

## Ep #43: Bestselling Author, Maisie Hill



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Becca Pike**

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Hey guys, I have a seriously important podcast for you today. So at first glance, this is going to seem a lot like it's just for the females, but if you are a man, if you are a male and you are listening to this episode, I urge you with extreme urgency to not just close this off and turn it off because you think it's for women.

If you are in a relationship with a woman, if you are married to a woman, if you are raising little women or teenage girls, if you have a sister, if you have a mother, this podcast is extremely important for you to listen and to understand because Maisie Hill is a bestselling author of *Period Power* and *Perimenopause Power*. She has revolutionized the world in which we think about menstruation, and she is an expert in the field of hormones and what actually happens during our cycle.

The way that she teaches it is really cool. So she teaches it as if it is in four seasons. So a woman's menstruation, like when she is on her period that week, Maisie considers that the winter. She talks about the hormones that happen during the winter. The week after menstruation is the spring, and she talks about the hormones that happen in the spring and how we show up as humans. How motivated we are, how social we are, how determined we are, how sad we are, how happy we are. They are so deeply tied to the season that we're in, okay.

When we're ovulating, this is when she calls it the summer. She explains from an evolution standpoint why we act the way that we do in our summer. Then the fall and the autumn is the week leading up to our period. Guys, when I started learning about the way that my hormones are functioning during my period and when the weeks around my period, to be honest, my brain melted. This has been revolutionary to me. I am so thankful that I have found her, that I am good friends with her, that I can just pick up her book at any time.

To be honest, my husband as found this to be revolutionary for our relationship. He has started understanding and using her books almost like a user manual for the way that my brain works. So if you are a male, I urge you to listen to this. If you are a female, I urge you to listen to this. I urge

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everyone to listen to this episode. Today's episode is with Maisie Hill, best selling author. I am so excited to have you all. It is time for your weekly dose of Hell Yes Coaching. Let's go.

Hey, guys. I'm Becca Pike and welcome to *The Hell Yes Entrepreneur* podcast, the number one show for entrepreneurs looking to create their first six-figure year. If you've got the drive and you know how to hustle but you're not sure where to channel your energy, we've got the answers. Let's dive into today's show.

Becca: hello Maisie Hill. How are you?

Maisie: Hello Becca Fucking Pike.

Becca: Listen, first of all I am so happy that you're here, but I have some friends that are even happier that you're here. I've got some friends that have been following your work and following your book and following you, and they totally fangirl over you. I just think we should all stop and say hi Kate.

Maisie: Hi Kate.

Becca: hi Jessica.

Maisie: Hello Jessica.

Becca: they're going to be in their car listening, and they're gonna be like oh my god, love it. You're famous in the period world.

Maisie: I am. I'm just going to own that for a moment. I have literally, what's really funny is I have just been signing copies of my book, well both books actually. Because I live in, as you can tell from my accent, I'm from the UK. I live in this seaside town called Margate. We have a local bookshop here. I tell people if you order a book from that bookshop, I'll go in and sign the copy for you. So I've just been in there signing copies.

Becca: that is so funny. Yeah you just sit and marinate in your fame because I don't think you've done that enough. I think you're always surprised

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when I'm like oh, that person recognizes you or whatever. You're just like no. No. They're just confused. I'm like no.

Maisie: well, I didn't know I was going to get coached. You're right. It's like I think the thing is when you are an authority in something, when you are an expert, it's just so normal to you the way that your brain works, the things that you come up with. It's just very normal. So you kind of forget that it's a big deal to other people who don't know this stuff.

Becca: yes.

Maisie: right to me it's like I've known it for ages. I've taken a deep dive into all the research. I've brought different types of medicine together and all of that. So for me it's like this is just who I am, and it's how I go about my life. It's how I approach my work, and of course it's my work with my clients. I forget what it's like when you're on the beginning or kind of slightly along that journey of understanding your cycle, working with your hormones, getting to know your body, coming into relationship with your body.

When I think back to when that happened for me, it was like a revolution occurred internally and externally in my life. So I think I just forget that. Then when people are like, "You're Maisie Hill. You wrote *Period Power*. And then I get all the messages about the impact that my books and my work have had on people.

Becca: so obviously a really important question here is do people walk up to you and just start talking about their periods?

Maisie: oh yeah. Yeah.

Becca: I have a feeling we're going to talk about my period today. What you're saying is so true because I'm that person. I feel like this is revolutionary, and I have just started understanding the cycle. Your book was revolutionary. I've loved nerding out on it. You're right, not everybody knows this stuff. Even though it's your life work, there's so many of us that are well educated people that literally have just not come across these types of resources or sought them out because they just didn't know to seek them out.

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Maisie: yeah, 100%. Like a really great example of this is I once heard from someone over social media who had a PhD of some kind in human biology. She had read my book and learnt about cervical fluid, which is a natural fluid that we produce in the run up to ovulation. It's associated with an increase in fertility. It's really important in terms of conceiving, and it has other benefits as well.

