

# Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Maisie Hill**

**The Maisie Hill Experience** with Maisie Hill

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

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 my friends, I have got a really juicy episode for you today because today I am joined by my client Ami who is a member of The Flow Collective and we have just the most incredible conversation that I know you're going to find hugely inspiring and insightful. Alright, enjoy it.

Hello, hello and welcome to the podcast. I've got a guest with me. We're just sat here grinning at each other through the screen. I have one of my lovely clients from The Flow Collective, Ami, with me today. Welcome to the podcast.

Ami: Thank you so much for having me, as a very avid listener of this podcast for a long time it's a delight and a pleasure to be on it.

Okay, so tell us a bit about you, what you do, anything you want to share, your pronouns, all the stuff.

Ami: Okay. So, I'm Ami. My pronouns are she, her. I am 35. I live in West London. I am a writer and a lawyer. I'm Aquarius.

Maisie: Are you?

Ami: Yes, so a lot of my analogies will be water based. It just happens without me realising it. Yes, and I've been a member of The Flow Collective for, we were just talking about, just over a year.

Maisie: Yeah. Wow, a year. I can't wait to hear about this because we've had so many people go through The Flow Collective and be long term members that I just, I think I'm pretty good at being able to guess accurately, not even guess, predict what someone's experience will be like over that course of time. So, I'm kind of looking forward to testing it out against what you say because I've got it written down somewhere.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Because I was like, “I think by month this is where they’ll be. And at three months this is where they’ll be, at six months and then at a year.”

Because that for me is kind of how we set up the user experience and kind of what we want you to work with when you first join. And then the kind of supplemental materials, all of that, okay.

Ami: Well, you can’t say that and not share what your prediction is, come on.

Maisie: So, my prediction is that within the first month, well, within the first week people are just like, “Oh my goodness. I can’t believe this community. It’s incredible.” Ami’s nodding on the other side.

Ami: Yeah, yeah, yeah, definitely.

Maisie: And then within a month the idea is that someone’s using the self-coaching tools to bring awareness and kind of just building awareness of themselves in their lives and starting to find the places where they have more power than they might realise in terms of their mindset, their approach, all of these things. And that they’re starting to become more aware of their emotional life and being able to process emotions, those things.

And then really what I want is the first three months is someone to come in, start using those tools, bring in the nervous system education and awareness, and being able to be themselves basically. And then after that, it’s for me that’s the core fundamental mission. And then from there we can bring in more specific things like people pleasing, and boundaries, and all of that stuff which can come in before then. But it’s when you have those core skills built in that stuff just gets so much easier and maybe not as necessary as you first thought they were.

Ami: They sort of integrate into your thinking without you actually realising.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

Maisie: Yeah. And so really, I think that first three to six months is all about improving your relationship with yourself which has a ripple effect on your other relationships and in your career, whether it's professional, personal relationships. And then I really think from six months there's a depth of working with these tools that comes in. And you start to be able to use them in more challenging situations and have conversations that you might have shied away from.

And we have people doing that from the get-go, from when they first joined. They're like, "What, I can use it for this? I'm going to go for it." But for me by the time someone has been with us for a year, and we've still got members who have been with us from the beginning, which is three years, over three years now. But have really, kind of feel much more at home in themselves so they're able to be out in the world in the way that they want to be. And just making shit happen, whatever that is. How am I doing?

Ami: Well, the fact that I'm sort of nodding so vigorously the whole time I think just illustrates how well thought out and how well planned everything in The Flow Collective is. You've spoken about how you've been very intentional with the way that you've designed it and the journey that you've just mapped. I think everybody who's been part of The Flow Collective for any period of time, I'm sure that'll be hugely resonant for them and it's massively resonant for me as well.

I think speaking personally when I think about the year that I've had so far, there's a song that plays in my head. And that song, it's a Frank Zappa song so that should give you some clue to how transformational really this year has been for me. But it's a song called Watermelon in Easter Hay. Another of those crazy Zappa titles. But basically, it's just this epic guitar solo. And the image it always conjures to mind for me is someone standing on the edge of a cliff just playing out into the open water as the sun is just setting, red, gold, orange all around in a blaze of light.

And that person has had to run, walk, crawl, drag themselves to where they are to play this epic solo. And on the way has seen things which are

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

heart-breaking, beautiful, majestic, tender, angry, just the span of human emotions. And reaching that kind of point at the end where there's still further to go but there's a marker in the sand almost, where the land meets the sea. That to me is what the last year has been. And a large part of my experience of it has been shaped by being in The Flow Collective.

And I think there's sort of, if I was to sum it up, I think for me this year has really been about stepping into power, stepping into my power. I joined The Flow Collective because I was an avid listener of this podcast. So, I was just like, "She's great." I loved Period Power. I remember I went to a seminar at work about confidence for women in the workplace. And this was just around the time that I had just first read the book. And I remember just waving it around everyone being like, "But it also [inaudible] in your cycle you're in if you have one."

And I signed up. I had no real conception about what to expect or what I could necessarily hope to do or what that might look like inside The Flow Collective. I only knew that I had a strong sense that there was something holding me back and, in many ways, I recognised potentially at a subconscious level that I was holding myself back. And I didn't know how to break through that on my own. I didn't quite understand the nature of the bondage. And I didn't feel like I had the tools to find the key to either unlock it or to break them, but I knew I needed some help.

And I knew that this was the kind of help that I might need. And I took a risk. I took a chance just to see how it would work and followed my intuition which is quite different to how I usually make decisions which involves a huge amount of research, and investigation, and rationalisation. I just had a feeling, and I went with it. And I couldn't have foreseen, and I'm glad that I couldn't really at that point, what the process might look like from that point.

Maisie: Yeah. When you look back and you think about, you kind of had this sense that you've been held back, and you were kind of sitting in that awareness I suppose what did that look like? Is there anything you can think about when you think back to a year ago, where the places you were

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

holding yourself back? Because it can show up in so many ways. Usually if we're doing it in one place, we're doing it in lots of places but I'm just curious if there's anywhere particular that comes to mind.

Ami: I've had time to reflect on this over the last year. And I don't think I could have particularly articulated it like this at the time. But looking back, I think this year has been a real interplay for me between coming to terms with grief on the one hand and hope on the other. And the ways in which I felt like I was being held back was what the effect of long-term grief, when it settles into your body. It shapes your mind and shapes your perspective. It tires your muscles out and it robs you of your sense of safety in the world.

I knew that that was potentially at the heart of what I was dealing with, which is life just felt like a struggle in a lot of ways. And I found it very difficult to find safe ground on which to plant my feet on which to take firm steps. I had already done a lot that I was proud of and am proud of up until that point. But the amount that I felt that it took for me, the resources that I had to draw from felt like it was unsustainable. So, I had achieved and done things that I was proud of almost in spite of how I was having to do them.

