



EP 050: A Pep Talk with Sarah

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, and welcome to the 50th episode! This time last year I was planning and recording for the New Year's Day launch of my brand new podcast, and it seems crazy that we've already got to 50 episodes. That's 50 episodes of interviews and chats with some wonderful guests, lots of words of hope and inspiration, and I hope that by listening to the podcast you've found strength within yourself to keep going on your journey to parenthood. And if you're new to the podcast and haven't yet listened to all 50 episodes, there are lots and lots for you to work your way through. You can take me on your walks on your car journeys, I can be by your side as you clean your home or you cook your meals, or even as you fall asleep.

It can be so helpful to have words of support in your ears, inviting you to look at things differently, to take care of you, and open your ears and heart to new ideas. Your fertility journey is uniquely yours, and whilst I can't tell you the best way to approach your fertility or how to live your life while you wait for your baby, I can, and I hope to inspire you to have the courage to find this for yourself. Discover what is most important to you, how you want to live your life, and how you are going to navigate the remainder of your fertility journey.

So, today's episode is a continuation of that theme, distilled into a pep talk, from me to you, to give you the boost, the support, and the inspiration to live your life with courage, determination and gentleness towards yourself too.

As I talk to you now, I'm imagining that we're sitting together, somewhere comfortable and cosy, drinking tea and sharing stories. And you tell me about your fertility struggles. I listen. I allow you space to talk and share what you're really going through. I may be the very first person that you've been so honest with, and I understand and hold that space for you. Take a little of that space now, to just reflect on what's been happening for you, what you are dealing with right now, and how you feel about the next steps and how you feel about the future. I'll give you a moment now to just be with what you feel...

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Now, I am here not here to tell you to do things differently or that you're doing anything wrong, because I know that you are doing the best you possibly can with the time, the energy and the resources you have. I understand how hard things can feel, how you can believe that you're not doing enough, or you're not coping with these challenges as well as you should be. Maybe you've compared yourself to others, or just some fictitious version of yourself where no challenge is insurmountable, and you have everything in your life in perfect balance.

But take a moment now to cut yourself some slack. This has been a long road already to get to this point. When you look back and see what obstacles were put in your way, and how you navigate your way around them, I believe that you have every right to be proud of yourself. I bet that you have shown strength and resilience, creativity in the way you handle problems, and this has all been done without any preparation or special training in how to cope with fertility issues. Because let's be honest, no one teaches this stuff to us when we're younger. We grow up learning about the birds and the bees, and then later having fear instilled into us around the risks of teenage pregnancy. In fact we grow up with this ingrained belief that we must therefore be super fertile. And then you try for a baby, it doesn't happen quickly in the way you always believed it would, and society made you believe too. And I know that may have shaken you in various ways.

Maybe you felt different, lacking, or failing in some way. If after all, the one thing that you can't do, is supposed to be a natural normal function of your body. And this imprints itself on your very being, your identity, how you see yourself in the world.

Now, if I could go back and have a word with that biology teacher directly before the lesson on pregnancy and the urgent need for contraception, I would ask them to give you a more balanced view. To acknowledge that, yes, these teenagers you are about to speak to are within the most fertile years of their lives, and this may last many years for some of them. But some may have unknown and undiagnosed fertility problems right now. And others may develop them later in life. So wouldn't a rounded view on all things fertility be beneficial for these young enquiring minds?

Imagine you could go back and have that different experience of learning about fertility from day one. It's my hope that you would ever then feel inadequate. You would be more accepting maybe, of yourself and your body, with no blame and no anger. I would love you to be more gentle with yourself now. Listen to every word you say to yourself, especially on those tough days when you see a negative pregnancy test, or your period arrives, or a friend announces that she's pregnant, or any number of tough days. Be mindful of the way you treat yourself. The emotions will rise up, that's understandable. And you're allowed to feel whatever you need to feel in that moment. But please don't meet emotion with anger or frustration. Be kind to yourself, always. Especially when you're struggling most.

And if you start to truly accept and understand all the emotions you feel, you'll notice that they don't stay as strong or for as long a time. Your emotions rise up to be acknowledged. And it's far far better and healthier to allow those emotions than to suppress them.

