

December 2023



NEWS FROM APRICOT LANE COACHING

The end of another year.

How has 2023 been for you? No doubt we've all had ups and downs, but I hope there has been contentment for you and the people you care about. The most significant events in my year have been a knee operation, which means I can walk without pain, an increase in the number of Workplace Wellness clients I see regularly, and my niece and nephew turning 18, which means I am an Auntie of adults! On reflection, 2023 has been a year of gentle change for me, and I'm fortunate that most of it has been welcome.

I feel PROUD of myself.

SIN+CH NEWS

In my client's words...

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 at SIN+CH we talked about the things we feel comfortable doing by ourselves and the times when a bit of bravery is required to go solo. The comfort zone turns out to be different for each of us. I love going to galleries and museums by myself, where I can become totally absorbed in what I see, and take it at my own pace. On the other hand, when I go to the theatre or cinema, I prefer to have company.

What do you like doing with just yourself for company?

You can link to SIN+CH here

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

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



This from a client who, eight months earlier, couldn't tell me one thing she considered herself to be good at.

#coachinglife Christmas Crafting!

I love making and baking for Christmas, so how lucky am I to have like-minded friends who invited me to decorate glass jars for tealights?



[Wellbeing at Work](https://apricotlanecoaching.co.uk)

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



What I know now...

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

Sometimes I need a nudge to practice what I preach. Actually I never preach, so that's not the best choice of words, but I do need to remember that my own wellbeing must come top of the list if I am to be at my best for clients.

I've learned

- ♦ to take time off
- ♦ to move away from the screen in between appointments
- ♦ no early starts and late finishes on the same day
- ♦ It's ok to apologise and cancel if I'm not well.

How good are you at self-employed self-care?

Workplace Wellness Coaching

What happens when staff who work together fall into a dynamic where they make each other uncomfortable or unhappy?

It can be challenging to act as a coach for a team of colleagues rather than individual members of a workplace. Coming in as an "outsider" I don't always receive a positive welcome from a team that is struggling with communication or trust.

One of my favourite things to do as a coach, is to help people identify their **Values** and then to make decisions that hold true to these.

In a team coaching context, I can help members of a team come to a consensus about their group **Values**. These provide a foundation on which the wellbeing of the whole team can be built.

Looking forward to...

Family time at Christmas—all those little rituals that are special to us.

Days getting longer from 22nd December.

Vision boarding between Christmas and New Year—more on that in the January newsletter!



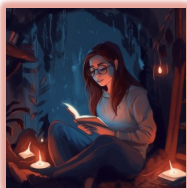
Coaching to Move Forward from Childlessness.

Christmas is really difficult time for many people who are childless not by choice. A festival based around the birth of a miracle baby, when everyone seems to be even more focussed than usual on children and families, rubs salt into those unhealed wounds left by the grief of childlessness.

A few thoughts if Christmas is difficult for you.

- * Family doesn't just mean your own children. Parents, siblings, cousins, friends, pets... create your own idea of family.
- * You don't have to do what anyone else expects of you. Choose what you want your Christmas to be and don't feel guilty about your boundaries.
- * It's ok to be sad about your Christmas dreams that never came true.
- * Find what makes you feel contented at Christmas. It's ok to be happy in your own way.

It's also ok to not do Christmas at all. Maybe just cosy down with a good book and some lovely food and indulge in a day of self care!



Inspiration!

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

Maya Angelou.

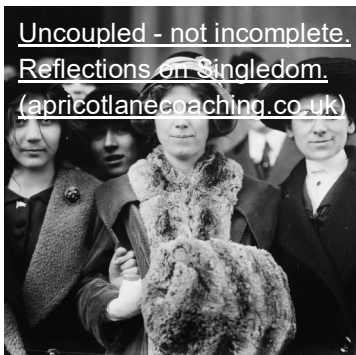


Coaching questions

When you are creative, what happens?

How could you be more creative or creative in a new way?

Uncoupled - not incomplete.
Reflections on Singledom.
(apricotlanecoaching.co.uk)



A link to my latest blog and my website

Doing New Year differently.

I've bought a ticket to our village New Year's Eve Party!

Now this might not sound like particularly big news, but if I tell you that I usually spend NYE at home with my cats and in bed well before midnight, then you'll see that this is quite a big deal for me.

It wasn't always like this. My best NYE memories are from my early twenties, when I lived in Margate and at midnight we would spill out of a nightclub onto the beach to celebrate.

A couple of decades later, NYE felt like a slap in the face as I struggled with a failing relationship and yet another year of infertility, wondering if next year might be better. The trauma of these years left me feeling pretty cynical about the whole New Year thing. In place of parties and forced jollity, I preferred to be snuggled up by a firepit with friends and back home before the fireworks.

I have always enjoyed New Year's day though—the idea of looking forwards is what coaching is all about after all. For many years there's been a NYD BBQ with friends, whatever the weather, and last year we went to Cheltenham Races and had fun placing a few quid each way on the horse with the funniest name, (I wouldn't recommend this as a formula for picking the winner!)

So why the change of heart? Well I've made an effort this year to be more connected to my local community. I live in a lovely village where there's a lot going on, or someone to chat with when I'm out walking. I go to gardening club, I sometimes volunteer at the village hall coffee morning and the new bell ringing and book club in the pub are on my list for next year. So the NYE party seems like the next bold step!

I've put some measures in place to make sure I feel a bit better about stepping out of my comfort zone. I've checked it will be a child free zone, (don't fancy partying with other people's offspring) and I've offered to help out, (less likely to be standing around on my own if I'm pouring drinks).

Then I have the ultimate safety net. I live a literal stone's throw from the village hall, so if I'm hating every second I can be home in less than a minute!

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

I wish you a contented Christmas time, whatever that looks like for you

Stay in touch. Sarah x

You can find me on Facebook and Instagram @apricotlanecoaching.