And then came the hope that sort of that real belief in the power of and the joy in life, and about your or my deservingness to experience it. And knowing that there was a tension between those two things. And knowing that I needed to do something to try to shift the balance between two of them.

Maisie: Yes. I love the way you phrase that, the tension between those two. Can you say some more on that? I'm curious if you're aware of how that felt in your body, or you've spoke about it costing you resources. Because that's the thing is often when people are experiencing grief and emotions, and trauma, and being human basically, we can still do things. So, I know for many of my clients, they'll still put on a brave face and go out to work and do things but inside there is this tension, this cost, this duality or even multiple existences.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

And there are times and places where that is the safest thing to do as well. I just want to acknowledge that. But it's not being able to be ourselves.

Ami: Yeah. And not feeling safe too, I think you hit the nail on the head when you talked about safety just then. And it's also interesting that the question you asked me just now was to do with the kind of somatic experience of it. So, feeling the experience of it inside the body. And I think that sort of disconnection about what I was actually feeling physically in my body was quite a large part of it because in order to bring ourselves through times which are really difficult, earth shatteringly difficult we have to find coping mechanisms.

And often that involves either a level of disconnection, detachment and numbness. That's certainly how it showed up for me. And I think there's quite a lot of work that I had to do before I could even get to that place. There's quite a lot I had to do in terms of, I suppose learning to create safety for myself. And it was a very intentional project that I undertook. And it wasn't until I would say the third quarter of my time in The Flow Collective that I actually felt ready and able to do that. And I think the grounding for it comes with what I was talking about in terms of hope.

And what I really learnt to do is to contextualise the sort of pain and difficulty of grief in the context of the past, in the context of my hope for my life in the future. I experienced some childhood trauma in the form of losing a parent at a really early age. My dad died when I was six. And then the sequence of events which took place after that were incredibly traumatic for me and my family and involved losses of all kinds. And that I think has resulted in a loss of safety which I felt was irreparable.

And I always, when I thought about it consciously, I think I always thought that I would have to find mechanisms or ways around it. But what is unfolding for me is the possibility of almost reaching back through time. I can't change what happened, but I can hold myself with the tools, resources and knowledge that I have now in a way that I needed to experience then in order to heal the trauma that I carry, and that other

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

people carry too on a day-to-day basis. And I found that to be a kind of alchemy really. It's incredible, there's a kind of quantum mechanics about it almost.

The idea of things happening in the past and in the future but them all happening inside you now. When you have a nervous system response, something from the past is triggering inside of you right now. And it's not possible to wind the clock back and although I would love to, to kind of keep my dad with us. But what is possible to do is to begin to provide myself with some of the things that I needed then as a six-year-old and find a way to sort of give those to myself now as well the age that I am. That's been an incredibly powerful experience.

And I also think that we might look at an event which happened 30 years ago, and you might have people who are grieving a loss of a parent or a loved one that happened decades ago. And I always thought that it was something that happened and that I am learning to deal with now. But what I felt and properly appreciate until I started dealing with the somatic experience in the body and as it unfolds in real time is that it's happening right now as well. And people who have suffered particularly from early parental loss don't always get that recognition, I think.

And people think that the phrase is that time is the greatest healer. And I think that that's a huge lie that society tells us because especially with early parental loss, each new developmental stage that you come to as a child and then as an adult. That generates a new understanding of the loss that you are bearing for a person who made you, who you loved so much, who loved you so much and who was able to create a safe space for you in the world. It's like new vistas of loss open up at your feet at every developmental stage.

I had several years of that in my backpack when I joined The Flow Collective. That's some of the luggage, let's say, that I started to unpack in the last year.



## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Maisie: You've put that so, so well. I'm just letting it arrive in me because I just know so many people are going to resonate with what you've shared. And I just want to acknowledge and thank you for sharing it. Just such a helpful way. And it is just, we live out our stories, whatever they are. And it's like the revisiting to the past, the grief of something that we don't have currently and like you said, throughout our lifetimes. And I think sometimes that can feel quite damning to someone.

It's like each time I think about it, and we speak about what fires together wires together in terms of neural plasticity and deepening the grooves in ourselves. The more we repeat a thought or an experience within us, the somatic bodily experience that that story gets deeper and deeper. And I think it's also, yes, that's true and there's an opportunity within that because each time we are experiencing it there is an opportunity hopefully with the right support, with tools and things being available that we can go back to the things that we didn't receive when we wanted to receive them.

The things that we needed, whatever they may be and give them to ourselves or with someone else accompanying us on that journey to do that. I remember one of the most powerful coaching sessions that I had where I was getting coached. My coach at the time said to me, "You know, Maisie, it's never too late to go back and give yourself what you needed." We were going through quite a painful childhood memory and she was just like, "What did you want that person to do at that moment? What was it you needed them to do?"

And having all the compassion in the world because for me at least in that experience, I'm sure that person would have given me those things had they been able to, or had they been able to recognise that that's what I needed. And so, it's not putting it on them and that's what I love about some of this work is that blame doesn't have to be there. And that's different when we're talking about accountability and people doing things that are hurtful, neglectful, abuse etc. But often we carry these stories and these, they can be traumas because traumas can involve all sorts of things.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Ami: For me that's been a real two hander. So, the first part was a part that I thought I had already done. I'm a big fan of cognitive behavioural therapy, and psychotherapies, and talking therapies. They work. They're important, when you need help go and get help. I've gone and got help in that regard and it's been extremely helpful at different points in my childhood and my life. But I hadn't quite appreciated that there was still a bit more work, particularly for me in the area of just recognising and holding what I had been through.

I knew sort of on a level that you would write something down, I knew on that level what I had been through. I knew what my family had been through. I knew the ways in which our physical and mental health had suffered. I knew about the isolation, the pain, the difficulty of those years, the precariousness of our lives. The suddenness, my dad was not that much older than I am now when he died, and my mum was pretty much the same age as me with two little kids. And then the ways that my family, that we have grown closer and have a very tight bond.

But also, the ways in which those experiences have shaped the way that we interact with each other and shaped the way that we interact with the world. I knew all that on a kind of factual level as though I was looking at it on a crib sheet. But what I hadn't properly let land within me was to how much that had been to carry and how well I've done in carrying it, how I've been able to look after myself and the people that I love throughout that process. I've been able to achieve things. I've been able to make meaningful connections with others.

I've been able to be of service to others, of service to myself and hopefully make a positive impact through my small contribution to the world. I hadn't properly, I think, acknowledged that. And I think that was the first step, which was compassion. It's self-compassion really. And then the secondary work that can only come after that which is from that place of holding space for yourself and holding compassion, and love, and self-celebration is then the work of with the tools, with the resources that you have now, giving

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

some of those to yourself in the past as they exist within you inside your body now.

