



EP 033: A mindset shift around fertility treatment.

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 back to the Fertile Mindset Podcast. It's lovely to know that you're out there listening and hopefully finding some support in my words and the thoughts I share here. And I hope that they are helping you feel stronger, more hopeful and helping you focus on you and your emotional wellbeing. That is the main aim of this podcast, and of all the support I offer at Fertile Mindset, is that you recognise how really taking care of yourself on this journey, can make such a difference in so many ways. Is it about getting pregnant and having your baby? Yes, of course it is for you. That is your focus and may be the why behind any support you seek out, including listening to this podcast. But it can also be about you, and I want it to be about you. Because by taking care of you and your emotional wellbeing, you're giving yourself the greatest gift and giving yourself the fuel, the energy to continue on this journey, for as long as you want or need to.

Some interesting research on the reasons why people stop IVF treatment sooner than they wish to, found that the top reason wasn't because they couldn't afford it, or there wasn't any chance of it working. No, the main reason people stop pursuing fertility treatment to create their family is because it is too stressful. And that is truly heart-breaking. And that is what I want to change. I want you to have the strength, resilience and peace of mind needed to do whatever you need or want to do, to bring your baby to you. This journey isn't easy, it's likely it isn't how you expected it to be, but you are more capable than you imagine. As Glennon Doyle told us, her family motto and now also the title of her brilliant podcast, is We Can Do Hard Things. We can. We can do so much more than we think, but we need the support to make it happen from outside and also from within ourselves.

So today I want to talk about creating a mindset shift around fertility treatment. Ok so when I say fertility treatment, I'm talking about anything that requires medical intervention in any way. This may be ovulation induction, IUI which is intrauterine insemination, IVF which is invitro fertilisation or donor IUI or IVF. You of course may have other treatment instead of or alongside these. And I want to speak to all of it today. Because I think something significant happens when we go down the fertility treatment path. Suddenly the direction has changed, everything has become medicalised, and there are more people involved. Virtual strangers are now a part of one of the most intimate events of your life – conceiving your baby. It

makes sense that we may need to take stock at this point and adjust our mindset and our perspective.

If we don't take time to do this, I often see two broad types of outcomes. There are the people who power through and on with treatment, not asking many questions, and trusting that this is what needs to be done and going ahead with whatever fertility treatment is needed. Then if the treatment is either unsuccessful or more challenging than they expected, it can take time to recover and heal, and to decide if they're ready for another treatment cycle.

And on the other end of the scale, I see people who are extremely fearful of fertility treatment. It wasn't how they wanted to bring their baby into the world, and they don't want to even go there. There may be fears around hospitals, needles, side effects of medications, worries about paying for treatment, the planning and logistics of how to have treatment alongside work or other commitments, ethical or religious concerns, and a general feeling of overwhelm, and it's difficult to even imagine going there, and having IVF or other treatment.

Both of these approaches are understandable. As I said, this is all new, it's a change of direction, and maybe you didn't feel at all prepared for it. So you put your head down and push through, or you run away and hide. These are primal, innate reactions – when we have a fight, flight, or freeze response. But there is another way, that requires a little investment of time and energy to acknowledge how you feel about fertility treatment, work through those thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and then get clear on what the very best way to proceed is for you.

Are you going to have fertility treatment or not? And if you do, how can you best approach it? Do you have concerns or gaps in your knowledge about the process that you need answers for first?

When we take a slower and more mindful approach to fertility treatment, it can become an entirely different experience.

One of the key times that someone will make contact with me for support sessions, is when they are about to embark on their next fertility treatment cycle. They may have taken the path first where they just felt the fear and did it anyway, and it didn't work out well for them. They may feel shaken or traumatised about how difficult they found it all, and know that if they are going to have another try, they must do it differently.

And then yes, I also often hear from people who are undecided about treatment. They had hoped they would conceive naturally, as most of us do, and now the reality of needing medical support is in front of them, it feels like an overwhelming decision. They may feel torn between wanting to continue to try naturally but being advised that IVF or another treatment is their best chance of success.

