

# Interview with Diane Part 2

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Welcome to Just breathe. The podcast focused on transforming the LGBTQ plus conversation and supporting you on your journey with your LGBTQ loved one. You are not alone.



Welcome to Just breathe parenting your LGBTQ team. 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. So today is part two of my interview with Diane Becker. And before we start, I have a little disclaimer the information provided today is for informational purposes only, and not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional therapeutic advice, diagnosis or treatment. This is a disclaimer of any and all liability or responsibility for any direct, indirect, incidental, special, consequential, or other damages that arise out of any individual's use of reference to reliance on or use of the information presented in or following this podcast. You are directed to verify information through consulting your healthcare team. So without further ado, here is part two, with Diane Becker on setting boundaries.



Really, really, all these boundaries that we're talking about in terms of physical and emotional self care, we're learning to have different conversations like when Like I mentioned, right in terms of candidates, like we, we are just learning we need to be having

more in depth conversations and different conversations. And so, you know, thinking just in terms of, you know, even basic kinds of things like material, like, who do you loan money to? Who do you loan your car to? You know, these conversations are different now with teens in terms of more about rather than telling them what to do. Mm hmm. But to engaging them in the conversations, what are you thinking about that? Why, you know, what's, what's behind you making that decision? So, really kind of looking through it a little bit differently. Um, physical boundaries, you know, what you as a family, what you're wanting in your home, and physical boundaries that you're wanting them to know for them personally. So, you know, in terms of your home, you know, are you someone that likes locked bedroom doors? Or do you not? You know, you have sleep overs, do you not? Right? These are all conversations to be having with your teams, you know, reasons behind that. Right?



And I think every single time it's better to have the conversation than to just either assume that everybody knows, right, everybody's on the same page or pretend like it, either a doesn't exist or B doesn't matter. I think that it's always better to have the conversation. Some of these are much easier and shorter than others. Some will end up in debate, it lends itself to great self discovery for them and For us, you know, we get to see pieces of our child that we may not know, we get to observe their growth. And all of these things just help with, you know, strengthening that relationship. You always hear, you know, kids want rules, kids want boundaries, but then we're never kind of walked through how to do that. It's, it's not as intuitive for you know, it's it's much more difficult for some than for others. Some, it's, it's, that's just how they work. Right. But that's not the case for everyone. So kind of having this teed up, right. So you know, these are the different areas where it's good and not just good, but okay, and to have these conversations is a great thing.



That kind of hit me early on in my career. When I was first out of college, I worked with runaways. And one of the things I consistently heard from the teams were that they I don't care because I don't have any rules or I don't have. So it's interesting because I think generationally, there have been different times where, you know, we hear all of these, like, you know, these self help books and all of these things that come out about how to parent and what to do. And we're sort of the swing of, you know, not setting rules and boundaries. And we're starting to hear from teens or we've been hearing from teens because that was, you know, many years ago. Right, right. But we are hearing from them that they actually find some safety and security in that. And that, you know, again, family

is that central part of providing safety and health and it doesn't mean that they can't negotiate some of those. Exactly. They will try well



Got that.



And it doesn't mean that you can't rethink some of those, correct some of those boundaries that you had in place early on. And some of the ways that they, you know, I, I always tease teens, like, convince me, you know, tell me the debate like, well, how are you defending that decision? So right, you know, that's a fun way to engage them in conversation and see what they're thinking and what evidence they're using to support their decision. And it's okay to say, I don't think that's correct. I don't think that's the way that things are and I might challenge their thinking a little bit.



Mm hmm. I could not agree more that is and I think that is that that adds a little bit of a, you know, fun element to it as well, right? Because it allows us to a set the boundary be Teach them the value of setting boundaries. See, teach them how to negotiate, you know, a lot of times has for an incredible sense of humor comes in handy. and patience, and all of that. But I think it also it, it allows them to practice their, you know, critical thinking skills, their debate skills, their early stopping and thinking, Well, why do I want this? Is it just because, you know, because my friend can because I just want to do the opposite of what my parents is asking, right? Or is there a really good reason? And so it's all valuable skills,



life skills. I think it's invaluable to where it shifts the, the main point where they're coming from, is that they are LGBTQ You and you're shifting the idea of this is about being a teenager, this is about being safe and healthy. And it removes some of that kind of labeling and that that self focus that they have about their own dealings with having to come out and interact with other people around that when it refocuses on health and safety.