So that's the kind of two-handed process. And I also really, it really resonated with me what you were just saying just now about accountability. Because the difference really between blame and accountability. And there were always certain things in my life which I thought were out of my control, the things that happened to me. And this can make the world feel like a really dark and scary place a lot of the time.

Because if you believe that things just happen to you, that terrible traumatic events can just befall you and there's nothing that you can possibly do to escape them it can only really have one reaction which is a really fear based sympathetic nervous system activation. And a belief that the world can be cruel and unmanageable. And then you feel very helpless and small. And it's very difficult to have agency from that place.

Maisie: It is and just to kind of intersect with a bit of science for everyone, that this is one of the reasons, there are many reasons but one of the reasons why people who have experienced trauma can go on to experience subsequent trauma. And I can't remember what the official term is but there's a trauma gets added to basically. And part of that is that kind of shutting down of the system that can happen, kind of that helplessness that you spoke about which is that nervous system shutdown where we just kind of play dead basically.

And because of that then we don't necessarily have the resources to get into fight or flight when we want that mechanism, that defence mechanism being activated and brought online. And as a result, subsequent traumas can happen and we're just not able to mobilise ourselves when we want to. And so, then we become like victim, and I mean that in every sense of the word to what's going on.

And it's really why I think that the somatic, the nervous system side of things is so important, just like as education as well because otherwise you

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

end up with an internal narrative that you should have done something. You should have been able to do this thing and you weren't able to. And then you make it about you as a person rather than you as an organism with a nervous system and all of these things.

Ami: Well, that was pretty much exactly my experience and the effect that you talked about with trauma being cumulative was definitely something that I experienced particularly I'd say up until my late 20s maybe turning 30, and that these sorts of circular patterns playing out. And so, like I said, there's on the one hand, there's the view and the belief that things just happen to you, and you have very little power or agency over the things that befall you.

And at the same time as you just described, there's also a belief that everything is your fault, that you are responsible for the unhealthy or unacceptable behaviour of other people. It almost becomes magical thinking. And I had a kind of experience when I was in my sort of mid 20s with quite intense OCD because you believe the connections between the things that you do and then the consequences in the world.

Even though you know that it doesn't matter how many times you check whether the door is locked. There's a belief that if you don't do it x number of times in x number of ways that your house will get burgled for example. And that's a really, really difficult and reductive unfair place for you to make your home, between those two polarities of not being in control of everything and also everything being your fault at the same time. And I think that that, to an extent we're all in a kind of a bell curve with these things, aren't we?

And I think that's a lot of the time sort of in my experience of the people that I know and love and in myself as well. That can often be the root cause of things like perfectionism, and people pleasing, and taking over responsibility. And I remember your series on this podcast about responsibility and you said, "There's good news and bad news. The good news is you are responsible for yourself. And the bad news is you are not

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

responsible for anyone else.” And allocating responsibility where it truly belongs and truly lies, I think is a source of deep empowerment particularly for women.

As I’m a woman of colour also there can be the additional pain of intergenerational trauma. We were talking just now, and you mentioned about trauma being something that we end up being traumatised sometimes by the people that we love. Who in turn have been traumatised by the people that they love. And I think a lot of people of colour, most people of colour, women of colour particularly, I myself am a sort of product of the British colonial empire.

So, there is literally generations worth of inherited trauma in the way that our communities and our cultures have been dislocated, moved around, subjugated, suppressed, had various experiences with wealth and losing that. And then poverty and alienation about the ways that people parent, particularly the ways that people parent girls. That all kind of adds I think to an experience of a world which isn’t safe, where it isn’t safe to be yourself. And I really liked what you said about when you were sort of mapping the journey of the year.

For anyone who joins The Flow Collective, the first six months are really about coming into relationship with yourself. And I think that has been one of the most powerful things for me which is, if you think of yourself, like almost the conduit for everything. Because your experience of your life is the prism through which all of your experiences, all light is refracted. And everything that you see, all the spectrum of colours which are in your vision come from the prism of self. And really working on the types of things that we have been talking about has lit up my view in many ways.

And these things, they’re difficult and they’re an ongoing journey and a challenge. But knowing that you can have responsibility for what you want your experience of your life to be, you can tilt the prism. So, you get the rainbow, you get the colours, you get the mix of what it is that you want in your life, has really been the thing that has allowed me to, as I said at the

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

beginning of this, to step into my power. And that's the place that I'm talking to you from today.

Maisie: That's amazing. Again, I just want to acknowledge because you've done so much work way before you ever got to The Flow Collective or anything like that. You've just done so much. And I know you've done that for you and for your loved ones and your family as well. I'm just energetically through the screen giving you a hug, if you want a consensual hug.

Ami: I would love a consensual hug, I would love one so much. And shall I tell you about my year in review?

Maisie: Yeah, let's do it.

Ami: This is what I said I would do today. So, in, I think it was December or maybe it was the beginning of January this year. We did a winter workshop and you asked us to pick a word for the year.

Maisie: Yeah, which is what we're going to be – I'm trying to think when this episode comes out. I think we're going to be doing it the day after as part of Recalibrate and Activate.

Ami: Okay, excellent.

Maisie: So, we're going to be doing it again and everyone can come. When you're hearing this, you will probably have missed the first one or two sessions, but you can get the recordings. And then we're going to go deeper in the winter workshop in The Flow Collective.

Ami: I highly recommend it. Everyone just get on it. So, my word was 'expansion'.

Maisie: That was my one as well.

Ami: I was thinking about, it was your one as well, yeah.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

Maisie: I love it, I can't wait to hear.

Ami: And I thought about it in a very geographical way, a topographical way if that makes sense. I thought about a kind of an expansion of territories in a sort of equitable and fair way, not [crosstalk] and subjugating people. And I had some coaching in January with Mars, Mars Lord.

Maisie: Shout out to Mars Lord.

Ami: Oh my God, Mars Lord.

Maisie: Isn't she the fucking best?

Ami: Oh my God, I just want to take this moment to do a sidebar and say that for anybody listening who's not already part of The Flow Collective who is a person of colour. The Flow Collective offers a beautiful, incredible, supportive, regenerative, amazing, majestic resource which is our BIPOC monthly calls which are run by the high priestess of everything, Mars Lord. And it's genuinely just a safe no strings attached, just loving supportive environment for people of colour to take space and be coached, and be seen, and supported by each other.

And only we can attend, only we can see the recordings. It's such an active kind of power, rebellion and generosity. And I love it so much. I go every month. I never miss it.

Maisie: Mars loves it too.