She had been going to her doctors thinking she had an infection because she was seeing this fluid every cycle, and she was just thinking it was infection. Her doctor also thought it was an infection. So she was being treated repeatedly with antibiotics and other treatment, forms of medicine, blah, blah, blah. Then she read my book and she was like, "Oh, you're telling me that this is a natural occurrence. That there are benefits to it. That there's nothing fucking wrong with me?"

Becca: yes.

Maisie: like yeah. She was like, "And I have a PhD in this. Why do I not know this?" I say that because this is really common. People don't know these things. It's no one's fault in terms of no one should feel any shame that they don't know this or that they're finding this out later on in life. It's patriarchy. It's just the way that medicine works.

It's the prioritization of the male body and the female body being different, and just really crap sex and reproductive health education, which includes menstrual health education. So it's no one's fault that we don't have access to these things, but I'm on a mission to change that.

Becca: yeah. I think you're doing well with that. I remember reading in your book that cervical fluid should be celebrated. It's a sign of health. It's a sign of youth. Now every time I see my cervical fluid I'm like well fuck yeah. Look at me, I'm a young buck. I'm just living my life with my cervical fluid.

It's interesting because I went through university, and I got my degree in kinesiology and sports medicine. I took countless anatomy and physiology and pathology classes. Then after that, I went to massage school, which

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here in Kentucky we have Lexington Healing Arts. They take massage very serious. I had to go through a lot more—

Maisie: I've heard it's the top center for massage in the states.

Becca: yeah, yeah. It was last time I checked, which was about seven years ago. So don't quote me on that. But it as at one time, it might still be. They put me through more biology classes, more kinesiology classes. When we talked about the female reproductive system and we talked about just periods in general, it was always so much like this is where your period comes from. This is the egg. This is the shedding. That's all. Case closed, right?

Then from a societal standpoint, I was kind of taught by well-meaning people, well-meaning women, but I was kind of just trained and conditioned to believe that this period was just something that I had to deal with. It was something that happened to me. It was like stock up on your pads and your tampons. You've got this shitty week every month that happens to you, and you've just got to deal with it and guys don't.

It wasn't until my adulthood that I became so inspired by you and inspired by this type of work, which says no. Your period should be celebrated, but also your period can be your superpower. When I read your book and realized I could use it in a way to my advantage. If I could learn my cycle and I could learn the way that my hormones work, then I could literally change and manipulate the way in which I work, the way in which I play, my sexual drive, my appetite. Like I can just understand it on such a deeper level and have a more robust life just by understanding my cycle.

Maisie: yeah. It's a total game changer. I mean once you have this understanding, and we can go into that as we're talking today. Once you have this understanding and this way of looking with understanding of being in relationship with yourself and with your hormones, it makes life so much easier. Because there are these moments in the cycle. I mean we go on this journey throughout each cycle.

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When I say cycle, I mean the start of one period to the start of the next. So for some people that's 28 days. For some it's 21. For some it's 56. That's what I mean by a cycle so that your hormones shift in levels and relationship to one another as you transition through each cycle. That has an impact on everything because we have hormone receptors everywhere in the body, including the brain. I was like the impact of hormones are huge, and they influence your energy, your mood, your behavior.

So when you understand what's going on and you start to get to know your particular cycle and the tendencies that you have and the things that you commonly experience as you move through each cycle, you can start to predict what's happening. It's a bit like the weather in terms of there's the weather report. Whether that weather is going to be accurate or not, there's some variation there.

When you know oh it's probably going to rain today, you can either make the decision of oh I'm not gonna go out after all. Right, you can change your plan. Most of the time, we all just have to crack on with life, but you'll know like oh, I need to take a raincoat with me. Or I need to call a cab. You put things in place to support whatever's going on with the weather that day, and it's the same with your cycle.

It's like yes you can change your life, change your calendar to suit your cycle at times. Other times you still need to crack on and get on with stuff, but you know what to expect and you know what kind of things you might need that are going to support you depending on where you are in your cycle. This makes such a huge difference because there are several moments in the cycle, for example, where your hormone levels just drop off. They go from being pretty high to just plummeting within the course of a couple of days.

So take, for example, the runup to ovulation. You have estrogen peaking, testosterone peaking. For a lot of people at that point in the cycle, they feel capable. They might be more up for taking risks. They feel really confident, motivated. Like that's the point when you're working and being an entrepreneur where you're like yes, I'm going to go for it. I'm just gonna really go for

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it. Because you feel like you have the capacity and you're able to kind of withstand things. There's like more resilience there.

Then a day or so later, you ovulate, and your hormone levels drop. So suddenly you're like why on earth did I make that plan two days ago? That does not sound like a good idea? Why did I propose that plan? Why did I say this to this person. Oh I wish I hadn't put this in motion. Who am I to be doing this? I feel pretty low. I don't have much energy.