Right? Because they are hyper focused on that. What they are experiencing internally is so loud and overwhelming to them. And because of where they are developmentally, if that's their whole experience, so I think for us to be able to kind of gently stop, have them pause, teach them to pause and kind of put that knot to the side. But help them learn how to not make that their entire. It's not their entire identity, right? It feels like it is right now because they are learning about it. But that's a piece of who they are. Right? It is a piece of who they are. So I think we can be helpful and just teaching them to pause, teaching them to reflect, teaching them to look at other pieces of what makes them who they are. And that will help that confusion and noise. Come down a notch, you know, internally.



And that's probably comfort for a parent, right? That it's not like you are either accepting or rejecting. You're not supporting or not supporting. It's more this is this is my focus is healthy. safety for you. Absolutely. I



love that you said that because parents are just trying to figure this out, right. And I don't think that there's truly any parent who wants to kick their child out or, you know, a lot of these things that you read about that you just are like, wow. So having something very positive like this to be able to focus on while you process, everything else, being able to focus on health and safety. That is my primary concern. I'm going to pause, I'm going to reflect I'm going to take time to really go through these, everything else. That's huge, Diane, thank you. I mean, that's a really, I think that is a powerful, powerful shift, and a powerful tool. moreso not a shift but a tool for so many who are just looking for something right Thank you for sharing that and just be able to see that. Mm hmm.



And that really, I will tell you those a lot back to the data. It's things that we're seeing and we're talking to teens about that are reporting to us, in terms of, you know, the anxiety, the depression, the bullying that's occurring, just really looking at, you know, they're trying to cope. They're trying to understand it themselves. Right. And they're trying to cope. And these coping skills, whether it's through drug use, or sexual activity and behaviors that are risky, you know, these are things that are putting their health at risk. And these are the conversations that you know, any parent at this point We have to be having with our kids,

whether we're comfortable or not, we have to be having ladies. And we're seeing higher rates with LGBTQ teens. So it's even more critical.



It absolutely is. You know, to that. I would just like to add, you know, perhaps for some of you out there, you're thinking, Well, you know, my kid has always been a rule follower or my team would never do that. But I am here to tell you that they will. And I cannot stress to you the importance of for you, as the parent to understand, to learn to educate yourself, on the many things that your child is dealing with going through and I say that Because these are some of the mistakes that I made that Steve and I made that we came from a you know, a place of. Connors always been a rule follower. Connors an overachiever, Connor says that drugs are bad Connor and I have a great relationship. All of these things are true. But this coming out and dealing with all of these things that Diane has talked about is so internally disruptive for them and confusing and scary, so very scary that sometimes these kids we think that we know so well do things that we are completely not even on our radar. So this is the this is one of the reasons why I started this podcast is because I wanted to be a voice of education of voice of here has been my experience a voice of comfort and hope and support. Be open to all of the possibilities. And be aware and pay attention and and know that you have support available to you to figure this out.



And this is the thing, right? People call the best way that they can at the moment. And sometimes there are unhealthy choices made to be coping. Mm hmm. And I've worked with many, many adults throughout the past years. And these things that happen early in life, carry on into adult relationships carry on into adult health. I think one of the most powerful like things I remember from a young man I worked with, he was actually a very successful professional and just carried a lot of shame and trauma from his childhood. And one of the things he said to me is, I wish I knew you when I was a child. And that's just always been so powerful to me. Mm hmm. And that is one of the driving forces of why I do what I do. Because I do believe in prevention. I do believe in early intervention. I do believe that treatment works. And there's supports available and I have seen it time and time again. And the more conversations we can have about



talking to people early, Mm hmm.



