

# EMOTIONS OVER THE CORONAVIRUS

We feel them. Our girls feel them. There are so many emotions that we experience throughout any given day, and a worldwide pandemic can often bring the most difficult emotions to the surface. As adults, we are having a hard time working through our feelings during this season. So how do we help our girls work through their own?

Biblical Counselor, Megan Burns, has broken down three of the common emotions that your girls may be facing during this season of self-distancing, unknowns, and disappointments.

1. Recognize the Signs of Each Emotion;
2. Understand What Your Girls Are Feeling;
3. Know How to Properly Respond;
4. Practically Help Her Process;
5. Point Her to Scripture.

Even though emotions can be difficult, they are an invitation to draw near to God and be shaped by Him. And this challenging season gives you an opportunity to know your girls more deeply as you listen to them and display the love of God through your help and support.

# Is She Sad?

## She Might Call It:

Disappointed, Grieving, Down, Depressed, Discouraged, Hopeless

## Signs of Sadness:

Tearful, Withdrawn, Quiet, Complaining, Frustrated, Disconnected, Apathetic, Fatigued

## Why is She Feeling Sad?

There is a lot of loss to grieve—time with friends, sports seasons, special events, academic opportunities, independence, needed income, etc. The cancellation of events and activities will be felt right away, but the effects of the coronavirus on the economy and education systems will be long-lasting. Our girls may not even be able to put into words what loss they are grieving (it's likely the cumulative loss of tons of little things), but they feel the weight of it just the same. Grief says “this matters to me and now it's gone.”

## How Do I Respond?

Let them voice their sadness, and affirm the reality of the pain and brokenness we're facing. Suffering often motivates us to isolate ourselves and keep the pain bottled up. While it's good and healthy for teens to have the time and space to process on their own, encourage them to give voice to what they're feeling in the context of community. Invite them to tell you the hurts and losses they're experiencing, and listen with a heart of compassion. Missing a prom or soccer game or band concert may seem inconsequential to you, but it matters to them. Be willing to enter in and ask why it's important and what exactly the loss means for them.

This is a great time to teach and model what it looks like to grieve and lament—turning to God with our pain and disappointment, pouring out our hearts to Him, rooting ourselves in His Word and promises, and choosing to praise and trust. As you help teens to process their grief, lead them gently

to our good Father. Communicate a perspective that sees eternal things as more weighty and focuses on God's presence and purposes. Point them to the unfading joy and hope that we have in the Lord. Grief is meant to lead us to deeper faith and joy, but we have to acknowledge it and engage in the journey. Offer your girls the support they need to walk the path of grief.

## Practical Tips for Her:

- Make a list of things you're thankful for.
- Make a list of your hurts, losses and disappointments, and walk through the process of lament with God.
- Choose aspects of God's character to study in Scripture. Think about how those aspects speak into your experience of loss.
- Praise—listen to worship music, make your own playlist or check out the one LifeWay Girls made on Spotify.
- Find ways to serve and love other people.

## What Bible Verse Would Be Helpful?

“The Lord is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit.”  
—Psalm 34:18

Psalm 42, 63:1-8, 77, 84; 2 Corinthians 1:3-11; 4:7-18; Romans 8:18-39

# Is She Anxious?

## She Might Call It:

Worried, Fearful, Stressed, Overwhelmed, Panicked

## Signs of Anxiousness:

Difficulty Focusing, Restlessness, Disrupted Sleep, Physical Symptoms of Stress, Obsessive Thoughts, Hypervigilant, Easily-Frustrated

## Why is She Feeling Anxious?

There are so many unknowns right now. So much about our normal life has been upended, and we don't know how long it will last. Our girls may be worried about a current issue ("Will someone I love get sick?") or an uncertain future ("Will my family have enough money to send me to college next year?"). Regardless of the significance or likelihood of their fears, these feelings of anxiety can be overwhelming. Anxiety carries a heavy burden and motivates us to fix, protect and grasp for control when something we care about seems threatened. Anxiety tells us that we are vulnerable.

