

# Ep #124: 9 Lessons from Formula One That You Can Use in Your Life



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Maisie Hill**

**The Maisie Hill Experience** with Maisie Hill

## Ep #124: 9 Lessons from Formula One That You Can Use in Your Life

You're listening to episode 124 of *The Maisie Hill Experience*. I've got a really fun one for you today, 9 Lessons from Formula One That You Can Use in Your Life.

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*.

Okay, folks, you probably don't know this about me, but I love watching sports documentaries. I'm not one for watching sports, live. It's not like I follow sports, I was at one point really, really into the UFC, the Ultimate Fighting Championships. This is back when I was in my 20s and I followed all the fights, watched all the things. I would stay up until 3:00am and 5:00am to watch it live just because I wanted to avoid anyone spoiling it by telling me who'd won without me seeing it happen. So, I was very into it for five years or so, I think.

I watched rugby a lot when I was younger because we hung out at a rugby club, Camberley Rugby Club, because my mum cleaned it. So, we hung out there a lot, my brother and I played rugby. So, we'd watch games at the club. We'd watch the international games on TV. I can actually remember crying so much one year when Scotland lost to England because I always supported Scotland because my mum was Scottish, my dad's Scottish. But my brother and I were the only ones born and raised in England at that point.

So, my brother supported England. I supported Scotland. Scotland lost and I was just in floods of tears over it. And I do cry a lot when it comes to sports. I don't even have to be into the sport or know the players or the athletes. If I'm watching the Olympics I am guaranteed to cry, but I don't follow sports. Documentaries about athletes and teams on the other hand, I am all about. I love *The Last Dance* which is a series on Netflix about the Chicago Bulls basketball team when Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippin and Dennis Rodman played, and they were managed by Phil Jackson.

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And I've watched that three times in the last couple of years. And I mentioned in last week's episode that I find it useful to spend time with people who are going for it and that can be people who I know personally, my peers and colleagues, but it can also be through the screen. There are people who have got goals and they're doing everything they can to make them happen. So, think about who you spend the most time with and how that impacts you.

And if you're spending time with people who are typically talking about everything that's going wrong in their life which is often all the time and there's always drama and maybe they're quick to blame other people rather than be self-responsible. If that kind of thing's resonating with you then one option is to choose who you spend time with on screen. If you are yearning to hang out with people who have a different mindset, a different approach to life, then spend time with those people on screen or through podcasts.

Watch things that help you to believe that you can do challenging things and that you can make things happen in your life. You're also welcome to join my membership, *The Flow Collective* because that's happening in abundance there, not in a toxic positivity vibe way, I have to say. So, I really recommend watching *The Last Dance*. But last month whilst Paul and I had COVID and were recovering from it we started watching *Drive to Survive* which is the Netflix series about Formula 1 racing. I watched formula 1 as a kid then I didn't watch it for, I don't know, 20 odd years.

And now I this week signed up for a sports TV plan so that we can watch the Grand Prix this weekend. So even if you have no interest in cars or racing, I still recommend watching *Drive to Survive* because there are so many lessons in it that you can use in your life. It's very in line with what I teach my clients and what I speak about here on the podcast. So, what I've done for you is pull out my top lessons to share with you today.

And side note, one of my goals for this year is to have fun expressing myself in my business. And this fits so perfectly into that goal because I am really quite hyper focused on a few things in my life right now, one of which

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is Formula 1. So, this is really fun for me to bring you today. I also know that some of you are really into Formula 1 because you've been sending me very excited messages about it which has also been fun. And Maggie Reyes, a fellow coach, good friend of mine was like, "You like Formula 1?"

Because she's going to the Miami Grand Prix that's coming up and now we're both excited because there's something else that we can geek out about together in addition to coaching and being entrepreneurs and all of those things.

Alright, so let's do this. Lesson number one. They are willing to feel emotions for years in order to get to a desired result. So, imagine racing in Formula 1 and not getting any points for a long time let alone coming in first or a podium place in the top three. Not getting a decent podium position again and again. That's the starting position for each race. Having a car that always seems to have issues. And even decent cars just race after race trying to problem solve to make them better.

