

## TRANSCRIPT

Ep 084: Berrion Berry on Understanding the Phases of Your Menstrual Cycle, Leveraging Them in Business, and Using Them to Optimize Your Calendar

**Berrion Berry, Intro Clip:** I always say that you're not in control, but you are in charge. In my opinion, God's always in control. But you are in charge of your Google Calendar, you are in charge of that team. You are in charge of like you know, your household and different things. So make sure you use what you're in charge of, and what you're aware of now, because now we're aware of the phases of our cycle. How can I intentionally work around this? How can I really take charge of my schedule, and like move from there that's how you optimize because optimizes to make as efficient as possible, right? So realize you're not in control, but you are in charge.

**Suneera Madhani:** Welcome to CEO school. We're your hosts Suneera Madhani and Shannan Monson, and we believe that you deserve to have it all. Less than 2% of female founders ever break 1 million in revenue, and we're on a mission to change that. Each week, you'll learn from incredible mentors who have made it to the 2% Club, as well as women well on their way sharing how they defied the odds so that you can do it to your real business now, class is officially in session.

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Hi, everyone, welcome to This Week CEO school podcast. This is your host scenario Madani and I'm so excited for today's guest, Barry on Barry. Barry is a menstrual health educator. She's a certified integrative health practitioner, which means she knows everything about our flow, our period flow that is as women and she's an expert on how we can actually use our flow to optimize everything in our life, optimize our energy, optimize our health, and ensure that we are utilizing our menstrual cycle effectively to really be at our peak performance at all times. Barry, welcome to the show. I'm so excited to have you today.

**Berrion Berry:** Oh my goodness, thank you so much for having me. And I'm excited to be here talk all things optimizing your flow with every CEO out there.

**Suneera Madhani:** Yes. And with so and with every woman, I mean, our audience, I mean, we have probably about a 5050 split at CEO School. We believe that you can run your life like a business. And so I think it's important to have CEO skills even if you are a rising leader in an organization, or you you know at home working on your on your startup or a full time CEO running your life of your dreams. And so we believe that you can absolutely run your life like a CEO. So I'm so excited to actually talk about this because we had you in the club last week. And it was one of the most fire workshops you guys, if you haven't joined the club, I'm going to put it I'm going to put a little plug in here right now. So the club is our membership for CEO school. And it is just ambitious women coming together. And just the slack conversations are so

fire, the workshops have been so incredible. And it's just so fun to have to get in. And it's a full behind the scenes and like have like these workshops and burian actually led a workshop for us on optimizing your flow and we called it work with your flow. And it was so fun. It was an evening workshop. We all had wine. There were like over 100 women there on zoom for this like mini mini workshop. And I kid you know that that slack bot that conversation? We were We were all hysterical. Also, it was it was it was so educational. That right after the event, I reached out to Barry and said, hey, we've got to do this live on the show, so that everyone can learn about so many things that I had no idea of how your period actually works and how we can use it to our advantage.

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah, that training. Like let me just cosign what you said about the club, I absolutely have loved every second of being in the club, because there's nothing better than being surrounded by true community with people who get it one. But number two, like our trainings in our workshops are so high in there so informative, because you always walk away with more information than you walked in with. And that's what I have loved. And, you know, being one of the first people to do the member led workshop, I was just like, I don't know how this is gonna go. But we're gonna have fun. And I'm so grateful that I got to really teach us all how to level up in leadership and in life in a different way. Because what I learned is like, you know, we were focused on systems and strategies. And one of the biggest systems in our body that most people don't know about is our menstrual cycle, like we run off of something called the kadian rhythm, which is like it's a 30 day cycle 20 to 30 days cycle which is much longer than our natural search. kadian rhythm so to teach all of our people inside of the club how to work with their flow rather than against it, I was like, let's go.

**Suneera Madhani:** Like, let's get into it, you set the bar. So high, so high. I mean, it was just so incredible. And I'm so excited actually to share this with all of our listeners today. Okay, so let's deep dive into it. Because last for January are every month The club has a theme. And our theme was systems and mindset, right? And so how we can actually optimize our systems. And it's so incredible that we you actually don't think about, I never thought about our body actually, as a system. So let's get into the science of it. And I'm just gonna, I'm gonna start asking questions, because I know our audience is like, what is this podcast gonna be about? You guys just put it on it. I wouldn't even listen to this at one point, whatever, like to put this on fun, because Barry's about to drop some serious knowledge for you.

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah, let's get into the science. So I love to break down the menstrual cycle into kind of three specific categories. Your cycle has four specific phases. But I love to categorize it one as body which is like the biology, the unsexy stuff that we don't want to know about, but like we have to know because it's the foundation, then I like to break it into balance, because we have to create that space to actually enjoy our lives and remember when to slow down. And then last but not least business because listen, power moves in periods go hand in hand. So you know phase one of your cycle is your menstruation. This is when you're on your period when the uterine lining is shedding. Now it's the the unsexy time but like, also, it's the really a great time of releasing and restoring. So when I talk about it in terms of balance, we're releasing what no longer serves us, we are restoring our bodies and rebuilding. And when it comes to

business, we're doing all of our ideating all of our ideation and create well, ideation brainstorming related things, because there's 25% more connectivity between the right and left hemisphere. So that's just phase one. And listen, it gets, it gets even better after that.