## How Do I Respond?

As much as you want to offer reassurance, a blanket response of "it will be fine" is often unhelpful and can feel dismissive and uncaring. What teens need from you is to listen with a desire to understand and empathize, and to walk with them through their difficult emotions and situations. Acknowledge the difficulty of facing so many unknowns and changes. Anxiety is like a camera lens that's zoomed all the way in. The frame is filled with a macro view of the situation—it's all you can see. Girls will need your help to zoom out the lens and gain a clearer perspective that's not controlled and consumed by fear. Anxiety also transports us to an imagined future that leaves out the very presence, power and purposes of God. Our fears often reveal the lesser things we have been depending on, and point to the reality that God alone is our refuge and firm foundation. Help your girls recall what is true about God and rest in His faithfulness.

## Practical Tips for Her:

- Make a list of things you're worried about, then identify what aspects you have control over (your faithful response), which aspects are someone else's responsibility, and which are under God's control alone.
- Look to God each day for your daily manna. What has God provided for you today?
- Do the next thing. Trust God, love others, and do the good work He's given you to do.
- Read stories in Scripture of God's faithful presence, sovereign power and accomplished purposes.
- Help your body to calm down—breathe deeply, go for a walk, exercise, sing, take a nap, etc.

## What Bible Verse Would Be Helpful?

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.”—1 Peter 5:6-7

Psalms 16, 27, 46, 62:5-8; Isaiah 41:10; Philippians 4:4-9

# Is She Angry?

## She Might Call It:

Frustrated, Discontent, Jealous, Bitter, Annoyed, Offended, Entitled

## Signs of Anger:

On-Edge, Critical, Complaining, Withdrawn, Short-Tempered, Argumentative

## Why is She Feeling Angry?

Anger says “this is wrong, and I don’t like it.” Someone or some situation has interfered with something we desire or value. In one way or another, our will has been crossed. In this season, our girls may be angry about their plans being interrupted, decisions they don’t agree with, or just generally frustrated about their loss of freedom and opportunity. Anger can also be an external expression that’s covering up another emotion, such as fear or sadness.

## How Do I Respond?

Stay calm in your response, and seek to diffuse their anger; don’t add fuel to the fire by responding in kind. You can suggest that they step away and take some time to calm down, so that they can navigate the conversation well. You can also help teens identify the content of their anger. In what way do they feel wronged? What is it they are wanting or valuing in this situation? What judgments are they making in their anger? Then you can lead them to consider what other emotions they are experiencing. During this season especially, they may uncover grief and fear when they peel back the veil of anger. Your girls may need help discerning what needs to be grieved, entrusted or surrendered.

## Practical Tips for Her

- Slow down. Breathe. Anger is a swift-moving emotion; it pushes us to react quickly by venting or retaliating. This fast anger reaction is

usually destructive, so we need to slow down in order to choose a better response.

- Acknowledge that you are angry, and choose to turn to God. This is an invitation to engage with God, so tell Him what's on your heart. Then give voice to your dependence on Him and your need for His grace.
- Use these journal questions to process your anger: What wrong am I perceiving? Is my response helpful or destructive? How does God view the situation and my desires?
- Pray for those whom you are frustrated with. Ask God to shape your heart to seek redemption, rather than vengeance.
- Other emotions that go unprocessed can leave us primed and ready to respond in anger. Being aware and seeking to address our other emotions can help prevent an explosion later.

## What Bible Verse Would Be Helpful?

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”—Ephesians 4:32

Romans 12:9-21; James 1:19-20; Ephesians 4:17-5:2; Colossians 3:12-17; Proverbs 16:32; Psalm 103; Psalm 18:30

# Recommended Resources

[Untangling Emotions](#) by Alasdair Groves & Winston Smith

[Contentment: Seeing God's Goodness](#) by Megan Hill

[A Small Book for the Anxious Heart](#) by Ed Welch

[A Small Book About a Big Problem](#) by Ed Welch

[Good & Angry](#) by David Powlison

[Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy](#) by Mark Vroegop



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