



EP 006: Present Moment Magic

This is the Fertile Mindset Podcast, where we explore all the emotional aspects of fertility to support you on your path to parenthood. My name is Sarah Holland. I'm the Fertile Mindset coach and a mother to two children after my own fertility challenges. I hope you find all the support and inspiration you need within this podcast, to carry you forward on your fertility journey towards your own successful outcome.

It's also my wish that through listening to these episodes, you rediscover how to enjoy life now and live it to the full while you wait for your baby.

Now let's begin today's episode.

Hello and welcome to episode 6 of the Fertile Mindset podcast where I'm going to share a very simple but extremely powerful practice with you, and this can have a far-reaching positive impact on your emotional wellbeing. In fact, what I'm going to talk about can help you through your most difficult and challenging times. And of course, I'm including fertility challenges within that.

When you find out that you can't have a baby as quickly or as easily as you hoped, you may suddenly be dealing with thoughts and emotions that are all new to you. So, many women have told me that they usually think of themselves as a "positive person", but the length and difficulty of their fertility journey has completely floored them. And that is why we are here. And that's why this podcast exists and all the support I give at Fertile Mindset is to recognise, acknowledge and support the many emotional challenges related to fertility issues.

Now, have you noticed that when you're dealing with something stressful, whether that's another negative pregnancy test, some worrying test results from your fertility investigations, or maybe you're starting an IVF cycle and it feels really stressful; your mind races and it's full of hundreds of thoughts. It may jump ahead and worry about what's going to happen next or it may pull you back into the past – reliving difficult memories or overwhelming you with regret and sadness. Our minds have a tendency to give us "What if?" questions and "if only" statements.

Like:

What if I don't get pregnant with this next IVF cycle?

What if I can't find a clinic to treat me at my age?

What if I never get pregnant?

And the “if onlys” can be just as heart-wrenching:

If only I hadn't waited so long to try for a baby.

If only I'd known, it would be this hard to conceive.

If only I'd made a different decision, things might be different now.

Now, when we live in the past or we worry about our future, we are taking ourselves away from the one thing that is true and real right now, and the one thing that will bring us peace – the present moment.

Have you noticed that when you feel stressed and your mind is darting all over the place, you tend to lose focus on what you're doing in that moment? You might miss a turn when you're driving because your mind is so preoccupied, or you might not hear something that someone has just said to you.

Now, this is something that could happen in an appointment with your fertility doctor, and it's something that a lot of people have told me that they have experienced in an appointment to maybe discuss test results, to look at fertility treatment options or any number of things. But if you're going into that appointment feeling worried and stressed, it's likely that your mind is already jumping ahead to worst-case scenarios or trying to even preempt what the doctor might be about to tell you. If your mind is racing ahead, it won't be staying present to the moment you are in – the moment of that appointment.

And it won't matter how important the information is that the doctor is discussing with you, you might not be able to take it in because your mind isn't present. Can you relate to that one?

Another thing that can happen is that as you hear the doctor speak, and you're trying to make sense of what they're saying – and maybe panicking a little bit too – you completely forget to ask all the questions that you wanted to. Your mind and your thoughts may have been taken down a completely different path and you've jumped ahead several steps into the future with all its worries and all its what ifs. This is why I advise my clients - and I advise you to do this too - to take in a written list of any questions you have to each appointment. And if you have a partner or friend attending the appointment with you, ask them to prompt you to ask the questions – just in case your mind is so distracted that you forget the sheet of paper in your hand!

Now, many people tell me that after important fertility appointments they feel overwhelmed and they didn't take in all the information or ask what they needed to.

Of course, much of this can be helped by having a kind and understanding doctor, who will clearly explain what they are telling you, give you time to reflect, and invite you to ask questions.

But if you are able to bring presence into a situation like this, it will help you further by making it possible to stay focused on exactly what is being said to you, to listen attentively, to process what you're being told, to be aware of any questions you want to ask, and to have the presence of mind and confidence to ask them.

