

Parent Facing Stress or Anxiety

Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28

In moments of stress and anxiety, it's important to remember that you are not alone. Your concern for your teens is a testament to your love for them. It is so important to acknowledge and address the impact these feelings may have on your relationship. Lean on your faith during these times, knowing that God understands the complexities of our emotions. Take a moment to surrender your worries in prayer, seeking His guidance and strength. When the time comes to talk to your teens, approach the conversation with a humble heart, sharing your struggles and expressing your love. Trust that through love and communication, you can navigate these challenges together. This also models for them how to handle stress and anxiety.

➤ conversation starter

I've been feeling a bit stressed lately, and it might be affecting our time together. I want you to know that I'm always here for you. I was wondering if you've noticed anything, or if there's anything on your mind.

I've been reflecting on things lately, and I realize that my stress and anxiety might have unintentionally hurt our relationship. I want you to know that I'm sorry if I've seemed distant. It's not about you—it's about my struggles, and I want to make things better. Can we talk about how I can support you better and any concerns you might have?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Pray Together:** Begin and end the conversation with prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation.
- **Express Vulnerability:** Share your struggles openly and honestly, emphasizing that everyone faces challenges.
- **Offer Biblical Perspective:** Use relevant Scriptures that speak to the themes of trust, peace, and reliance on God. For example, you might reference verses like Matthew 11:28-30 or Philippians 4:6-7 to talk about the idea of turning to God during times of stress.
- **Encourage Communication:** Make it clear that your intention is to foster open communication. Encourage your teens to express their feelings, concerns, and experiences.
- **Seek Forgiveness:** If your stress has inadvertently impacted your relationship, be willing to ask for forgiveness. Acknowledge any areas where you may have fallen short and express your commitment to improving the situation.
- **Encourage Faith-Based Coping:** Discuss faith-based coping mechanisms, such as prayer, meditation on Scripture, and trusting in God's plan. Share your own practices and encourage your teens to develop their spiritual tool kit.
- **Follow-Up:** After the initial conversation, follow up regularly. Check in on each other's well-being and continue to pray together. Celebrate victories and support each other through setbacks.

