

When it is scary

Mon, 5/25 2:05PM 15:38

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

feeling, caring, feelings, child, scary, connor, lgbtq, parent, breaths, scared, share, journey, grounding, uncertainty, judge, reel, visualize, movie, work, worry



Welcome to Just breathe parenting your LGBTQ teen. My name is Heather Hester and I am excited to be with you to transform the conversation around loving and raising an LGBTQ child. Wherever you are on this journey right now, in this moment in time, you are not alone. Today I want to talk about two very real and very normal feelings that I believe we all experience, not only when our kids first come out to us, but all throughout the process. The first is when it feels scary, and the second caring what others think. I have received several emails and messages recently expressing these feelings and I think it's really important to address them and to talk about them. So the first When it feels scary, this is a big one. I think we all find ourselves feeling scared along this journey for many different reasons. But they all boil down to uncertainty, not knowing what to do or say in the moment, not knowing or being able to visualize the future, worrying about helping our children navigate their present, and their future, as well as teaching the tools they will need to navigate their future, and their present are all on their own. This journey whether your child is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, non binary or questioning is likely a very different journey than the one you envisioned or even prepared for Like I've said before, different isn't bad. It's just that it's different. And sometimes different can feel scary. I like my movie reel analogy the best because it creates such a valuable visual and I am a very visual person so I, I work better when I can visualize things and see them in my mind. And basically, if you haven't heard me say it before, the movie real analogy is simply when our children are born when we first told them for the first time, that movie reel starts, and as they grow and change, we add to this movie reel of who we think they might become, what they might do things that they enjoy, how we envision



their life to



Just the way that their life will grow and change and who they'll grow up to be. And for. I think a lot of people when your child comes out this movie real changes and it goes in a very different direction. And so it is really just realizing and being okay with the fact that it's okay that the movie reel is changing. It's okay that it's different. Different isn't bad. It's just that it's different. And this really goes into when Connor first came out to us. We didn't know we we were surprised. I know there are many of you out there who were not surprised when your children came out to you, or your teens or young adults. We were surprised and so it was scary at the very beginning because Cuz we just were surprised. And we didn't know how to shift or where to shift or what to do. And there were so many questions and many times when we have lots of questions, and there's lots of uncertainty. There's lots of worry that goes along with that. Right? So it was it was scary for us for a while. And I would go through times where just feeling scared I would, I would be frozen and kind of what to do next and, and how to what I needed to learn who I needed to talk to what I needed to, you know, ask Connor and how to support him the best and where he was. I A lot of times would just feel completely blank. I went through a time about a year ago actually where there was just so much Going on



that it literally



felt like an elephant was sitting on my chest. And you know, these feelings scared fear this feeling these feelings can do all of these things to you and I just want you to know that if you're feeling that, or if you go through moments where you feel that it's okay, it is a normal part of this process. And there there's nothing wrong with you feeling scared. This does not make you a bad parent or an adequate it makes you human. And there is a network of parents out here out there who are a going through or have gone through similar feelings and be who are ready to watch To support you. So a few things that help me when I have these moments because they still do happen I want to share with you and I'd like for you to try because they really do help. So first, I want you to just take three grounding breaths. It doesn't matter where you are, you don't have to be sitting on a

meditation cushion. You don't have to be locked up in a room somewhere. You could be sitting in your car, you could be on your couch in your kitchen. Just stop for a minute and take three deep grounding breaths. And then I want you to try to city, sit with the feeling whatever you're feeling in that moment and try to identify whether it is Something that is specifically going on right then or something that's happening that is feeling scary. Or if it's just the general uncertainty of where you are where your child is, and if you can identify it, write it down. You can even journal about it if that helps relieve that awful clenching, feeling. And in journaling that may help just show you more show you give you a deeper insight into where these feelings are coming from, what you even where you may need to go next. And then, and I know this may be a little woowoo for some of you but hang in there with me, because I promise you this works. Know that God, the universe, your higher power, whatever resonates with you. They have your back and they are there to support you. So lean on that. The second feeling caring what others think is a rather sneaky one. Typically, when caring what others think comes up it relates to how people view us personally we worry about, you know,



what is you know so and so thinking about me.



And no matter where you are on this spectrum of carry and what whether you you know, that's something that just is a big feeling for you all of the time or



you just don't care at all.



It is easier to pull apart the the whys of this and work through those why's when we're dealing with ourselves right with us. Now, add your kid to that equation and all bets are All right, mama bear comes out. All rationale is off the table, and we go into protection mode. So I want to share with you and Connor first came out to us. We had like the combo we were scared of what others would think. And it was more. We were scared of people judging Connor. And



it was such an overwhelming.



Again, just both of us both Steve and I were just frozen by this. Oh my gosh, all of a sudden, you know going through the list of what will this person think and what what does this person think and oh my goodness, we don't want them to to judge our child and judge our family. And it is a very real and scary place to be and because We wanted to be very respectful of Connors wishes at the time, which was, you know, initially only Steven I knew. And then a few months later he shared with his sister is about and he started sharing with friends one by one. So it was a very kind of drawn out process of taking his lead on who would know, which was beautiful, but it was always also difficult because we didn't share with our closest friends for quite some time. And that was, you know, I think it would lend itself to us being you know, continuing with that



internal



narrative



It lent to that internal narrative of what are people thinking, caring what others are thinking, caring that people are judging or will judge. So, when we had to send Connor away for intensive therapeutic intervention, it definitely again hit on both of those feelings. It was such a scary time, because he was engaging in very dangerous behavior. And this is the topic that he and I will actually share with you together a few episodes from now. But for now, for this episode, the sake of this episode, I know that you are concerned for his mental health and his well being trumped everything. And even though at the time we we circled the wagons, so to speak and didn't really discuss details with many people. By that point, we had built more inner strength and more family solidarity. And so carrying or wondering when others were thinking or how they may be judging didn't sneak in quite as often because we knew that we were doing the best possible thing for Connor, and for our family. And so now, more than three years later, while we're all on this spectrum of caring,

all six of us are more likely than not to either not care. Recognize that we care and ask ourselves why. Or realize that it is judgment or someone else's stuff and not our stuff, not our story about and set that really hard boundary. So when we are hard on ourselves for caring, or we should all over ourselves as an I should just worry about myself and my family. Emily or I shouldn't care what anyone else thinks. We need to take a step back and cut ourselves some slack. The most important thing I want you to take away from this episode is that these feelings are normal. There's nothing wrong with you. And having these moments when everything feels scary, or you care what others think, doesn't make you a bad parent. It makes you human. The fact that you are aware and continue to work through your process, whether it is through education, therapy, connection with others, or quiet stillness. That is what matters. You are not alone.



Please remember that.



I have set up a private Facebook page for parents to have a place to talk about these types of concerns. And anything else you may want to talk about, and to find community and support that we all want and need. You can go on Facebook to



you can go on Facebook to at chrysalis Mama, or click on the link which I will have in the show notes for you. And I can't wait to meet you all there. This is where I will leave you for today. Thanks so much for joining me. Remember to just breathe. Taking a few minutes each day to focus on your breath and calm and center yourself will give you so much strength and clarity. And please subscribe to and review just breathe because it will help me reach even more people just like you



Please subscribe to and review just breathe



please subscribe to and review just breathe so I can reach many more people who need to

know that they are not alone. Until next time