Ami: Marks keeps me in my head. She'd speak to me in my head, I was up a mountain in Peru earlier this year and I could just hear her in my head. Her voice was just ringing and echoing around the chambers of my mind. And she often delays her dinner so that she can coach everyone who's put their hand up. And she's just fabulous. And between you and her and the community and the collective, I just feel incredibly grateful and held. So, I just want to give a massive shout out to the BIPOC monthly calls and specifically Mars as well.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Maisie: Yes. I'm glad because she's just such an incredible coach. I love her so much. And I just feel, I feel so blessed to know her in all the ways that I know her and to have her as a friend and she coaches me. And to have her coach everyone in The Flow Collective, on the calls she does there. And of course, also for the BIPOC calls because there's no one else that could do it apart from her, the way she approaches things, the love she has, the coaching, the understanding of the impact of misogynoir and culture identities, ethnicity, race.

Being able to coach people with all those lenses, like you said, and all those prisms and nuances that come into play. And to do it in the powerful way that she does it, it's just – I don't have words for it. She's just so good.

Ami: I think there are very few people that can spot and call you out very directly on any bullshit and still make you feel like you're being hugged and held at the same time. And that is part of the magic I think of why we are all able to be so open and so vulnerable in a world that tells us specifically in these bodies that our problems aren't as important. Our voice is not as loud. Our values are not as valid.

And I can't even really begin to calculate the ways that that has fed into my thinking and the way that I show up particularly in spaces which are of a dominant culture which either doesn't include mine or feels proactively exclusionary. Which those spaces obviously continue to exist whether or not we acknowledge them as such. So, I've been coached by her in January. She was the first person who ever coached me ever and that was in December. And in January, I told her about my word for the year.

And I also told her about some of the work that I had begun to do in terms of looking at the webinars. I think we were doing things like boundaries and people pleasing at that time in The Flow Collective. And I'd started doing that. And I felt very open and ready to go with the work pretty much instantly from joining. And I took it, and I literally ran really fast with it, and it was fantastic. And so, by the time January rolled around I was talking about how my experience was shifting.

**The Maisie Hill Experience** with Maisie Hill



## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

And rather than feeling contracted I talked about feeling almost before a kind of a small thin precise metal object, almost like a part in a great capitalist machine, honed to do specific things. And to almost automate things and to act with precision and to try it and be perfect all the time. I felt this shift, a sort of a disillusion of that energy. And instead, I talked about beginning to feel myself, or feel into myself like a great river with swirling tributaries and ecosystems, swelling in one place, sort of drifting off in another. And all of these sorts of things organically happening.

And that really rang with my word for the year and that is a great space and sort of organic and natural expansion that I felt in the beginning of the year. And I began to put in place the theories of changes which were planned before but we kind of started to do that in my life. And kind of get going with that. So around that time my partner and I put our place, our flat on the market. We told our respective employers that we wanted to go on a career break for six months. And I effectively had to find a way to temporarily resign from the organisation that I've been working for, for the last decade.

So that was a huge part of change and really that kind of feeds into the hope thing that I was talking about earlier. So, it's a kind of a belief in the projection of what your life can be in the future, where you want to go and what you want to get to. And so that was the sort of the beginning of the year. And the things that I was thinking about to kind of the thoughts, because obviously we work with the thought model which is to do with how you respond to circumstances with your thoughts, how they then impact your feelings, how that determines your actions.

And then that tells you what result that you get. So, the thoughts I was working with around that kind of time is I began to, as instructed by Mars, hold myself, physically hold myself, to get a sense of where my body was at. And I came up with the thoughts, here is my sanctuary. And that thought kept me grounded and safe in a very turbulent and exciting year.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

Maisie: Wow, what a thought. I mean Mars comes up with whopper thoughts. She offered me one the other day and I was like, "Thank you." It just felt like such a gift, like a real, a balm.

Ami: Yeah, absolutely. Well, I came up with that one.

Maisie: Oh, sorry.

Ami: I came up with that one.

Maisie: Great job. It's a really fantastic one. I'm totally going to steal it.

Ami: Yeah. It's a beautiful thought because it makes me think of myself almost like I think of an ancient temple with steps leading up to it, a kind of sacred space of magic and healing which is what all of our bodies are. That is the kind of essence of us individually as humans. And Mars always likes to say, I can quote her any day off the top of our head, "Our longest and most enduring relationship is the one that we have with ourselves. And your value is set. It's not based on what you do. It's based on who you are, and your value is set from birth."

And so that was the kind of things that she had been saying which kind of got me into this place. And I was also thinking, I have one life and I'm living it. And that is what really kind of got me out of the door to create the results that I wanted for the year. So, then spring was really all about preparing and holding space for the things which were about to materialize, things that I had set in motion, that hadn't started yet. We had a very challenging house move as all house sales usually are. But I think this particular set of circumstances and the people involved made it very challenging.

And I could almost feel myself kind of constricting it again. And that was a kind of, I think a good analogy really for how these things, they do come in waves again. Sorry about the water analogy.

Maisie: No, no, no. Well, you know me, I do seem to do a lot of seafaring analogies and things so I'm here for all the water ones.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Ami: So, it's not a linear thing and that's part of the beauty of it and the beauty of us as sort of organic beings. It was a very sort of challenging time, but I was able to kind of continue through the thoughts that I was thinking and through the plan that I had for myself for the year. I was able to kind of hold that space for myself and really invest in believing. Believing in what I wanted, what I was creating, what I was manifesting and what could happen.

Maisie: I love it because this is the thing, it's like people get very stuck on the how. They'll think, well, I want this to happen in my life. No, but how am I going to do that? And they just think, well, it's not possible or I'm going to have to have this in place, that in place. And it just takes away from the desire, which is why, do you remember, I think it was in the summer, I kind of set everyone in the membership with the task of practising wanting?

Ami: Yes, I loved that.

Maisie: Yeah. And letting yourself experience desire without getting into the how and the practicalities of things.

Ami: I think what you said was, "What would you want or what would you like to happen if you didn't have to do any of it?" Yeah, which is so great. And I absolutely for this whole year really, I've just been practising, or I've been holding the practice of focusing solely on what it is I want to create. Because I've learnt through my time in The Flow Collective that once you focus on how you want to feel, once you do that it's almost natural to then take the steps that will get you there. You become the kind of person that naturally does those things anyway.

And I have definitely used that to my advantage to create some of the results that I have made for myself this year.

Maisie: Do you want to share any of the results that you've made this year, or we can get there at the end, it's up to you?

Ami: Yeah, we'll probably get there, yeah.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

Maisie: You're doing your timeline, I love it.

Ami: Yeah, we'll probably, I think we'll get there at the end because some of it is to do with what I'm about to talk about. And also, just to stay in the spring, part of what was so difficult is that I was working on a new relationship to security. Security is something that I've always held on tightly to with my fingers digging in, whether or not it was healthy or right for me to do that, stay in those circumstances. Whether or not it was real security that was being represented or just an impression of security.

