

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Maisie Hill

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

You're listening to episode 122 of *The Maisie Hill Experience*. We're going to talk about feelings today and how the seasons are influencing what's going on, so let's get into it.

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, everyone. It is so good to be back. I have been off with COVID, and I have to give a huge shout out to my podcast team, especially to Megan, because when I told her that I wasn't sure if I was going to be well enough to record an episode in time, Megan took care of everything. She not only picked an episode out, and the perfect one at that. But she also recorded an amazing introduction and I just felt so relieved and incredibly well taken care of. So, thank you, Megan.

I am feeling much better, and I've been able to enjoy some of the Easter holidays with my family and just hanging out with Nelson. This week we have both done a couple of horse-riding lessons and let me tell you, my thighs are killing me. I can feel every single muscle. I did a half hour lesson five days ago. Thank goodness I didn't do an hour. And I was still feeling it this morning and then I had another lesson today and it's just so hard for me to get up and down and basically use my legs for anything. But it also just feels great to be riding again.

I was doing lessons before the pandemic and then I just didn't go back once we were able to. It's just one of those things that just kind of fell by the wayside, but for the last month I've felt a huge need to retreat and focus on nourishing myself and working less, hanging out with Nelson more, to switch off from sources of input like intellectual input. I have had zero interest in learning which is highly, highly unusual for me. And I've just wanted space to rest and recalibrate.

And being ill has actually really supported that. It was quite helpful. But I've also wanted to pause and reconnect with the things that feel good and that

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

bring me joy. So, I knew it was time to go horse-riding again and I'm really glad that I prioritised that because I'm feeling a bit different at the moment. I'm not feeling like my usual self. I have had a few autistic meltdowns in the last week. I'm not feeling very peoply. And I'm experiencing a different range of emotions.

You know how when spring kicks in and people have a spring wardrobe or spring summer wardrobe that they bring out? I feel like I have a spring collection of emotions that I bring out for a bit at this time of year. And it's important for me to share this because that's a lot of perfectionism in the world of self-development. And along with that can be a belief that when you do enough thought work, when you do enough journaling or have enough treatments or eat whatever food then you'll stop having certain feelings or experiences and that's not true.

They might be less intense, they might happen less often, but you won't stop being human. Being human is a package deal. We don't get to pick the parts that we want and get rid of the rest. So rather than try to eliminate thoughts and feelings and experiences, how about being able to have them, to be in them? Because I've been in a little bit of a funk for a bit. It's not too severe but it's definitely, it's impacting me, but I know it won't last forever. And I know that for me, being in this place really does pave the way for what's to come.

April is my reset month. And the work that I do here as in the inner work is paving the way for the next 11 months. It's laying that foundation and just really setting me up. The same thing happened this time last year and the year before that and so on. And particularly when I think back to last year because that was the one that was most recent, I went through a huge shift. I did a lot of processing emotions, a lot of being very gentle with myself, resting, lying down, taking time outside, all of those things.

It really was like the foundation for everything else that happened after that. And I know that the same thing is happening now. I was just explaining it to Paul that it really does feel like taking this time to be this way with myself is going to pay off in ways that I can't even know right now. And I just need to

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

do it now for a start and that's beneficial in and of itself. But I just know that there's more to come. So how are you feeling? How are you doing over there? And I ask you this because it's not just me who goes through this at this time of year.

You might notice that you're feeling some irritability, frustration, maybe anger, maybe a bit restless or some kind of discontent. And it might feel out of place because with the arrival of spring, warmer temperatures, more light, especially now that the clocks have changed you might anticipate feeling 'better'. So, the expectation could be to feel more energised and upbeat and brimming with life and positivity. But the arrival of spring isn't always like that, instead you might be feeling frustrated, irritable, angry, a bit blah, maybe bored or stuck.

And I want you to know that that is exactly what I would be expecting many of you to be feeling. And of course, these emotions can come up at any point of the year, but spring is the season where they can rear their head because the wood element, which is the element associated with spring in Chinese medicine, is kicking in and waking us up after winter.

