

WHAT AN interesting TIME IN WHICH WE ARE LIVING.

You might think these times are the fodder for the basis of blockbuster feature films or at least the reason to create a new video game. The human spirit has always feared an "act of God," a global pandemic, or any other cataclysmic event of which we have no control nor an explanation of apparent cause. In our fallen state, it is only "human" to feel hopeless and helpless when events bigger than us take over every facet of our lives.

Fear is debilitating. It manifests itself into a variety of unhealthy behaviors. One such behavior, worry, is a negative focus on the future. Speculating what might occur under potential circumstances can provide each of us hundreds of sleepless nights. Today's teens are experiencing the effects of worry and its parent cause, fear, in unprecedented numbers. Diagnostic interview data from the National Comorbidity Survey Adolescent Supplement¹ shows 31% of all youth have diagnosed anxiety disorders. Note the word "diagnosed." Imagine the percentage when we include those who have not sought medical or psychiatric help. Fear has reached pandemic levels.

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https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20855043/

Why so much fear? Well there is a lot to fear in this world—terrorism, COVID-19, economic downturns, to name a few. But in this fallen world, there also has and always will be reasons to fear; it is part of the human condition. Whether we are an Israelite meandering in the wilderness or an Acts 1 disciple being sought after by the Roman centurion, it is how we handle fear that makes all the difference.

As Christians we are told over 500 times in the Bible not to fear. That means there is a fear warning for virtually every day of the year and then some. The Lord warns us that fear that results in worry is not from Him, it is from the adversary. He knows that fear can keep His followers from fulfilling the destiny that He has designed for us, and so He warns us in His precious word. The apostle Paul spoke about fear regularly. He warns the people of Philippi:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

(Philippians 4:6-7, NIV)

Yes, fear is part of the human condition, but as part of the Body of Christ we are called to faith over fear. We are called to know beyond a shadow of a doubt, that God will never leave us or forsake us.

My prayer at this time of anxiety and distress, is for each of us to dismiss fear and shine as a beacon of certainty that we serve a sovereign God who is the creator of the earth, the Prince of Peace, the Alpha and the Omega, and the Lord that provides (Jehovah Jireh). **Faith over fear**.

Raising Godly Girls is a culmination of 25 years of building women of integrity through American Heritage Girls (AHG), the premier Christ-centered character and leadership development program for girls ages 5 to 18. I pray you find this guide helpful as you navigate uncertainty with your girl. Whether you're a parent, a pastor, an educator, or a volunteer for a youth-serving organization like AHG, this guide is for you. If you like what you read here, be sure to visit us online and learn more about empowering girls through the love of God at raisinggodlygirls.com.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