And when you do move through and then beyond the discomfort of anger, frustration, and deep sadness, you'll be making space for other emotions and perspectives to come in. You'll be creating space for your most naturally supportive mindset to come forward.

I want to tell you that I believe you have more strength within you than you realise. And I know, that's an easy thing for me to say, but you may wonder how can I know it is true for you? Well not only do I believe that you, and all of us, have more strength than we realise,

but that we also have everything we need to see even the biggest of life's challenges through. I know it can feel like you don't. You can feel exhausted, completely drained, and lacking in any ideas about how to move forward, and what you need to do next to support you and your fertility. But what if you could just trust? Trust that you do know. Yes, you are tired right now, and when you're tired everything feels hard work. Even taking out the bins feels hard work! So again, be kind, cut yourself some slack, give yourself the rest that you need. Take a good hard look at your life. Is there anything that is taking up way too much time and energy right now? And is there support out there, available to you, that you're not yet tapping into? Releasing what you don't need, and bringing in what you do, can tip the balance massively in your favour. And when we start to be proactive in our life, we are showing ourselves that we do matter. We are worthy of the effort us and others are putting in for us. And I know this can be hard to believe. So maybe take a small step first. Some small act of self care – whether that's saying no to a party you really don't want to go to or saying yes to giving yourself a treat of some kind. It can be tiny, but what it symbolises is huge. It's that self-belief, that honouring of yourself. So much about fertility seems to revolve around the pregnancy, the baby who isn't here with us yet, but every thought, every action is focused on bringing them to us. But what about us? What about you? You are the one at the very centre of this fertility journey. It's about you, your body, your life – these are the things that are required to step up and be there for the baby that you hope to welcome soon. But please don't forget about you and what you need while you wait. Honour and respect the amazing person that you are. You have already lived and experienced so much in your life, and you're still here. You are stronger than you believe and have yet more strength inside you that is untapped. It is our biggest challenges that help us connect to our greatest strengths and qualities. You will amaze yourself with what you can bring to this challenge! And when you start being amazed by yourself, in awe of your strength and ability, then you allow all those innate natural qualities of yours to come forward and shine!

This journey is hard, it does require a lot of us for sure, and you my love, and ready to take this on. You're doing it already! You're here, listening to my pep talk allowing yourself to sit with and reflect on these words. Maybe you'll want to listen twice or more. Maybe you'll listen every day, until you are jumping up and down, smiling the biggest smile and celebrating you! Because you, yes you, are amazing and what you are learning about yourself here, the person you are growing into, your most authentic, feisty, go-getting, beautiful version of yourself is going to be one amazing mother too. This isn't the journey to motherhood that you expected, I know. But you'll be able to tell your future children what a journey you went on to meet them. It's something my two children love to hear and telling them the stories of both fertility treatment and adoption connects me back with the story of the journeys to get here. They are stories of strength of hope and tenacity. And whilst I was at times all-consuming with my desire to have a baby, I also lived my life while I waited. Your fertility is one part of you, it's not all of you. Remember to allow every part of you to shine and illuminate the way to your babies. Whatever brings you joy, whether that's singing, dancing, painting, or whatever it may be, bring that into your life. It will fill you up and bring you energy through joy and creativity. We can't keep drawing from the same well if it is depleted. Let's find a new well for you, those hidden depths. Enjoy getting to know yourself again, you are remarkable.

As I come to the end of my pep talk with you, I imagine I look to you and see you smiling. Not smiling at me or about what I've said, but smiling to yourself, about what you already knew about yourself and are getting reacquainted with now. That secret, knowing smile of trust and hope.

When I started this pep talk today, I had no plan, no idea what I would actually say, I just let the words flow and I hope it was something that you needed to hear and maybe you feel a shift in yourself. If so, my question to you is – what will you do now? Ask yourself: what is the one inspired action that I can take now to support me best and give me what I need on this fertility journey? Don't filter or judge the answer, whatever that may be. And it's a question

you may want to ask yourself again and again, if ever you feel at a loss or are struggling. Come back to yourself, the inner trust and ask, "what do I need?"

Thank you for joining me on the podcast today. I look forward to speaking with you again next week.

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.