So back in my previous life when I worked as an acupuncturist there would be this specific timeframe when all of my clients' pulses would change, some more than others but it was noticeable. And if you haven't experienced Chinese medicine before, one thing that practitioners do is take your pulse. So, when we feel your pulse we're not just assessing its rate, that's one part of it but it's also so much more than that. We're feeling it on lots of different levels, different positions. We're feeling, does this pulse meet my fingers immediately or do I have to push down to find it?

And then when I do feel on it and press on it, how does it respond? Does it disappear on me? Does it become more vigorous? Can you feel it in all of the positions with each fingertip? And what's the quality of it? Does it feel like a guitar string or like a pearl gliding past my fingers? There's so much more to taking a pulse in Chinese medicine. And we feel someone's pulse at every appointment as well as other things. And there would always be this point in the spring where people's pulses started to feel different.

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

And I remember being in China in Harbin as the spring arrived. This is where I did a semester working with a doctor, a neurologist who would be sending people off for MRIs and things like that, but also using acupuncture and herbs in the treatment alongside regular, well, what we would call regular medicine. And the winter there is very cold in this part of China. It's where they have the ice festivals and it's way into the minus temperatures. I think it was about minus 24 when I was there. So, once it turns to spring it feels very different.

And that shift from winter to spring was reflected in what we were feeling in the clinic there. So, the neurologist called it a springtime pulse. Spring is associated with the wood element in Chinese medicine. It represents growth and expansion. And just think about that on a bodily level, growth and expansion. This is why there can be feelings of restlessness and irritability as the body adjusts to the changing energy of the season. It doesn't mean that's bad.

I think that restlessness and frustration can be really helpful as can irritability and anger. We're going to get onto that in a moment. But when that wood element is in harmony there's flexibility and resilience. There's creativity and a vision. And when it's out of harmony you might feel a bit stuck or feel very frustrated, angry, irritable. And you might be approaching things in quite a rigid way. Now, there are times when anger could do with being cooled down or drained. And there are times when that anger needs to be strengthened so that it can flow and be expressed.

So, you might choose to get the chi flowing more smoothly, it all depends on an individual and the other signs and symptoms that we're seeing in them. You can probably think of someone in your life who's very outwardly angry and could perhaps do with learning how to manage themselves a bit better or to have some of that fire drained out of them.

And equally you probably know someone who keeps it all inside. So internally they might be very frustrated, they might be raging, but it's never expressed or maybe there's that moment perhaps in the menstrual cycle where that steam valve is let off and it does come out. So, there's all sorts

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

of ways to approach anger. By the way, unexpressed anger can also cause stagnation which leads to symptoms, and it becomes a bit of a vicious cycle. So, it's an important one to work with.

I am going to give you some pointers, some recommendations of things that you can be doing to support yourself if you're feeling this way. Now, the liver is the organ that we associate with the spring. When I say liver I'm not referring to your actual liver in your body as in your anatomical organ. The liver in Chinese medicine is much more than that and it's referred to as the general of an army because it's in charge of the storage of blood and the flow of chi throughout the body, so it regulates movement.

And in the spring as the weather warms up, the days get longer. We get an increase in yang energy from the liver, also the gallbladder, they start to become more active. And this increase in yang energy can cause a bit of a build-up of heat and energy in the body which can lead to a variety of symptoms including these emotional ones like irritability, anger and frustration. Now, the liver is also said to be responsible for the free flow of emotions. And when the liver isn't functioning particularly well, emotions can become stagnant, blocked, a bit trapped.

And when things aren't flowing smoothly, that creates friction. So, think about frustration, it comes about because of a blockage, something's not flowing properly, it creates friction. And this is something that you experience in life as in something that happens in your day that creates a delay, a blockage of some kind, that can lead to friction and frustration. Well, the same thing happens inside of you if your chi isn't flowing smoothly, then we get blockages, stagnation, that causes friction and frustration and contributes to a sense of feeling stuck.