You know, it just



from years of just caring less, right,



going back to when we were discussing and asking our kids Do you ever think about suicide? Do you ever think about her hurting yourself, you know, asking, What is it like for you at school? What is it like for you? And you know, your act after school activities? How are your friends responding to you coming out? Be curious and open those conversations so they know that you are, you know, aware that there are different environments that they're in and they're, they're trying to navigate those environments and respond. And while all while they're trying to figure out figure this out, right. And that's a lot. That really is a lot. And again, you know, it is okay to do you ever think about using drugs? Do your friends use drugs? Let's talk about that. You know, all none of these topics are taboo. These are all things that it is more than okay to discuss. And our job is whatever they say. say to us to not freak out, because that is a surefire way to get them to never tell you anything ever again. So you, you know, learn to freak out internally,



which I have done more times than I want to count. And



that is where you freak out, you freak out to your therapist, which I've also done many many times. But, you know, you just keep that like, Alright, let's talk about that. Like, whatever works for you, whatever, but just learning how to it is okay to internalize and, and then the new take it out someplace else, you take it off the shelf someplace else, but that is not for your child to have to deal with. That's your stuff. Your Your job is to be available for all of these things. And I think that will kindness just opened so many doors for you and and for them



and just to expand on that self care for you, as a parent is just so key. You know, there's so much tied into getting proper sleep, proper nutrition. You know, it's all tied into how we think more clearly. I mean, we just know too much about it right, and how we take care of our body and how we think the support is out there. And, you know, if you are, you know, wondering how to manage some of that. And I know you've shared that whether that is a great place for you to be able to do that, because it's a lot to handle. And it's not just your child, even where you're having these difficult conversations. You're also going to be in a position to have these difficult conversations with school web, with other health care providers with other resources. says, and just to, to be in a place to be able to think through some of these things that your child is going to need just to be in a place to be able to articulate that to other people.



Correct that oh my gosh, thank you for saying that, because that is so true. And trust me when I tell you, you do not want to be doing that off the cuff. Because I've done that. Also, it doesn't get much more real. I mean,



I like the I like the lesson of what not to do. And a lot of words.



Here's what I've learned. But anyway, yes, that is very good. These are such important things. And I love that you've just put these all out in such a lovely organized way because yeah, I hope I hope everyone's taking notes. I'm going to have lots of this will all be in the show notes. So I actually will, I will have the notes for you, I will make it easier. Lots of great links and lots of great just bullet points and thoughts and good things to think about reflect on and, you know, it's different for everyone. That's the other lovely piece of this right? That what works for one family doesn't have to work for another you you get to you get to decide that and that is really awesome.



And your child can guide you. Right, absolutely. Absolutely nice. Those are nice conversations, and even changing the conversation of Do you is what happens when

because they will all be in situations right? where they are going to be faced with something that you Yeah, that seems so difficult for them. Mm hmm. You know, we're never going to be able to prepare teams for every single scenario. And, you know, I've had a lot of these conversations surrounding social media, because, you know, before the iPhone and social media, you know, you could talk about, you know, what do you do if someone approaches you in the street or asks you to go for a ride or to do something, you know, and it's all the safety things around protecting themselves, and they, social media and internet. Everyone has access, right? And so, you cannot cover every single specific scenario. So some of these conversations are even like, what do you what do you do if, like, what do you do if somebody contacts you with You don't know them, right? What are you doing? If you see something that makes you uncomfortable? So it's all these, like it's changing the conversation a little bit of like, if you because now it's what do you do when?



