



EP 037: Is a stress-free fertility journey possible?

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! Now this episode was a last-minute change of plan as I did have a lovely guest booked in for a chat, but we had to reschedule at the last minute. So I was left without an episode for this week and with not much time as I was also about to go on holiday. In fact as you listen to this I will be camping in Dorset in the South of England, and I really hope the weather is being kind to us because right now as I'm recording this it is raining heavily outside!! But for now I'll keep my fingers crossed for sunshine, while I get back to focusing on today's podcast for you.

Now, when I decided that what I wanted to talk about in this podcast, I imagined it would be a short episode with an inspiring message about how it is possible to have a stress-free fertility journey, or at least get much closer to it. But when I started thinking about what I wanted to share and making notes, I realised it would be longer. So as I look at these notes now, and how much I want to share with you, I'd love you to have something that you can make notes on too, because what I'll be sharing today can help you take a deep dive into the whole emotional side of your fertility and help you create your own plan for a stress-free fertility journey. So if you wish to, pause now, grab a notepad, and then we'll get started.

So, for this episode I decided to talk to you about what is the essence and the reason for this podcast – the reason for all the work I do and the support I offer at Fertile Mindset. And what I most want you to achieve through listening to the podcast, and doing the reflection, the work on your mindset. And this may sound like a lofty goal, some would say an impossible or a ridiculous goal, and that is the goal of having a stress-free fertility journey.

Now, how does that make you feel just to hear those words: stress-free fertility journey? I had a free webinar that I held for several years called How to Have a Stress-Free Fertility Journey, and whilst it was always popular with up to 500 people registered to watch it each time that I held the webinar, there would be a range of reactions to the title, the promise of the webinar. Anything from disbelief or feeling incredulous, but also sparking curiosity or hope or excitement about the possibilities of discovering a different, more positive, more enjoyable way to experience your fertility journey. Is it possible to have a stress-free fertility journey? And why is this worth working towards? Well, let's find out together now.

On the podcast today I'm going to share my unique framework that can take you to a stress-free place, and also some stories of the people who've done this work with me and what happened for them and their fertility journeys.

One way I like to look at this as we play with the idea of a stress-free fertility journey is this quote:

Shoot for the moon, because even if you miss you will still land among the stars.

So this means that if you start by aiming high, you have already upped your game, and your belief in yourself and what is possible, so the results you can expect and achieve in your mindset, your emotional wellbeing and your experience of your fertility journey will be much better than you thought possible before. Much higher – up in the stars at the very least!

So if you have been feeling low, feeling dragged down by your emotions, your thoughts, and your mindset, now is the time to elevate your position – shoot for the moon and know wherever you land will be wonderful!

Before we talk about how to do this, let's have a look at what stress is.

Stress is when forces from the inside or outside world affect us, either our emotional or physical well-being, or both. We then respond to stress in ways that affect us. Due to huge amounts of stress in our modern lives, we usually think of stress as a negative experience, but from a biological point of view, stress can be neutral, negative, or a positive experience.

What is important here is how we are affected and how we respond. What we think of as stress, is in fact a reaction within us, which means we have some – if not total – control over it. The external forces we can't always control – but the response is ours – we can own that and reclaim our power.

So how do we do this? We can say we are in control, but how? We need a strategy and a method that works to strengthen our response to stress and turn it into a naturally positive, supportive reaction. To help us ride the waves of stress, rather than be knocked down by them.

I have solutions to this, and ways that I've seen many many people now approach their own experience of fertility issues, by using the technique EFT, which you will have heard me speak about before. But if you haven't, if maybe this is the first of my podcasts, the first time you've ever heard me speak, then do have a listen also to episode 20. As in that episode I share what EFT is, how it is so effective for emotional wellbeing, and I teach and show you how to actually use EFT too.

So learning how to do EFT is one part, but it's what you do with that technique that really matters. How you apply it to you and your unique situation, to get you as close as possible to a stress-free fertility journey.