When you don't know that's about the cycle, what happens instead is you just blame yourself. You're like oh, I'm not very consistent. Why can't I be like I was last week instead of how I am today? It's like there's a map to understand yourself, but you can't see the map.

So you just think that things are shifting all the time, and you don't have this secret tool that you can actually be using. Because then when you know that it's like oh, that's not a problem. It's just my hormones are lower. You don't have to engage with it anymore than that. There's other points in the cycle where that happens and other hormonal shifts as well. I'm just all about treating ourselves with more kindness and compassion. Like not getting lost in the depths of doom that often come.

Becca: yeah.

Maisie: at certain moments in the cycle.

Becca: yeah. Well, I found myself having so much more grace for myself because I'm like oh, I'm in my fall. Of course I don't want to do this thing that I planned in the summer. Who was that girl? What has been really fun watching is my husband. So my husband, he loves reading. He loves learning. He's always consuming.

When I read *Period Power*, he read *Period Power*, because he's raising three daughters, you know. And he's got me, and he is outnumbered significantly. He was just like this makes so much sense as to why I feel like sometimes I'm married to different people. He was like, he asks me all the time.

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Like he has a cycle app on his phone. He's trying to time it to the moon cycles so that he can remember, which is interesting, but he's always like hey, you're in your fall right now, right? Like you're coming into your winter? I just I feel so much love from that because I deeply feel like he's trying to understand me, you know. It's because of your work that he's able to do that.

Maisie: I know. It's so cool. I've had like quite a few people say like, "Well I bought your book, but my boyfriend stole it."

Becca: yeah. They want a manual to us. They want to be like okay. It's day 13. What do I need to know? They want their weather report, right?

Maisie: exactly. You know, I have that experience with my partner, of course. He's the same. Like he is DJing this weekend. I was like oh, maybe I'll come to that. He straight away was like, "Are you at the point in your cycle where sensory wise that's going to feel good to you?" I was like mmm. I mean it's at a point where it's like I could do it, but a week or so later would be better. He was just like, "Yeah so don't feel like you have to come." Which I would never feel anyway, but it's nice to not just have that relationship with myself but for him to also have that relationship with me and with my cycle.

It's really great because when we're talking about date night, for example. Maybe going out for lunch or something like that. I'm like oh yeah, this is going to be a good week to do it because I'm going to have lots of chat. Like I'm going to be up for sitting across the table over lunch chatting about things. At other times, like today, it's like my bleed is due. I'm going to start my period soon. I don't usually have a lot of chat at that point in my cycle, apart from for you, of course, because I'm here and we're doing it.

But for him, I don't. So I would be like yeah I want to connect, and I want to spend time with you, but let's go for a walk together. So we took our son to school and went for a walk together. So I find that really helpful because as

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you already know, I'm autistic. There's a really interesting crossover between being neurodiverse, being autistic, and the second half of my cycle, which I'm currently in.

So there are kind of more things for me to tend to and be gentle with, I would say. Especially in terms of sensory needs. I can find eye contact hard at this point in my cycle. So I don't want to be sat across a table from him analyzing my levels of eye contact. It's much more comfortable for us to go for a walk. We can still connect, be together, but I don't put myself in situations where I'm going to be putting pressure on myself. I can do that predictably because I know my cycle.

Becca: you were diagnosed with autism in adulthood, right.

Maisie: yeah just like, I'm trying to think, a couple of years back. Yeah.

Becca: were you surprised by this diagnosis, or were you like oh, this makes so much sense.

Maisie: well I had self-diagnosed like a year before I sought out like a professional diagnosis. So it was more just like confirmed what I already knew. Up until the point where I started reading articles about it, no chance. I would have never said I was autistic. No way. I'm like no way because I'm sarcastic. I can do eye contact most of the time.

I had this very male kind of picture of what autism looks like, and I didn't meet that picture. So when someone I knew was like, "Oh I've been diagnosed with being autistic." I was like what? No way. Like I didn't say this to their face, but in my head I was like there's no way you're autistic.

Then I started reading some of the articles that she was sharing on Facebook about it. I read it and was like oh, this sounds like me. I read the list of common traits in females out to Paul, my partner, but I didn't tell him what it was. I was just like what do you think of this list, and I started reading it out to him. He was like whatever this is, this is you.

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Becca: what was like some of the top things? Does it look different in females than in males?

Maisie: yes there are differences. I think also just like the mass media tend to focus on certain autistic traits and ignore others. So they tend to focus on a lack of empathy, an absence of empathy. Whilst that will be true for some people who are autistic, for others like me, what we have is hyper empathy. So we really feel what someone else is going through, which is why there's a lot of things I can't watch on TV or movies because I so intensely feel what a character is going through that it can be traumatic. Like stuff I watched when I was a teen when I didn't have this awareness, and I certainly didn't know what to do with those feelings.

