

Worry / Anxiety

Heart Questions:

- Are you anxious, nervous or uneasy about something?
- Is any worry too small to give to God?
- Are you forgetting who made everything?
- Who is all-powerful?
- What can God do about this situation?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Matthew 6:25-27, 31, 34; 1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6-9

Talk About:

- What do these scriptures tell us to do with our worry & anxiety?
- What do these scriptures tell us God will do?
- In light of what we've read, let's pray together!

Action Steps:

Younger kids: Decorate a paper bag or jar and label it "Worry Jar." Pick one of the verses we just read and write it on the container. Help the child write out their worries on slips of paper and pray over them as you put them in the container. Encourage the child not to be anxious about these things because he/she has given them to God. Later on, open up the container and discuss how God helped them through those worries.

Older kids: Encourage them to keep a prayer journal. When they are feeling anxious or stressed about something he/she can pour out their hearts to God in their journal and leave their worries with Him. Later on, encourage them to read back through their journal and see how God has answered their prayers. It will serve as a good reminder of how God hears our cries and answers in His time.



Sadness

Heart Questions:

- Has anything made you sad or unhappy recently?
- How did this make you feel?
- What do you want to do when you're sad?
- Is there anything that makes you feel better?
- Did you know that the Lord cares about your sadness and wants to help?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Psalm 31:9; Psalm 119:28; Jeremiah 31:13; Matthew 5:4;
Matthew 11:28; Revelation 21:4; Ecclesiastes 3:1,4

Talk About:

- Do any of these verses describe how you're feeling?
- Is it possible to go through life without sadness?
- Is it okay to be sad and cry?
- What do these scriptures tell us God will do when we are sad?
- Will there ever be a time when there will be no sadness? In light of what we've read, let's pray together!

Action Steps:

- Often, just talking to someone about your feelings will make you feel better, so please continue to share with others when you are feeling sad.
- Our hearts are strengthened by God's Word. Are there some verses we can look up together that talk about cheerfulness, comfort and joy?
- Do you know someone else who might be sad? What do you think might cheer them up? Let's go do that!



Weariness

Heart Questions:

- Are you feeling tired, exhausted, or bored?
- What is making you feel that way?
- Do you feel like you're getting enough sleep at night?
- Would you like for us to take a break from our activities sometime to spend time together? If so, which ones do you want to take a break from?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Isaiah 40:28-31; Matthew 11:28; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:3

Talk About:

- Do you sometimes feel so tired that you can't keep going?
- How can God help you when you are weary, tired or exhausted? What are some good things that come from not giving up and continuing to do good?
- In light of what we've read, let's pray together!

Action Steps:

- Draw a picture of the last sentence of Isaiah 40:28-31. Put it in a place where you will be reminded of that verse.
- Ask God to be with you and give you the strength to make it through times when you feel weary, tired, bored, or exhausted.
- Pray for others you know that may also be experiencing these feelings.
- Parents, be sure the child is getting adequate rest each night.
- Be careful not to over-schedule the child in extracurricular activities. Give them a choice of several and then with your help, encourage them to choose.



Fear

Heart Questions:

- Are there some things that make you afraid?
- What are they?
- When do you feel most afraid? What do you do when you're in that situation? Do you think God is afraid of anything?
- What do you think God would want us to do when we are in fearful situations? What is the opposite of fear? (Bravery / Courage)

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Matthew 8:26; Hebrews 13:5b-6; Deuteronomy 31:6; Psalm 27:1; Proverbs 29:25; 2 Timothy 1:7; Psalm 4:8; Psalm 46:1-2a; Isaiah 41:10, 13; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 23; Psalm 91:9-11; Psalm 121

Talk About:

Does God give you a spirit of fear? What does God give you? What did God say about being afraid in the verses we read? What does God say about courage? What are some things that are hard for you and for which you need courage? In light of what we've read, let's pray together and thank God for being bigger than all your fears.

Action Steps:

- Ask the child to pick one of their favorite verses to draw out or write down and keep handy. They can use this scripture to say in their head or out loud when they feel afraid or need courage.
- Consider playing scripture set to music during the day / night or especially times when your child is feeling afraid. Two of our favorites have been Seeds Family Worship and Hidden in My Heart.



Discouragement

Heart Questions:

- Do you feel discouraged (like giving up and not trying)?
- Are there some things you used to enjoy or that made you happy and don't anymore?
- Can we talk about the times you feel discouraged?
- Is there anything you know of that might have taken away your enthusiasm or confidence?
- Is there any way I can encourage or support you better?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:9; Nehemiah 6:9; Psalm 31:24; John 16:33; Colossians 3:21; Psalm 18:2, 6; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Romans 15:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; Psalm 31:24; Isaiah 40:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Talk About:

How did Nehemiah fight his discouragement? Who can you always look to for encouragement? Where do these verses say we can find encouragement? Is there anyone in your life that constantly discourages or encourages you? Who do you know that needs some encouragement? How can you encourage them? In light of what we've read, let's pray together and ask the Lord to encourage your heart and help you to be an encourager to others.