**Suneera Madhani:** Okay, so phase one phase one of your body, or the system of the 30 days, this cycle is the the, the actual period itself. Okay, one, day one. And that's day one of the cycle of the whole cycle. And your uterus is I'm not a science expert, and I'm not a biology nerd. Okay. So your body is the uterus is like removing, you're literally waiting, you're literally Okay, so why is that ideation like explain, I didn't see and why is our left and right bank brain connected? Like, why is this the time to actually do like, create variation?

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah, so one of the things that research shows is that when you are actually your, your female hormone of estrogen is at its lowest or just above and rising, this is when your hippocampus and your amygdala are actually larger in size. So that is why there is more connectivity, because these are two different sides of your brain that are actually working. Hence why we want to really be creating during this time and brainstorming more specifically during this time, because there's this actual connectivity between that right and left hemispheres just based off of how your hormones work. And most people don't know your menstrual cycle starts in your brain with the release of a specific hormone. So we think only about our like, you know, our lower limbs and like, we're thinking about our uterus, and we're thinking about our ovaries, but your cycle actually starts in your brain with the work of hormones being released.

Suneera Madhani

Okay, so the hormones are released, the left and right brain are at optimal connectivity. So this is the time where it's like the most connected. And so you're saying that it's beneficial for us during our period week to actually be brainstorming? And ideating. So what does that look like in like a business world? Right? Because this is where I'm taking it right away. This is where we're having strategy sessions.

**Berrion Berry:** No, this is where we are doing our vision casting and our goal setting we are thinking big during this stage.

**Suneera Madhani:** So we're not even in that yet. We're literally zooming completely out. We're at the highest level, we're in full mete out here. And we're looking out and we're saying, Okay, what is the vision for the month ahead? Or what are the vision for the quarter and for the year and what else is happening? And so, you are in vision casting mode, what are some of the what else you consider in the idea so what else should we be doing physically, maybe at that time, so how is like our energy level in comparison to that.

**Berrion Berry:** So what you should be doing during this time is really relaxing because your energy levels but more specifically, that hormone level is a little bit lower than it would normally be like if you were ovulating, which we'll get to. So during this time, really focus on your internal world and the people closest to you and how you can show up for yourself or maybe for others.

In terms of workouts, we're going to do those low intensity workouts, active recovery, we're keeping it as like restorative as possible as chill and relax. as possible during this phase,

**Suneera Madhani:** okay. All right. All right. So that's phase one.

**Berrion Berry:** That's week one. Yeah. And then phase two is going to be called your follicular phase. And we could consider this, let's just say week two, because like, each of these phases will change based off of like hormones, but we'll just go week by week. So phase number two is called your follicular phase. This is when your hormone levels are beginning to rise, and you'll feel like the veil has lifted, you have a bit more energy. Now, when I talk about this in terms of balance, this is the reconnect phase, this is a time for your virtual coffee dates, your virtual, like, you know, Wine Down Wednesdays and different things like this. And this is also a time and business for strategic planning, detail oriented work. This is when you're having those strategy sessions, and you're getting into those nitty gritty details. Because again, our brain is still connected. But in addition to this, the size of certain parts of your brain are starting to shrink. So your hippocampus is known for really, you know, this emotional side of your brain, but it's starting to shrink a little bit. And it's allowing you to be a little bit more analytical. So let's utilize that to your advantage. And really, okay, what is this vision casting gonna look like? If we put it into a blueprint? What is this framework gonna look like, step by step, you know, the workflow formula? How are we going to make this happen? What's my end goal, and now let me reverse engineer it.

**Suneera Madhani:** Okay, so that's when the strategy actually takes place in passing on week, one low, you know, internal things resting, it's a resting period within that week, and then the next week, you're reconnecting. So you're saying that human interaction is a good thing here on this week, connecting with the world, again, having your coffee date, meeting up with your friends, like maybe a girls night, and reconnecting and then utilizing the analysis portion of your brain because that's where it's at its peak right now, to actually dig deeper and to create the details and the strategy of the plans that you you are passing? Exactly. Okay. Okay, I'm with you. Alright, then. Okay. Okay.