Correct? Oh, that's so very true. And thank you. Thank you again, one more great thing because that is a really tough thing where because of the way we grow up, grew up, we kind of go at it as well. We'll put all these locks on their computer and we'll put all these parental controls and we'll put all, you know, timing in, you name it. We've all tried it right. And they can get around all of that if they are determined enough. If they are curious enough. These kids are tech whizzes. This is so valuable, because they're really just doing that because you've put blocks up right? It's not because they are innately, you know, trying to do bad things. It's because they want to prove that you're wrong. So instead, coming at it with just like Diane said, you know, what do you do if this happens? What do you do if this thing this pops up on your computer, or you've typed in your, you know, researching something for a project for school, and it uses words that can be construed in all different kinds of ways, right? And other things pop up? Oh my gosh, what do you do? Having those conversations is really important and specific to our LGBTQ kids. And this will be a conversation with Connor because Connor really wants to take this one. But I'm just gonna touch on it briefly here. There are apps out there parents, if you are not aware of them, you need to become aware of them. And I will put them in the show notes. So you can do your own research, but this is vitally, vitally important. Because there are people out there who prey on our kids. There are people out there who prey on all of our kids. But there are people who specifically prey on our LGBTQ kids. And in those apps, it's very, very scary. So you know, more information to come on that. But just to be aware, and I think this is good, like you said, if this is changing the conversation with our kids, and for us becoming aware of really what's out there,



and technology is moving so fast, you will never know and keep up with all of it. Now, I've had the conversations with the police department, you just, you will never be able to keep up. It moves so incredibly fast. And I think to shift as parents to think about that. Because if you're trying to keep up if you're trying to stay as current with every single thing, you can get really discouraged and you can feel very self defeated by it. So just know you're never going to know it's it's critical to know some very important one out there that are putting your kids in very vulnerable situations and putting them at rest. And there are adults that do prey on children. And these are other tough conversations, crabby, and I've had some very interesting discussions with teens, it you know, teens fascinate me. I actually love working with teens because they are so unique. I mean, they really have such a great perspective on things and just this, you know, they're not clouded by a lot of previous history and so they can come in it from a very different perspective and angle. And it's really neat in some ways, and it really can put them at risk in other ways, correct? Yeah. So some of the conversations that I've had, it's just been interesting because there is a shift, you know, from being a child to being a sexually aware child, young adult writing adult. And that's a critical, vulnerable period, because they may be doing certain activities that adults are looking at as very sexual. And young child, young teen, his intention is not insect is not sexual at all correct. And so these are very interesting conversations and they're very difficult to come Stab with teens, but they're very, they're very rewarding and they're very helpful in terms of being focused on health and safety. Mm hmm.



Very true. It is hard. But the here's the good news with that the first conversation as the hardest. The more that you do it, the easier it becomes for both you and for your child because they're like, okay, here, here comes another awkward conversation with Mom, you know, or dad or whomever right and and you know, you kind of you just add your personality to it, you know, you can, you can laugh about it. You can be goofy about it, however you want to handle it. The important thing is that you're having the conversation, right? You're everything doesn't have to be like super serious and we need to sit down away from everybody else and have this conversation. It can be Hey, you know, I was wondering Whatever it is, right? And sometimes that you know that the best things come from those. And then once you realize you can do it, you're like, I've got this. Let's talk about sex. Let's talk about some drugs. Let's talk about this stuff. This is awesome. And then your kids are gonna be like, all right, you are super weird. Well,



and a lot of times, it's even resonates more with them when it's not even about them. And there are such wonderful opportunities, I think, offered through the media now, through movies and commercials. And I think athletes are giving us some great role modeling and understanding of of things of how they're discussing it. And even just having those conversations like, you know, hey, I was talking to this person today and this is, you know, what are your thoughts on that? All right. Did you see that? Did you hear them speak or I mentioned that or,



Oh, that is so true entities, right? Absolutely. And, you know, I think when you clue in on things that they are interested in, and you come at it by that, you know, from that angle, right, all good. All good. So, you've got this. Oh, my goodness,



families are amazing. They're awesome. And they're so incredibly important. Yes. And it is I surround yourself with people who you feel supported by you know, it's interesting because I was at a conference once and they were saying, you know, write down the number of people that you feel like support you. And then it was like, okay, which of these people also drain you like, like, are you like are very concerning for you and not Like the like you go to for support, but it ends up being more stress. And it's just fascinating that a lot of those same people. Yeah, that was.



Uh huh. That is very interesting. Very interesting and, and perhaps a conversation for another day, which I have a feeling we could go on a very long tangent about but that is just the thought in and of itself because is super helpful. And perhaps creating some boundaries, right?