And so, I was really kind of stretching my tolerance. I suppose to not only invite in uncertainty but to loosen the grip of security or what I thought security looked like in my life in order to have space to let other things in. And then summer was just about living it. At the end of spring, end of sort of April, beginning of May, that is when by that time we had sold, my partner and I had sold our flat. We put all our stuff into storage.

We had resigned permanently or temporarily from our jobs, packed our bags and then we were on a plane for a six month break from work travelling around Central and South America which was incredible. Very different to how I imagined it and I think that's because it was real. Things appear differently in our imagined versions of them. At the beginning of the song that I mentioned, the Frank Zappa song, he does a little intro with a weird voice [inaudible], but in it he says, "Imaginings are only real in the mind of the imaginer."

And that had been my experience of my dreams and my hopes for myself. They lived in an imaginary place inside me. But now I'm unleashing them and experiencing them. And that was a real time of sort of, it was just a beautiful time of just being completely away from all the things that we might think define us on a day-to-day basis, just travelling, meeting incredible people. Being part of different cultures, having the sort of humility and openness I hope to learn, and to grow from those experiences.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

My partner also proposed while we were away which I said yes to. I had some real reservations about getting married because I love my relationship with my partner. I think he's amazing. And I just thought, why should a state be part of this, why should we introduce any kind of legal functionality into our private relationship? And we had talked about all of this before he proposed. He didn't just sort of spring it on me and hope for the best.

But I'd got to the point where I felt like if I was looking really deep down inside myself, even though it didn't really make sense on a rational or practical basis, even though they weren't really, apart from sort of tax benefits. There weren't really any sort of tangible reasons to do it. I was able to sort of get quiet enough and get close enough to what I truly want and what I think, you know, what my intuition is telling me to hear that there was still a part of me which wanted this. And I wanted to honour that part even though couldn't rationalise it, couldn't make sense of it.

It was still valid, and it was a voice and I wanted to hear it. So that was a kind of, yes, we got engaged but it was almost a commitment that I made, not just to him but to myself as well which was very beautiful.

Maisie: I love that.

Ami: And it was, yeah, it was a lovely experience. But that was a real time of connection for us but also a kind of a metamorphosis for me in a lot of ways. I know that you've spoken about identity shifts. And you spoke about, I think it was the lobster phase.

Maisie: Yeah, the lobster phase.

Ami: Which is the sort of painful place where basically your [inaudible] is breaking up. And you haven't quite developed the new skin underneath.

Maisie: Yeah, it's a very tender, raw but necessary place, yeah.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Ami: Yeah. And that was definitely something that I began to experience in the summer while we were away because it was like I had amplified all the hopes and dreams that I had for myself. And I was really listening, there was nothing else distracting me. And I was very porous and very open to it. But that's quite an exposing place. It's a very tender place which can be beautiful for connection, but it can also leave you feeling quite raw.

And he and I had a disagreement in a laundrette in a really kind of dodgy barrier of Mexico City. A very dodgy neighbourhood in Mexico City, it is relevant. So, we put all of our clothes for the entire trip in these two laundry machines in this sort of laundrette that anybody could just walk into off the street in this dodgy neighbourhood in Mexico City. And we'd been walking around all day. It was pretty hot. It was lunchtime. We were both starving. And he said, "Okay, why don't we go off around the corner and find a restaurant and we can go and eat something?"

And I was just sort of like, "Are you insane? These are all our clothes for the trip. There's no locks on the doors or anything. If we get back and they're all gone, we can't sort of go wandering around starkers for a few months, so no way are we going to do." And basically, we ended up having this, I think it was a disagreement to do with world views because he very much comes from the place I think, and he's expressed it himself this way that if there's a problem, we will resolve it and we'll find a way around it and we'll go on to continue to have a great time and it won't really affect us that much.

Whereas the place that I was coming at it from was if something goes wrong this is disastrous, and it will be terrible. And we can't replace what we've lost. And he was trying to get me to see the merits of his world view. And he was just sort of like, "It must be pretty debilitating to see life in that way, in the way that you've just described." I'm like, "Yeah, it is. It's really tiring." And it was hard to kind of, you know, and he was like, "Well, I think it would be better if you could just try and find a way to sort of trust a bit more that things will be okay."

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

And I was just saying, “I don’t know how possible that is.” Because I was in that really raw lobster place where I was already trusting so much. I was already opening myself up so much that that one trip to the laundrette, just it felt like almost too much. But I thought about a lot when we came back into the autumn. And that was really the seed of realising what work I needed to do in the autumn. And that was very much to do with this idea about if I leave our clothes in the laundry, can I, one, sort of trust that hopefully it won’t get nicked?

But two, trust that if they do get nicked, I’ll still be, okay? And so, in the autumn my work very much was about, it was really about nervous system capacity. It’s what Victoria Albina who is also amazing, another amazing coach that you’ve introduced me to, Maisie, who did a somatics webinar which I think was on the bonus section of the website.

Maisie: Yeah, it is. Much loved resource and yeah, she’s incredible. She was my coach for one and a half, two years, something like that. And she’s been on the podcast. So, if anyone wants to go back and listen to that, I can’t remember off the top of my head which one it was. It was a while back though, but go back and listen to it, she’s wonderful.

Ami: It was one of the People of Influence series, wasn’t it?

Maisie: I think it was the first one.

Ami: Yeah. And she’s incredible. She’s just so sort of so loving. I mean just her love just kind of floors me, but I’ve joined her...

Maisie: She’s a Leo as well so you get her love. She’s there.

Ami: Yeah, literally just like she’s purring in everything. She’s so fabulous. But I joined her six-month programme called Anchored which is a six-month sort of somatic programme to explore some of the things that we’ve been talking about. I’m three weeks in and it’s absolutely fantastic. But I think she called it Titrating Your Window of Bodily Dignity. Which is basically to do with expanding the capacity in your nervous system. And so

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

going to the laundrette in Mexico for example, sent me into an activated sympathetic response. Whereas my partner was able to stay in ventral.

Maisie: Nice regulated states, yeah.

Ami: Exactly. And then I realised, I thought to myself, I want that for myself. And then I thought to myself, I can have that. And then I thought to myself, I know how to get that. So, I set about the work of doing it. So, there are so many incredible resources inside The Flow Collective.

Maisie: Can you please just say those three things again. Because what I want everyone to hear is the simplicity of this. It doesn't mean it's easy, but the simplicity of those three things, can you remember what they were? I can remember some of them.

Ami: I think so. I want that for myself. I can have that for myself. And I know how to get that for myself.