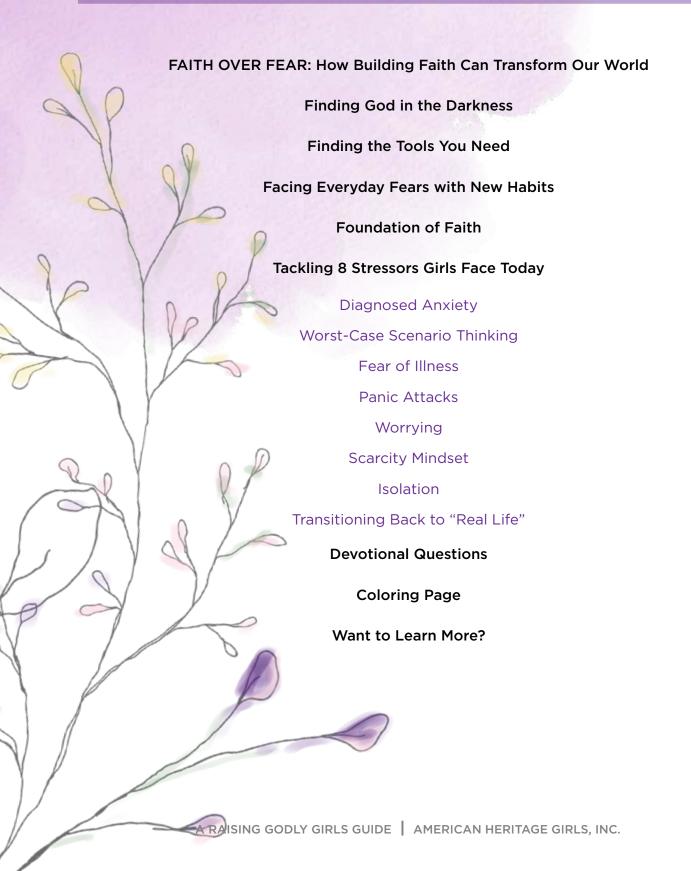
atti Sanbay

Patti Garibav

Founder & Executive Director of American Heritage Girls



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FAITH OVER FEAR:

How Building Can In the Next Generation Can Transform Our World

IT'S TIME TO SUIT UP

Girls today, especially teenagers, are fully aware and scared of all that's happening in our world. It's time we step up, suit them up with the armor of God, and equip them to face the world as a spiritual battleground each day. Ephesians 6:10-18, NIV gives us the blueprint for the armor of God:

Ephesians 6:10-18, NIV

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take

your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not

against flesh and blood,

but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground,

and after you have done everything, to stand.

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers

and requests. With this in mind, be alert and

always keep on praying for

all the Lord's people."

FINDING God in the DARKNESS

Barna Group and Impact 360's 2018
Gen Z Study titled "Gen Z: The Culture,
Beliefs, and Motivations Shaping the Next
Generation" found that more than any
generation before, members of Generation
Z (those born between 1999 and 2015,
according to the researchers) are selfidentifying as atheist. In fact, they're
doing so at twice the rate of the general
population. The most noted reason for this
lack of faith in God? "I have a hard time
believing that a good God would allow so
much evil or suffering in the world."

The majority of Generation Z and Generation Alpha, the newly-dubbed term for those born between 2010 through 2024, have never lived in a world where the United States is at peace. Their world has always been in strife, having been born in the age of fear caused by 9/11, the financial crisis, and gun violence. Parents who grew up in an America where Christianity was the norm are faced with the reality that if they don't intentionally seek out ways to help their daughter foster her relationship with God, the culture won't do it for them. Girls need to learn about the overwhelming love of God, and how the schemes of the enemy try to veil it from humankind.

Action Step:

Check out the list of eight common stressors our girls face in today's uncertain world at the end of this chapter. The following are essential to meaningful parenting and effective discipling:

- Knowing the difficulties she's facing
- Finding where she needs help
- Identifying how you can came alongside her

²https://shop.barna.com/products/gen-z



ISAIAH 41:10, NIV TELLS US

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."



Raising a Godly girl who is able to spread God's love in our broken world is easier said than done. No parent should have to go it alone. (Or maybe, you're not the #girlmom/#girldad, but you minister to families and you find yourself with this guide...keep reading! Knowing the needs of your parents and girls is vital in meeting them where they are!) Finding a community of supportive, like-minded fellow believers is key in the success of your attempt at countering the culture.

Supporting your girl in navigating stress and anxiety first starts with building up the confidence in yourself. God calls the equipped, sure, but more often than not, God equips the called. For this, for your girl, God called you. It's time to answer the call. Dig into the Word, build a community (a virtual one is a great starting place, but don't limit yourself there!), and lean on your trusted people when you need to. We aren't meant to go it alone, after all, you know the age-old adage: it takes a village to raise a child. More good news? God's Church is that village. As Christians, we belong to a centuries-old network of families raising their children in our faith tradition—look to your faith community and ministries to build your personal village.