Wherever you are right now, however you feel about fertility treatment, I encourage you to take a moment to explore the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs you have around it. And it doesn't have to take long, you're starting it right now by listening to me and reflecting as I speak. If you have a pen and paper or your notes app open on your phone, you could even write down some thoughts now. Catch them in the moment as I'm asking you to reflect and see how you truly feel about fertility treatment.

Do you have any fears around it? What are your worst-case scenario fears? Have you heard people share stories about IVF that worry you? Do you have worries about any aspects of it, the medication, the clinic, the procedures, all the waiting, and the intensity of it?

When you bring fertility treatment to mind, what are your first thoughts? What do you associate with IVF and fertility treatment?

And is there anything else, any other thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or internal dialogue that's going on for you around the idea of having fertility treatment, whether that's for the first time for you, or it's a subsequent cycle you're considering?

Once you have a list or a stream of thoughts put onto paper, you have something to work with. Just the simple exercise of getting our thoughts out of our head and on to paper can be clarifying in itself. You may be able to look at them more objectively now, and get clear on what you want to do with this information.

But if you are still feeling confused, overwhelmed or emotionally uncomfortable in any way, then this is where you can do some work to support your mindset. And if you've listened to me in the past, you know what I'm going to say! This is where you can use EFT. EFT stands for Emotional Freedom Techniques and is also called Tapping, because you use your own fingertips to tap on key meridian points on the face, upper body, and hands, to bring about balance to your emotions and mindset. It's an easy and extremely effective technique, and it's the foundation of all the support I offer at Fertile Mindset, and once learned you can apply to absolutely anything. If you want my support in quickly and easily learning EFT please join me in my fertility support membership, the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary. We have hundreds of members with new members signing up every week, for emotional support and techniques that really work. I understand how you don't have time for lengthy therapy and a long-winded approach to emotional wellness when you're trying for a baby. Especially if you're preparing for a fertility treatment cycle, and want to have your mind in the best possible place before you go ahead, or before you even decide whether to go ahead. That's why I love EFT for fertility support, because it gets you to where you need to be faster than any other approach I've come across. Being a member of the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary will give you support from today and for as long as you need it, and the free level of membership is open right now. The paid subscription level isn't open right now, but will be again in September and if you join the free membership, you're also automatically on the waiting list for the next level up and will be the first to know when it's available. It's optional of course, but if at that stage you are wanting more support, directly from me and the other members, then it is well worth looking into it when we open in September.

But for now, use the free resources, including the weekly Tapping Tuesday emails I send out to all members giving you tips on how to use EFT for you and your fertility, and also you can hop over to episode 20 of the Fertile Mindset Podcast, which includes a completely guided round of using EFT. You can listen to the whole episode to get a real insight into what EFT is and how it will work for you, and then the 5 minutes guided tapping round is at 17 minutes 33 seconds. If you do now listen to episode 20 and tap along with me, or tap by yourself if you already know EFT, then I want you to focus on that list you made or whatever thoughts popped into your head as I asked you questions about how you think of and feel about fertility treatment.

By tapping on any uncomfortable or negative thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, you will help reduce or get rid of any emotions you don't need, which will then help you discover how you truly feel. After tapping you'll be able to think about it in a calmer way with a clearer mind. You'll be able to sort the fears from the facts, and tap into your own innate wisdom and knowledge about yourself. It is so important on this journey, when so much is done to us and so much seems to be taken away, that we come back to ourselves. Know ourselves, listen to ourselves. I hope that listening today and then doing some tapping too will help you find your way back. This is one of the keys to making your fertility journey, and the life you live alongside it, more comfortable, more enjoyable, and I hope taking you towards your baby.

Sending you so much love and thank you for joining me today. If you have any questions after this episode or would just like to have a chat about anything that's come up for you, do email me at mail@fertilemindset.com where emails will come directly to me, and I'll be happy to hear from you. Speak to you again next week for another episode of the Fertile Mindset Podcast.

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.