

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Maisie Hill**

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

This is episode 244, and today we're talking about the politics of protecting the asset. So taking care of yourself, aka protecting the asset, isn't just about preventing things like burnout. It is about power and socialisation, whose needs get met, whose don't, and who pays the cost. So let's get into it.

If you want to do things differently but need some help making it happen, then tune in for your weekly dose of coaching from me, Maisie Hill, Master Life Coach and author of *Period Power*. Welcome to *The Maisie Hill Experience*.

Welcome back to the podcast, folks. Before we get going with this, I just want to take a moment to thank you for all of your incredible applications to my new coaching program, The Herd Within. All the spots filled very quickly. The applications were just so good. I actually had to really take my time reading them because it was hard to pick. I mean, it just made me want to work with all of you, but I wanted to keep this a small group, especially for the first round. And so we've closed applications now. So I've been getting messages, lovely messages from some of you asking if it's still open, and we've closed applications for now. But when I do this in the future, in whatever form it takes, I will let you know.

All right. Last night, I taught a new power class inside the membership about protecting the asset, which kicked off our community focus for the next 30 days, because throughout September, that is our focus inside the membership. When you protect the asset, you are prioritising yourself. It's the ultimate form of self-care. It's how you set yourself up for success. And that can be in all sorts of ways. So, for example, getting a good, solid night's sleep is one way that you can protect the asset.

I protect the asset by doing things like spending time with my horse because the connection and the level of presence that I have when I'm with him literally changes my brain waves. I can feel it. It soothes me, it focuses me, I get all sorts of interesting ideas popping into my head. Literally every single podcast episode is created through me driving to the yard, being with him, riding, and then driving home again. Like that's when I do all my

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

thinking and teaching time in my head, and then I just prepare it once I'm at my laptop. It's when I do all my creative thinking, not just for the podcast, but also for the membership.

So when I spend time with my horse, I'm not just taking care of my health and well-being in doing that. I'm also supporting my clients and my business, and all of you.

I also protect the asset by saying no to things. And some of it is stuff that I just don't want to do, and to say yes would be incoherent. And some of it is stuff that I actually really would love to do. But if I said yes to all the things that I'd like to do, it would come at a cost because for every event that I attend or I'm involved with, I need to like save up myself in advance, conserving social energy, and then I need recovery time after. And sometimes I'm very willing and up for doing that, but of course, it has consequences for my home life, for my work. So I say yes judiciously, and less often than I would actually like to.

So that's another way that I protect the asset, but it's also all of the smaller bits and bobs that I do that make a difference, like changing my clothes several times a day in order to suit my sensory needs. I recently bought some extra phone chargers so that I don't get annoyed when I can't find one. These are the things that make a difference to my day.

In last night's class, I went through the mindset issues and also practical tactics that you can use when it comes to protecting the asset. But I wanted to bring what we're doing inside the membership onto the podcast and add an additional lens to this conversation for everyone who's in the membership.

So if you haven't listened to episode 162, which is where I initially covered the idea of protecting the asset, you could go back to that. I don't think it's entirely necessary. I think you've probably already got a good idea of what I'm talking about, but just know that there is that episode as well if you want to hear more about this. Because today I wanted to talk about how

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

protecting the asset isn't just about you, it's about the systems that benefit when you don't take care of yourself.

So something that comes up a lot in coaching with my clients is the guilt that comes from taking care of yourself in some way. It's so entrenched and loaded. So when my clients start to actually shift this, it is the most amazing thing to witness.

But that guilt was taught to you through various means, and it's important that you see that because it keeps you useful to everyone but yourself. So this is about politics and power and who benefits when you don't take care of yourself.

I spoke last week about this idea of being the emotional support tight in groups where you pick up on any potential tension and then just immediately smooth it over, doing the emotional labour for everyone. And that can cost you in terms of your energy, but also it can cost the group's progress because things get buried under the surface, and that level of suppression delays resolution. And this is really a continuation of that conversation.

Because when you always hold the group together, you don't just exhaust yourself, you train everyone else to believe that is your job, and you're also reinforcing and training yourself that it is your job. And what then happens is that they don't build the muscles to do it themselves because in the same way that there are plenty of people listening to this podcast who over function in this role, who have that great skill of being able to be the glue in groups and create and sustain that kind of social cohesion that's really beneficial a lot of the time. But we can overdo it. But then there's also people who really lack that skill and could do with building it. So it's good to give those people opportunities to actually step into that role for themselves.

But the way that I've been thinking about this is, you know, how women are often spoken about at their funerals? When someone gives the eulogy or when people are just talking about the woman that died, they say things

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

like, "Oh, she was always there for everyone. She'd never complained." And it's said like it's the highest compliment. But are you telling me that she never had complaints or felt resentful? That this woman never raged inside? Of course she did. She just swallowed it. Maybe it came out when she was having a gin and tonic with her girlfriends, or it came out when her period was due. But largely, she kept going because that was the role that she had been trained into.

