

Ep #165: One Simple Question to Improve Your Life



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With Your Host

Maisie Hill

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

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Alright my friends, this is episode 165, and it's a short and powerful one. I've got a technique to share with you that you can use in your personal and professional relationships that will radically transform your experience of them. 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*.

Hey, folks, welcome back. This last week has been huge for me for a few reasons but I'm going to share a couple of them. The first one is that I have been in London recording the audiobook for my upcoming book, *Powerful*, which is set to release on May 9th. And it's all about understanding your stress responses and how they influence your life as well as using my favourite coaching techniques so that you can find your power in situations like people pleasing, boundary setting, making decisions and mastering tough conversations.

So as you know, if you've read my books before, it is packed with strategies and insights. That is how I roll. But it's designed, as it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. It's a playbook that you can adapt to your life so that you can find your power both in everyday situations as well as the grander vision that you hold for your life. And there were so many moments when I was recording the audiobook, I was just getting so excited because when you write a book it's quite a process that you go through. And I started writing this book over a year ago.

And so even though there's been the editing process and I've read it through multiple times. I do also forget what I said. And then I think there's something about reading it out loud that just it lands differently. You really hear it for yourself in a different way. So there were all these times when I'm reading, I'm like, "Holy crap, this is really good." So I can't wait for it to come out. I am buzzing for you to read it and to use it, because this is a book that you will use.

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But that is not all that happened. That was pretty big. But in an exciting turn of events, I finally bought a horse, Mr Buttons is his name. He's a four-year-old Irish cob, so he's pretty young, younger than I was looking for, I'll be honest. But I found a really lovely yard to keep him on, so I'm very happy about that. It's nice and peaceful. They kind of do things differently over there, compared to other kind of more traditional yards. So I already feel really at home there and so does he.

But as I said, he's quite young. I read an essay by a vet that said a four-year-old is the equivalent of a 12-year-old human. So he's still maturing. He hasn't been ridden a lot. He was backed in September last year. That's when they started riding him. But he's come along really nicely in his education, and he seems very willing and he's just a pretty steady, nice guy. So again, I'm just so excited.

But interestingly, this new partnership with Mr Buttons perfectly ties into what I wanted to talk about with you today. Because I have this quick sure-fire way for you to improve your life. And the approach I'm sharing today is something I use continuously in my personal and professional life, and it comes up all the time on our coaching calls in the membership and over at Ask a Coach where you get one-on-one coaching. So you're going to be able to use it in every single situation, every single communication that you are in.

And it's especially useful in those times where you get annoyed at other people and point the finger at them, which, hey, it happens. So here's the deal. Often my clients will come to a coaching call, and they share how their boyfriend or their mum or their housemate or their friend has done something or not done something. And they're annoyed with the humans in their lives for not behaving in the way that they want them to. And they're blaming and finding fault with the humans, as I said, believe me, I get it. I have done this work for many years.

I have used the technique I'm going to share with you today, countless times. And there are times where I notice myself getting annoyed or frustrated with other humans, whether that's Paul, someone I work with, a

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friend, or even random strangers. But whether I'm coaching a client or I'm coaching myself, I like to start with getting the facts straight. Now, when we are annoyed and frustrated we are usually very invested in feeling that way, and busy accumulating evidence of how we are correct about these people.

Facts, who cares about facts when you're busy being right. Take note of that. Notice when and where that comes up for you. Because when we're caught up in our frustration, we're not interested in facts. We're too busy validating our feelings of being wronged. But because coaching is amazing, it offers a space to dissect these situations in a different way. And that's a skill that you develop over time yourself through being coached and then eventually the idea is you're able to use it within the situation itself as it's unfolding.

So I like to know what it is that we're talking about. And one of my jobs as your coach, because I consider anyone listening to this, I'm your self-appointed coach, is to get the facts straight. That is part of my job. It is different to talking to a friend. If I was being your friend, I'd listen to your story about what happened, go along with your interpretation of things. Although I'm saying this and I probably actually wouldn't, that's just me. But you probably have friends that would respond in that way.

One of the reasons I'm such a great coach is because coaching is very in line with how I generally communicate and interact with people in everyday life. So coaching is just kind of an extension of how I am. And I've had friends go through shocking and upsetting things. And I know that I am not always the friend you want around when you are in a situation where you just want someone to agree with how shit your husband is. There are times when I can do that.