One of the easiest ways to share the approach with you that I have developed over many years of supporting people, is my CALM framework of emotional support and healing for people like you, on a fertility journey. CALM – that's C A L M – one letter for each element of the framework.

I'll go through each element now which is the core of the support in the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary. In fact all monthly subscription paying members of the Sanctuary receive full access to the CALM fertility support program, which has a 60-minute video and PDF workbook for each of the 4 modules. I'll give you the overview now – feel free to take notes so you can start working with it – and I'll also share some stories from my clients and Sanctuary members in their own words.

And if you're interested in the sanctuary membership, I'll be telling you more about that at the end of this episode, too.

So starting with C which is for Clarity and Creativity

This is where you eliminate overwhelm and confusion, so you can focus on your fertility with clarity and creativity!

When we feel overwhelmed, we either feel stuck and are unable to move forward, or the overwhelm leads us to make rash and quick decisions from a place of fear. Neither of these feel good, and it's always a good idea to recognise when you're feeling overwhelmed and then work to reduce or eliminate it. It is so important and is often the very first place I start with my clients, and this is why it's within the first element of the CALM framework.

What can lead to overwhelm is when we try and do too much. There are so many things you could do to support your fertility and it's tempting to try them all, I know. But you'll reach a point where it's too much, and rather than doing a few carefully chosen things well, you may find yourself dabbling in many, many different things that are all supposed to make you more fertile and help you get pregnant. This is such a dangerous and overwhelming place to be. And if you can reduce the overwhelm, stop the dabbling in anything and everything, then you make way for clarity. This is where with a clear mind and clear thinking you can make good decisions for you and your fertility.

In this C module too we look at creativity, which is often lost on a fertility journey, or just lost when we became an adult and don't make time for our creative side anymore. Conceiving and growing your baby is innately creative – maybe the most creative thing you will ever do! So working with your creativity, igniting your creative power in whatever way that works for you, can be a wonderful, supportive, and fulfilling thing to do.

I'd like to share Joanna's story with you in her own words showing how going from overwhelm to clarity helped her create her family. These are Joanna's words:

"I wanted to have a baby, but PCOS meant I wasn't ovulating and couldn't try to conceive. I started researching online for a quick fix solution, but the research left me feeling hopeless and overwhelmed and I was getting nowhere.

"Then I started working with Sarah and quickly realised I needed to focus on approaches that would help my fertility. With EFT we addressed my worries, and created a sense of clarity so I could focus on all the things that I could do to help my fertility. I made dietary changes I never thought possible, I exercised without effort, used charting to become knowledgeable about my cycle without stress, and learnt how to manage self-destructive thoughts. As soon as I started using EFT, I immediately felt less burdened, calmer, more in control and focussed on what was important and what could be let go of. It felt like a great weight off my shoulders.

"Once I was feeling less overwhelmed and more focussed, I also felt happier, and I even started to enjoy the process of trying to conceive our first baby. Within just a couple of weeks of this new approach, I ovulated! And the best news of all, I conceived with that very first ovulation! I now have a baby boy of 2 and a half who was joined by a baby girl who's now 14 months, who was once again conceived quickly once I returned to the same focussed mindset. I now hope to conceive our third child and achieve my dream of having a big family!"

Joanna first contacted me around 9 years ago when she was waiting to conceive her first baby, and wrote this, as she said, after the birth of her second child. Amazingly she now has 4 children and each time used EFT, this approach, and my support to bring her to her most

stress-free and clear state to support her, which then in turn supported her fertility journey and helped her become a mother.

Now that's only the first module of the CALM framework, but even if you just apply that, as you can see from Joanna's story, so much is possible! But the next one which will enable us to work on a deeper level to create a stress-free fertility journey is A for Associations and Attachments.

With this module we clean the slate and discover a fresh perspective to support your fertility.