Maisie: Just think, everyone listening, I want you to think how you can apply those three thoughts in your life. And if you just went through life, I don't mean this in a perfectionist way, like you have to always work at this kind of level with yourself, because nobody can do that. But if you approach things with that kind of thinking, what becomes available to you? Because it really shifts things. Sometimes we go for the really kind of detailed thoughts, or the this or the that. And it's like, listen, if you can just simply say, "I want that. I'm going to do that."

Variants of those simple powerful sentences, so much opens up. So much more becomes possible both within us, that expansion, that internal expansion. But also, how we're able to go about our lives.

Ami: They're power thoughts really, aren't they?

Maisie: Yeah, they are.



## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Ami: So yeah, and that was really like you just said, that was really revolutionary for me because rather than thinking, my brain was wired in a certain way due to the experiences that I had. And now it's going to be very difficult for me to experience a sense of felt safety in the world. I instead thought I just said, because as I said, there are so many great resources in The Flow Collective, specifically the Creating Safety webinar, the Somatics webinar. And then all the stuff to do with kind of listening to self and building self-confidence, setting boundaries, all of those kinds of things.

But particularly the sort of – I think we did an exercise, I think it's in the second webinar, the Creating Safety series to map the nervous system.

Maisie: It is. I'm so impressed that you know all of these things, but it is, it's in the start of the second one. Are you talking about the mapping exercise where you map your nervous system? Yeah.

Ami: That is just incredible. So, I've got that map and I did all the different colours. And I just enjoyed being a huge geek basically, doing all that. And I keep it with me and it's really helpful because it helps you to diagnose, these are the kinds of thoughts I think when I'm in this state. These are the kind of feelings I have. These are the things I start doing. This is my view and my perception of the world. And so, there's a saying that attention is the purest form of love.

And that has definitely been my experience of it because when I started bringing attention and awareness to these things, I was able to begin the process of creating safety for myself just by understanding, acknowledging and connecting to what I was experiencing at the time. And it was actually that simple.

Maisie: I know. I know. I say this because people send me messages all the time. "But how exactly?" And of course, you have to start off with that kind of nervous system education and to sometimes to create enough safety to be able to have that awareness. Because it's not easy for everyone to be in

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

their bodies, especially if you're someone who has experienced traumas or there's other challenges there.

So sometimes that's why I love when we do things as a group and as a community because there's the coregulation that happens of us all working on it together. And creating that held space where we can all have our individual experiences there, knowing we're all in this together. But once you can do that it's the same with the thought work. You think you need to problem solve for having a lack of boundaries in your life.

But once you build your nervous system capacity and once you get to know yourself in this way and you have that level of compassion and you're able to have awareness not just of your nervous system but your mindset and all of those things. This is not scientifically proven but I'm going to say 80 to 90% of what you think you need to do goes away or becomes so much simpler to do once you bring those resources in line. What do you think?

Ami: Yeah, I'm just nodding vociferously over here because it's like that Audre Lorde quote, "The master's tools can never dismantle the master's house." And in this case, you're both sides of the equation. And overthinking or trying to problem solve with your thinking mind cannot ever resolve the issues that your thinking mind has created. And there are other forms of knowledge and power which are as valuable as the rational thinking brain. But they're not really as valued by our society.

Our sort of capitalist society was sort of very neoclassical traditions of logic and rationalisation, and proven scientific facts and things like that. But there are other ancient forms of wisdom and knowledge, particularly sort of indigenous forms of knowledge and ones that are particularly associated with the kind of the power of women and the feminine power which I think that you can tap into. I wanted a lift. I wanted to know, do I create safety for myself and a 10-point list. And you can probably tell sort of the way I went about this by how I've explained and where I know exactly what was where.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Because that's how my brain works. I do things very thoroughly. I try and do them sequentially and in a particular order. And part of the process of creating safety for myself and connecting with myself in a different way is understanding the wisdom that's already within me and learning to value that as much as my logical brain. So, I worked very strongly on that in the autumn. I was addressing some of the stuff that came up over the summer.

But in a way I was also beginning to recondition myself because I wanted to work on my relationship to my anxiety and my sense of fear and lack of safety in the world. But at the same time there was this undercurrent in all of the seasons really, just doing some future dreaming. And that is what has kept each season connected to the next season. So, when we came back from our trip my partner and I, every couple of weeks, every month we would have like an AGM. It wasn't an annual general meeting. It was more like a fortnightly general meeting.

Where we would come together, and we spent time for example thinking about what our values are and how we can live more in alignment with our values. And then based on what our values are, thinking about what our priorities are for that month for ourselves, for our personal growth, for our connection, in our professional lives, where we want to live, what we want to do, all of those kinds of things. Those sorts of regular checking in whilst doing this work is the thing that I was talking about at the beginning.

The kind of confluence between grief and hope, there's one for in the past and one for in the future but your body is here in the present. And that reconditioning has really taken me on a journey now from sort of autumn into winter to doing a lot of healing work with my inner child, my inner children. And the last coaching that you and I had, you took me through some really, really powerful stuff about connecting with that child and healing the childhood trauma. And the pain and the difficulty of particular experiences with the resources and the tools that I have now.

I think I had begun doing that work subconsciously right from day one, if not, well before that. But it's now that I not only have practical tools, but I

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

also have the capaciousness, the expansiveness in the sort of abundance of self-love, and care, and respect that I have for myself in order for it to feel safe for those children to come out.

Maisie: Yeah. I don't know about you but I've definitely had the experience with some of the coaching that I've received, especially kind of a few years ago of when you're getting coached, especially when you're going back to childhood experiences, having your coach offer you that safety and that love that maybe you didn't get then, it doesn't always feel great. Because there's this thing going on where it's what you've always wanted but it's uncomfortable to get it because your experience...

Ami: Because it's not familiar.

Maisie: Yes. And so, it's like it kind of, I think needs to be like a drip, drip, drip. There's the drip and that's kind of the level that you can receive in that moment. And then you kind of, you leave that session and it hopefully then, it keeps kind of percolating away and it just kind of continues even I think if you don't give it much thought after that moment. And then you can kind of come back to it either in your self-coaching, or in another session, or at Ask a Coach, in the community, however, in conversations with your partner, it just drip.

And then it gradually, it starts to feel safer, and you feel more worthy of receiving that love, and that safety, and protection, and attention, and whatever it was that you didn't have in the way that you wanted to.

Ami: And it becomes a lot easier once you start doing it for yourself. So, it becomes so much easier to receive it from you for example or from Mars once I started to very intentionally give it to myself. And I decided at one point that I realised I just wasn't ever praising myself. I wasn't ever giving myself a pat on the back and saying, "Well done for doing this, you nailed this, you did this." And there was so many opportunities for me to do it but it was like, right, onto the next thing, onto the next thing I've got to do and excel in, do excellently, do brilliantly, be exceptional.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

And then we won't bank that either, we'll just move on to the next thing. And the minute that a mistake is made we won't hear the end of that inside. That was the place when I joined The Flow Collective that it was coming form. And so yeah, you're right, when you do receive that from someone it's hard to be receptive to it. But again, that's part of the titration of your capacity, not just to experience discomfort but to experience unconditional love and support as well.

