

Ep #208: Be the Chief Visionary Officer of Your Life



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With Your Host

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The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

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This is episode 208 and we are kicking off 2025. I thought I was going to get it wrong there. Here we are, 2025 with an episode all about becoming the CVO of your life. Let's go.

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*.

Welcome to 2025, folks. It is January 1st, although I'm recording this at the start of December. My birthday hasn't even happened yet, let alone the holidays and everything else. But how are you? How were your holidays? I hope they were wonderful. So here we are. We are at the start of the calendar year. And I just want to say, give yourself a break.

New Year's and all the resolutions business, it doesn't have to be embraced. You don't have to do that. But if you do want to, can you do it in a way where you're not setting an impossible standard for yourself, which is rooted in perfectionism? And in a few days or a few weeks time, you'll end up just beating yourself up for failing at it again. Because of course your inner critic is going to be all doom and gloom and be like, "This is how you always are. You never succeed at this."

So you can just literally skip all of that. You can decide now, you're not going to bother. I'm much more into the Lunar New Year, which is often celebrated as Chinese New Year, which this year will be on January 29th. So with that in mind, I wanted to start January off with an episode that will be supportive whether your personal rhythms are aligned with declaring a vision and taking action now. Or whether you're more like me and inclined to kind of wait until February or maybe even March when spring is upon us.

So today we are diving deep into what it means to be the visionary of your own life. It's about embracing the role of Chief Visionary Officer, something I personally did, I'm going to tell you all about. It's all about taking control, setting your direction and pushing through to make your visions a reality.

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So I'm in a business mastermind, and I was recently getting coached in it by my peers. I can't even remember what the conversation was about, but someone asked me who I was at a pivotal point in my career. And I was struggling to remember who I was then and what was going on. But thankfully my coach actually knew me back then because we were doing Master Coach training together and she pointed out that this was the time period when I very intentionally started to engage with the identity of being a CVO, so the Chief Visionary Officer of both my business and all aspects of my life.

So in Master Coach training, every one of us underwent a project that was completely different to everyone else. We had to come up with an idea, propose it, get it signed off by our instructors, and then do it. Some people launched podcasts or set goals to make a certain amount of money or get a number of clients in their business. My project was to write my job description and then only do my job. And it was then that I realised that the CEO title didn't feel coherent. And I can recognise that yeah, I am the CEO, but it just didn't land right in me.

But then when I heard the term CVO through Simon Sinek, that felt great to me because I identify very strongly with the visionary role, with the leadership role. So this was a defining moment for me that shifted a lot in a short space of time. So that happened within me, within my business, in my work with clients, literally everything. So what better way to start this year than talking about you being the visionary of your life.

And I want to do that by talking about a remarkable woman called Trudy Edley. And I watched a movie about her a few months ago. It's called *Young Woman and the Sea*. And her story exemplifies the importance of having a vision for your life. And there are going to be spoilers in this episode, so I am warning you, if you plan to watch it and you don't watch spoilers, pause this now and listen to it after.

So Trudy set a clear, ambitious goal to become the first woman to swim the English Channel and in doing so, she set a record not just for female swimmers, for everyone. And this was at a time when I think women had

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just competed in swimming in the Olympics, but it was not the done thing for women to swim at all. So she completely defied societal expectations of what women are capable of in terms of our athleticism and physical abilities. But perhaps more than that, what society thought and probably still thinks we should and shouldn't be doing.

So there were all the challenges involved in that, which included her own coach giving her medicine in order to sabotage her first attempt at crossing the channel. And she didn't even want him as her coach, he was assigned to her. And she also swam through a load of jellyfish. And by the way, I looked this up because I love knowing what the groups of certain animals are called. And a group of jellyfish is called a smack. How delightful is that, a smack of jellyfish.

So she swam through a smack of jellyfish. And then she got to the shallow portion of the channel, close to the English coast, and she lost her sense of direction. So if you're ready to define and pursue your own vision, challenges and all, then this episode is for you.

So let's get into what it means to be the Chief Visionary Officer, the CVO of your own life. This isn't about lofty, nice to have dreams or the occasional daydream about what might be, it is not that. This is about anchoring yourself to a vivid vision that guides your decisions and your direction. Being the CVO of your life means you are the one that is steering the ship towards your chosen horizon. This is about knowing what you want, why you want it, and how you plan to get there.

And this role is really about looking at the big picture and mapping out a route that aligns with your deepest values and aspirations. So imagine that you are at sea and your vision is the North Star that's guiding you through the night. Sailors used the stars to navigate the vast oceans, they probably still do in some way. I know we have all the tech, but your vision helps you to navigate through life's challenges and opportunities.

It gives you that constant point of reference to which you will orient your actions and your decisions. And that is the case, no matter how rough the

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seas get, and they are going to be rough at times. It's not always smooth sailing with idyllic weather and currents that just get you where you need to go. And if you don't have one, if you don't have a vision, then you're doing what I refer to as ducking around, which came about because I would say to clients that, without a vision and a sense of direction, they're just bobbing around on the ocean like rubber ducks.