Action Step:

Good news: you've already taken the first step in your journey to raising a Godly girl—you downloaded this e-book! Resources, like this one, are the arrows in your parenting quiver. Just as no one is born automatically knowing calculus, no one is born knowing the ins and outs of great parenting. It takes time to learn, and it takes voices you can trust to guide you. Together with your spouse or co-parent, create a list of shared resources on which you can rely when you don't readily have the answers!



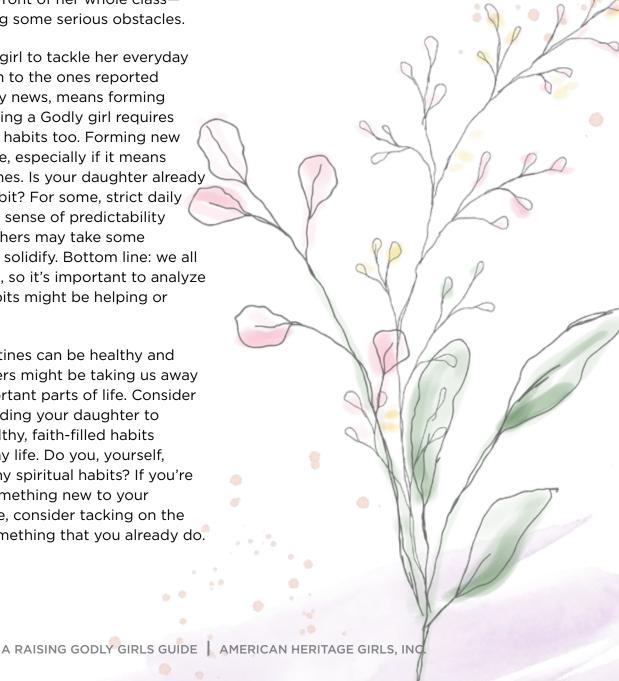
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FACING Everyday Fears with NEW HABITS

Aside from the fear-inducing stories we hear on the news, our girls come up against challenges each day that require grit, resiliency, and faith. From standing up to the bully at school to tackling an oral presentation in front of her whole class your girl is facing some serious obstacles.

Equipping your girl to tackle her everyday fears, in addition to the ones reported on by the nightly news, means forming new habits. Raising a Godly girl requires healthy spiritual habits too. Forming new habits takes time, especially if it means 'breaking' old ones. Is your daughter already a creature of habit? For some, strict daily rituals provide a sense of predictability and comfort. Others may take some attentiveness to solidify. Bottom line: we all fall into routines, so it's important to analyze how current habits might be helping or hurting us.

While some routines can be healthy and productive, others might be taking us away from more important parts of life. Consider how you are guiding your daughter to incorporate healthy, faith-filled habits into her everyday life. Do you, yourself, exemplify healthy spiritual habits? If you're ready to add something new to your everyday routine, consider tacking on the new habit to something that you already do.



Action Step:

Adding small new habits to existing ones makes way for change.

For example, if your family watches TV nightly, but each of you struggle to carve out time to read Scripture, don't expect everyone to report to a nightly Bible study bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

Why? Simply stopping a habit (like watching TV) and replacing it with something entirely different (like a Bible study) probably won't work very well because you can't form a new habit out of not doing something anymore.

Instead, find a way to tack on Scripture to your already formed habits.

- Keep a daily verse resource, or even a stack of index cards or sticky notes with verses written on them on the TV stand.
- Before grabbing the remote each night, ask someone in your family to look up the verse, or recite it from memory. Even just the small change of reading a single verse together is a step in the right direction.

You may find your family wants to talk further about the meaning of a verse or ask questions, expanding the conversation. Give your family the opportunity, in a painless way, to make healthy spiritual habits, together.