Becca: that's one of the things I'm most inspired by you is your ability to feel also. I'll never forget the first time we met in person. So we had been communicating for how long, like a year.

Maisie: yeah.

Becca: I would consider you a good friend even though we had never met in person. Of course because of COVID and you were stuck in the UK, and we just never got to meet. Then when we did finally meet, it was just the most touching meeting ever. You walked up to me, you hugged me, and then you just bawled your eyes out with me. We just like stood and hugged. I'll never forget it. Like I just loved it so much.

Maisie: that was an amazing hug.

Becca: I just loved it so much. Like I could feel you there. Like I was like oh, this is what it should feel like when two friends from across the world who have been communicating for a year meet each other and the way that they feel towards each other. It was like I was just meeting my sister is what it felt like. It just felt good watching you feel the same way.

Maisie: yeah. I mean I'm crying now just remembering that because it was so, yeah. I was so excited to meet you and to meet the other people who were a part of the event that we were at and things because it's like really

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meaningful relationships and friendships to me that have been built on us knowing each other, knowing each other's businesses really intimately. I didn't know how tall you were. You meet in person and you're like oh, you're tall.

Becca: aren't you taller than me? Or you were in that—Were you wearing heels that night? No, I can't remember.

Maisie: no I never wear heels.

Becca: you're tall too.

Maisie: yeah, we're tall. But yeah. I really felt that. So yeah. I just I think I'm pretty good at just feeling.

Becca: are you in a bird sanctuary right now? Do you have pet birds?

Maisie: so there's lots of seagulls in Margate, where I live. They're real pests. Because of COVID when I did the audio book for my first book *Period Power* I went to Audible and did the recording there in a professional booth and everything.

For the second one, *Perimenopause Power* it was again with Audible, but the rules meant I couldn't be in a room with someone else. So they sent me a booth to set up in my studio, which is where I am today. I had a producer working with me through Zoom on all of those things. I cannot tell you how many retakes we had to do because of the seagulls. It was just constant. Say a sentence, have to go back. It took long because of the seagulls.

Becca: I feel like you should have just left it in. You should have been like guys, listen. We're gonna pepper this with seagulls. People are gonna feel so good about it. It's gonna really bring the heat to this book reading. The first audible with seagulls, brought to you by Audible, seagulls included. So speaking of animals, let me tell you my story from this morning.

Maisie: oh yeah, please do.

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Becca: okay so I'm getting my kids ready for school, which by the way is stressful because we have four kids, and they get on the bus super early. It's like super-fast paced, and my dog wants to go outside. This is funny because just two episodes ago I talked about how a coyote got killed in my backyard. So like I have all these farm problems, but I live in a neighborhood. So it doesn't make any sense.

So this morning my dog wants to go outside. So I let my dog out. Then when I open the door to let him back in, it is the strongest skunk smell I've ever smelled in my life. It radiated into my mouth. When I opened my door, I could taste the skunk. It was like in my eyes. It was the most intense smell ever. So I'm like oh shit, my dog got sprayed by a skunk, right? Like this is awful, and he's rubbing his body all over my front porch.

Maisie: oh.

Becca: He's just trying to get it off of him. So he's rubbing it all over my porch rugs and my porch décor. I look out and you can see just see this glisten on my front porch of just skunk oil, and it's everywhere. I don't want to go out my garage because then he's going to bring the skunk oil in the garage, but I've got to get the kids on the bus, right.

So we're walking across the skunk oil, and I'm like don't touch the dog. Don't touch the porch. Don't touch anything. I'm like yelling at Milo to not touch the kids while they're getting on the bus. So stressful, right. So I call my husband, this story gets better, by the way. So I call my husband who is such a champ at situations like this. Call him and I'm like.

Maisie: that's my impression of him, by the way. I'm yet to meet him. I'm sure I will at some point, but that is like the impression I get from him via Instagram.

Becca: yes. Here is all the vibes of husband material. Listen when I say that he's cool, that's an understatement. It's like I don't have the words to describe my husband. Sometimes I think he might be a serial killer. Like he's almost too good to be true. Like if he told me that he had bodies in the

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basement, I would be like oh, I knew that you were too good. I would cover it up for him though because I just love him that much.

Maisie: you've got to keep him.

Becca: anyways I call my husband, and I'm like Milo got sprayed by a skunk. Which is ironic because just literally 48 hours ago, two days ago, we talked about how awful it would be if our dog got sprayed by a skunk. So the fact that it happened.

Maisie: you're so good at manifesting.