**Berrion Berry:** So the next phase of our cycle is ovulation. This is when there is a surge in two specific hormones, I'm going to mentioned estrogen and testosterone. This is also a surge in your energy. This is that fertile window that so many people are familiar with. But I also say this is the window to renew and like really step into you because you have a surge in energy based off of your estrogen and testosterone. Okay? So in balance, it's three new, it's the Diana Ross moment, like I'm coming out, right? Like we're having that moment where people are attracted to us, based off of like, our, literally our estrogen levels, and they're like, Oh, that's good energy, because we're radiating at this time. Well, in business, this is a time to execute, communicate and take action. Because you have a surge in testosterone. If you feel like you can do that 15 hour work day, you go right ahead, and you do that you take the action to move that needle in your business, to make that vision come to life to actually make that dream come true. So many people are like, Oh, I want to do this, I want to do that. Well, when you have done the vision casting the right way, in your mental phase, you've done the detail oriented work of knowing

what you need to do to make this vision come to life, taking the action in ovulation so much easier, because you actually have that game plan, you have that like, okay, these are my three needle movers, this is what I need to do. This is how I can work ahead. This is what like you can just check all the boxes off. Now, you'll feel this energy, technically, you only ovulate for 24 hours, but you will feel the energy of ovulation for at least three to five days. If you're somebody who has like a quote unquote, normal cycle. This is my favorite phase. Okay, so

**Suneera Madhani:** Okay, so this feels like the superpower phase. Like Yes, you can accomplish anything, this is where you are executing, you are firing away, maybe you're booking all of your sales calls on this time, you have like the highest confidence level here. Maybe you are pitching at this time, maybe you're talking to investors at this time, maybe your public facing at this time, or you're running shows and podcasts like this is the time where you are maximizing and you are working. And you can have those days where you actually power through for a longer period periods of time to say, you know what I'm going to take on this week and you working 12 hours a day, 15 hours a day if I want to, because I have the energy and the like the estrogen and testosterone both to actually go execute and the people are actually feeding off of off of that as well to help us actually close or actually get the job done.

**Berrion Berry:** Yes, this Oh, you're at peak performance like this is literally peak time of your menstrual cycle. This is peak performance time. So like let's get it done. And I also say that this is a time where if you're somebody who works out a lot and you do any type of training, this is also a great time to do any heavy lifting in maxing out too because there is that surge in testosterone. So for us To have a well balanced life, you know, we want to make sure that we're also focusing in on those things. And this is like, this is my favorite time to do those discovery calls and onboard those new clients and like, really put myself out there, because I know what I'm hormonally feeling and experiencing. And so I know it's irresistible. So like, let me just go ahead and use it.

**Suneera Madhani:** That's so incredible. This is so great. Like, I literally want to put this on my calendar right now, which we'll talk to you which we'll get to okay. I saw your calendar, we all saw the calendar, you guys. I cannot wait to go there. Okay, so that's phase. That's the third part of it, which was ovulation.

**Berrion Berry:** And then our fourth and final phase is our luteal PMS phase. Now this is everyone's like kind of least favorite phase. This is when you're a little bit more testy. But so biologically, what's happening in the body is there's a decrease in your estrogen levels, and an increase in a hormone called progesterone. Now, what's really important to note during this phase is because there's a dip in your estrogen, there's also a dip in your serotonin levels. So you know, those times where, you know, you might deal with a bit of imposter syndrome, or you're not feeling 100%, that's actually 100% normal because of a dip in your estrogen. But I encourage you to create that balance and relax during this phase, give yourself that space, to really be able to just sit with yourself, sit with your feelings. And in business. This is our evaluation phase. Rather than looking for like, problems in your personal life, I always tell

people, look for them in your professional life and create those solutions. problem solution orientation, that's what we're doing during this phase.

**Suneera Madhani:** Okay, so you're evaluating during this phase, how's our energy at this time?

**Berrion Berry:** Low, so we turn within again, so what you'll notice is, you know, two weeks, you're out of your, throughout your menstrual cycle, you're externally focused in two weeks, internally focused, this is one of those internal focuses. So it's kind of like phase one and phase four, internal phase two and phase three external,

**Suneera Madhani:** but then they kind of go back to back. So you're almost like two weeks external two weeks internal. Right? Because then this phase is right before you're about to get your period again. So at this final evaluation, and then you kind of take in and you're internalizing, and for business, what how did you apply this back to business? Again, I want to recap

**Berrion Berry:** Valuation. So this is going to be your numbers and analytics times, this is a time to kind of go back in and look at your KPIs, look at your slps and see what's really going on. I also say that this is a time to critically think about, like what you need as far as your team, and who you want on your team, what kind of roles maybe you want to fill with things you may want to be delegating, because during this time, your your brain function changes a little bit, again, back to the brain, but our hippocampus in our middle ages are actually smaller during this phase. And so we're not as good at verbal communication, we're not good at with like memory stuff. But we are really good with that analytical processing. So look for those gaps in your business. Look for like what bridges need to be built to get you from point A to point B and really optimize that.

**Suneera Madhani:** That's so good. That's such a great full month, right? Because your vision casting, then you're talking to all the right people, you're getting the pieces in place, you're putting a plan together, right? This is actually business, then you go execute, and then you go evaluate. That is how we work every month on a business cycle. If you look at it from that perspective, it's crazy that your body actually mimics that exact system for your body like for the human body, like my mind blown right now.

**Berrion Berry** It's just incredible that they didn't teach us this when we first got our periods. But guess what, we're learning it now. And we're about to do everything we need to be doing.