On average, it takes more than two months before a new behavior becomes a habit. Over the course of about 66 days, our bodies start to recognize the pattern—then it becomes automatic.3

Establishing healthy spiritual habits in the lives of our girls is an important step in raising them to be women of integrity. When girls start to form faith-filled habits early in life, like daily prayer or Scripture journaling, they are more likely to keep Christ at the center of their lives as they grow.





of Faith

It's commonly understood that children who participate in faith-based programming in their youth are more likely to remain engaged Christians in adulthood. According to Barna Research findings⁴, what we believe at the age of 13 is likely what we will die believing. If we want our girls to know Christ, we need to make sure they are given ample time and space to develop their faith in their foundational years. Seek out activities and curriculum that will develop and strengthen your girl's faith, even at an early age. You are never too young to experience the love of God. Give your girl the chance to recognize her role as a daughter of the King long before the world tries to lead her heart astray.

What we believe at the age of

is likely what

we will die

believing.

Action Step:

When compiling a calendar of faith-based activities for your girl, **go beyond Sunday**, offer her more. Today's Christ-centered activities aren't just your grandma's Sunday school class!

- There are Christian-owned dance studios across the country that encourage Godliness in choreography, song choices, and costumes.
- There are Christian summer camps that seamlessly knit together spirituality and outdoor adventure.
- And, of course, there are scout-type ministries, like American Heritage Girls, that give girls the chance to make friends and grow holistically in a fun, Christcentered environment.

Don't limit your girl's exposure to faith to one day a week.

Weave it into the everyday and don't forget to make it fun!

 ${\it ^4} https://www.barna.com/research/research-shows-that-spiritual-maturity-process-should-start-at-a-young-age}$

Tackling 8 Stressors Girls Face Today tudies show an estimated 32% of adolescents have been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder—and the prevalence of these types of disorders is 38% higher for females¹.

Take note:

girls today are experiencing higher rates of diagnosed anxiety than ever before.

They need our help.

Thanks to the Bible, we know how God cares for those afflicted with anxiety. After the death of Moses, Joshua was likely anxious about his own future. But God said to him "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9, NIV)





oes your daughter live in constant fear of the "worst-case scenario"? For some, it can be difficult to navigate through the new and unknown in life. Those who live in heavy fog of the "what if" can feel paralyzed by their circumstances. Rather than view her as a "Debbie Downer," consider the level of severity this pessimism has on her life. Anxiety this severe isn't something to ignore.

If your daughter experiences this crippling fear, consider counseling. A trained professional can tap into her fears in a safe and productive way to help her overcome them.

Work to make your home a light in her dark world. Encourage your daughter to dive into the Word, and guide her toward reassuring Scriptures like 1 Peter that reads

"CAST ALL YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU."

(1 Peter 5:7, NIV)



ear trickles into all of our lives at some point. But right now, in the midst of a global virus pandemic, it feels like fear is rushing in like a storm surge, bringing 10-foot-tall waves of anxiety and panic with it.

There are concrete, practical steps we can take to calm the fears of sickness in our kids. We can fortify their bodies with nutritious foods. We can practice healthy habits like handwashing and surfacesanitizing. We can also build up their spiritual armor.

God instructs us to "be not afraid" constantly throughout the Bible. We haven't counted ourselves, but we've heard it said that there are over 365 mentions of being fearless—one for every day of the year.

Find one of these verses and kick start your day with its inspiring message.

Though an army

besiege me, my

heart will not fear;