So much frustration and disappointment is involved in this, but they're willing to experience in order to get to where they want to be. It does suck. It doesn't feel good. They don't want to feel that way. They'd rather be winning, rather be on the podium getting points. And it's not like they're accepting this feeling and kind of giving up and giving into it. They're using it to motivate them to keep going and to propel them forwards to use that healthy frustration like I spoke about recently, to transform things.

Think about a goal that you currently have or that you've had in the past and maybe you came up against some challenges where you experienced frustration and disappointment. What often happens, I've done this myself, is we come up against those obstacles and it feels hard or impossible because we're thinking that way. And it forces you to confront your belief in yourself. It's basically going to bring all your shit up. And my belief is that's useful because all those thoughts about yourself are there anyway, but they're just background noise.

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They're still affecting you but it's just background noise. It's far more useful to turn up the volume on them and bring them into focus so that we can increase awareness of them, understand why they're there and then do something about them. But because it doesn't feel great to be confronted with critical and judgemental thoughts about yourself, what can happen very understandably is that you change or downgrade your goals to try and escape your thoughts and feelings, but they haven't gone anywhere, they're still there.

And in Formula 1 they stay in that space of feeling the frustration and being annoyed about it. And they keep going. They're willing to be there, but the plan is also to get out of that and into winning, whatever that looks like for each team and driver. Sometimes it's winning the championship or championships, being in the top three or being the best of the rest in fourth. The stakes are high. There's a lot of money involved, sponsors, shareholders, wanting to stay in Formula 1, to attract and keep the best drivers, the engineers, mechanics, everyone that's involved in each team.

So, you may not have all of that to contend with in your life but I want to offer that the stakes are high in your life too. The cost of not going for it, whatever that looks like for you is huge. That isn't even about ending up with your desired result. It's about your relationship with yourself, how much self-trust you have, your ability to acknowledge and honour what you want and need in your life, being authentically you, living your life. Instead of just going along with things and being a passive participant in your own life.

Lesson two. They talk about problems factually for the most part at least. Sometimes there's complaining and whining and making excuses. But on the whole it's amazing to see how in the debriefs after qualifying and after each race the team all evaluate things together. And they, as I said, for the most part talk about things very factually. This is what we do in the membership too.

In fact, I've just got off our end of month evaluate and activate call which is where I teach you how to evaluate events in your life without blaming

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yourself or others, without judging and shaming yourself or automatically finding fault with yourself. And the difference in these kinds of conversations is huge, I can't state it enough. I see it in my clients. I've seen it in myself, and I could really see it in the TV series. So being able to do this is a really valuable skill.

And Toto Wolff who is the team principal of the Mercedes team, he talks about the culture at Mercedes which is to blame the problem not the person. And I really love that because that's what we do in my business too. When mistakes are made it usually highlights a lack of clarity around something or a lack of a clear process. And of course, there's human error too, but it's much more useful to understand how and why something happened and solve for that, which is exactly what we do with our clients as well when we're coaching them on understanding situations in their lives.

By the way, if anyone, I couldn't do this episode without saying this, if anyone listening happens to be connected to Toto Wolff or Susie Wolff, I would love for you to introduce me because I'd love to have either one of them on the podcast. From an entrepreneurial perspective I'm really intrigued about how each of them run things in their respective roles at Mercedes and at the Formula 1 Academy, so hook me up, please.

Alright, lesson number three. They celebrate so hard. I'm sure you've seen how they celebrate with champagne when they're on the podium. They just spray it over each other. They hug and leap and even jump on top of their team, over the barrier. They jump in the pool at Monaco. It's a big deal and we can get into the psychology behind some of these things like the spraying of champagne. But aside from any thoughts you might have about that, I think it's helpful to look at that culture of celebration.

It's a big deal. They don't hold themselves back. They don't skip it. It's important and they recognise this. So, do you currently celebrate yourself like this? If you've been socialised as female, probably not. This is why we are so intentional about celebrating in *The Flow Collective*. I want you all to

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be good at celebrating hard. You don't have to spray champagne everywhere, but can you get to a place where celebrating your wins is non-negotiable, it's just a thing that you do, and you recognise the importance of it?