**Suneera Madhani:** Okay, I love that. And then also I think energy so important because that is really an all this is hormones, right? I never really think about it that way. But I really love how he broke down like the two weeks of external and the two weeks of internal because I do you believe that? I can feel my energy no matter I'm doing the same thing. Whether I'm working out whether it's my food, like it's those things do matter in my energy levels. But there are just weeks I'm doing all the quote like right things and my energy is just so low. And the days feel

longer. And it feels harder. And it just makes sense because it's probably one of the it's probably week one or week four, right? Like it's one of those weeks that my energy is lower at that week for let's also talk about the physical. You said optimal peak performance for those that work out like push hard during week three and week four. Is it also is it recovery again, like what is week four.

**Berrion Berry:** So week four is going to be turned back down. So we turn it up for two weeks and we turn it down for two weeks basically and this is going to be that active recovery restorative phase low intensity workouts from your Pilates To use to your long walks to your vinyasa flows, to really make sure that you are tuning things down during this phase. Because what we ideally want to do is create the best environment for your body to actually release when people are excessively working out during this phase, which I love a good workout, like, don't get me wrong, I love a good hit session, but maybe like, go hit something at boxing instead of actually getting on the spin bike because the elevated levels of cortisol in the body cause more inflammation in the body and actually make it harder for your body to release and shed that endometrium lining that we actually needed to get rid of. So turning down your workouts for maybe four days, while your body prepares to release is going to be ideal.

**Suneera Madhani:** That is just this is amazing. Okay, so now I know how to run workout energy business based on my cycle. What about and this is also for women that have a normal cycle, I'm on birth control, right? So I'm on birth control as many a lot of women are and I'm on a, I'm sure you're gonna tell me as it as the period expert, I don't need to be on on anything, which we can talk about. Let's talk we can talk about birth control next, and what your views are on birth control. I don't even have a period anymore. So does that mean that I don't have all of like all this? Or like, how does that work? So I'm on I'm on a IUD. So I'm on a marina IUD. So I don't even know. I'll have spotting occasionally, but I don't know my cycle. So one, how do I figure out hormonally where I'm at for those women that don't get a normal flow? And what are your thoughts on birth control? So we'll go from we'll go next. Okay, so we'll start for those listening and not watching the recording, Barry has had like the funniest grin grin on her face, as soon as I said, the words birth control. So I'm really excited to see what her thoughts are here.

**Berrion Berry:** So first and foremost, when you are on hormonal birth control, one, you're not having a real period, it's called a withdraw bleed. That's just kind of what happens because there's no communication between your brain and your ovaries during this time. So if you are actually not really ovulating, you're not actually menstruating. Which is why you have that spotting, some people do experience what they think is a bleed, it's not a real bleed, they just never told people that. But in addition to that, you know, because you're on hormonal birth control, you will be able to feel this, but you're not actually having the general phases that everybody else is having. So the best thing you can do is kind of one track your temperature, your basal body temperature in the morning and kind of see what's going on. Because just after your usual population, there is an increase in your body temperature. So that's one way you can do it. But most of the time, I'm just like, if you think you're pmsing, you probably are. Because with synthetic hormones in the body, there's no way to actually know where you're at and what's happening. It's kind of like, check your temperature, check your panties, sometimes you can

check your panties for cervical fluid, and it'll be there. But most of the time, it's kind of like, it's I don't want to say it's a lost cause. But I don't have a better word or phrase to say because hormonal birth control is the Wild Wild West. My personal views is as natural as possible. And that's what I will always encourage, I understand why people are on birth control, especially if you're busy. It's just not something that aligns with, like my personal beliefs, let alone with what I teach to my students or my clients.

**Suneera Madhani:** Yeah, I mean, I would love not to be on it. But it's safe for me and my busy schedule and my family for me not to continue to procreate anymore life. And so no, and so what are your thoughts are just to not be on? You know, and I agree with, you know, most of all, like, I would say that I've made a huge shift. I mean, most of us have into a much more natural way of life anyway. And in most of everything in our lives. I put like we've gone so you know, clean and organic. And I've never actually thought about the IUD that I have, as you know, because it is it is it's artificial. And it is telling my brain, it's tricking my brain every day, I guess is how it works.

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah. So here's what I always say, I understand that when you have a demanding life career, and especially like a family life, you have to do what works best for you. But I always encourage people to be educated and empowered with what's going on into their body because a lot of people are given birth control at like 14 years old and don't know how that's impacting them. 14 years later, when they're 20 years old, and maybe trying to conceive or maybe they're dealing with post birth control syndrome and all these different things. So you know, while I'm all about natural, you know, birth control methods, I use a fertility awareness method I get that doesn't work for everyone. I just want to make sure we all know like, hey, these are some of the side effects you might experience. Now it may not happen to everyone but it I don't think I'll enough professionals are having that conversation before they put somebody on an IUD or have an implant inserted, or they're giving them a shot or giving them the pill, you know, there's all these things that we don't know. So you know, if you are on birth control, or you do think that's going to be something for you, that's 100%. Okay, just know how it's going to be impacting your body and know how to support your body beyond that.