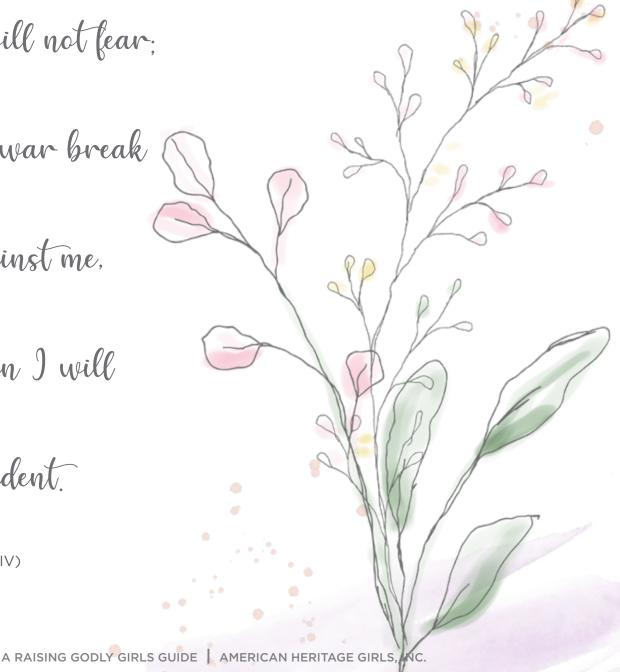
though war break

out against me.

even then I will

be confident.

(Psalm 27:3 NIV)

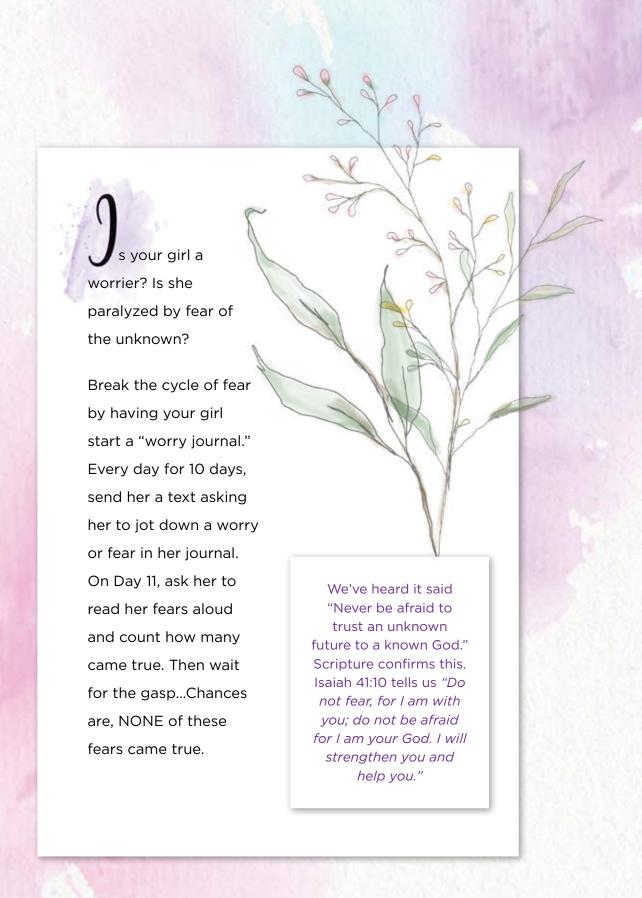




as your girl ever gotten
overwhelmed by the stressors in her
life? For some, moments of stress and
anxiety manifest in a physical way. These
are known commonly as panic attacks.
Hyperventilating, dizziness, tightening in
the chest—they're all scary symptoms of
panic.

If your daughter is experiencing panic attacks, you can ease her burden by being present with her in the moment. Whether through the reassurance of a bear hug or the power of intercessory prayer, you can help your daughter find the light at the end of this **temporary** tunnel. If you find your daughter is experiencing panic attacks often, or even regularly, it's important to seek out help from mental health professionals, like her doctor or a Christian counselor.





