

005_Episode 5 FINAL

Mon, 5/3 12:02AM 28:58

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

crisis, grateful, year, turmoil, suggestion, lgbtq, love, connors, life, dog, spend, newport, listening, house, week, remind, sitting, messiness, favorite, feel



00:13

Welcome to Just breed, the podcast focused on transforming



00:15

the LGBTQ plus conversation and supporting you on your journey with your LGBTQ. You are not alone. 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. So the holidays are officially in full swing. I honestly love Love, love this time of year, it has always been my favorite. I love the decorating the movies, Christmas vacation, Fred Claus. It's a Wonderful Life. I've officially named Connors guardian angel Clarence, by the way. And my all time favorite Love Actually, I love the baking, the celebrating with friends and family. Just the love and the togetherness. And whatever your belief system is, whatever you celebrate the energy this time of year is incredible. It's inviting. It's warm. It's frenetic, it's a little bit insane. But it's magical. And it's miraculous. Today, we're going to talk about being in crisis during the holidays. What better time right? Unfortunately, crisis situations do not take a break for the calendar, or seasons, or anything really. So what can we do when we find ourselves in really tough situations, especially during this time of year? I can tell you what we did. When we found ourselves overwhelmed. And without many answers two years ago, I will also share what we learned and what we would do differently now. Like so much I have talked about being in crisis can feel very lonely. Even if a good friend or a family member, or even a neighbor is going through their own rough spot, or if they try to empathize. When you're in the midst of turmoil, the main feelings tend to be overwhelm and fear and that no one else

can possibly understand your specific situation. And that's okay. When Connor left for Newport Academy in California on November 2 two years ago, we were initially told that he would be away for six weeks, with Steve and I traveling there every other weekend for family programming and therapy. A daily battle with insurance. I'm not kidding seriously, it was a daily battle. Three sad and confused younger siblings mixed information from our educational consultant and the therapeutic staff in California. And an angry angry teenager who was beginning to process through a lot does not give you a recipe for the most wonderful time of the year. Steve and I both were way past our max stress and our max breaking points. I cried most days when the kids were at school, and worked hard to keep their lives as stable as possible when they were home. within the span of one week, our insurance stopped covering Connors care. The California staff informed us that he was nowhere near ready to be home. And our Ed consultant flaked on us in the middle of us trying to decide where he should go.



04:28

I still remember sitting in church on Christmas Eve that year, just crying as I was fielding a brace of texts from her and literally having all these choices of where you should go and not having a decision and knowing that we needed to get on a plane the next morning. We checked him out of Newport and we spent four really incredible days with him. As a family, against every single person's advice, every professional warning, every professional warning us not to do that, not to have any kind of break in between places, we decided, we know our kid best, this is what we're doing. We need this family time together, we need to regroup, and we need to make a plan. So I'm sharing this little snippet of our life, this little piece of the big story, because I want you to know that the tips and the advice and the mental shifts I share with you don't just come from a random book, or a list that I found on the internet, they come from my life experience, I've tried them. I've tried many things, but I share with you what has worked. That's it. Period. So yay, it's the holidays, but you feel like your world is absolutely caving in. There's a piece of you that is desperately trying to enjoy this time of year. And another piece of you that is just an utter turmoil or sadness, or grief, or confusion. And that's really, really a hard place to be. And I get that you may be having a hard time processing, or searching for solutions. Because your brain and your emotions are on overload, let's face it, we can only handle so much and the more that's piled on us and we don't take the opportunity to clear it or let go of it or just give ourselves a break, the more confusing and the more clarity, or lack of clarity that we have. So let's start there, we're going to actually start where we usually end. And that is with taking a breath,



07:19

the breath,



07:20

you know how much I love the breath. But we are going to breathe before we start any of this, that deep belly breath, that helps calm everything. And I'm going to do it with you today. So I can make sure that you do it. So let's take a deep breath in and count to three.



07:46

Hold it



07:50

and let it all the way out. Let's just sit with that for a minute. To let your nervous system calm down, to let your emotions calm down.