**Suneera Madhani:** I appreciate that perspective. And I'm going to ask a secondary question follow up here. Then from a scale of like, other types of birth control, are there ones that you you feel are better or safer, at least the ones that maybe cause you to bleed versus ones that don't? And when the ones that are synced to your cycle, what are your viewpoints on on, you know, is there a better birth control?

**Berrion Berry:** So okay, my number one birth control method, I would recommend as a fertility awareness method, non hormonal 100% natural, it's just not always doable for people with a busy lifestyle,

**Suneera Madhani:** That's to be aware of your cycle and to Yes, you know, be safe in the days that you are ovulating if you're trying not to get pregnant.



**Berrion Berry:** Exactly. My second birth control method I recommend is called a condom. Okay? Believe it or not, it does work. Okay, it works wonders. But I would recommend that and then from there, unfortunately, I would not recommend anything else. And the reason being is while the copper IUD is considered a natural contraception method, the amount of people who have messaged me personally and told me I still got pregnant with a copper IUD, I wouldn't feel competent, saying like, put this in your body. Same thing with the pill I found out not too long ago, according to the World Health Organization, the combination pill is actually a known carcinogen. And yet people are still prescribing it for birth control that this is like my issue with it and why I'm just like, as natural as possible, please. And you know, like I said, if you are going to choose something like the marina for instance, right, since you're on it, let's talk about it. Like, since you have that integrity, make sure you're doing your best to really support your gut and your liver, because you're going to have higher levels of synthetic hormones in the body. So we want to make sure that we're creating a space for your liver to be able to actually process any of that synthetic stuff that's in the body so that protein healthy fat and fiber is super important.

**Suneera Madhani:** Oh, that's such good advice. And that's so important. We actually had Megan from the Nutrition Addiction, Metabolism Makeover on the show a couple weeks ago, and her entire like it's an anti diet but it's literally protein healthy fat and fiber at every single meal and how it just is the best source of food for you is that exact combination. So I love that you just re echo that. Okay, notes are being taken right now. And I will definitely really got me thinking and probably in any women listening here on synthetic hormones for for the role. And then if we do just track and now actually tracking is so much easier, right? I mean, there's so many if you could talk about some of the your favorite apps that you use any cool tech, I'm always like looking at what are the cool techs in in periods now? So like what what what do you what are you enjoy? And what do you recommend?

**Berrion Berry:** So my number one like app I've been loving as of late. And what I recommend is called Femometer, if you're in the club, Sofia dropped the link for you guys. I made sure she sent it out. But I love this app, because one, it allows you to track your basal body temperature. But I also love it because you get to like track, you know, kind of your cycle in its entirety. I also love the Apple Health app. It's so underrated but it's free. And it's on your phone already if you have an iPhone, so let's go ahead and utilize that. And then you know, those are the two that I'm going to recommend at this moment. There's another app called the clue app, but I don't use it as much as I used to. So I'm going to go with Femometer and Apple Health app. Those are my like top two.

**Suneera Madhani:** That's awesome. Berry, this has been so informative and just so interesting. Truthfully, like it's been so interesting to learn about, I'd love to talk about your journey in entrepreneurship, because I love highlighting that and I know you left you know you had your you were working corporate, and now you are a new entrepreneur. And so I'd love to kind of talk about how's that journey been for you. And you know, we could talk about the good stuff, the hard stuff, wherever you want to go.

**Berrion Berry:** I have loved every second of it. It was definitely not something I had, like really anticipated to happen the way that it did. But essentially back in March of 2020, I got let go from my corporate job because they were like, hey, you're considered non essential. And I had two choices at that point. sit and cry, or go after a dream I had already been chasing. And I'm one of those people like I there's like this Tik Tok where they're like, you know, this girl has a smart mouth but like she's super sensitive. Like she's a crybaby thug. That's me. So I cried a little bit for about six hours. And then I started actually creating a presentation in a workshop. And no soon as I started creating that about 20 minutes in, I got like an email, Hey, will you come be a part of this summit. And that was like my confirmation that it's time for you to fully step into your entrepreneurial calling. It's time for you to serve people and really educate and empower them. So it's been nothing but pivots along the way, I always say there's purpose in the pivot. And while I initially didn't think that I'm be honest, I was like, Oh, my gosh, I'm gonna die. Like, I just remember hearing everyone say, this is a time where you're going to see leaders rise is where you're going to see people, it's going to make or break people. And I don't know, I guess I was made for 2020, but made to do what it is that I'm doing. And here we are. Now,

**Suneera Madhani:** I'm so proud of you, it's so incredible to see within, like, take that leap. And in a really hard time, right 2020 was so difficult for so many. And, you know, I want to say I'm sorry, that you got, you know, laid off of your job, but I also have not, because you wouldn't have maybe taken that chance, if you you know, this is probably something that was lingering in the back of your mind for so long, you needed that, that push that said, Okay, I don't actually have a choice. Now I have to leave, it's either this or I'm gonna go back into the cycle of what I don't love to do, and do it for somebody else, right. And so, I do believe that, you know, it's cheesy, but everything does happen for a reason. And the timeline for things is so important. And you needed that push, maybe you would not have gotten off of your corporate position, if it wasn't for 2020. And here we are in 2021. And you have a thriving, thriving business, leading workshops. With I think earlier, when we were we were chatting before the show, you were telling me like you're literally living your dream right now.