Action Steps:

- Role-play scenarios where the child can be reminded to encourage their own heart with the truths they've learned.
- You can role-play scenarios with the child to help them practice how to respond to discouragement others send their way.
- Think of a time when someone encouraged you. How did it make you feel? Did it help?
- Ask the child to choose a scripture they can memorize & then repeat at any time to encourage their heart.
- Parents, re-read Colossians 3:21 and think carefully: Is there anything I am doing to embitter my child? Confess it to the Lord and to them and pray for help to better handle your relationship with your child.
- Draw a picture or write a note to encourage family members. Plan a fun outing together or cook a favorite dish.

Apathy

Heart Questions:

- Do you find yourself saying, “I don’t care” a lot lately?
- Tell me about the times when you just don’t want to do anything or try?
- Is there anything you start that you don’t feel like finishing?
- Are there times when you just want to give up? Can you give me some examples?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Galatians 6:9; Genesis 25:29-34; Hebrews 6:12; John 10:11-13; Colossians 3:23-24; Titus 3:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 6:18; James 5:13; Romans 5:3; Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 12:3

Talk About:

Why should you work at not being apathetic? In John 10:11-13, how does the hired hand show apathy? What did Jesus do when He was tempted to give up? What if Jesus had given up? What should you do when you are tempted to give up or not try? Sometimes we can have an “I don’t care / I don’t want to try anymore” attitude when we experience the consequences of not thinking through our actions. Has this happened to you before? Is there anything at school, home, or in your friendships that may not be going as well as you’d like right now? In light of what we’ve read, let’s pray that you will “not become weary in doing good” and that you will enjoy the benefits that come from persevering.

Action Steps:

- List out the areas where you see the child showing apathy and where they can see they have a lack of motivation. Discuss the consequences that may come from continuing in a state of apathy in these areas. Follow up by talking about the potential rewards of not being apathetic in those specific areas.
- Pray together often that the Lord will give the child a willingness and strength to persevere when things are hard or don’t go their way. Ask God for His strength to be made perfect in their weakness.
- Celebrate when the child follows through or perseveres through something challenging.



Stress

Heart Questions:

- Are you worried or thinking a lot about something that makes you nervous?
- Do you feel a “heaviness / pressure” inside when you think about certain things?
- Is there anything “stressing you out”? (Kids may have heard this statement and know how to respond to this direct question.)
- Are mom / dad worried or stressed out about anything that you know of? If yes, do you think about that thing a lot too?

Scriptures to Read & Discuss:

Psalm 62:8; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Corinthians 1:8-10; 2 Corinthians 4:7-8; 2 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Peter 5:7; Isaiah 40:27-31; John 14:1; 1 Corinthians 1:3-4; James 5:10-11

Talk About:

Spend time listening to situations that have put your children under stress. Talk about healthy ways you respond to stress. After reading the scriptures above, does God care about your stress? What are some positive ways of dealing with worries or stress that we’ve read about in the Bible? What’s one encouragement from the scripture that you are going to try? Praise the child for their openness / honesty and emphasize with them the importance of talking through stressors with someone that can put things into perspective. In light of what we’ve read, let’s pray.

Action Steps:

- Offer to help your child write out or draw visible reminders of some of the scriptures so that they can go back and pray through them during times of pressure, worry or stress.
- When stressed, encourage the child to use a journal or blank coloring sheet to “pour out” his/her heart to God. Use it when they are ready to discuss what may be burdening them.
- Do you know someone who is worried or stressed? Ask them if you can help by: Listening, helping in some way or praying for them.
- Parents: Your child may be under more stress than you realize. You may not see certain things as a big deal; however, it may be for your child. Validate, listen and pray often when they share what concerns them. Be sure to model a dependence on the Lord during times when you are stressed as well as healthy coping strategies.



Comfort

Heart Questions:

- I love you. What can do to comfort you and help you feel less worried or upset?
- What has helped you feel better in the past when you're upset or having a hard day?
- What are some tangible / intangible things that comfort you?

Scriptures to Read and Discuss:

Psalm 119:50; Psalm 119:76-77; Matthew 5:4; Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; 2 Corinthians 7:6-7a; Isaiah 26:3; Nahum 1:7; John 16:33; Romans 5:2b-5; Romans 8:18; Psalm 55:22; Romans 8:38-39; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 1 Peter 5:6-7

Talk About:

How is God better than all the things we usually look to for comfort? Can you always depend on people or things to comfort you? What promises did you read in the scriptures that you want to remember when you need comforting? What would be a good reminder tool that you could use? How does God comfort us? What can you do for others as a result of God's blessing you with His comfort?

Action Steps:

- When your child needs comfort, invite them to sit with you and talk through things. Next, show them how to give God their troubles by praying and asking Him to send His comfort.
- Praise your heavenly Father for being the "God of all comfort."
- Help the child identify someone they know who needs comforting. Encourage them to: give them a call or text, check in and see how they are doing, surprise them with a special treat, share some of the promises you've found in scripture with them and pray for new ideas to offer God's comfort to those in need around your family.
- Remind the child that God is always there with them – anytime, anyplace...even when you are not. He can hear and listen to them. He cares about them more than anyone and He wants to comfort them.