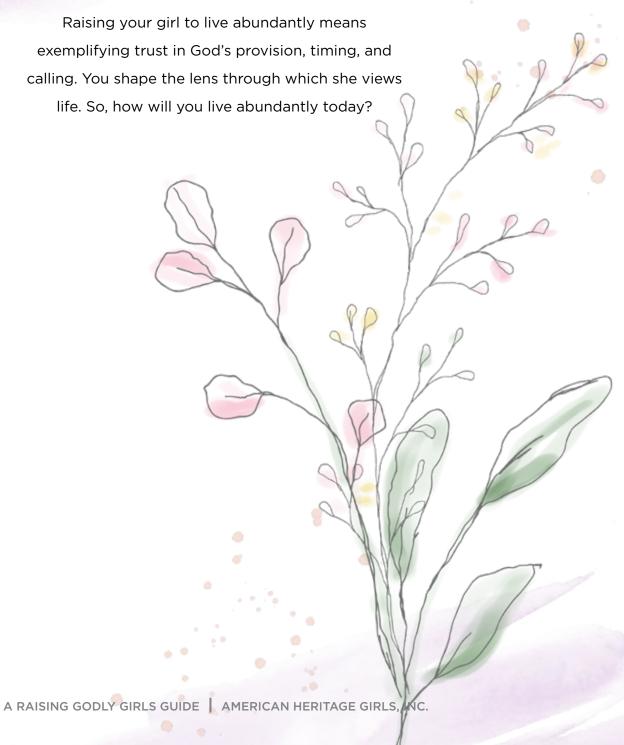


Vids today have grown up in a scary world. Terrorism, environmental struggle, health crises. Today's world runs on fear.

In times of fear, it's natural to resort to a scarcity mindset. We default to self-preservation, rather than trusting in God's abundance. Hear this: there is a time and place for preparing well. But preparing well doesn't mean hoarding. Hoarding time, resources, love—they're all manifestations of a scarcity mindset. Fear that there won't be enough.



"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."



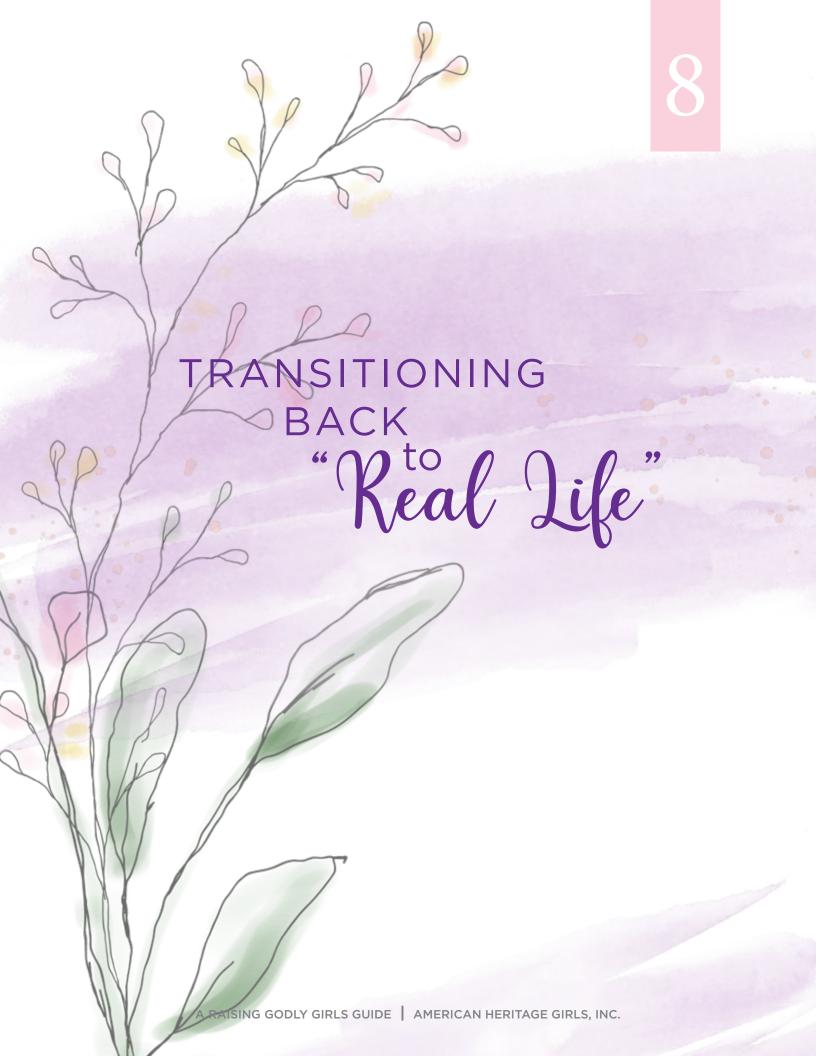


he quarantine-mentality isn't going away anytime soon. Even after our kids are able to walk the halls of their schools again, the effects of such a lengthy isolation will linger. Does your daughter struggle with fear or anxiety around re-entering her normal life?