Because years ago my dad told me about a container that had come off a cargo ship at sea and it contained, I think, something like 30,000 rubber ducks. And so all these ducks went out onto the ocean, and they didn't have any holes in them, so they were just bobbing around. And the ducks would drift around the seas, according to the ocean currents and oceanographers have actually followed them and learnt from them.

And people follow them, see where they're going, and they've come into shore at various points. They've washed up in Hawaii, British Columbia, Japan, Alaska, the Arctic, all over. So if you don't have a vision and a sense of direction for your life, you are just ducking around and going along with currents that are determined by others. So that can be things people want you to do, other people's opinions, just kind of going along with what life gives you. And that is completely different to say, intentionally resting or experimenting or playing around with ideas.

You can do all those things in an intentional way, and that is actually your direction, your vision. And then that might shift into something that's more decided, a more tangible goal. So your vision is, first of all, going to make making decisions a whole lot simpler. Oh, my gosh, it really helps you to make decisions because suddenly every decision you face, whether it's big or small, it can be passed through the filter of your vision. So does this choice bring me closer to my vision, or does it take me away from it? It is that simple.

Does it align with the values and the future I'm committed to creating? So when you use your vision as a decision making filter it just cuts through the noise and confusion and all the things that kind of take you off into other directions. And it just provides clarity and focus. So is the decision you're

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trying to make, is it going to propel you forward towards your vision or is it keeping you tethered to the shore or pulling you down into the depths as the case may be?

Now, I want you to take a moment, think about what you want for your life, what you really want to achieve. What are the dreams that you have been keeping on the backburner? What are the changes you've been too apprehensive to make? And instead of dismissing yourself by writing these offers like fanciful wishes, I really want you to reflect on them as future realities. What is one goal that if you pursued, would change the trajectory of your life?

Really answer that and tell me. I would love to hear what your answers to these questions are. This reflection is your starting point, because from there you can start laying down the practical steps, the milestones along the way that are going to mark your journey. Because being a visionary isn't just about having a vision, it's about the relentless pursuit of that vision. Now, that does not mean that you can't rest or step away when you need to.

Trudy Edley trained, she planned, she overcame. She also paused to eat when they actually gave her food to eat finally. I mean, what this woman dealt with is ridiculous, but she did get back on the boat when she couldn't physically go on, and she did pause to eat food and recalibrate and do whatever else she needed to do. So relentless pursuit includes taking care of yourself. As a human being that has to happen. We don't dismiss that in pursuit of the goal, it has to be part of the goal, and indeed it's what's going to help you achieve that goal.

When you have that vision, a goal you can orient towards, it just simplifies life. And it also provides a way to overcome obstacles, which is inevitable because you will have to face external forces and curveballs as well as any internal obstacles that you yourself have created, that you've internalised from society and through your upbringing. And those obstacles, I would say are the hardest to overcome. That's why I love coaching so much, because

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it helps you to see the internal obstacles as well as helping you to dismantle them.

So this is about cultivating mental fortitude, which is entirely necessary. That is a necessary trait for anyone stepping into the role of Chief Visionary Officer for your life. Just like Trudy Edley faced immense physical and mental challenges during her swim across the English Channel, and all the preparation that took place in the run up to it and the previous attempts. It's going to be the same for your journey towards your vision. That will also test your resilience, but it will also build your resilience, it will create resilience within you.

So here are some ways that you can build that mental fortitude. I think starting off with just knowing that challenges are part of the process. You're not special because you're experiencing these challenges. I hate to tell you, you are very special, I'm sure, but everyone has challenges. And just acknowledging that they are an inevitable part of the process can make them less daunting. So then we can expect them, we can plan for them if and when they do arrive, because not all of them will happen.

But then you can just remind yourself that they're not blockers, they're just milestones on your journey to greatness. They are the failures that are going to help you to figure out. I literally had this happen to me in the last week. I had so many failures with something, and then, oh my gosh, the success on the other side of it, blew my mind and brought me to tears. But when you're experiencing those challenges, you're just busy thinking, oh my God, this is never going to happen.

So it's about how you manage your mind in those moments, which you can do, and I can teach you to do if you don't know. So when those challenges arise, you really need to reconnect with the reasons that you chose your path in the first place. This connection is so, so important because it provides the emotional fuel to persevere when the going gets tough.

Whenever I want to give up, it is connection to my purpose, to my clients and to all of you that plugs me back in and gets me going again. And every

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obstacle or undesired result is a source of information. It's valuable feedback, so try to see it as that rather than the end of the road. You can analyse what's happened, understand what you can do differently in future and redefine your approach. It's acknowledging what's happened, but continuing to move forward. It's not going to stop you.