Becca: it was a manifestation. So I called him. I said you won't believe the irony of this, but Milo got sprayed by a skunk. It's all over the front porch. It's everywhere. He laughed, which I think was him trying not to cry. He laughed and he was like, "Okay, I'm coming home." He left work, and he just went straight to scrubbing the dog, right. Scrubbing the crap out of the dog and the front porch. So I walk upstairs, and I see him scrubbing the front porch and spraying it down. He's just sweating and he's just working. I come downstairs.

Maisie: this is starting to sound like a porno.

Becca: his body is just glistening in the sun and he's panting. No but for real he's just working so hard on this front porch. So I come downstairs, okay, and I come to my office. Water is pouring through our house, down into the basement. So I have to run upstairs and I'm like turn the hose off. It's pouring through our house. It's not even 9:30 in the morning and this man is cleaning up skunk on the porch, cleaning up the dog. Now his water is pouring through the basement, and now he's got to come clean that up. I can't imagine what he's saying under his breath, but I went up there and I was like the water's pouring through.

He turned the hose off and he looked at me and he goes, "Okay. Okay. Okay. Thank you." And he just walked away. Then here I am drinking tea with you and just hanging out, and he's probably up there still working. It's been such a day. So all of the thoughts for my husband today.

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Maisie: oh man. What a day.

Becca: I know. I know. I couldn't wait to get on here to tell you this story. I was like I can't wait to tell Maisie about the skunk and my poor husband. Okay. Back to the story. This is a question I wanted to ask you. Whenever I asked you to come on this podcast you said, "But wait, what part of your cycle will you be on when we do this podcast?" I said fall. I think you said me too maybe.

Maisie: yeah.

Becca: I just want to ask you. Why I'd you ask that? What calculations happen in your head when you ask someone that question?

Maisie: we were talking about doing it this week. So I was like well, my period's going to be due. Oh so that's why I was like what's going to be going on with yours? Should we pick another week where like, for example, verbal recall and kind of expression is stronger. Because I'll be honest, this is the point in my cycle where I struggle to finish a sentence and sometimes words completely allude me. So I think that's why I was asking. That's why I was asking for us. Then I was like it doesn't matter.

Becca: well we can just sit and stare at each other with our brain fog, and I feel like it would still be a decent episode. So I love learning about nutrition and sleep and kind of this biohacking thing. The fact that no one had brought up how much our cycle effects our word recall and our brain fog was mind blowing to me because I deal with exceptional amounts of brain fog, especially when I eat gluten. I haven't been diagnosed Celiac disease, but I don't need to be diagnosed to know that it completely fucks me up every time I eat it.

The brain fog from eating gluten will last weeks after I eat it. Then, you know, the hormones that happen with the cycle. Like now that I understand that brain fog happens so much more in my fall, it's like you said. It's just like hacking your life to learn how to create a better life. I know that if I want to do a podcast episode or I'm teaching a class, I want to do my best to put

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it in my summer. I can put it in my fall. There are some good things to fall. I have much less of a bullshit filter.

Maisie: yeah, yeah, yeah.

Becca: Like I don't deal with bullshit in my fall. I look at my fall version of myself, and I like her. I honor her. Even though she can't make a sentence, she also has—

Maisie: she doesn't need to.

Becca: she has more boundaries. She's like don't fuck with me. What you're saying is not acceptable, right.

Maisie: yeah.

Becca: so she is a really cool version of me too even though summer Becca is more playful and more happy, but also more people pleasing. It took me a minute to realize that fall is its own superpower. I'm less people pleasing, and that's a good thing.

Maisie: yeah. Just for everyone listening, when we're talking about the seasons what we mean by that is you can split your cycle up into the four seasons, like the four seasons of the year. So the time around when you have your period is your winter. Then as your period is finishing and your hormones are starting to increase, that's your spring. The time around ovulation is your summer. Then the premenstrual phase is your autumn. There's different qualities and powers and pitfalls associated with each season.

So Becca like what you were saying the kind of more people pleasing, more maybe outgoing, etcetera, etcetera. That's all because your hormones are driving your behavior because that's the point in your cycle where you are capable of conceiving.

Becca: so you're just literally more playful. You're like sure, I'll have sex with you. Let's reproduce. We are created to reproduce. It makes so much sense when you taught it in your book.

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Maisie: yeah. So you will typically, and this isn't true of everyone, I should say, but typically you're more conversational. A bit more playful, more sassy, more flirty, more up for having sex, appetite goes down, sexual desire goes up. We even walk further in the runup to ovulation. They've done research on how many steps people take, and they take more around ovulation because the whole idea is that back in the day and how evolutionary history, it would have served us to walk further when it came to mating because then we'd be mating with someone in a different gene pool than the people around us.

Becca: so we were biologically designed to put ourselves in front of more people. Like more villages.

Maisie: yeah. This is where the taking risks things come in as well. Like taking a risk. Going and having sex with this person.

Becca: then didn't you say that you're less likely to take risks in your fall because your body thinks it could be pregnant. So it wants to protect that in any way it can. You become more risk adverse.