Being present in the moment you are in can make such a difference to your mind, your thoughts, and your perspective.

Now you may ask, “But what if the present moment I'm in is painful and uncomfortable?”

To answer this, I want to read from an amazing book on the subject of presence, *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle.

This is what he says:

“It is as it is. Observe how the mind labels it and how this labelling process, this continuous sitting in judgement, creates pain and unhappiness. By watching the mechanics of the mind, you step out of its resistance patterns, and you can then allow the present moment to be. This will give you a taste of the state of inner freedom from external conditions, the state of true inner peace. Then see what happens and take action if necessary or possible.”

Now, my own copy of the book, *The Power of Now*, is sitting right next to me now and its condition, it's pretty poor condition, shows how well read it is, and reminds me actually how often I've revisited this book, so I highly recommend it if you want to explore the concept of presence more fully.

Now, you may already be doing some other things or following certain practices to help bring more presence into your life. Like mindfulness, breathing exercises, meditation, for example, they're all popular routes to a more peaceful and present mind, and they all encourage you to bring your focus to something simple, like the flame of a candle, or inwards to your body. And an easy way to bring your attention to your body is to focus on your breath.

When you focus on your breath or anything else that is with you or happening right now, in this moment, this of course, brings you into a place of presence. The longer and more often you maintain this focus the more present you will feel, and the calmer your mind will become.

However, anyone who has ever tried to meditate – even those who've been practising meditation for years – will know that this simple practice of being still and present can be very, very challenging.

The challenge of course, is our busy mind and our thousands of thoughts! That doesn't mean meditating and breathing exercises aren't helpful when your mind is busy. They absolutely are and will give you brief moments of respite from the busy-ness of your mind. Taking deep breaths down to your belly, counting the length of your in-breath and your out-breath could be enough to calm your body and mind and bring you a moment of presence.

But that busy mind will try and take you away from presence at the next opportunity. So, as you sit to meditate for 10 minutes, or however long, a thought no doubt will pop into your mind.

And as thinking begins, we're taken away from being present.

Now remember there are two broad types of thoughts that will take you away from presence.

Thoughts about the past, where you are revisiting or reliving past experiences that can bring sadness and regret. If you spend too much time with these thoughts, you feel as if you're stuck in the past and unable to move on.

And thoughts about the future. Imagining all the worst-case scenarios can bring you worry and fear. Of course, there are positive ways to think about the future too, but these thoughts can also stop you from being present and living peacefully and joyfully in the moment. When you, for example, dream about a holiday next year, (or hopefully sooner if Covid restrictions are lifted!), or dream about “when I am a mother, when I have my baby” - whilst these are lovely thoughts to have and can help you visualise a positive future and move towards it, too much time spent thinking about the future may mean that you are wishing your time away and not finding any happiness in the moments of your life that you are living right now.

These are fun dreams to have, of course, but the stronger they become, the more they may feel their current life is lacking what they need to feel happy and fulfilled, and they're pinning all their hopes of happiness onto a future that hasn't happened yet.

The phrase "stop and smell the roses" comes to mind. And we could have another whole episode on the power of gratitude, but we'll save that one for another day.

When you focus on being present, by shifting your focus to your body with your breath or to something that is happening now, this is where you will find a sense of calm and peace with that moment in your life, with what is.

So how can you address the struggle of thoughts taking you to the past and future and all the emotions that come up, and then become more present?

Now, women tell me they're overwhelmed with thoughts and emotions about unsuccessful IVF cycles, or the sadness of a pregnancy loss. They feel stuck in that painful past experience, and they also feel fearful about the future, worrying about whether there will be another IVF treatment that doesn't work or another pregnancy loss. It is a painful cycle to be in, and it can feel hard to be present when your thoughts and emotions are so strong.

If you've listened to this podcast before or know anything about me, you'll know what I'm about to suggest as a way of cutting through the thoughts and feelings that are no longer needed, helping you to release the past, let the future reveal itself in good time, and staying truly present – which will mean you can live your life now, and really enjoy your life. Don't put off your happiness while you wait for your baby!