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah. And, you know, what's such a blessing was to actually look back at where I was this time last year. And I was actually looking at my pay statements, right? Because it's like tax time, you know, I was looking at my pay stubs. And I was looking at my w two. And I was like, the fact that I was working 40 hours a week to try to make that. And I make that in a day or two. Now, my how far I've come. Like, I am beyond grateful. And when I say I'm living my dream, it's like, I've always wanted to, like, wake up on my own timeline make time to actually meditate. Like I've always wanted to do that. I wanted to have a schedule that made sense for my cycle. And I started talking about living in sync with your cycle when I still had my corporate job. And yeah, don't get me wrong. It was a little bit difficult and a little bit unconventional. But the people around me were super receptive to it. They were like, Wait, you're able to communicate this and articulate it in a way that I can receive it like, and I was working in construction and development, too. So this is like a pretty masculine area. If I'm being very honest to tell a guy please don't talk to me right now. I don't have the capacity to be in a boardroom saying that. It was crazy. But it's like now, everyone I talked to they just get it. They

know they're like, oh, you're the period girl. And I'm like, Yeah, I guess so. Like, I guess that's who I am now. But yeah, totally.

**Suneera Madhani:** I love it. And I'm sure that it wasn't, it wasn't as easy. I think it's really, it's crazy when you come on to a show or you're telling your story. And it's like 60 seconds to recap your entrepreneurial journey, and we highlight all the great stuff, I'm sure that it didn't happen overnight, right. And your success has just been, it's the time that you put in, it's all the sessions you're doing for free. It's all putting yourself out there. It's showing up on social every day, and really just being the period girl, right? Like literally identify yourself. And that's not easy. Like most people on the other side, we consume content all day long. I was actually telling my husband that this weekend, and and, you know, like I see him like scroll through his feed. His you know, like his reels or like he's watching these videos. And then after like, maybe, I don't know, 50 that he scrolls through that he likes one, okay, but he's laughing the whole way through, he's laughing the whole way through. And I turn around and I'm like, give that person if you laughed, you better double tap that or write something because we consume content as like, all day long, so quickly and so easily. And it literally took that person time to put that out there. It took them thought and effort to put that piece of content out there. And it's not easy. And so as a content creator myself, I have so much respect for people who show up and have these fun, like you're the period girl, right? It's really incredible. And it's so amazing. And this should be celebrated so much more. And I think it will be I think it is and just want to say that I'm proud of you. It's not easy to take that leap and say okay, I'm going to go back to a construction, you know, go back into a male dominant industry when this is where you're passionate about and making a career out of it. It's really Really neat. It's really cool. Kudos to you.

**Berrion Berry:** Thank you so much. And if I could just leave one tip for anybody out there listening to this, there's four things that I think everybody needs to do. Get really clear on what it is you need to do that clarity, it hits different every time. That confidence that you have, and whatever it is you're delivering your ability to communicate that and step into it with competence. And your consistency is what's going to get you so much further, so much faster. These are things I've known my entire life. But I also think that's why I was able to navigate and pivot and like just step into a purpose and calling that I was like, Huh, I don't know if this is what I should be doing. But like, Let's go, you know, those four things, the clarity, the competence, the communication, and the consistency is like, what changed my life. And I think that's four things everybody can start doing today to really change their lives. So yeah.

**Suneera Madhani:** Wow, that was just so incredible. And yes, I could not agree with those four things even more. And then the only thing I'm going to add is, is is an organized calendar. And I do want to, I do want to come back there because we had an opportunity to see your calendar. And I'm a calendar snob, by the way, because I like everything super hyper organized, everything is blocked. I have a crazy when I say a crazy busy schedule, and I'm able to do the things that I'm able to do. I believe anybody can do anything, because it feels like I'm like running a world right now, like three different worlds right now.

**Berrion Berry:** But I mean, you really do

**Suneera Madhani:** Thank you. But I do it because I will because I love it. But I'm able to do it because of the systems right, I would not be able to do it if I didn't have systems if I didn't have things in place. And I actually believe that Google calendar is actually one of my most powerful tools. The most powerful tool that I have is Google Calendar. And I'll tell you what, that night that I saw your Google Calendar, period cycle on it, I literally, I'm like next level, I need to I might just take out my IUD just so that I can have a flow. So I can put my cycle on my calendar, like yes, it's like, I just want to have it on my calendar. So let's talk about that. How do you kind of how do you have this system? How do you like kind of put that together, I would love to kind of share some of those tips that you shared with us that night.