If that's happening inside of you then you'll then be more prone to experience external events as frustrating and annoying because it just becomes the baseline for how you're approaching your life. And that then turns up the volume on them, let's say, adds a bit of heat and brings in irritation and anger. Friction creates heat. Heat, its nature is to rise which is why you might feel that upward direction of your chi, of that irritability, that

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

anger or it could be headaches, migraines, eye and ear problems, sinus issues, shoulder and neck tension etc. etc. The list really does go on here.

And when you think about heat, heat increases reactivity. Raising the temperature of a chemical reaction is going to result in a higher reaction rate. So, if you're generating internal heat that's related to frustration then that can turn into anger, rage and irritability. These can all occur for other reasons too by the way, which is why you need to have a consultation with someone qualified to help you. If you want to get into this the best thing to do is to go and work with a trained and qualified acupuncturist or Chinese herbalist.

Please don't be emailing me your list of symptoms or DMing me, please don't do that. I understand why you want to and perhaps why you have in the past if you have done this, because I understand the frustration at the medical system and I get your need for help. I get why you would reach out to me for that 100%. But it very clearly says on my website not to do that. And my team has always received a lot of emails where people share their full medical histories.

Literally every week people send either me on Instagram or via email, pictures of their scans, their blood tests, all of these things. People even send me pictures of their cervixes. So, I would love for you not to do that. This is actually very relevant to today's topic because you know how you can have something going on in your life that it's not a big deal but it's just a little niggle that happens on a repeated basis. And kind of one day you just realise the impact of it.

And this is what happened to me recently because I suddenly realised how much time my team were spending responding to those emails. Even though our position and it's always said this explicitly on my website is that we don't offer medical advice. It would be completely inappropriate for us to do that. But I guess I just hadn't realised how much we still got them. So I made the decision, I just instructed my team, "Stop responding to those emails, just delete them." Because they're just taking up so much time, even that none of them were from clients.

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

And as I said, we don't offer any advice like this. It makes no professional sense whatsoever. And so, one day I was just like, "Enough's enough, just delete them." And that's the power of what I'm talking about today. When something's frustrating, if it doesn't feel right to you there are times when it's appropriate to manage our minds about things. But there's also times when it's appropriate to use it to bring about change and learning to discern that difference is for sure one of the best skills to learn and build.

But this is one of those occasions where I was like, "Okay, let's just explicitly say that we will delete these emails. We won't respond to them." That's the boundary. Please don't do this. If you do this here's what's going to happen. And I could just feel the collective relief of that decision. And I want to invite you to see if you can find things like this in your own life. Can you find, let's say, five things that are currently a source of frustration or irritability? And then I want you to just simply and decisively take action to change them because as I said, yes, we can manage our minds.

We can use thought work but there are also times when we need to use those feelings to bring about change. We can still use thought work to do so. And of course, we are all individually responsible for how we do that, but my invitation is that you use that tension on purpose, to be intentional in feeling it, expressing it and wielding it because it's also eclipse season. We have the solar eclipse coming up on April 20th I think it is. It's five or so in the morning on Thursday UK time.

And then we've got the lunar eclipse coming up on May 5th. So again, those data are based on UK times. So, the eclipses could be lighting you up in all sorts of ways. That might feel challenging for you to be in it, but I like to think that the planets are on my side for a bit of destruction and transformation. We actually have a destruction and transformation coaching call coming up in the membership on the day of the second eclipse. I cannot wait for that one. But again, we're all responsible for our behaviour. We practise self-responsibility around here.

But can you use what you're feeling to bring about the change that is needed? Because spring is a season of great change, think about the

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

growth that happens all around us. And also, how changeable the weather is across the course of a day. We're really experiencing that here in Margate right now. But our internal environment is affected by our external environments. I know I talk a lot about mindset but what's going on in our environment and what's going on with the seasonal shifts also play a part in how we feel.

So, I want to give you some guiding principles to support you as we're going through this seasonal shift. The first is moving. Moving is the solution and I mean that in all sorts of ways. Moving your body is the obvious one. Stretching, doing some cardio, go for a walk and talk, get some things off your chest, physically move your body. Spend more time outside. There's that. There's also breathing, shifting things with your breath. If you notice yourself sighing or yawning a lot or perhaps someone that you live or work with sighs a lot, that's stagnation. That's a sign of stagnation that they need to get things moving.