Maisie: Yeah. Because sometimes someone will say something either in a post or when I'm coaching them and it's like you said, they're just kind of brushing past a huge success. Or maybe they haven't even acknowledged it as a success for themselves. Then I'll, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, hold your horses. We will get on to whatever you want to get coached on but let's not rush past this thing that you've achieved because it's incredible." And you can see, often people, just like a kind of squirming and an uncomfortableness there.

Again, like you said at the start, very intentional for me that I just really wanted this huge culture of celebration because it is so uncomfortable and so many people are, particularly women just brushing past the successes in this pursuit of perfectionism and some kind of idealised life whilst beating themselves up the whole time. And that's the kind of the driving force for creating the results in a kind of bid to, well, if I do this then I'll be worthy, then I'll be lovable, then I'll be acceptable in the world.

Ami: And I think that's why the Friday Wins thread is just such, it's just such a great resource because I found it quite, at the beginning I was just though, well, I don't really have anything to say. And then now a year in, I'm just sort of like I can't contain how much I have to say about what I've done. And my posts end up being really long and lots of different bullet points. And I love reading what everybody else has achieved, or has manifested, or what they're just celebrating.

The act of women or people who have been socialised as women coming together and saying, "I did this thing. And I'm here to tell you about it. And

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

I'm here to be seen by you doing it. And sometimes it's like I didn't do this thing as well as I wanted but I'm not making myself feel crap about it. And those sometimes can be the biggest wins. And then the other thing that I think that really feeds into that sort of, the culture of celebration to create the results that you want to create because that's ultimately for me what I see The Flow Collective being about.

It's, what do you want in your life? And we're going to be with you on this journey as you go get it. Now, let's go. And so, the other part of that is equipping yourself to give yourself what you need in order to get the results that you want. So, I think in the autumn workshop you mentioned, we did an exercise where we thought about ourselves as houseplants which is just so great. And you asked us to write our own self-care label, so does well in sunlight and warm conditions. And needs to be fed regularly etc, etc.

And this really blew my mind, not in terms of [inaudible] knew that about myself. And I think most of the people in my life would say that I'm quite good at advocating for my needs, expressing what my needs are. But what I realised through my time in The Flow Collective is there was always a bit of a trade-off happening in the back of my mind which is I can ask for those things, but I can only justify asking for those things if I'm doing x, y and z. If my output is x, y and z.

So, every time I would 'make a mistake' not only was I dealing with that mistake, but I was also subconsciously I think dealing with my worthiness and my right to ask for and to request the things and make happen the things that I need in my life. And I didn't realise that that's what was going on. So, I thought, yes, I know what my needs are, and I'm good at kind of making sure that they get met but I didn't realise it was conditional.

And then when we did the houseplant exercise, I was like, "You know what? Plants just need these things all the time. They don't just need them when they're in flower."

Maisie: Yeah, year-round support.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

Ami: Yeah. And so, then once I started thinking about my needs as non-negotiable, it's just sort of taken a layer off my day-to-day processes.

Maisie: Oh, in what way?

Ami: Because now I'm not thinking like, should I? It's 12:30 and I'm really hungry but I've got this bit of work to do. And I just know I need to be fed at certain times. So, I just make sure that I feed myself at certain times. It sounds really obvious, but I get really dysregulated when my hands and my feet are dry, or my lips are dry.

Maisie: Did you read the email I sent round to everyone yesterday?

Ami: Yeah.

Maisie: I sent this email out that's about dry skin and things, you'll have to read it. You're talking to the right person here. I get it.

Ami: And I didn't realise that I was dysregulated, I just thought, I've got various proclivities and I should, you know, it'd be nice if I can have them met but if I can't then I just need to get on with it and deal with it. Now I understand myself to be dysregulated and I know, I just carry around lip balm and hand cream. It sounds really obvious.

Maisie: No, but I know exactly what you mean. And it is, I think sometimes there can be a bit of – and I don't know if that FE, but just having had this conversation with many clients and my own work with this is that there's often a layer of self-judgment about needing these things. Or like, I shouldn't need moisturised hands. I shouldn't need to always have a lip balm. I shouldn't blah, blah, blah. Other people, I just coached someone on this the other day in The Flow Collective about another topic.

But it's like well, other people can do this. It was social occasions. Other people are very social. They can do big events, blah, blah, blah. But that's like me comparing myself to Mars. Because Mars from the minute I met her has had the best social life of anyone that I know. And she had five teenage

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

kids and young kids at the time. That's not me. And it's just so harmful to me to think that I should be like her or anyone else. And I think that was for me the beauty of the houseplant exercise because it's like, well, what are your needs?

And it was interesting, people were like, I need to be around other plants, need to know other people, like I'm the only one in the room.

Ami: Yeah, that's me. I think you said it in relation to your business coaching work but it's so true in any context is you said, "Don't make who you are a problem." And it's that sense of respecting my own needs and carving space for my own needs, prioritising my own needs because I am someone important in my life. I'm an important person in my life and I am going to treat myself like I am an important person in my life.

Maisie: How does that feel when you say that?

Ami: It feels true, I am on the cusp of taking some big steps in the new year. And I feel like my stride pattern has changed. I took what Vic calls baby kitten steps when I needed to. And sometimes I kind of took some firm footprints down and it's been a kind of up and down journey. But recently more and more I feel myself striding into the future. You spoke about sort of feeling uncomfortable when one is shown love and acceptance. I have recently been struggling with sort of feeling really almost uncomfortable with the experience of feeling excited.

Maisie: Yeah. Like a kind of restlessness, yeah.

Ami: I feel really jittery. And Mars coached me on it in our December BIPOC call and she was just like, "Why are you making this a problem?"

Maisie: Great question because that sounds great to me.

Ami: Exactly.



## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Maisie: I know, it's a kind of holding the tension thing because it's like this after such a period of taking such exquisite care of yourself and doing this deep inner work. It's quite a shift to go through into that where it feels like there's a charge building up in you. And I was watching Sonic the Hedgehog thing with Nelson yesterday and that what I'm reminded of. It's like there's this charge building up before he just goes.

Ami: In power mode.

Maisie: Yeah. And when that's happening it's like you're holding that tension and figuring out what that charge is and how you're going to use it and wield it and let yourself go. Yeah.

Ami: Yeah. And I'm really excited for that process because just even imagining what it'd be like to let myself go in a sort of creative, positive, joyful way is not something that I have a huge amount of experience of in my adult life. But equally I feel incredibly ready for it.