Shout out to all of my clients who do this on our weekly win threads. I know for many of you it's been perhaps the most challenging thing about joining the membership, but it's also so worth it.

Lesson four. Failing is valued. There's a lot of failure in Formula 1. So many things can go wrong, and they do go wrong a lot of the time. Most of them start the season with cars that have issues of some kind. They get them on the track for preseason testing and it's like, oh, shit, we've got this to sort out, and this to sort out before the first Grand Prix comes around. Someone can crash into you. It can rain on race day or on qualifying and that impacts your experience. You can skid into barriers. You can get a puncture.

Imagine being in the lead all ready to win and then in the final lap you get a puncture and suddenly you're fifth or you're twelfth or whatever, devastating. There can be issues with changing tyres in a pitstop that completely changed the outcome of the race. There are so many opportunities for failure. There's this great Niki Lauda quote. Niki Lauda, if you don't know, was a three-time Formula 1 world drivers' champion. And he's the only driver in Formula 1 history to have been a champion for both Ferrari and McLaren.

He was in a massive accident in a race that resulted in him suffering extensive burns. He was in a coma fighting for his life, last rites were even administered and then get this. He returned to race in Formula 1, 40 days later. So, he's a pretty legendary guy. And he said, quote him in this that, "Winning is one thing, but out of losing I always learned more. Because you don't waste time blaming somebody else. Analyse yourself, change yourself to be successful." I love that quote.

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There is so much to gain from failing and losing. There's an abundance of data for you to analyse and use to succeed but you have to be willing to look at it. And you'll only be able to do that in a useful way if you learn to stop criticising yourself in harmful ways, to stop blaming yourself or blaming other people and the world around you.

Okay, lesson five. The benefit of getting out of your comfort zone. One of the driver's personal trainers spoke about the fitness training that he does with the driver. And he said, "We're taking them out of their comfort zone during training so that you can ensure that they can perform at their best when they are in the car. Now, I'm a big believer that you can do great things from your comfort zone, I'm all for that. But I like to temper that with getting out of my comfort zone.

I covered this in last week's episode when I spoke about me staying in a hotel and going to a luxury department store and walking around there because for me that was a stretch. And that was an opportunity for me to expand into because when you get out of your comfort zone it's an opportunity to expand your self-concept, your belief in yourself and what's possible for you. And when you do this, when you're able to hang out in that zone of discomfort a bit more and then a bit more and then more and more, your zone of discomfort becomes your baseline. Isn't that wild?

I was thinking about this in terms of learning to drive. I imagine for most people, learning to drive is a lot to get to grips with all at once, getting the car to go, changing gears, using the clutch, using the handbrake, getting to know the biting point of the car whilst also assessing what's going on around you, taking note of pedestrians, other cars, traffic lights, one-way systems, pedestrian crossings etc, etc. It's all new and it's a lot, but you get in the car, and you keep putting yourself in the car and hopefully at some point you take your test and you pass it.

And even after that, you've passed your test but there still may be a lot for you to be paying attention to you when you're driving and so you keep going. And then one day you're just driving and that's all there is to it. All



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those things are still going on, they're still things that you're paying attention to, but so many of the other things have become automatic. So, what started out as a zone of discomfort, very new, unfamiliar, trying to get to grips with it. Suddenly it's just driving and it's your baseline.

So, hanging out on the edge of your comfort zone, stretching your capacity and expanding into that space is going to result in it becoming comfortable. It becomes your normal. And when I look back over my career at various stages there's been so many things where I was like, "Oh, my God, what the hell am I doing? This is so scary but I'm going to do it. I'm going to love myself through it. I'm going to just go for it." And now those things that were once such a big deal to me are just what I do on the regular and they're just not a big deal, they're just part of my life.

And I'm sure you have many examples of this from your life too. It's helpful to remind yourself of those times because brains have a negativity bias. And without reining your brain in, you could go to how you can't do things and find all the places that you're not capable or resilient or whatever it happens to be. So just take a moment to remind yourself of all the times where you have done something unfamiliar, you've given something a go, being willing to go for it.

And then with practice, with repetition it just becomes something that you do, no big deal.