But I'm autistic, I just like to know the facts, that is me. And yes, I know that facts are debatable, alright, sidenote. But when my clients are feeling frustrated and annoyed, I always want to get to the facts, and I do this by asking the following question. Are you ready? Because this is the technique. It's just one question. It's simple. It's powerful. It's all you need. The question is, did you clearly and explicitly communicate your needs,

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preferences and desires to the person involved? More often than not, the answer is no.

And it's the same question I ask myself in situations, yeah, Maisie, yeah, I know we're busy being annoyed at this person for doing this thing or not doing this thing or doing it this way instead of that way. But do they actually know that this isn't what you want? Have you clearly and explicitly told them? Most of the time I have not. The people around us do not have a crystal ball. They don't magically know what you do and don't want, and that's before we even get on to even if they do know, that doesn't mean they're going to behave the way you want them because freewill and all of that.

But we can't expect others to read our minds or know precisely what we want without us communicating it. But so often we are operating from the position of assuming or expecting them to know. But we just might not be aware that that's what we're doing. So this is all about calling attention to the times, places, situations where this is what's happening. And it's just about getting really honest with yourself and asking that question. Have I been clear and explicit about this? If all you do is ask that, your relationships, your life will change, I promise.

And that clear and explicit communication is just about making sure that the people in our lives understand our needs, our preferences, our desires, without them having to guess. It's about taking responsibility for our part in any interaction and ensuring we're doing all we can to be clear and understood. It's not about demanding or expecting others to comply with our every wish because newsflash, that's not going to happen.

But it does mean we owe it to ourselves and to them to be clear about what those wishes are. So with Mr Buttons, clear communication is key. Literally every moment I'm with him, I'm needing to be clear about things. He just needs to understand exactly what I'm asking of him without mixed signals. I'm telling you, if you start hanging out with horses, the way you communicate shifts.

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I was at the park yesterday and we bumped into some old friends that we hadn't seen in a while. And without going into the specifics, there was a lot of boys, teenage boys, younger boys, also playing in the park and then our collection of kids that were younger. And they were playing a bit more aggressively, I would say, and taking up all of the play area and just swearing and things like that. And I was just telling them what I wanted to do in a way that was just so simple and direct.

And I think my friends were a bit like, "Whoa, who is this Maisie?" Because they're used to seeing other sides of me. And I'm just telling them, "Oy, watch your language. That is not cool." And just communicating in this way. And my friend said to me, she was like, "Wow, that's amazing the way you're speaking to them." I was like, "Yeah, once you've dealt with a massive horse, talking to other people is a lot easier." So I highly recommend investing in a horse if you want to improve your communication.

But just like Mr Buttons, the people in your lives will benefit from this level of clarity. It eliminates confusion and you just know that you are doing your part in things. You might be thinking as you're listening to this, well, Maisie, I've tried to be clear, but it doesn't always change the outcome. And you're right. That clear communication doesn't guarantee that others will meet your needs or act as you would like them to. But it's unreasonable to expect that of other people. It's not actually the outcome that we want to focus on.

There are other outcomes that are more useful to focus on than other people behaving the way we want them to. But how can any of us enter that kind of conversation about what is and isn't happening without being clear and explicit first? So how can you ensure that you've done your part before you request anyone else do anything? Because once you do that, then you can honestly say to yourself that you have been responsible for yourself. You've given that person the information they need in order to decide what they want to do.

So all you have to do is ask that question. But I have some other questions that you can play around with as well. And they are, where am I expecting

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this person to read my mind? Where have I neglected to express myself clearly and explicitly? Where have I been ambiguous in my communication or given mixed messages? And of course, it is always useful to follow-up a question like that with why? Why have you not been clear and explicit? Why have you not shared information with this person? Why have you been ambiguous?

And then we can get to work on coaching you on whatever your answers to those questions are. But even without me or my team coaching you, you can still get a lot out of just answering those questions as honestly as you can. So that clear and explicit communication just eliminates the guesswork. It reduces frustration and annoyance, particularly in you, possibly in them as well. And it requires you to take responsibility for your part in interactions and ensure that you are doing your part.

Mr Buttons needs explicit cues and consistent communication from me to understand what it is I'm asking of him, what I would like from him, just as the people in our lives do, it's not just horses. Because if I haven't been clear, how can I take issue with him or anyone else in my life for that matter? So that principle of clear and explicit communication is universal, whether it's in relationships, the workplace, or with lovely horses like Mr Buttons. Alright, folks, a short and powerful one for you today. I'll be back next week. Have a good one.

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