Maisie: yeah. So it's much more about, I would say, an overall theme of safety in the second half of your cycle. People are often more introverted. Not all the time, but more introverted. More perhaps prone to wanting to stay indoors or hang out in certain circles versus putting yourself out there. So when we think about business, maybe if you're doing a webinar then I love to time it for my summer or my spring.

Becca: my summer business loves to create webinars, but then she always puts it on the fall version of me.

Maisie: yeah, well I just did this as well. This is something that you want to watch out for. If you're listening to this, watch out for you. Because the summer version of you is very good at saying yes to things because you're like of course I can deal with that. Yes. I can do that.

Becca: you're like yes, I'd love to host your baby shower. Sounds fantastic. Then you're like fuck.

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Maisie: yeah. Then often we are scheduling for the second half of the cycle when we're like well, I just want to kind of hang out and watch a bit of Netflix. Pot around my house and not do all of these things that previous me signed up for. So it's good to keep an eye out for that. I think the other thing is like when you are, like you and I are both coaches. Our clients work with us because we're coaches. I think this is a thing that we can use the cycle, understand the cycle, use it to our advantage where possible, but that doesn't mean that we can't do it other times. It's just like needing that weather report.

So for me, my period is now due. I booked this in knowing it was going to be the week my period was due. When I booked it in I was like okay. So I'm doing that on Wednesday. Let me not book up the rest of my day with stuff. I want to have a chilled morning where I can take my time coming in. I'm not going to arrive at our time to talk having rushed through other things. So this is a week when I do a lot less. Then there are weeks when I do more.

Becca: so let me ask you this. I haven't yet read *Perimenopause Power*, although I have bought it for people and sent it to them. So I'm just like I know this book is good. I know it's going to be great. You should check it out. I'm not super familiar with what happens in perimenopause. Interestingly enough when we say perimenopause, we mean all the years leading up to menopause. Because, like you said, a big understanding is that menopause, menopause is actually just like one day.

Maisie: it's a day, yeah.

Becca: it's the day that you stop having your period. Is that right?

Maisie: it's a year after your last period. So say I have my final period today, and then 12 months later is when I go through menopause. It's one day and then it's post menopause. All the years proceeding that is when you are perimenopausal. So you are going through different symptoms, which a lot of people call going through menopause. What they really mean

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is going through perimenopause. Is it true that perimenopause, a lot of your hormones are reflective of your fall? Or did I make that up?

Maisie: no, this is true. So I would say perimenopause is, you have to confront things. You have to confront the things from your history. Confront what's going on in your life, what's going on with your health, and confront what's coming up. So because of that there is this, I mean it's the autumn phase of life. Like spring would be childhood and adolescence. Summer is like, I don't know, do they call it the prime of life? I don't know. Like 20s, 30s. Then kind of 40s you're moving into the autumn phase of life.

So the hormonal landscape can be changing quite quickly, and it is a process, right. Initially you've have higher levels of hormones, and then eventually you have lower levels of hormones. So initially you have signs and symptoms that are kind of I think of them as excess. I'm a Chinese medicine practitioner. That's my history. So I think of things in terms of like Chinese medicine excess and deficiency.

So initially in perimenopause, that's when you get like tender breasts, swelling, irritation, rage, these kind of excessive symptoms. Your cycle also speeds up. So it shortens. Say if it was 28 days and then it drops to like 26, 25. You kind of speed through it quicker. Then your hormone levels start to lower, and that's when you start to get signs and symptoms like vaginal dryness, poor memory, decreases in sexual desire, skin changes. So there's a different set of symptoms. Joint pain is another big one. That's when hormone levels are starting to lower.

Becca: I have heard that women peak in their sexual desire in their late summer/early autumn. I mean in the life cycle not in the menstrual cycle. Is that true?

Maisie: yeah because initially in perimenopause, there's that shift in hormones where there's higher levels of hormones, but also there's things going on with the conversation between hormones. Because hormones are always made from other hormones and there's different kind of pathways going on. So there's the actual levels of hormones, but then there's also

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shift in the conversion of hormones and the relationship between hormones. So yeah. It's definitely a time in life where sexual desire can really increase, but for other people it will lower. So it kind of all depends.

Becca: do you think that when a woman goes through what our society loves to deem as a midwife crisis, and usually it's reflective of her leaving a toxic relationship or moving or finally going after this hobby that she's always wanted to do. Do you think that is just her bullshit filter finally coming through and stopping the people pleasing?

Maisie: yes. Definitely.

Becca: every time I hear someone say, "Oh she's going through a midlife crisis." I always think I don't know what's happening over there, but good for her. She's probably just like who's fucking life is this? Who built it? It got built in my summer phase. Like I said yes to the baby shower basically is what happened for the rest of my life. I'm waking up and I'm realizing this isn't what I want, and this is my time to...

