a thought. And what's interesting if my memory serves me right, the variation in cycle length that she was experiencing didn't actually meet the 'official' definition of an irregular cycle. And this is why we always want to get clear on what's actually happening on a factual basis.

Regardless of official definitions, her cycle did shift in length by a few days. Sometimes it was shorter, sometimes later. And I asked her how it felt to say, "My cycle is irregular." And it was so long ago. I can't remember what she said but I know that it didn't feel good to her. And whatever her thoughts were about it, it was making her feel more stressed. And of course, stress has an impact on all sorts of health issues including the cycle.

So I asked her how it would be to just slightly adjust that thought, to upgrade it in a way that was truthful but didn't create stress and whatever else was going on at the time. And it can be as simple as going from I have an irregular cycle to I have a regular-ish cycle. Such a slight difference but they could feel very different to you and result in your experience of life, the actions you take, the behaviours you do being very different. So both of those thoughts are true. I don't know which one's going to be most useful to you because it's going to depend on an individual basis.

But you can develop and increase the skill of being able to discern these things for yourself. So my cycle also isn't as regular as it used to be. I'm here at 42, my cycle is shifting. But having a more irregular cycle doesn't cause me any stress or concern. It's very neutral to me so it's not that there's a single thought that's awful or harmful. It really depends on how it feels to you and if it's ultimately serving you or not. Like with me in the wind, the realisation, the thought that the wind dysregulates me was helpful and then it wasn't.

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

And I caught that and I decided that I wanted to create a new relationship with the wind. That was actually my goal for the autumn and that's what I did. I now have a different relationship with the wind. It doesn't have the impact on me that it had. I have a greater capacity to experience the wind. I can go out in the wind. And it doesn't dysregulate me to the degree that it used to or at all simply because I decided that's what I wanted and I changed my thoughts. It really was that simple.

I know our brains love to think that it's complicated, there has to be more to it than that. There wasn't. I also didn't make myself suffer through anything in order to get there. I just thought I'm creating a different relationship with the wind. And that made me feel excited and powerful and interested in how I might actually do that. and then I would just stand outside on purpose when it was windy and experiment with being in the wind whilst thinking I'm creating a different relationship with the wind. That is it, I promise you.

I know I'm going to get messages from people going, "Yeah, but is there this other thing?" No, that's it. That was my process, that's all I had to do. So can you find a way to acknowledge something that is true for you whilst also being mindful not to make it worse with that thought? Because every time you think a thought or behave a certain way you're deepening a neural groove, a neural pathway in your body.

And before you despair, I think it's great news that this is what's going on. Because it means you have the power to change things in multiple ways which I think is very cool. But we don't have to beat ourselves up for not using every single opportunity to shift things. It's just not humanly possible and it also stems from thinking that you're not good enough and not loving and accepting who you are.

Coaching is so useful because we use it to bring awareness to your most practised thoughts, patterns and behaviours including a tendency to put yourself down and think that you need to be different in order to be worthy and lovable. As you're auditing your thoughts you will notice that there are places and times where it's useful to think a particular thought and other situations where it isn't. One single thought, one sentence can both serve

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

you and not serve you depending on how it makes you feel and what happens as a result of it.

This is why it's so important that we audit our thoughts and the impact that they have because at one point in time, they can help and support you and at another point, that same thought can hold you back. You can be using one thought that's helpful in the short term but it has unintended consequences in the long run. And sometimes you won't know that until you're there and that's just how life goes.

I'm a master-certified life coach with a lot of experience. A lot of training and this happens to me all the time. I'll be using a thought that just feels great, really helpful and then at some point that becomes a limiting thought. I've given you a bunch of examples in this episode but I also want to give you a step-by-step process to follow. Remember there's a worksheet that you can use. You can just get it from the form on the page on my website for this episode or check your emails if you're already on my list.

So to start off with, you're going to do a thought audit and then if that's helpful, a thought upgrade. The first step is to assess your current thoughts and you can use these questions. Is this thought serving you or not? Why? How do you know if it is or it isn't? And for this, you really want to pay attention to how you feel and then because of the think, feel, do cycle, what you do or don't do as a result of feeling that way and thinking that way. Does this thought hold you back or limit you in some way? How?

And even if the thought feels good and helpful currently could it also have negative consequences either now or in the long run? And what might those be if you were just going to give it your best guess? And then once you've run that thought audit, you're in a place to make a decision. So the next questions are, would it be helpful to tweak or upgrade your current thought? Why or why not? Again, we're not saying that you have to upgrade your thoughts, only you're going to know if it's going to serve you to do this or not.

Ep #112: The Impact of Your Thoughts

But asking why or why not gives you more awareness and it gives you more information to work with. And then if you do decide that it's time for a thought upgrade, how can you upgrade this thought in a way that both creates space for the truth of your experience and either neutralises or improves the impact of it? And if you're in my membership go ahead, post about this in the community, bring it to Ask a Coach and get coached. Bring it to the calls. We'll coach you on this. But that's how to assess if it's time for a thought upgrade and how to go about a thought audit and then an upgrade.

But go ahead and grab your worksheet so that you can go through this for yourself and have the questions there. I hope you found this episode helpful. It's beautiful to be able to come here and really talk about the nuances of this work and just to help you to build the skills of working with your mindset and thought work whether you're brand new to this or you've been around here for a while. Alright my loves, I will be back next week. Have a cracking week and I'll see you then.

Hey, if you love listening to this podcast then come and check out my membership, *The Flow Collective*, where you get my best resources and all the coaching you need to transform your inner and outer life. Sign up to the waitlist at theflowcollective.co/join, and I'll see you in the community.