



### **EP 034: The non-diagnosis of “Unexplained Infertility”**

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. As always it's lovely to think of you out there listening, putting yourself and your wellbeing at the very centre of your fertility journey. And today I'm probably speaking to up to around 1 in 3, or 1 in 4 of people who are currently trying for a baby alongside fertility issues. That's because today I'm talking about unexplained infertility.

When you have been trying for a baby for a while and it's not happening, you then go to a doctor for various tests and investigations. Although this is a significant step, and can feel quite daunting, people often tell me they took that step, went through all the tests, with hope that at the end of all the poking and prodding a reason would be found. They imagined the doctor would announce “good news! I have found out exactly what has been preventing you from getting pregnant, and now I have the perfect solution so will you soon have your baby!” This is the hope, the dream, and what all hopes are pinned on, but for many it isn't the reality. For up to 30% of us, we're just told “We have found no reason why you can't conceive. Please keep trying”. They are told they have unexplained infertility. Which isn't the diagnosis they thought they'd be left with. In fact it's not a diagnosis at all. Diagnosis is defined as “the identification of the nature of an illness or other problem”. Well, there's no “identification of the nature of the problem” here. There are no answers, just more questions. Questions that are left hanging in the air and feel ignored, like: Why can't I get pregnant? What can I do to help me conceive? How can I make this happen? When will I meet my baby?

This is why unexplained infertility can never be called a diagnosis. It's the opposite to having answers, having a reason. It's a non-diagnosis with no clear steps to take next.

That being said, I see two clear reactions to this non-diagnosis, and it's not unusual to flip between the two either. On the one hand you can see that being told you have unexplained infertility as deeply upsetting and frustrating. You were hoping for answers, a treatment and a plan and you're not being given any of this. You're not sure what to do next or where to turn to. You feel disempowered and lacking in support and knowledge. This is a completely understandable reaction that can bring up a lot of emotion. When we're looking for a reason,

someone or something to blame, and we don't have that, sometimes we turn that on to ourselves and our partner, or both. Blaming ourselves for not trying sooner, not going to the doctor sooner, or anything else that we feel could have contributed to the situation we find ourselves in. If you feel yourself reacting in this way, give yourself a whole load of kindness and compassion, and space to release those emotions and then work through them. If we don't they can bubble under the surface and turn into resentment and anger.

The other reaction I see to these two words Unexplained Infertility is relief and reassurance. "Oh nothing is wrong! That's fantastic that nothing serious or worrying has been found". And although this is another understandable reaction to your non-diagnosis of unexplained infertility, it may be short lived and quickly be followed by asking "what next?" When you're told that everything is working just as it should be and there is no known reason why you're not getting pregnant, this may feel reassuring at first. But as the news settles in, and maybe a few more months pass without a sniff of a positive pregnancy test, the frustration and worry can begin to rise up.

We are left in a kind of no man's land when we're told we have unexplained infertility. We've been told that there's no reason we can't get pregnant, but no support in making it happen either. What to do next can be the biggest question of all.

I felt fortunate when I was given my own non-diagnosis of unexplained infertility. I had almost 2 years of trying for a baby behind me, and because I had worked in the fertility world for many years before, I charted my cycles as soon as I came off contraception and had almost 2 years of fertility charts too. These charts and a number of blood tests I had ordered and paid for myself gave me a wealth of information and an understanding as to why I may not be getting pregnant, or having chemical pregnancies on the few times I did see the faintest of faint lines. None of this interested my fertility doctor though and I was sent down the path of unexplained and to keep trying while I waited for IVF.

As I said, I felt fortunate because frustrating as this was to hear, I already had a back up plan in my head and a growing fertility support team who were helping me create a plan. I shook off the unexplained infertility label, and we carried on down our path of addressing hormone imbalances and sub par sperm quality with nutrition, acupuncture and other approaches to bring us back into a state of balance and optimal health which I hoped would lead to optimal fertility too. Within a few months I was pregnant again, and this time the pregnancy – my baby boy – stuck around and we met him in September 2007. We did not have unexplained infertility. It was possible for us to dig down further into our tests and get the right answers and support to bring our baby to us.

