

## DEALING WITH ANXIETY

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Anxiety and stress are things we learn to live with. Unfortunately, when most of us were children, we didn't talk much about them in the family, much less with a counselor. I am encouraged by how many people today discuss ways of dealing with stress through avenues like yoga, meditation, exercise, and music. It's comforting to know *God* helps us in dealing with our anxiety well. "The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24 NIV). We can set some examples to equip our kids.



### Physical Health

Dealing with anxiety can be especially difficult if we are not physically healthy. It's important for us and our kids to be active. Since our *example* is often the best teacher, we must be willing to be active ourselves. If you haven't been very active for a while, you might have a hard time feeling motivated. On the other hand, if you are pretty active, it can be difficult to slow down to have the kids along. But we need to try. It will be worth your while, both in terms of your own activity and the benefit to your kids when you include them. This time together will create a strong healthy bond they will remember long after the inconvenience.

### Mental Health

Have you ever talked with a counselor? When you do, you may find that issues causing you stress or anxiety become clearer in a shorter time. Pass what you learn on to your kids. Helping them see issues clearly as young people will only help them make wise decisions as they get older. Also, seeing your experience with counseling will remove the stigma for your kids, and they will be more willing to talk with a counselor later in life.

Other methods of improving your mental health might include having devotions, meditating, walking in nature, listening to music, and social engagements, depending on your living situation.

Whatever you choose, it allows you to

- do something different than watching TV or working and
- give yourself the headspace to think, dream, and explore.

### Spiritual Health

Reading your Bible is a great form of meditation. For example, choose one of the fruit of the Spirit ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)) to concentrate on for the day. You might be surprised by what you notice. You can include your kids—they are amazingly observant! Ask them to share their observations with you, their grandparents, or other adults they see regularly. This practice will eventually improve the spiritual health of your family.

Memorizing Bible verses is another great way to block out anxious thoughts. Ask yourself, what would you rather have going on in your head? Negative anxious thoughts or positive life-affirming verses? Once you memorize a verse, you can retrieve it when stress mounts—both for yourself and others.

The bottom line: *God* helps us in dealing with anxiety, giving us the physical, mental, and spiritual tools we need to go through the ups and downs of life.

Want to dig deeper? Check out Family Fire's article [Listening for God](#)

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