Maisie: Yes. I want everyone to hear that because I think often, we look for evidence of being able to do things through the experience of doing them. But what you're speaking about is just deciding in advance. Like you said that you want it, that you can and that you are going to do it. And that you have the resources that you need to do it.

Ami: It's the difference between, I remember listening to this podcast episode when I was in a hotel in Buenos Aires at the end of my trip. And you spoke about the difference between confidence through experience and self-confidence. Confidence through experience being something that you garner through what you do. And self-confidence being something you generate within yourself.

Maisie: Yeah. Oh my gosh, I cannot wait. I think you and I might end up having similar words for next year. I don't know if you've figured yours out yet but we're going to be going through the process next week, yeah, next

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

week or this week if you're listening to it as this comes out. This is going to be so much fun. I'm so excited.

Ami: I'm so excited too.

Maisie: I can't wait to see what happens. But it is, I think about that for myself a lot. I was saying to you before we started recording today about how my last month has been my most productive of the year. And I got so much done this year. We as a company, as a business, as coaches achieved so much in this year. When I was going through all of my wins for the year, I was like, I'd known as we were doing it, oh my goodness. And then when I saw it all I was like, "Fuck." Really, this is just incredible.

And my period is about to start so I keep completely – I think it actually has been starting as we've been recording. My brain keeps going off into, whenever I start my bleed, I always move into this very expansive place. And I think it's really fascinating that we've ended up because I feel like we both go into these quite expansive places when we talk to each other.

Ami: Yeah. But it's also perfect because it's the start of winter and that's that real coming home moment, isn't it, that you talk about?

Maisie: Yeah, it's the solstice today. It's the solstice today.

Ami: And so, like kind of coming into yourself as well.

Maisie: Yes. So other people around me will look at what I have done this year, or they will look at what the last month has been like, which has been very intense focused work of the best kind. I love hard work like that. I just love it. And some people around me who maybe don't see much of me and will kind of sometimes make comments from a very loving caring place of you don't have to work this hard. And that's different to hard work. There's a difference here.

My dad said to me recently, "You're running yourself into the ground." And it's just really fascinating to have that reflected back, and this is where we

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

have to be careful about thoughts that are offered to us from others. Because sometimes it's helpful for someone go, "I've noticed this about you." Sometimes Paul will go, "Are you feeling a bit sensory or dysregulated because I just want to check-in?" And that's like he's offering me a space to pause and bring awareness. And a lot of the time I'm like, "No, I'm good." I still appreciate the check-in.

And other times I'm like, "Yeah, he's spotted something that I haven't spotted." So, there are times, that's the nuance, when that is helpful. But this is why it's so important to be able to run it through your internal awareness because otherwise you can have people offering you thoughts that aren't true and that can become unhelpful.

Ami: Yeah, that's a really big one actually for me because you spend a lot of your life in connection and in community with the people that you love and care about in your family and stuff. But I think what you're talking about becomes easier when you start to have more regard for your own views, and thoughts, and feelings about things. I was saying, when you become an important person in your own life, and you see yourself as such.

It's still really challenging when people you love say things from a place of care but that are potentially not helpful to you in the result that you're trying to create, because they're not on the journey with you. And that space and that distance can be a bit difficult, and you might want to bring them along and they might not be ready. Or they might be wondering where you're going and all that kind of stuff which is challenging. I think you and Maggie talked about this on the podcast. There was an episode about a request versus a command, I think it was.

Maisie: Yeah, requests and demands, and responsibility, and yeah.

Ami: Exactly. So, it can show up in relationships. But it's a really difficult balance to get right when you do the kinds of work that we've been talking about. And then you start to evolve and change and your relationships with other people start to evolve and change but they may be in different places

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

in their life. And I think that's just another way of, if this body can be your sanctuary, then you've always got somewhere safe to return to when that happens.

Maisie: I feel like that's just such a beautiful place to end things. I'm going to offer you my thought that I love, and I've used it for quite a while. And it just feels like it might be one that you want to borrow or steal.

Ami: Yes, please.

Maisie: Whatever you want to do. Because the thought, because you've got your pen at the ready. I love it. So, when my dad might say that, and I know that's not true. Okay, I've been working hard but I'm not burnt out, I'm stretching my brain, I'm working in this hard way, but I love it. And I feel great. I feel energised by it. I don't feel depleted. So, my thought is, I'm just hitting my stride.

Ami: So, I like just scribbling this down because I love that.

Maisie: I had a feeling you might.

Ami: Because I spoke about my stride pattern changing.

Maisie: That's why, that's what took me on this whole thing. It took me a while to get back round to it but that's what got me going.

Ami: And it's easy, to cover more ground when you have a bigger stride.

Maisie: And it also, it takes less effort as well. The image that I had in mind because I started thinking about this I think back when I was writing *Period Power*. And there were additional challenges there, I didn't have the resources that I have now as embodied in me. I was working with them, but it was, a lot of them were still kind of fairly new to me. But I was just like, "Oh, no, I'm just", because it really felt like I was stretching myself. I was kind of coming up against an edge of working my brain in this particular way, creating a book, writing a book, all of those things.

## Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai

But it kind of as I got accustomed to that it's like you acclimatise to it. And I would think about how elephants, once they start going, they go. And they go long distances, and they go together. They have a community of support around them. But it's that kind of stride pattern doesn't require as much effort. And I think that's a really fun place to play because we think striding out and getting results like that is going to take a lot of effort. Well, what if it's not? What if it's the easiest thing to do?

Ami: And I want to just offer the end of that something that I found helpful which other people might find helpful is that for that stride pattern you can decide that you're ready right now. You can decide that you don't need to do anything else. That all of the things that have been leading up to this point of you listening to this podcast now, wherever you are listening to it. All the things that have happened have got you to this point and you are exactly where you need to be ready to take the steps that you want to take for the next year.

Maisie: Oh my gosh, you nailed it, literally every word of this has been gold. And I just have loved having the opportunity to hang out and chat with you. And I'm just really grateful for you to come on and share this with everyone because I know it's going to be hugely helpful to everyone listening. So, thank you and congratulations on an epic year.

Ami: Thank you very much.

Maisie: You nailed expansion.

Ami: Thank you, Maisie. And I just want to take a moment here to hold space for me and everyone in The Flow Collective and everyone listening just to say thank you so much to you for all you do. The love that you have for all of us and the time that you put in and doing it with all of your heart is so palpable. So, I hope you just take a minute to receive all the love that is coming at you right now.

Maisie: Thank you. Thank you.

## **Ep #202: Unpacking Trauma and Building a Life of Hope with Flow Collective Member Ami Jai**

Ami: Thank you.

Maisie: Okay, everyone, we're going to get off and cry some more.

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