Now, of course I don't want to shine light on actual like someone going through depression or mental issues. I'm literally just saying women that are waking up and deciding they want a different life. It seems like they probably have wanted a different life, and they finally were able to move into that and have the courage to do it with this hormonal shift.

Maisie: yeah. That is my suspicion of what goes on as well because estrogen is a very accommodating hormone. It makes us care about others, care about what other people think about us as well. So then when it starts to lower, suddenly you don't give a shit about what people think and it's really liberating. This is, I think, one of the powers of perimenopause is that this is what happens to so many people that have gone through perimenopause have told me this is one of the gifts. You just stop giving a shit about what other people think and just care about yourself, which is amazing.

Becca: I love that. I can't imagine.

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Maisie: I can't wait. I'm very excited about it. I feel like this has been so much of my inner growth work in life and particularly over the last five years or so. So I feel like I've already shifted so much. So it's going to be interesting to see what happens in perimenopause.

Becca: yeah, seriously.

Maisie: which I'm kind of teetering my way into I would say.

Becca: we kind of joke in my circle about how much I don't give a shit about some things. Now some things I do. I don't want to act like I'm just like middle fingers to the wind, but there's a lot of things that I just don't care about when it comes to what people think of me in a lot of ways. So I wonder if that's just going to be magnified. I kind of hope that I'm just like this older woman that just plays in her garden all day and drinks a martini at night and just lives her life quietly and no one talks to me.

Maisie: I'm laughing at the idea of you staying up until midnight.

Becca: staying up until midnight?

Maisie: just because when we met up we were like okay, it's 9:30. Let's go to bed.

Becca: I can't stay up past 9:00. I just can't do it. When they say that you go through this period of time where you can't sleep, isn't that a symptom of perimenopause?

Maisie: yeah, that also happens. So as we age, particularly in females, sleep gets worse. The quality of it declines and the amount of it declines. That's where I'm at. So there's a stage of perimenopause that some researchers are now referring to as very early perimenopause. It's not like going through early menopause, which can happen when you're 30 or when you're 40. That's like early menopause.

Very early perimenopause is when you're starting to get those perimenopausal symptoms, but they are just kind of happening around the period your due. So this is where I am at. So in the runup to my period, I have

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trouble falling asleep. If my kid wakes up in the night, it's hard for me to get back to sleep. I can get night sweats. I kind of need to keep my feet out from under the duvet. Do you call it duvet in the states? I forget. Comforter. That's the word.

Becca: comforter. We call it a good old fashioned blanket.

Maisie: and my cycle's got a little bit shorter as well. So I'm starting to get that, which means that I like to kind of put measures in place to support my sleep. I know that predictably that's what's going to happen.

Becca: yeah. You were such my buddy at this last event because like these girls were like, I mean it was 9:00 and they were acting like they had no where to be. They were like you want another drink? I'm like what are you talking about? I can't have another drink. It's 9:01. I've gotta go.

Maisie: so we were there as participants, but we were also there to work as well. So I think it's like maybe a bit different for some of us. We're like okay well we've got to show up and coach tomorrow. So let's get to bed.

Becca: yeah. Yeah. I have gotten really bougie with how I sleep, my sleep routine, how many hours I want to get, how closes to bed I will eat and not eat. All the things. To me the older I get the more I realize like if you just genuinely look at your day and how well you feel, it's like 100% based on how I slept last night. If I slept great, I feel great. If I slept bad, I feel bad, period.

Maisie: back when I was doing my acupuncture degree, my course director once said to me because we had someone come into the student clinic who had loads of different conditions and symptoms. They were on a whole variety of medication. He was just like okay. So where would you start with this case? Most of us were like no idea. We could start anywhere. How do we know what to prioritize?

He just said, "Look, if anyone comes in, and particularly if they have quite a complex case, always start with sleep if that's on the list. Because until they are sleeping better, they're only gonna get so much progress happening in

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all their other symptoms. Sleep is the universal thing that improves everything.”

Becca: yeah.

Maisie: this is like really, really true. That’s my experience as well. I think it’s really important like as entrepreneurs and in the work that we’re doing that we are taking care of ourselves as we go about our work and also modeling that for our clients.

Becca: yeah, you know, I just released an episode today, which won't make sense which this episode is released. When we’re recording this episode, an episode was released today where I'm talking to my health coach about sleep and I'm talking about the importance of it. My doctor and my health coach work together. They truly believe that sleep comes above movement. It comes above nutrition. Even though they put large emphases on movement and nutrition, sleep is the number one thing we talk about when it comes to hormone regulation and repair.

I'm a really big believer in intermittent fasting three to four days a week as females. One of the things that I've learned is our microbiome, the bacteria in our gut, needs rest and that it is on a circadian rhythm the same way that we are. So our bacteria is living organisms, and it has to have rest. If we eat late at night or we eat early in the morning and we don't give a proper amount of rest for it then it goes out of whack just like we do. It's such a big part of prevention of disease. It's just getting your bacteria on that rhythm as well.

