



EP 013: Fertility Decision Making

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.

Welcome back to another episode – number 13 today and we're talking about decision making.

Now every fertility journey involves decision making, and there are certain reasons why decision making around your fertility can be especially difficult or stressful.

Firstly, it's essential to make decisions to keep things moving forward and hopefully in the right direction too. Right from the very first moment you acknowledge that it's taking longer than you hoped to conceive a baby, the decision comes up about if and when to see your doctor. The standard advice from the NHS here in the UK is to seek medical advice once you have been trying for 12 months, or sooner if the woman is aged 36 or over. Now some may also want to seek advice and tests earlier if they suspect they have fertility issues already. But even with this information as a guidance, it's still you that has to make the decision to pick up the phone and book an appointment.

And this can feel like a huge step to take. It's the moment when you openly acknowledge that things are not going the way you hoped and you need some help. There's nothing wrong seeking help of course, it's the most logical first step, but it's the moment when it stops being the dream of how you thought you would conceive your baby. You're involving someone else now – your doctor – and that can make it feel as if it's turning into a medical process. So I understand that it's a big but important decision to make.

After making this initial decision to make an appointment and start fertility investigations, other decisions that come up along the way could be; what to do with the results you receive from your fertility investigations, whether to and when to go ahead with any recommended fertility treatment, this may include which clinic to choose as well. If you're planning an IVF cycle, you'll need to decide when this is going to happen – maybe there are other things going on in your life and you'll be deciding when is the best timing for treatment.

If the first cycle of treatment isn't successful, you may then be making decisions about what adjustments to make to that treatment or maybe other types of treatment or paths to

parenthood to look at. Along the way you will of course be informed and supported by your fertility doctor and medical team, but the final decisions are down to you.

There may be times when you're trying to decide what treatment to have, which other paths to parenthood could be open to you, or how long to try each option before maybe moving on to the next. And who to share your fertility story with too, what to tell work when you need time off for appointments, and any number of decisions, big and small along the way.

Another big decision that can feel a burden, waiting for us in the future is how to know if and when it's the right time to stop trying for a baby. This may not be one you currently want or even need to think about, and I hope you never do get to that point, but just the fact that this final, maybe most difficult decision could be in your future can create a lot of stress in itself.

All of these decisions, both ones that need to be made now or maybe in the future, feel so important which is why making them can feel so so difficult.

And of course, what can further complicate decision making is the abundance of information and advice available or given to you – whether you've asked for it or not! Too much information and advice can lead to conflicting thoughts, a sense of overwhelm, a real fear of making the wrong decision, which can then lead to procrastination and inaction.

And as I said at the start, continuing to make decisions keeps you moving ahead on your fertility journey, and when you feel unable to do this you can feel really stuck.

The more important the decision, the more information you may gather, and the harder it can be to make, and the more fear there will be around it.

But if your mind could be clear and calm, focusing only on the facts and information that you need to know, and feeling connected to your gut instinct or your intuition, decision making could be a whole lot easier.

Making decisions keeps you moving forward, refining your actions, and all the while potentially taking you closer to your baby. You may be just one decision away from a complete turnaround on your fertility journey so good decision making is important.

So how can we do this? As I said, it's important to have a calm, clear mind and the easiest way to achieve this is to notice what is standing between you and making a clear decision. What is overwhelming you, making you feel worried or anxious? You may want to get clear on all the thoughts and empty them out of your mind and on to paper by writing them all out as a brainstorm. You could write the decision to be made in the middle of the paper – for example it could be should I go with clinic A or clinic B for my fertility treatment? – and then write down all the thoughts, information, opinions, fears and worries on the paper. Keep writing them all, even the little worries and niggles, get them all out of your mind and written down.

Now look at the decision in the middle again, ask yourself the question and see which of the thoughts around it jump out at you the most. Which feel the most challenging, the most in conflict with each other, the hardest to move beyond? Grab a pen, in another colour if you have it, and circle all of those however many there are.

Now what you have in front of you is your EFT tapping round to take you from confused and overwhelmed, to calm and crystal clear about your decision.

Use the question as the set up phrase, and then all the words, especially the circled ones, are your reminder words as you tap on each point. As you voice the decision you need to make, and all the options and worries, you are bringing these feelings to the surface so the tapping can bring about balance to your mind and perspective. Keep on tapping more

rounds until you get to the clarity you need to make a clear, calm decision. You may want to cross out some of the words as you go if you feel they've been resolved, then continue to focus on the ones that feel the most challenging.

You will get there, I know you will. And of course sometimes there is no clear black and white answer. Sometimes a decision means choosing the least uncomfortable option. Not all decisions will be full of hearts and flowers and happiness, but where you can get to is a place of knowing yourself, knowing what is most important, and feeling sure that the steps you are taking and the decision you are making is the best one possible at this time. Does that make sense to you?

Now if you have any questions on this feel free to reach out and send me an email at mail@fertilemindset.com, or better still join me tomorrow, on Friday 12th March at lunchtime, 12noon UK time on both Insta live and Facebook live – I'm going to go for a double live! – where I'm going to guide you through how to make decisions with clarity and ease. I'll be guiding you through the EFT tapping, and you won't need any previous experience or knowledge, but if you'd like to learn more about EFT and how to use it effectively to support you and your fertility, then you are very welcome to join my Fertile Mindset Sanctuary membership on either the free entry level called BUD which gives you everything that you need to start learning and using EFT and bringing in effective emotional support, or the subscription levels of BLOSSOM and BLOOM starting at £29 a month for much more fertility focused support and direct access to support from me too. Either way, joining the Sanctuary will be a hugely positive step forwards towards emotional self-care, strength and resilience so if you're not with us already I highly encourage you to join. Go to www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary.

So tomorrow, Friday 12th March I'm going to be live on both my Facebook page, which is www.facebook.com/fertilemindset and on Instagram where you'll find me at @fertile_mindset. And if you're listening to this after Friday, then you can go to either of my accounts to watch the recording.

I hope that through listening to this episode and taking part in the exercise and tapping, will help you become clearer around decision making. Remember you could be one decision away from turning around your fertility journey, and I want this knowledge not to be stressful, but to be empowering and encourage you to take back control of your decision making. A calm clear mind can be like rocket fuel with all obstacles and barriers removed. You can move forward, feeling good about the choices you are making and trusting that each step not only feels right for you, but also could be taking you closer to your baby.

So that's it for today's episode and I hope to see you on Facebook or Instagram tomorrow, Friday 12th March at 12noon UK time for some lunchtime clarity around decision making. See you there.

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.