



5 Questions to Ask Yourself When Your Child Faces Adversity



QUESTION 1:

What's the real problem?

It's often difficult for kids to explain exactly what's bothering them when they feel upset. Kids lack awareness of their thoughts and frequently blame others for their negative emotions. Many times when kids feel stressed, there may be multiple reasons and explanations for the discomfort. Identifying those specific reasons takes time. Even for adults, it usually requires careful reflection, discussion, and prayer to determine what's truly bothering us. We know we feel stress, but it takes time to pinpoint what's causing it.

Kids may tell their parents they don't want to go to school because it's boring. While boredom could be part of the equation, there may be other issues under the surface. When your child comes to you with a problem, it's wise to pause and contemplate all angles of the situation. You can gather information by journaling, praying, or discussing the issue with your child. It's best to consider all possible emotions, thoughts, and feelings before jumping to conclusions.



QUESTION 2:

What message is my reaction communicating to my child?

When our children come to us crying about something another child said or curious about a word they heard on the bus, what is our reaction? What does our face look like? What does the tone of our voice tell our children? Remember, actions speak louder than words.

As parents, we should be approachable. We want our children to see us as the best source of information. Therefore, we must be careful not to overreact when they come to us with a problem. Now don't beat yourself up if you haven't always had the best response. Remember, we don't need to be perfect parents. We need to be purposeful parents.

The next time our kids face a difficult situation, it's worth pausing and asking ourselves: What do I want my children to know about stress? Conflict? Adversity? Kids who make wrong choices? Our kids look to us for wisdom, discernment, and direction. When they come to us with a problem, how are we reacting? And is our reaction conveying to them the truths we want to build our family upon?



QUESTION 3:

Am I rushing to fix my child's problem?

No one likes to see their child in pain. Our natural reaction as caring parents is to fix whatever is causing our children discomfort. We want to nurture and protect, so we quickly start problem-solving. The trouble is when we jump into fix-it mode, we prevent our children from learning how to problem-solve and cope with stress.

Learning to persist in the face of difficulty is a valuable life skill. Eventually, we'll all feel sad, disappointed, or frustrated, and we need to learn how to work through those uncomfortable emotions.

If your child comes to you about a difficult situation, listen actively and ask them opened-ended questions:

How does that make you feel?

What do you think could help?

Encourage your kids to look at the situation from all perspectives, not just their own. Help them explore potential solutions, but encourage them to take steps to fix the problem themselves. Our kids gain confidence and resilience when they learn to overcome challenges or obstacles. Of course, as parents, we should provide direction and wisdom. We know more than our kids, and they may need our assistance. But let's be careful not to jump in too soon and rob our kids of the chance to see God's power be made perfect in their weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).



QUESTION 4:

Am I teaching my kids to take their problems to Jesus?

We must encourage our children to lean on God if we want them to develop sound minds. As parents, we should encourage our kids to take their problems, concerns, dreams, and joys to Jesus through prayer. God cares about the little things and loves when little children come to Him.

Prayer is a powerful way to center our thoughts on lovely, excellent, and true things. I love praying the Scriptures, so I've taught my children to do the same. If we read in Psalm 23:1-2, "The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams" (NLT), we can pray, "Thank you, Jesus, for supplying all my needs. You lead me beside peaceful streams, and you give me rest in green meadows. How wonderful that you guide me into peace." Take it further by asking your children to close their eyes and imagine relaxing in a green meadow by a soothing stream. What do they hear? What does a babbling brook sound like? How do they feel lying down in the grass, knowing God supplies all their needs?

When we read God's Word and understand that He has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7), we can rest in His goodness. Our kids need to know that whatever happens in life does not surprise Jesus, and He is always there for them in every situation.



QUESTION 5:

Do we need outside help?

Last but certainly not least, when our children face adversity, we must be honest with ourselves. Are we equipped to help our children through the specific challenge they're facing, or is there someone else we should connect with? Don't hesitate to ask your pastor, pediatrician, child's guidance counselor, or trusted friend for advice or input.

Prayerfully consider the situation and follow the Holy Spirit's leading. Sometimes we need extra help, and there is nothing wrong with that. As always, use discernment when inviting others into your family's life. But don't be afraid to admit you need help. That's why God gave us each other, to care for one another.

With God's help, you can equip your child to face challenges head-on and come out on the other side stronger and more resilient! You can build mentally strong kids who know the promises of the Bible and walk through life confident God is working on their behalf even when they can't see it.





Connect with the Author:

Lauren Gaines is an author, writer, teacher, and mother. She is the creator of Inspired Motherhood, a thriving online community for moms to find practical tools to raise spiritually and emotionally healthy kids. Lauren has a unique take on parenting as a busy mom of three children who also happens to hold a master's degree in school psychology. With her experience teaching as an adjunct professor of psychology, she deeply understands the mental overload families experience today.



Connect with Inspired Motherhood:

At Inspired Motherhood, moms are empowered to know their worth, and families are equipped with the tools to raise spiritually and emotionally healthy kids. Here you'll learn how to cultivate deep roots in your children and create sacred spaces where your family can thrive. Come be refreshed, renewed, and equipped to raise up the next generation in courage and love. Join our community today at Inspired-Motherhood.com.

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