08:11

And I want you to listen to the following list. I've made a list of a few suggestions that are my, my favorite go twos. What have really worked well for me and what worked specifically, during that time, two years ago, when we were in such intense crisis during this time of year. Those were the things that I pulled from for today. But I want you to really just listen and write down and commit to trying two to three of these to see how they work for you. So the first one is take time to be present with your children who are not in crisis. And here's the big one. And I did this I promise you I wish I had pictures. But if they want to make gingerbread houses from scratch, make those gingerbread houses and allow yourself to enjoy the process. Enjoy the process. And the hilarity that no human outside of Martha Stewart can make a picture where the gingerbread house that has any structural integrity. I've never seen it. I certainly I've never created one. But we have so much fun trying to and it was really, really good for us to do. And it can be anything, whatever your kids come to you and say I really want to do this. And it's something that you can spend present time with them doing. Just do it. You may maybe on your last ounce of energy, your last bit of patients, this will help. The point here is to spend time and spend time laughing together. And along the same lines, the second one really equally as important is to take time to be with your spouse or your partner, not discussing the crisis at hand. The two of you spend plenty of time discussing and making decisions and making

more decisions and perhaps disagreeing with one another, and trying to get on the same page. Take some time, not discussing it at all. Just being together, get out of the house, go for dinner, go for coffee, go for a glass of wine, and just talk with and enjoy being with each other. I cannot really emphasize, emphasize the importance of this one enough. Communicate, appreciate and love each other. My third suggestion, and this is one of my favorites, because it's super, super easy is to spend time with your dog. Again, being present, enjoy petting them enjoy soaking in that amazing energy that they give. There's a science behind it. There have been many, many studies done on this. But it is extraordinary. It's why you see therapy dogs all over the place. There are something with petting a dog that absolutely can center you, and ground you and calm you and bring you clarity and peace. It's really, really quite extraordinary. And every time that I really focus on not the offhanded, like, oh, you're sitting in my office with your head on my lap while I'm working again. But the sitting with her and just petting her and talking to her it is amazing. The the gift of just unconditional love that they give and that calming energy that they give. So take time with your dog. And if you don't have a dog, go hang out with a friend who has won gold who has shelter and pet the dogs there, you might actually end up with one at home after that. Just try it. Try it once and you will be amazed.



13:01

The next one is to do something nice for yourself. And this is really, obviously a very a very personal one. Because everybody has different things that work for them that are really things they like to do that. Bring them comfort, make them feel like they're just taking a little extra time to take care of themselves. But just take a few minutes to think about a few of those things that do that for you. Pick one and commit to doing it this week. Because if you say oh, well, I'll do it later. You're never going to do it. Pick one, pick a day, go do it. For me, I made a list of a few things that work for me. I love doing yoga. I love going and getting a massage. I love getting a Mani pedi. I really really love having lunch or coffee with a friend reconnecting with somebody I haven't seen for a long time. Just getting out of my house. and spending time with somebody I really care about is huge. reading a novel. I don't know about you, but I read a lot of nonfiction and a lot of articles and I'm constantly trying to learn more, pick up more information, learn new things and reading a fiction novel is really a treat for me and something that I love to do and I really enjoy doing but I don't allow myself to do it very often. So for me that's on my list of things that are very, that call me. That grounds me and I You're very special to me. Go for a walk, here's a really big one. Hire a cleaning service. If you spend a lot of your days, just picking up and doing cleaning around the house that just eats up your time, and you're exhausted to begin with, because you are going through so much right now. Treat yourself and hire a cleaning service. It doesn't need to be every week for the rest of your life. It can be a one

time thing or a temporary, you know, once a month or once every other week. But do this for yourself. Take this off of your plate right now. What else can you take off of your plate?
Order takeout twice



15:48

a week.