**Berrion Berry:** Okay, so first thing, everybody whip out your Google Calendar, as long as you're not driving, and go ahead and mark your period on your calendar. So think about the last period you had put that on your calendar, whether or not you have it, like in hormonal birth control or not. If you have a period or you think you have a bleed, just put it on your calendar, okay? What I want you to do is the day before your period, mark that as a vacation day, okay, the first day of your period, that's the vacation date and the second day of your period, vacation day, okay, we're gonna start right there. This is your time to really sit with yourself and be with yourself. And I know that doesn't even seem realistic to really be on vacation. But like, this is a day where you're going to scale back anything really external facing, maybe not have those, like super major boardroom calls on those days, because you're actually not the best communicator on those days. So just do low energy things. Now, from there, go ahead and mark off five to seven days for your period and color code that red, that's what I did. I love that red. And then the following week for an entire week, I go ahead and just say this is going to be that follicular phase, this is my reconnect phase. So I start stacking my calls a little bit more and doing more externally facing things. The week after that. I literally have fertile window and like ovulation because we've got to know when our energy is the best and when we can get the most done. And then the week after that, you go ahead and put on that PMS phase. Now, like I said before, this will fluctuate based off of your hormones. Most people are not in each phase for seven days. But when you're first learning how to do this, I think it's super important to just go week by week instead of trying to calculate the nuances of like, Oh, I'm ovulating for only five days, which means I'm in my luteal phase for only 10 days like a luteal phase generally is anywhere from 11 to 14 days long. But just for the sake of being able to kind of work with it at its most basic level just go week by week and block off certain times. And I also put it on my calendar like relax when I'm in my PMS PMS phase. I also like to put like facemask and self care to make sure that I'm really being with myself in my body.

**Suneera Madhani:** That is so amazing. And you're right it doesn't have to be super over complicated. I mean, I learned so much today, just by even understanding like I said, energy is such a big piece of this right even if you just know, okay, hey, this is like the two weeks that I'm on in my two weeks that I'm not. I think that is just a huge revelation we can make it as basic as possible. I think this has been super, super helpful and it was so fun to kind of see your calendar. It was definitely next level for me because I do believe that good systems in place everywhere can really help us optimize our entire entire life and is exactly the premise of any single person

listening. It's not just about business, I think people that are successful in business are actually really successful most of the time at home as well, especially as women, right? I don't know about men per se. But I would say that after I even became a mom, I became even more efficient in work, right? Because I had to be hyperfocus. Because your time it's all about time management. And the people that can manage their time most effectively, are the ones that live a balanced life, they live a full life and that are able to focus on the things that actually drive results, and not waste that time. And so this is this has just been super, super helpful. Barry, I'm just I'm blown away. And I'm blown away by your spirit. Like I just love that you're able to have these conversations, I want to talk about something I talked about it a little bit. The other night, I shared with you that in my culture, like I'm a Muslim, a woman and I didn't grow up in like a household that was very, like my parents were super liberal. But even so even then, being super liberal, like we never talked about your period, I never told my face like it was not something that you talk about, especially around men like it was it just I don't want to say it's forbidden, it's not forbidden, it just feels it's just taboo, like you do not talk about your period. And even in certain things I was sharing the other night that when if you're, you're not even supposed to be fasting for Ramadan if you're on your period, because it's considered like unclean. And you're supposed to be your purest form. When when you really think about it, you're actually at your purest form, because you're like getting rid of all the toxins. It was so empowering for me, I'm trying to actually break through it to talk about it's, it's it to talk about sex, and to talk about your cycle and to talk about these things are so natural, but it feels so taboo to talk about. And there's so many countries out there, like mine, like back home, where girls aren't allowed to even like say that they're on their period.

**Berrion Berry:** Yeah. So you know, one of the things that I always say I do is I normalize the conversation around menstruation. And when I went to university, I actually thought I was going to be working in women's health and women's rights. So you know, most people just see like the commercial side of what I do, but they don't understand how much of that is really rooted into something that's a bit more political, which is breaking down the stigma surrounding menstruation, specifically, talking about period poverty and things like that. And that's how I know I'm operating in my purpose and my calling because I can take my expertise, and really my old school studies of like politics and be able to marry it with my new understanding and my certifications in integrative health, and help people have this conversation, but do it in a way that honors and respects all cultures, but still says, hey, yeah, this is actually 100% normal, you can have a seat at this table and have this conversation because guess what, we all know that this is a thing. Now, it's not always as easy, especially when you're navigating societal norms. I'm not gonna say it's always that easy, because I come from a really conservative household. And there's days where I tell my dad, like, Look, bruh don't start like today's not that day, you know, I have to have those conversations. But at the same time, what I've learned in navigating those cultural norms is being able to back it with the science of like, Hey, this is actually what's going on. Okay. So while it may seem like this person is hormonal, she's Oh, she's hormonal. Like, I've heard that so many times. First of all, Yes, I am. But second of all, I have a bigger brain than you. So this is why, you know, it's really owning that and embodying, like, what it means to be menstruator. And like being unapologetic about it, ultimately.