Because then I mentioned before, like having an objective person, like a therapist or someone outside that you can go leave it in the office and then walk out and have your other relationships. It's just kind of compartmentalize this a little bit.



Oh, for sure. I mean, we have that The whole process we call it shelving, you know, shelve it till next week, it is so great because then it's you know, a lot of this stuff is stuff that I've said this before, you know, makes you a better friend, a better parent, a better partner, a better child. You name it, you've got it. Have we covered



everything?



I think it's been a great start.



I mean, so I feel like we've just scratched the surface,



keep conversations going out in the community. And you know, these are just great. These are conversation starters for sure. And find people there out there. And you know, I do have a few like resources like you know, p flag for in terms of actions to other families and you can, you know, offer them just phenomenal and you You know, once you start thinking a little bit more through that, also think about families who do not have LGBTQ teens, right? Because you want allies. This is part of changing conversations. This is part of, you know, really connecting and having support for your team and your family. And so, you know, at first, yes, you know, stick to who can really support you and feel you and sometimes that is only families that are also going through the same thing. But I do want to offer open yourself up to reaching out to other people too, because allies are important.



So important. So so, so important. I mean, I know for us, we didn't know any of that. Their families at the time that Connor came out who had kids who were out. And so, you know, we did keep it very Connor wasn't quite ready to come out outside of our family of six for for a while, but then once he's kind of reached that point, then we did start slowly telling

people who are close to us and, and that support is so important. We've talked about that your one true blue friend or your, you know, people that you can talk to and go to and who love you no matter what. Right? Those are. Those are your people. Very, very, very important. Thank you, Diane.



Mm hmm. Yeah. So people people have definitely, and then we already talked about Trevor Project. Yeah, sir. Well, yes, nominal resource. And in terms of health, you know, we're really seeing a lot of that health safety connection. So, definitely two ways to find healthcare providers the that I can offer, one is called out Care Health. Okay. And the other is glioma, which is health professionals. Advancing equity. So those



right, yeah, so those will be linked in the show notes as well. And on my website, so all of this awesome information that Diane has shared with us today you'll be able to access



so important to healthcare provider that understands that knows, know, the language knows, you know, some of the, you know, it's interesting even like some of the health issues that will surface around



correct. It is very, very important. And we did kind of go through that process of trying to figure that out as well. And Connor you know now has a doctor who you know primarily works with ALJ at the LGBTQ community and phenomenal will be available to you so you don't have to remember all of this it'll just be you know listed on my website so you can click right through to you know what, what you're needing and what the type of support you're looking for right now.



So is there anything else you'd like to add? I think we're going to have to talk Diane into coming back again



to just way too much fun and and you know, as you can tell, we could talk all day long about a million different topics, which is often what happens. Anything else you'd like to share before we close it up?



Just keep talking. I love it. I love the conversations. I know. There's a big focus right now in terms of research of changing some of the questions, changing some of the things to really start diving a little bit deeper. So, you know, have these conversations with your team to when you're taking surveys when you're asking questions be, you know, be as direct as you can share as much information as you can. That's, um, you know, these are all, you know, the the national surveys and things like that are confidential, there's no names attached, and so share information because that really does guide a lot of where some of the studies and the healthcare resources go. So, and also you're having teens that are entering entering into adulthood, and trying to decide what they're going to do in their life. You know, there's so many wonderful needs out there. So you know, they're impacted by politics are impacted by health care. They're impacted by social policy. So, you know, anything that they are passionate about that they have an interest in, they will make a huge difference.



Absolutely, they will. Yes, they will. It's just so amazing to watch, isn't it? Yeah. And to be part of, so Oh, my goodness thing. And thank you, thank you for agreeing to do this with me. And for being here. I will thank you until the end of time for teaching me What a boundary is. It has saved my life. Thank you. Thank you.



Bye. Thanks for having me.



I hope you've really enjoyed this two part interview with Diane Becker and just learned so much I know that I did. I want to remind you, as always, To just breathe, taking those few minutes each day to just focus on your breath and calm and center yourself will give you so much strength and clarity and will really help you and honing in on those boundaries.

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