Here we dig into your self-talk and beliefs, and how they affect you and how you feel about your fertility. Looking at where the thoughts and beliefs came from, whether they even belong to you, and how freeing yourself of them could support you and take you closer still to a stress-free fertility journey. An example of this could be how you feel about your age in relation to your fertility. Do you feel too old? Have you been told you are, or are affected by messages in the media or society as a whole? Discovering your own beliefs around you and your fertility, your own truth, as well as healing from any past experiences – related to your fertility or before – can also help you move forward without the burden of baggage from the past. You'll be cleaning the slate for your next steps and all the possibilities in your future. This module is also about clearing any fears or thoughts about pregnancy, birth and parenthood that could be showing up as emotional blocks on your fertility journey.

I'd love to share a client story with you now that, along with all these stories and quotes I have permission to share. It's a story that shows the power and potential of clearing the way to pregnancy, and how we can uncover and resolve any blocks.

This client was in her early 40s and had unsuccessfully been trying to conceive with IVF. She was taking a break from treatment, and preparing for a final IVF cycle with Chinese Herbal Medicine and changes to her diet. After several months of this preparation she was in a great place physically and then wanted to have EFT sessions with me to focus on clearing stress and preparing herself emotionally for the upcoming IVF cycle. We did work on clearing stress, and she was feeling great, and then in her last session a long-buried issue came to light. She was terrified about becoming pregnant because in her teens she had been told by a doctor that a back problem would make childbirth "impossible". We cleared the decades-old, buried fear and she felt instantly relaxed about pregnancy and birth. Then amazingly she conceived naturally the very next month!

This is the email she sent me: "I've had my baby girl and she is amazing. My labour was super fast and easy (so much for the worry I had about going through labour!!). Many thanks for your support during my time trying to get pregnant. I definitely feel that you assisted. It's quite amazing to see how far I have come!"

Now after the in-depth and powerful work of the A module, it's time for something really lovely which is L – Living and Loving.

This is where you get to rediscover the real you, the essence of you and your life, and nurture your relationship and friendships.

This is where you can explore and reconnect with yourself, and the life you were living before you started on this long fertility journey. Do you feel you have lost some parts of yourself? Maybe you don't recognise who you have become, and you've lost your identity to infertility. When you discover and reconnect with who you truly are, you can see how the real you would tackle this journey – what would she bring to the situation?

And relationships – all relationships, whether that's your partner, your friends, your relatives, or your colleagues – they are key for support and needed now more than ever. Embracing

this module of Living and Loving brings you back to your true self and the life you want to live – both before and after you conceive your baby.

Here are some words from Sinead who's experience shows the importance of supporting this part of ourselves. And I wonder if you can see yourself in her words?

“Since I discovered EFT and began working with Sarah, the transformation in my life has been extraordinary. When I remember tears streaming down my face and how I found certain parts of my fertility journey almost impossible to talk about, it is remarkable how far I have come. Using EFT, I felt enormous relief almost instantly. Lifestyle changes such as giving up alcohol and caffeine, which I always found 100% impossible, became effortless overnight. Daily work stresses have disappeared, and even when something very stressful occurs, for example, a minor car accident recently, I found my response to be calm and thoughtful, which is the total opposite of where I was for so long. I simply cannot thank Sarah enough. I feel the best I've felt in years and have a warm, quiet optimism that I have never had in the last almost six years of trying to conceive. I'm very much looking forward to what the future holds.”

This sharing from Sinead represents the experience of so many people I have supported, and how they've put living and loving their lives at the centre of their fertility journeys.

OK, so finally at the end of CALM we have M which is for Manifesting and Magic. There's a reason this is the last module of CALM, because you've done the groundwork already with the first three. Now this module is about aligning yourself for success on your fertility journey and watching the magic happen!

Here we step into faith and trust and what they mean to you. How would this mindset, this state of being, support you on your fertility journey? Also ask yourself, what would you do differently if you had more faith and trust?

We can look at this as the law of attraction, in that you attract more of what you expect or believe to be true, or you're acting as if you already have. A simple way to do this is with gratitude, and having a daily gratitude practice where you notice what you already have and are showing yourself that you deserve and expect more good things.