So that's what I want you to know. The fact that unexplained infertility is a misnomer. It's not that there isn't a reason, or explanation for you not conceiving. It's that it hasn't been found yet. Unidentified infertility reasons may be more accurate, or although that's sounding a little like a UFO so I'm not sure that's the right term either!

See your initial fertility investigations as just that. It's the initial step, the first step towards understanding what is happening and what may be preventing you from conceiving. It's not the be all and end all. If you have seen one fertility doctor for one opinion, that's exactly what you have – one opinion. If you're not happy with the outcome, then it's time to switch direction and seek the opinion of another clinic, another doctor, or another fertility specialist of some kind. It can be useful to look at your fertility health from another perspective entirely as this will surely throw up more ideas and paths to investigate. This could be from a functional medicine perspective, Chinese medicine, nutrition and lifestyle, emotional, psychological and spiritual, or whatever speaks most to you.

Do you have a nudge or a feeling that an area of your health, your life and yourself could benefit from further exploration?

It can be hard to answer that one when you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed, which is how many of us will feel after hearing we have unexplained infertility. And this is why it's so important to recognise and acknowledge how you feel, how your mind and thoughts are in this moment, and then do some work to move through the feelings of frustration or being stuck. Unless this is the first time you've listened to this podcast, you know what I'm going to say. This is where you can use EFT and find your way back to your most natural, supportive and comfortable mindset. It isn't supportive to be stuck with anger, frustration, blame or deep sadness. Yes, all of these emotional reactions are 100% understandable but that doesn't mean we have to or would want to hold on to them. However angry, frustrated or lost you feel that you have yet found the reason why you're not conceiving, be curious as to how else you could feel. Is there another way to be in this moment, another way to view the situation, a clarity in your mind that could allow amazing, genius thoughts to come through and show you the next steps to take?

This is where I would love you to get to, and I know through supporting thousands of people in a similar place, that it is possible to uncover a mindset that gives you the strongest, clearest, most amazing support possible on your fertility journey. I don't want the words unexplained infertility to stop you, or to make you feel hopeless. And I know it can do that, I really do. And if you ask yourself now, I'm sure you don't want to be stopped by this either.

So I invite you, as I often do in this podcast, to take what we have talked about today, recognise what emotions and thoughts are present for you, and then apply EFT to everything that feels not needed or uncomfortable in any way. If you don't yet know how to do EFT, you have 2 options – or you can do both of course! First you can join my membership, the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary. The paid subscription level of membership isn't open again until September but the free level is open now and will teach and guide you through using EFT for you and your fertility. You can sign up for free at [www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary](http://www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary). And the other option is to listen to episode 20 of the Fertile Mindset Podcast, where I teach you EFT and guide you through a 5 minute tapping round.

Either option, the Sanctuary or episode 20 is free, quick and easy, and you will soon be armed with a technique that makes it easy to work through all the challenges, emotions and mindset states we find ourselves in on a fertility journey. I have seen what a huge positive difference this approach makes to many people's experiences of fertility issues, including my own, and I'd love you not to feel disempowered or knocked back in any way by those two words: unexplained infertility.

There is so much potential out there for you, and for everyone who has ever dearly wished for their baby, but has been told "we don't know why you're not getting pregnant". Find your strength, your clarity and take your next steps forward. I'm cheering you on from here!

I hope you've found today's podcast helpful, and I look forward to keeping in touch with you and being your cheerleader and supporter, whether that's through this podcast, within the Sanctuary membership, or on social media too. If you don't already, do come and follow me on Instagram where you'll find me @fertile\_mindset. And send me a message too if you like to say you found me via the podcast. I would really love to hear from you!

So until next time, sending you lots of love and tons of support. Speak to you again soon.

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](http://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.