**Suneera Madhani:** Yeah I mean, it, there's nothing to apologize for this is the way that we were born like this is this is the way that the world works. And this is how life is created like this is, this is not something that we should be ashamed of. And it's unfortunate that something so human, something so human, like literally as basic as it is, it's so taboo. And it's definitely 100% society thing. It's definitely a woman thing. How many times have we heard Well, she's just bitchy, because she's on her period, she must be on her period and exactly that she's hormonal, right? That needs to stop, you know, and those conversations should not be taking place. Especially in a in workplace. I've seen that happen. I mean, so many women can say that in the workplace is also happens, or even at home when my husband's like, oh, it must be the time of the month, right. And we're just automatically assume that we have a little bit of feistiness, that we're all in our periods all the time.

**Berrion Berry:** You know, here's how I feel like I always got the vice units under me Don't get it twisted bow like not at all right? But I remember when I was back in corporate and I had to have those conversations like, Hey, what's wrong with you today? Look, Charles, like don't start and that was not my boss's name. But I would literally have to say like, Yes, I don't feel 100% today. No, I'm not showing up 100% today, but while I'm here and while I'm present, this is what I'm going to be doing. Is there anything So I can do for you. Because you have to learn how to communicate those things with people you shouldn't have to. But at this point in our society, like we're having open door conversations, and we're just like, yep, I'm kms thing, so maybe not test me like try, I dare you to try me on a day where I'm not in the mood, not in the mood, like, I could go on and on about that. I love that.

**Suneera Madhani:** And then also, I want to, I want to ask, so are we not in the mood on our period? Is that us telling ourselves that we are like, what what happens internally? Why are we so testy during that time?

**Berrion Berry:** So normally when you are in that PMS phase of your cycle, there's that dip in estrogen I told you about right. And so we have that lower serotonin level, while also a lot of people with periods have a tendency to have higher levels of estrogen when they shouldn't have that there. And so that makes us even more emotional, because we have progesterone, whose job is to really have us be chill and relax. But then, you know, were working way too hard. We're not sleeping enough. We're not feeding ourselves enough. So we're chemically testy, based off of our hormonal fluctuations, but then we're inducing that even more when we're trying to negotiate big deals when we have no business doing that, because really, we should have been negotiating that deal two weeks prior two weeks after, rather than like, in that moment, because we're working when we need to be chilling. So I think that yes, there is these idea that like, you know, we might be doing it to ourselves, but really, when you look at the chemical levels of what's happening in the body, it's natural, we just make it a little extra, because why not?

**Suneera Madhani:** No that that makes complete sense. And I will also kind of point out that it's, it might not be realistic to it's nice to know, right? I think that the first and foremost thing that I will agree with, but it's nice to know where you are on that level. But in all honesty, I can't not make a deal on a week. Right? Like it's not it's not realistic for personally for myself, I think that it may

for some and that's like, that would be great if I could perfect my schedule, where I just have those outward and inward weeks. And that would be great. Part of my job is I have to be outward and customer facing public facing team facing as a leader most every single day. But what is helpful is the fact that at least I'm aware that this is that week that maybe I need to conserve my energy and other weights, right? And I think that that is a takeaway, for those of you that are like, well, this isn't, you know, this isn't gonna work for me. It does, if as long as we just even if we're aware about it today, even from an energy capacity from an internal facing up from where, where your body needs you to be that I think that we can optimize ourselves to say, Okay, if I have these things this week, and this is what's happening, how do we actually conserve it in other ways. And I think that's been extremely, extremely important for me to understand in this process so far, because I think the other night when you're going through it, I was like, okay, I'd love to but and now I finally feel clarity around it, that doesn't have to be like I feel I feel clear about it, right? That I don't have to have it perfect. Because I can't I can't I have a heart I have, this is my job. And that's and there's gonna be things that are gonna happen in everyone's life that we're not gonna be able to do, but at least I'm aware of what's taking place internally. So I can adjust.

**Berrion Berry:** I always say that, you know, you're not in control, but you are in charge. In my, in my opinion, God's always in control. But you are in charge by Google Calendar, you are in charge of that team, you are in charge of like, you know, your household and different things. So make sure you use what you're in charge of, and what you're aware of now, because now we're aware of the phases of our cycle. How can I intentionally work around this? How can I really take charge of my schedule, and like move from there? That's how you optimize? Because optimizes to make as efficient as possible, right? So realize you're not in control, but you are in charge.

**Suneera Madhani:** I love that. And that's a perfect way to end this segment. Barry, thank you so much for just continuing to enlighten us with your with your knowledge, we're super pumped to support you, how can we support you?

**Berrion Berry:** Thank you for having me, too, you guys can head to [optimizeyourflo.com](https://www.optimizeyourflo.com) and flow is spelled fl o.com. And check out my course all about literally aligning your life with your cycle. And the second thing you can do is come hang out with me on the gram. I'm super funny on Instagram. My handle is [@berrionlberry](https://www.instagram.com/berrionlberry) would love to have you all there.

**Suneera Madhani:** Well, we can't wait to be there. And I'll definitely be linking all of that in the show notes for all of you guys. Thanks so much for joining us today at CEO School. We'll see you next week.

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