15:49

So you're not cooking every day, in whatever works for you. Whatever you can come up with that would just really anything cash that would be that would be so nice. Do that for yourself right now. It will make a huge difference and getting through your current crisis, your current turmoil. Again, especially at this time of year, when it is extra busy. There are a lot more things going on your calendars more full, there are more people around, do these little things to give yourself a break. My fifth suggestion is to do something nice for someone else. When you give of yourself from a place of love, whether it's time, a thoughtful gesture, a smile, the paying for somebody Starbucks, when you're in the drive thru lane, the person behind you, it has the lovely benefit of not only making someone else's day brighter, but yours as well. And I'm sure everyone out there listening knows this from doing it at some point. But it's something so easily forgotten. Realizing the smile that you know making the eye contact and smiling at somebody the difference that can make letting somebody go ahead of you when you're on the highway, when they want to get in your lane. crazy little things like that. But you know how good it makes you feel when somebody else does that for you. So hold on to that. And make that a part or try to make that a part of helping you through where you are right now. The sixth suggestion is to start a gratitude journal. Now you may already have one. And you may already know all of this. But this is one of my absolute favorites. Because it is something that at first certainly feels like work. But the benefit is really, really wonderful. So when you're in the midst of a crisis, or turmoil or problem or whatever you have going on, it is way too easy to feel that 100% of your focus needs to be on that situation. Like if you take any amount of focus off of that, somehow, the problem won't get solved or somehow something else is going to happen. And that true. When you shift into a mindset of gratitude, it forces your brain and your body to relax. There is actually a chemical component that occurs here. It may feel like I said, awkward at first but I promise you if you just take a few minutes a day to write and it can be anything it can be. I am truly grateful for my dog. I am truly grateful that the sun is out today. I am truly grateful for how kind my husband was this morning by driving the kids to school. It doesn't matter how specific or nonspecific it is. It doesn't need to be about a purse you know a specific person or a specific thing. It's truly Look around you

and you could probably from where you're sitting right now. And 30 seconds. Think of it like Three things that you're grateful for.



20:03

So



20:04

just take that little time, it doesn't need to be a fancy notebook, it can be a piece of paper for all it just, it's the, the act of doing it, the process of doing it. And, and really, truly thinking, I am. So truly grateful. Your body, your mind, and your spirit will all begin to balance. And they will all thank you for it. And my seventh suggestion is to lean on a close friend or family member for support. I know this is a hard one, because most people, it is hard for us to lean on others for support, we want to figure things out on our own, we don't want to be a burden to others, we don't want to sound like we're complaining all the time. Or it could be a million different reasons why we don't do it.



21:13

But



21:15

when you are in any kind of crisis, any kind of tough situation, anything where you're just really struggling, you will have people in your life who want to support you who want to hold you up, when you're not feeling your strongest, to give you some of their strength. Let them do that. That's what they can do for you. Sometimes there's nothing, you know, they can say there's no action they can take. But that simple gesture of just holding you up listening to you, being there for you. That's all that you really, really need. Right? So and you have done that for other people. So let your loved ones people who are really close to you, your your people, your tribe, whatever you want to call them, let them be there for you. Lean on them for strength and for energy and for love. I know this is really hard. And again, it tenfold as hard this time of year. But remember, it can be and there is a crisis in your life. And you are grateful there is a crisis. And you are laughing hysterically with your kids watching elf for the 10th time there is a crisis and you feel at peace sitting on the floor with your dog and rubbing their belly. And remember that it can be and give yourself permission to embrace the messiness of whatever is going on around you. And remind

yourself of my favorite of Connors tattoos, the word impermanence.



23:32

It's okay.



23:35

Allow yourself to embrace the messiness. So, today I can actually say I just gave you a lot of tips and tools this this whole podcast today was about tips and tools and mental chefs. But I will just kind of roll them and roll them into three. And summarize. by reminding you again, your your basic tool for everything is to just brave. And to remind you have the mantra that I gave you a few episodes ago. Embrace the beauty in the messiness. It's a really lovely one that applies to so many different situations. Write it down, keep it in a journal, keep it in your purse, put it by your desk, whatever works. And then finally, take some time and meditate on the concepts of and and impermanence. Whether you meditate, whether you just think about them, whether you write them somewhere and contemplate them. Just really Think about what they mean to you and how they apply to your life, what your ends are. And just reminding yourself this is impermanent. This too shall pass. So I want to wish all of you



25:22

just



25:23

the happiest of holiday seasons and to enjoy every moment I'm sending so much love and, and gratitude, I am grateful that you are all out there listening. It just, it brings me great happiness. And I just want to thank you, thank you for joining me. Like always, I will have show notes on my website. I don't have any links for today. So no links, but I am always putting new information on my website. So check that out for resources and other really great reading material. Anytime I come across a new book that I love, and I think is really helpful, I put it up there. And lastly, please subscribe. I would love for you to subscribe. This just pops right into your inbox when I have new episodes and join the private facebook page and share both with anyone who needs to know that they are not alone. Until next time,