Maisie: yeah. Yeah. They're all involved in how you process your hormones, the production of hormones. They come into it big time. I think especially, like you've mentioned a couple of times, not eating at night. It's that final meal of the day for melatonin, the sleepy hormone, to start coming out. It's like two and a half hours after you have that final meal of the day that that melatonin production is triggered. So eating and the times that you eat really helps to set your circadian rhythm.

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So it's like well, that's a big thing. It's like well if you're finishing up work late, you're doing your commute home, you're cooking your meal, ordering takeout, whatever. It's like 9:00 before you're eating, no wonder you're struggling to get to sleep. You're like up until after midnight. That makes sense.

Becca: yeah. You know if you would have a snack and you feel like it's really innocent at 10:00 at night and it's small. Maybe it's even healthy. It still is producing insulin in your body. When insulin comes into your body, it down regulates your sleep hormones drastically. So a lot of people believe that they can sleep better with a snack at night, and it's just scientifically not true. You might fall asleep fine, but your body can't handle digesting and sleeping and releasing the hormones that it needs to for you to have an actual restful sleep. So definitely something to think about.

Maisie: although I will say there is a time when I think that's not the case, which is especially for a lot of my audience and my clients. They are in need of more nutrition. Not eating enough nutrient dense foods. They've often been avoiding whole food groups like fat or carbs to great detriment, and they've been over training, stressed out.

When one or more of those things is going on, someone can actually stop ovulating because the body is just like well food is clearly scarce. Times are pretty stressful around here. We're running a lot, right. Whether you're actually running for a jog or whether you're training in some other way.

So the body can be like well, we're running a lot. Maybe it's quite dangerous around here. Because there's no food to eat, let's just stop ovulating. Because clearly this isn't a time to get pregnant and have a kid. Times are scarce. Let's dial down ovulation and just stop that shit because let's not waste energy on that.

Becca: yeah.

Maisie: often what I see in those folks is that they do wake up in the night, and it's because of the influence between blood sugar levels and cortisol and blood pressure. So what can happen in the night is they are being

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woken up, but if they have something that's high fat before bed then that can help them to stay asleep. Most people, you don't need to snack.

Becca: yeah. Well when you go into cases like that, do you think the answer is the snack before bed? Or is the answer to remove some of the daily stresses, feed their bodies nutritionally during the day, give themselves the calories and the nutrients they need so that their body can fast at night. It's capable of that.

Maisie: yeah. I think that's the ultimate place to get to, but I think in that acute recovery phase where you really are kind of, I suppose, are wanting to overdo it on the signals that the body's getting. It can be useful certainly when you're just like wanting to get those results as quickly as you can then it's helpful.

Becca: right. So it's like an acute recovery situation to get your body back to health.

Maisie: yeah. Yeah.

Becca: yeah interesting. I love it. Well, hey I've loved having you on here today. Can you tell my audience where they can find you, what resources you have? You have a podcast as well in which we look identical on the cover of so.

Maisie: I love it because we appear together. Because our podcasts come out on the same day. So they always—

Becca: so we're just gonna be in the same pose back to back like right next to each other.

Maisie: I love it. It always makes me smile. So my book is called *Period Power*. Then there's *Perimenopause Power*, and I haven't shown you these yet. I've got to show them to you later on, but *Period Power* has also been made into this amazing deck of illustrated cards, like reference cards for you to understand your cycle. So that's coming out soon.

Becca: what?

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Maisie: I know. I haven't got them right here, but I'll show you a photo later. They're incredible.

Becca: was that your idea for that to happen?

Maisie: no. A publishers who make these amazing cards just got in contact. They're like we love your book. We want to make it even more accessible for people who don't want to read the whole book or for a younger audience maybe who kind of just want to understand the most important pieces of it. They're stunning. They're really great.

Becca: man, that's super fun.

Maisie: yeah. I think they come out in the states at the same time as they do in the UK, which is in March. So that's rolling around soon. Yeah I have the *Period Power* podcast. I'm @\_maisiehill\_ on Instagram, and I have an online monthly membership called the Flow Collective.

Becca: if you are a menstruating person and you're not in the Flow Collective, it's time to rethink this.

Maisie: you should definitely join. It's amazing. There's all sorts of amazing things coming up that I won't speak about just yet.

Becca: that's so fun. So fun. All right Maisie thank you for being here. You are always welcome on this podcast. I've loved having you, and I just love being your friend. So thanks for being a rad ass chick.

Maisie: I love that too. Thanks for having me. This has been great. We can talk all day. I'd love to come back, and I can't wait to have you on mine.

Becca: we could talk all day even in our fall. What? We're amazing. Okay by Maisie.

Maisie: bye.

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