Lesson six. Investing in rest and recovery. So, because I've been a bit hyper focused on this, as if you can be a bit hyper focused. I've been reading up about how they prepare for each season, each racing season and how their training adjusts once they are racing and competing. And a lot of the work that they do is upfront in advance of the season to help them build muscle and strength to improve core stability, keep them flexible etc.

And I think it's really interesting how they have to reach that peak physical fitness without gaining weight in order to keep the overall weight of the car down and give them that racing advantage. But then once they're racing,

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they shift more into maintaining things and rest and recovery because racing is hard work. The G force that's loading on the body, the amount of sweat, that just means that they lose apparently up to three kilograms in a race, that's almost half a stone. Plus, all the core strength that's required. It's full on.

So, I say maintaining, but during the race season they apparently are still working out most days. The fitness regime seems pretty strict, so they're doing endurance training and aerobic fitness. But there's also a real focus on recovery and rest, whether that's massage, ice baths, acupuncture or sleep.

Formula 1 is referred to as the travelling circus. And the Grand Prix are all over the world, so there's jetlag, adjusting to time zones. And then the races that are in warmer climates are often done at night-time under the lights because it's too hot to race in the daylight. So, sleep is a priority. And I imagine that it is for you as well. I've shared here on the podcast before that supporting and improving sleep quality as well as duration is, I don't think even one of, I would say it's my favourite healthcare intervention because everything else improves as a result of sleep.

Lesson seven. They have a healthy relationship with pressure. So, one of the drivers was being interviewed and he said, "Diamonds are made under pressure." And I've heard that phrase before, you possibly have as well, but it just got me thinking about that relationship with pressure. Because you've probably got pressure in your life. I have certain pressures in mine, might be different to yours, probably different to a Formula 1 driver's but pressure can create all sorts of things. It can create problems, havoc, stress, creativity, solutions and success.

Pressure's going to exist, we can all for sure reduce the amount of pressure that we experience in terms of the unnecessary pressure that you put yourself under, but what about the rest of it. How do you want to interact with pressure? How do you want to respond to it? Do you want to crumble, or do you want to turn into a diamond? Choice is yours.

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Lesson number eight. All the drivers have a coach, it's just normal, it's the done thing. And of course, as a coach I love to see that. But I also love it when a lot of my clients feed back to me, "Well, it's just this normal thing that we expect in certain industries, certain types of people, why not have that for myself?" And that's such a big part of why my membership exists is I want as many people to benefit from coaching as possible. It's also why I have the podcast.

Lesson number nine, the final one. Never give up. They never give up. Fernando Alonso went from needing his car to be fixed to the point where he was struggling to even get into the pit lane for the mechanics to do their thing. He could have retired the car. I'm sure many drivers would have, but he didn't. He didn't count himself out and he ended up getting points in that race. So, think about his ability to manage his mind in that situation where you're racing, there's problems with the car, I can't remember what it was, a puncture or something.

But is he even going to get to the mechanics, is that even possible? And then the amount of time that he was in there with them fixing, doing whatever it is they were doing. By that point, that's a lot of time for a pit stop in Formula 1. It's very different to when I watched it as a child when they were taking, I don't know, 7 to 10 seconds for each pit stop. Now it's a second or two, it's so fast. So, any time a driver is spending longer than that there, one way their mind could go is, what's the point now, I've lost my chance, but he didn't. He got to the pit lane, and he kept going.

And another lovely example of this was from the 2019 Brazilian Grand Prix where Carlos Sainz was racing for McLaren, and he started at the back of the grid. I think something had happened in the qualifying sessions which meant that he was penalised, and he started last. He ended up coming in fourth. And then Lewis Hamilton was awarded a penalty because of his role in a crash which meant that Carlos Sainz came third. He got his first podium and then a few weeks later Ferrari initiated talks with him about coming to drive for them.

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So, imagine that you're at the back of the grid, you're last, twentieth, but you just go for it. You end up with your first podium. So don't give up. Don't count yourself out. That doesn't mean always pushing and going about things in a way that has a negative impact on your health for example, but can you learn from these lessons? Can you use them in your own life? Can you manage your mind and don't count yourself out? Just go for it. Okay my lovelies, that is it for today. I'll be back next week.

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