Remember, this is like previous generations, and don't forget that it wasn't long ago that we couldn't have bank accounts or credit cards without men. So our mothers and grandmothers, great-grandmothers probably needed to keep their husbands and male family members on side for lots of reasons.

But when you are making yourself pleasant to everyone, you're not protecting anyone. You're erasing yourself bit by bit by bit, and the whole time you're doing it, you're training the people around you to think that your self-erasure is normal. And of course, it benefits them.

But this fear of being selfish or lazy or not committed enough is what's kept you in line. Okay? You were trained to think that way because it keeps these systems stable, the systems that are going to benefit from you being this way. So for the most part, patriarchal and capitalist systems reward women who overfunction, and then punish those who protect their capacity. Now, we don't typically get rewarded financially. It would be great if we did. I hope that's starting to change, though.

But we get rewarded in terms of social currency, usually in the form of praise that is some version, some flavour of being a good girl, being so helpful, not having needs, seeing what needs to be done without being asked. Gosh, I remember so many times when my teachers have praised me for this, and this continues into the workplace.

Workplaces also generally glorify people who say yes and who never take leave or sick days. There's like great pride in that. Families and social systems rely largely on women's invisible labour in order to keep running, and often protecting the asset means disrupting this unpaid and unseen

## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

economy. So this is where the politics of capacity and protecting the asset come into play.

So if you've been socialised as female, you will have been taught to make space for others by shrinking yourself in all sorts of ways. This can show up in so many places. You'll have been taught to prove your goodness and your value by how much you can endure. And it's as if your worth is measured by how quiet your needs are, as is the example I gave with women at their funerals. And I spoke about this also in the recent episode about being low maintenance. So we're on a nice roll with this theme at the moment.

So when you then do start protecting your capacity and taking care of yourself, you'll come up against thoughts about how it's indulgent for you to do that and that it's selfish. And there's usually a very critical vibe to the conversation that's going on in your head. Some version of who do you think you are? You think you're better than everyone else? Do you actually think you deserve this? You shouldn't need to do this. And these labels carry real social costs. You know how women get treated when they're called bossy or dramatic or high maintenance. So what I would love for you to do is instead of seeing taking care of yourself as indulgent, I want you to see it as political.

And these labels carry real social cost. They have an impact on us internally, and they have an impact on the places that we show up in our lives. You know how women get treated when they're called bossy or dramatic or high maintenance. But when you don't prioritise yourself, you can end up suppressing yourself, and it takes up a lot of energy to contain yourself. I know it does. And your possibilities shrink because you're always stuck in some kind of recovery mode from that.

And it can also feel dangerous to start doing this because when you're used to being the peacekeeper, then the idea of not keeping the peace surely means fights. And the idea of that can feel intolerable. But when you do protect yourself, when you set a boundary, for example, you don't just protect yourself in that moment. You're modelling something radical for



## Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset

others, and doing this is contagious in the best of ways, because when you model taking care of yourself, you're also giving others permission to do the same, and that's something that we could all benefit from.

So there is the part of this conversation that is about unwinding how, having been socialised as women, we need to unwind the patriarchal programming. And of course, how those systems and men need to step up. And then there's the part where we need to be aware of how, when we finally do decide to prioritise ourselves and set ourselves up for success in our lives, someone else often ends up carrying that load in the form of other women. Okay, people with lower incomes, immigrants, Black women, women of colour. Think about how care work, cleaning, healthcare, admin, who's holding it all up?

So when white women finally get fed up and decide to protect their own capacity or set themselves up for success in our lives, then it can easily turn into expecting and exploiting Black women and women of colour, who are always expected to pick up the slack. And we can end up pulling resources away from communities that have great need of them.

So protecting the asset and protecting your capacity has to include looking at the bigger picture. So am I actually putting this load down, or am I passing it on to someone else? Because if taking care of yourself means someone else is being exploited, then that isn't the shift that you think it is. This work has to be done with an awareness of privilege, of who's still being asked to carry the load, and a willingness to investigate and change that too. Otherwise, we just end up replicating the same patterns while telling ourselves that we're finally taking care of ourselves.

So my final thought to leave you with today is that protecting the asset is about building collective care, not just personal well-being and success. And that's something that I invite you to consider as you do this work.

All right, folks, that's it for today. Have a cracking week. I will catch you next time.

## **Ep #244: The Politics of Protecting the Asset**

Hey, if you love listening to this podcast then come and check out my membership, Powerful, where you get my best resources and all the coaching you need to transform your inner and outer life. Sign up to the waitlist at [maisiehill.com/powerful](https://maisiehill.com/powerful), and I'll see you in the community.