

January 2024

## NEWS FROM APRICOT LANE COACHING



### Happy New Year...cough, splutter, cough...

I went to the village New Year's Eve party as planned (see December newsletter!) and then succumbed to a nasty cough and cold for the next 2 weeks. So although I'm glad I went to the party, I'm now telling myself that socialising in large groups puts me at the mercy of everyone else's germs! Is this me already preparing an excuse for a quiet New Year's Eve in 2024?

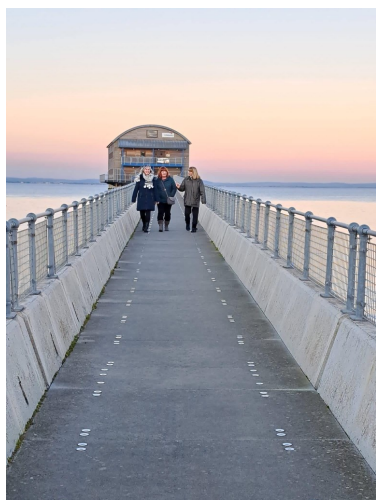
Unfortunately, it's impossible to coach and cough at the same time, so I had to cancel a number of clients, which I'm always reluctant to do. Unlike teaching, when you are self-employed you don't get sick pay; but more of a concern is the feeling that you are letting people down. Of course, my lovely clients are always very understanding and I have to remind myself that taking time off for self care when you're poorly is essential for your own wellbeing, not to mention setting a good example!

I'm happy to say that I'm more or less fully recovered and back into my usual work routine. I hope you have managed to stay well and I wish you all a very healthy 2024.

### In my client's words...

*Our conversation about friendships really helped me to understand what I expect from my friends and my role in those relationships.*

**#coachinglife** A weekend away with old friends. I've known my college friends for the best part of 40 years. We've all taken different paths through life, but when we get together it's just like old times—although the topics of conversation and our idea of fun has changed a bit!



### Looking forward to...

Going to see Fascinating Aida with my niece.  
Watching Traitors on tv!  
Spotting snowdrops when I'm out walking.

### What I know now...

*Things I've learned on my road to being self-employed*

**As a coach, I sometimes need to be coached.**

Every few months I meet with another coach who gives me space to celebrate my successes and develop ideas going forward.

I'm always reflecting and learning to ensure that I'm looking after myself, taking my business in the right direction and being the best coach I can be for my clients.

*Shout out to Sheryl Andrews at Step by Step Listening who fulfills this need!*

### SIN+CH NEWS

*SIN+CH is a unique online coaching group for women who are single and childless. We meet online once a month, offering a safe and friendly space to talk about the issues and challenges we face as single and childless women. I also send a video message and a task to complete in between our meetings.*

Last month's SIN+CH meeting included a review of how the Christmas season was for us single and childless ladies. Some of us had been able to enjoy it, some used strategies to survive the bits they were dreading and others let it pass them by without too much attention. Meanwhile, I've been reflecting on the challenges and benefits of being ill when you're single and childless. I made a croaky little video for our group, feeling a bit sorry for myself with no-one on hand to look after me but also feeling grateful that I could cough and sneeze to my heart's content without disturbing a partner! I also didn't have to worry about "keeping going" for anyone else. I could just rest and recuperate without any guilt or responsibility. Succumbing to serious illness when you live alone is obviously a more worrying concern. Good connections with friends and neighbours are vital for those times when it's difficult to be single.

You can link to SIN+CH  here

[SIN&CH](https://apricotlanecoaching.co.uk)  
 [\(apricotlanecoaching.co.uk\)](https://apricotlanecoaching.co.uk)



## Coaching to Move Forwards from Childlessness.

One of the hardest aspects of being childless not by choice (CNBC) is the feeling of being a **failure** at something that most women expect to achieve without struggle. I experienced an intense sense of failure when I didn't have children, and it's something I hear from most of my childless clients. That idea that you've failed can then encroach into other aspects of life, leaving a childless person struggling with their self-esteem and confidence. Of course the word failure is incredibly harsh and it's one we move away from through the coaching process. We would never use the word "failure" to describe someone else who was unable to have something they desperately wanted, so why would we use it to describe ourselves?

Childless women are often misunderstood and sometimes judged negatively by the rest of society, thus reinforcing the idea of failure. In coaching, we work hard to move away from self-blame, to forgive ourselves for choices we wish we had made differently and to be able to say **"It wasn't my fault."**



A link to my latest blog and my website

### Workplace Wellness Coaching Looking after the people who are looking after...

Many of my regular workplace clients have roles that involve them taking care of young people struggling with their mental health. Our coaching sessions provide an opportunity for staff to "offload" and process some of the situations they have experienced to reduce the risk of **secondary trauma**. This happens when the listener or carer experiences symptoms of PTSD through indirect exposure to a traumatic event that happened to someone else.

### Inspiration!

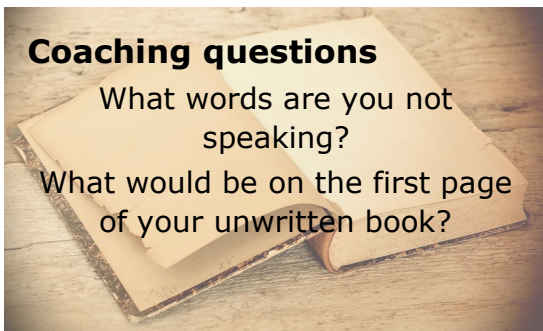
"Drench yourself in words unspoken, live your life with arms wide open, today is where your book begins, the rest is still Unwritten."

Natasha Bedingfield

### Coaching questions

What words are you not speaking?

What would be on the first page of your unwritten book?



### What next?

Rather than looking to grow Apricot Lane Coaching this year, I'm hoping to consolidate and enhance what I already offer.

Coaching to Move Forwards From Childlessness is the aspect of my work that I'm most passionate about and the one I find most rewarding. Aligned with this, I also enjoy my SIN+CH Group Coaching and would love to get another group up and running.

If you are one of my **previous childless clients**, I wonder if you have any thoughts about what might be helpful or interesting for you now you are further along in your childless journey. Do you have any suggestions perhaps for some workshops or groups I could offer that would be the next step along from individual coaching?

**If you have any suggestions, I'd love to hear from you** and maybe I can float some ideas in future newsletters.

I hope you've enjoyed this Apricot Lane Coaching Newsletter.  
Stay in touch.

Sarah x

**You can find me on Facebook and Instagram @apricotlanecoaching**