She's not alone.

Scripture reminds us that Christians are called to live in community. While virtual connection doesn't always satisfy the basic need for human interaction, it's a start. Look for ways to connect your daughter with members of her faith community, like creating a podcast-listening club or joining a video-based Bible study series.





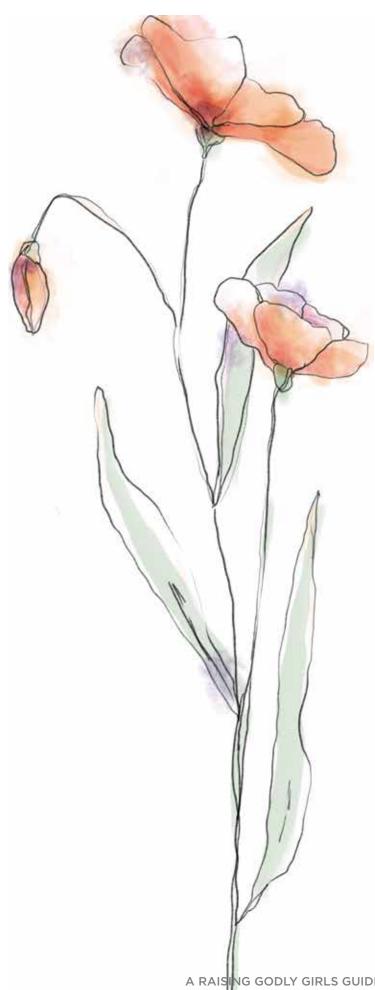
he world, as we once knew it, is no more. We have transitioned to living in a "new normal."

Ensuring we have enough hand sanitizer and face masks are everyday conversations.

As a parent, the "new normal" is a huge transition—imagine what it's like for your girl! Life is full of transitions that can throw us off our rocker, make us uncertain, and even cause us to fear what's next.



Remind your daughter that God will be there through every transition of her life.



Questions

These questions are meant to spark conversation between you and your daughter. Treat them as a starting point, not a checklist. Allow the discussion with your girl to blossom and transform into the relationship-fostering conversation God has planned for you both!

- 1. Is there anything in your life that triggers fear or anxiety? If so, how does it affect how you live your everyday life?
- 2. Who do you turn to when you're struggling with fear or anxiety? Why him/her?
- 3. When you're triggered, how does your physical body react?
- 4. What types of things bring you comfort or calm your nerves when you feel afraid?
- 5. Have you ever found yourself imagining the "worst-case scenario"? Why is this kind of thinking unhelpful?
- 6. Do you have any Scripture verses memorized to remind you of God's assurance in times of difficulty?
- 7. What does the Bible say about worrying?
- 8. What are practical ways you can live out your faith and trust in the plan God has for your future?

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Page

Studies prove coloring relaxes the amygdala, the fear center of your brain, making it an incredibly effective mindfulness exercise to reduce stress and anxiety. Print this page to share with your girl (don't forget to print a copy for yourself too!). Whether she's entering kindergarten or graduating from high school, there is great value in spending quality time, like completing this coloring page, with your daughter.



Follow this link for a customizable coloring page:

http://bit.ly/ RGGcoloringpage



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

The Raising Godly Girls blog is updated weekly with new, current topics and insight on how to raise a girl after God's own heart. You can also listen to the Raising Godly Girls Minute with Patti Garibay, a daily radio feature highlighting parenting solutions through a Biblical lens, playing on thousands of Christian radio stations across the country.

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