Now whether this mindset actually helps you get pregnant and have your baby is a topic that's always up for discussion, but what I do know is that when you have worked through the C, A and L modules and come to this final piece, where you feel so aligned and so ready, you surrender to your fertility, let go of the tight hold you may have had, and this does reduce stress – often quite dramatically. When you feel at ease, you feel present, the stress response isn't being triggered and you can achieve your own stress-free fertility journey.

A lovely example of someone who worked towards her own stress-free fertility journey and then conceived twice, including once with twins, was Heather who wrote these words:

“I am so pleased with the support I received from Sarah in our journey to becoming a family. I am an older mother with over a decade of fertility treatments behind me and I was exhausted and discouraged. I completed some one-to-one sessions with Sarah and found them to be incredibly reassuring and positive. I am convinced our treatments were finally successful in part due to the positive mental state I was able to achieve using these techniques. I plan on using them again to help manage stress and remain positive now that we are parents with three children under three at home!”

Something else I wanted to talk about here is that many people and maybe you too, love to use fertility visualisations but they often feel hard work or difficult to do. Using EFT with the visualisations, and on any blocks or thoughts that come up and feel at odds with the visualisation of being pregnant or having your baby, can make them much easier and more

powerful. I call this approach of combining them with EFT tapping, Superpowered Fertility Visualisations, and within the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary I have a class on how to do this which is available to all monthly paying subscription members.

Now this paid level of membership isn't available just now, but will be open very soon and in the meanwhile, I have two things for you. And one is just for you right now, my lovely podcast listeners! So first, if you haven't already, I recommend getting signed up on the FREE level of membership of the Fertile Mindset Sanctuary, as this will give you all the support you need to get started in creating your own stress-free fertility journey. And you'll then be first in line to join the subscription level when it opens soon. I'm often asked how much this is as there is so much more support in the paid level, including lots of direct support from me. And I'm happy to tell you that now. It's just £29 a month which is quite honestly amazing value for the amount of support you receive, and just a tiny fraction of the price of one-to-one support. In fact it's probably the lowest cost support of this kind you can find. You can become a free member now at www.fertilemindset.com/sanctuary.

And also, something else free before the Sanctuary is fully opened, which will give you a real experience into using EFT thoroughly and seeing how it can really help you on your fertility journey, is my free challenge, 5 Days to Fertility Calm.

Now, do you believe for a moment that over just 5 days you could get significantly closer to a stress-free fertility journey? And with only a few minutes on each of those 5 days? Whether you believe it or not, I'd love you to join me at 5 Days to Fertility Calm and find out for yourself! We had 300 people take part last time I ran this in April, and I'm opening registration early just for you, my podcast listeners. No one else has been told yet, just you, so get in early and make sure you reserve yourself a spot ready for when we start. The link to go to sign up is www.fertilemindset.com/5days That's number 5.

www.fertilemindset.com/5days We start on 13th September, and it runs from Monday to Friday so get it in your diary now, although it will only take a few minutes each day and it doesn't matter which few minutes they are. So hopefully wherever in the world you are, whatever time zone you are in and whatever else you have going on that week, you will easily be able to take part. Register at www.fertilemindset.com/5days and I look forward to spending those 5 days with you! It will be really lovely to get to know more of my podcast listeners and by joining early we'll have a bit of time to get to know each other first, you can tell me what you want to get out of the 5 days together, and I can make sure it covers things that will be really supportive and useful for you.

A quick overview of what 5 Days to Fertility Calm is. We're together for 5 days – and the time before too of course! And on each of those 5 days I will support you through exploring an aspect of your fertility journey. I'll take you through live EFT tapping videos each day, which are recorded too, answer all your questions, and give you space to explore the emotional side of fertility and make significant changes and progress over the 5 days. There are also contests with prizes and lots of fun and opportunities to make friends too. And yes, it is all 100% free and open to you now to register at fertilemindset.com/5, that's a number 5, days.

Ok so that's it for today. And if you made notes, you now have the beginnings of your own plan to have a stress-free fertility journey. I look forward to continuing this with you at 5 Days to Fertility Calm. Bye for now, see you there, and next time on the podcast too.

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.