With my Fertile Mindset fertility support, we work to discover, acknowledge, and release the negative thought patterns, beliefs and emotions that are not supporting you. We do this with a technique called EFT – which stands for Emotional Freedom Techniques. It's also called Tapping or Meridian tapping as it uses the meridian points used in acupuncture, but there are no needles. It's just a light tapping technique that you do with your own fingertips on these points.

Now if you're already familiar with EFT or using EFT I'm going to be giving you some tips now on using it to stay present. If you haven't yet learned EFT, then I would love to invite you to watch my free online class, Fertile Mindset Mastery where I teach you EFT and show you how to use it for your fertility. This class is within my Fertile Mindset Sanctuary membership, which has both paid and free levels of access. So, feel free to start with the free level, watch the class, and then see if you want to dive into this effective approach to fertility support with the paid membership which is only £29 a month. You can begin for free at www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary and as soon as you've signed up there, you'll be able to watch the class and learn EFT.

Now, if you already know EFT, or you're about to learn it with the class, then here's how to use it to effectively clear your attachments to the past and future and stay more fully present.

Each time you notice your mind drifting to a sadness about the past or a worry about the future, see if you can pinpoint the exact thought you are having. The more specific you can be the better. Then apply EFT to that thought. Now stick to the one thought and apply as many rounds of EFT as you need to, until you feel your connection to that thought, and any uncomfortable emotions have been released. Remember to use the 0-10 scale that I teach in the class as this will make sure that you are both aware of the results you're achieving, and also encourage you to keep using EFT, until you have fully resolved the thought or issue that you are tapping on.

Remember each round of EFT only takes a couple of minutes, and it's time well spent on nurturing your mindset and emotional wellbeing.

If you'd like some further guidance in using EFT, would like some tap along videos or even advice from me directly then I would love to see you in the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary, and you can access all of that in our BLOSSOM level of support at £29 a month.

If you do use EFT on your past and future thoughts to help you become more present, please let me know. I love to read your reviews on Apple Podcasts so feel free to write about your experience there, or you are welcome to email me too. You can contact me about today's episode or anything else at mail@fertilemindset.com

So, let's review the key points from this episode on Present Moment Magic.

First, we talked about the principle of being present and how when our minds take us to thoughts about the past or future this brings up uncomfortable emotions of sadness and regret, or fear and worry.

Then we talked about the many ways we can encourage presence through mindfulness, breath, work, and meditation, and how a focus on your body with the breath or something in the present moment can bring us back to presence and a calmer, clearer mind.

Next, we talked about the struggle that we all have with our thoughts and how living in the past or future stops us from fully living our life now.

And lastly, I shared how using EFT can quickly help resolve the attachments to past experiences and future worries about your fertility or anything in life, and then bring you back to the present moment.

Now, if you want to explore the practice of being present more fully, for learning and immersing yourself into these ideas I recommend *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle, as I mentioned earlier. And to work through and release the thoughts and emotions that are causing you stress and making it difficult to be present, come and join me in the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary and I'll guide you through using EFT.

OK. So that's it for today's episode to make sure that you don't miss our next one. Please remember to subscribe wherever you listen to your podcasts!

Thank you for listening to the Fertile Mindset Podcast.

If the topics talked about here sounded like I was speaking directly to you and your thoughts, then I would really love to invite you into the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary.

This is my fertility support membership, where you can free yourself from stress, worry and any emotions that don't feel helpful, so you can then create a naturally supportive mindset, your Fertile Mindset.

In the Sanctuary I'll guide you through using the emotional healing technique I use at Fertile Mindset called EFT, and you'll soon be feeling less stressed and more joyful.

If you're not already in the Sanctuary, do come and join us now, starting with the BUD level of membership, which is completely free of charge.

Go to www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary to join, and then watch the welcome class, which will give you a fast start into taking back control over the emotional side of your fertility.

I look forward to seeing you there, and at the next episode of the Fertile Mindset Podcast.