So questions you can ask yourself in those moments are, what can I learn from this? How can I adjust my strategy to overcome this obstacle? Who do I need to become in order to get past this? These are all ways for you to turn challenges into opportunities. And it's this continuous loop of feedback and improvement that is crucial for any visionary in order to keep going. And visionaries love to problem solve, so just embrace it, but no visionary achieves their dream alone, including me.

Even those of us who tend to be hermits and act alone, we often still have peers, coaches, mentors, and other forms of support. And Trudy Edley had a team that supported her, even though she faced betrayal from within that team. It's definitely better, objectively better to surround yourself with people who believe in your vision and offer constructive feedback, coaching and encouragement.

Community matters too, being in a room literally and metaphorically with other people who are doing this work, that makes a difference. In the movie at one point, well, according to the movie at least, Trudy was swimming in the shallow part of the English Channel where her support boat couldn't go, they couldn't follow, it was too shallow. So she had nobody to help her navigate and it was dark by this point.

But people in England had been listening to the radio and following the reports of her journey along the way. So they had the media on another boat as well as her support boat. And there were messenger pigeons taking messages back to the coast that was then being reported on the radio. And the last report came in that the support boat was unable to follow, she'd be swimming alone from this point on.

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And after however many hours, she hadn't appeared on the English coastline, no one had heard from her. So that was when everyone started to get very concerned about her being lost at sea. But the local people have been listening to the radio and they lit fires all along. I'm totally ruining the movie. I do apologise.

So they lit fires all along the cliffs and that enabled her to see which way she needed to swim. So the lesson there is that when we are losing direction and hope, community matters. We don't achieve greatness in isolation. So surrounding yourself with a network of supporters, of mentors, of peers who encourage and challenge you, that makes a real difference. And then this community becomes your sounding board, your cheer squad, your navigational beacons, a lot like the fires that were lit by the local people for Trudy.

And this is why I am so passionate about the community we've built in the membership because our setup is designed to create that for you and for you to plug into and be part of. But while community is invaluable and support from other people is an amazing thing, the ultimate responsibility for our own success lies within us. Nobody is obligated to provide the conditions for your success.

And yes, it's wonderful when other people are supportive and helpful and that they believe in us, but we can't rely solely on others to propel us forward. It is not their responsibility to prop you up if you aren't bothering to do that for yourself. And this isn't about those times when we are genuinely unable to function. That's when support becomes necessary and vital.

I am speaking about the need for cultivating a robust foundation of self-belief that doesn't depend excessively on external validation. That's when your self-belief comes from within, and you can create it for yourself. So rather than being built upon a shaky foundation that's based on the approval and actions of others, it's something that comes from within you. So we've talked about defining your vision and understanding the importance of resilience and community and helpful support.

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So now let's move into taking action. This isn't about creating a rigid, unchanging plan that has to work. Your plan of action can change, and in all likelihood it will need to. This is an ongoing, dynamic process. That means you will need to find ways to adapt to and to be nimble and flexible whilst also following that vision. Adapting doesn't mean giving up on your vision, it means just being flexible in how you achieve it. Because if we get stuck on it has to be achieved a certain way, then often we're blocking ourselves to our success.

And intentionality really is your biggest tool as a Chief Visionary Officer. Once you've identified your vision, then you're going to break it down into actionable steps. This is where being intentional and having a strategy comes in. So in terms of your vision, what can you do this month or this week or even just today in the next five minutes that will move you closer to your vision?

And as I said, you're going to need to constantly refine your actions based on the outcomes that you get, but the sooner you get going, the more results you get. And then you can assess those results and make any changes and that way you're just always learning. You're always evolving, and it keeps your actions aligned with your vision.

And regular reviews are important, don't skip that, because that's how you can end up off track or miss a really important insight that's actually going to save you a lot of time, energy, money and other resources. This is why we have a seasonal review worksheet in the membership as well as regular opportunities to evaluate what's going on in your life, specific situations, ongoing themes. And this all just helps to activate what's going to happen next.

But all that said, you can have a vision and a strong sense of direction and end up somewhere you didn't plan to or actually imagined was even possible, it can be something fantastic, how exciting. So as cheesy as it sounds, the old adage, it's about the journey, not the destination, is true.

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Alright, I mean, that just flew out of me that episode. I feel very passionate about this. So we've covered a lot. Remember that being a visionary isn't just about seeing into the future. It is about having a vision but creating it actively with every choice and action that you make. You are the Chief Visionary Officer of your life so own that role, step into it. And as you step into 2025, think about what being the CVO of your life means to you.

Consider the areas where you can start taking more control, where you can be more intentional, where you can bring in that vision. And what might you need to adapt or places you can adjust your strategies in order for that to line up better with your vision.

Alright folks, thanks for joining me today. This was a really fun one to record. I hope this episode sparked some deep reflection and inspires you to embrace being the CVO in your own life. Let me know how it goes.

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