Acupuncture of course helps to get things moving too, so does massage. You can literally just grip your body up or you can get someone else to grip it up for you. That's also an option. But you can just squeeze your limbs, squeeze your body's tissues, get things moving, shake, dance, whatever, follow what feels good to your body.

The second is express your feelings. This is still movement by the way, but if you've got stuff on your mind, write it down, tell it to someone else, just get it out somehow, even better if you can get coached. If you're feeling angry, get some pillows and just throw them down to the ground as in just forcefully throw them in a downwards direction, put some effort into it. Irritability or anger is very charged though. And if you're not used to feeling that level of activation in your body you might feel a bit uncomfortable with it to begin with.

I want to encourage you to go with it, to let it light you up, to activate you, to move through you. There is a huge tendency to de-escalate our anger and that's useful, don't get me wrong, but there can be this overemphasis on calming down. And I think that's an excellent skill for a lot of people to work

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

on, but equally some people need to work on the skill of expressing anger, healthy expression of anger, appropriate expression of it. So, I want to challenge you, if you kind of identify that in yourself, I want to challenge you to inhabit your anger and irritability because it signals a need for change.

Irritability can be a signal that something in our environment or life is not working for us. When you feel irritable it can be a sign that maybe you need to make some changes to your routine, your relationships, your living situation, your work life, whatever it may be. It's a powerful motivator for change when you feel irritable. You can use that to take action to make changes that can improve your situation. Because if all you ever do is calm yourself down you can end up actually not very happy.

You might be somewhat calm, I'd kind of argue as to whether you actually are, you might appear calm, but you also might not be particularly happy with your life and be putting up with a lot of things. Again, being able to de-escalate from that reactionary activated place is great at times. Lots of people, who in my opinion could do with learning how to do that, but being able to inhabit anger and express it is also useful. So, it's not that one is better than the other, they're just different.

Irritability also increases your awareness of your own needs and boundaries. When you feel irritable you notice and identify the behaviours and the situations that are a problem for you. Now, what you do with that intel is up to you, but it's good data collection at this point. And of course, if your baseline stress level is all the way up here, then you're going to be more prone to reacting to things that at other times maybe wouldn't be a problem or as much of a problem.

So be mindful of that because when you're under stress and your nervous system is activated and you move into a fight or flight response to help you prepare to deal with a perceived threat, your heart rate, your breathing increase, your muscles tense up, your blood pressure rises. This response is great for short term acute stress like running away from a lion for example. However, when we're dealing with chronic ongoing stress like

Ep #122: Spring and Your Feelings

work deadlines, financial worries, relationship issues then that response can become chronic too.

And when your body is in this constant state of heightened arousal, it can affect your mood, your ability to regulate your emotions. And we become much more reactive and our threshold for tolerating things becomes lower. This means that the things that might not normally bother you, can suddenly feel very overwhelming and lead to irritability. But there's also this frustration that I really think of as helpful frustration that promotes problem solving, critical thinking. And this really relates to the spring season because there's that frustration that can lead to creative ideas, to going for it, to making these changes.

And that's what brings us into the rapid growth that's available in this season. So, it just makes so much sense to me that this comes up at this time of year. Think about what's going on in nature, shoots are sprouting up from the soil. Everything that's been underground is suddenly bursting up. There's an upward movement. And that's happening within us too. So, chi energy is moving upwards, it's moving up and everything that was underground, and unseen is also pushing up and becoming visible.

So, we want to notice what is coming up, how can we use what's coming up in powerful ways. Think about what it feels like within you. Does it feel like something is being initiated? Does it feel like purpose and direction or is it more like frustration or anger, restlessness? And if it's the latter, what are your thoughts and feelings about those feelings? Do you resist them? Do you view them negatively? Are they uncomfortable or are you able to experience them and work with them? Can you inhabit them and use them as a force for good in your life?

Okay my loves, have a great eclipse and I will be back next week.

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.

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill