

*Transcript has been edited from automatically generated captions and may contain errors.*

[Kiarra:] All right, that question is like 50% of the work.

Just being like, "Oh, there's a difference between where I want to be and where I am right now." That's a huge part of the change that's already starting to happen once you recognize, "Oh, I'm naturally reactive" or "I am naturally anxious." Then you can start practicing some of the stuff that we've talked about.

And we're systems thinkers. We usually think that everything kind of has a connection to other stuff. And so sometimes, and this will fit with your thing too, sometimes this anxiety is from somewhere—like it comes from somewhere and it keeps coming up in the same ways because it has a specific connection in our soul.

Sometimes we need to go talk about whatever that is and figure out whatever that is. We don't always know why some situations make us more reactive than others. That's part of the reason why all of us got into therapy and physical therapy, because we want to help people unpack some of that stuff. Yeah, figure out what's going on inside.

So I would definitely recommend talking to somebody about what's going on, but also the stuff that Ali was talking about and practicing. Your own emotional regulation, practicing mindfulness. Prayer is mindfulness. Like just praying is a slowing down activity. I know so many parents who pray under their breath when they're talking to their kids and like, good for them, you know.

So doing those things to start practicing, noticing your own emotional regulation, trying new things. This time I added five seconds between when I said something and when they said the thing. This time I asked myself how I was feeling. A lot of us are just living our lives from day to day and surviving, and we've never had time to sit down and say, "What—what was that actually like for me? Actually it was really scary for me. I actually hated that experience." So that's part of the work you can kind of start.

[Dr. Ali:] I would add—and I'm going to take off of where you're at.

What I have found in working with adults is that self-awareness is a pretty powerful tool. And so when you kind of do a deep dive into, you know, how you think, what your values are, how you developed your worldview—it does unearth some of your deficits, but it also identifies a lot of your strengths.

And so what you can do is you can use your strengths. Those deficits, that's just your guide to what goals you need to develop. That's it. They're not weaknesses. Those are just areas that you need to beef up a little bit more in. And so you use your strengths to beef those things up.

And so, for example, if you are quick to react, then that's something that's a goal of yours that you know you want to work on. If you are a poor communicator and you really struggle with

communicating not just your thoughts, but your emotions with your partners or with your kids, then that's a goal that you want to work on.

You know, and you could do this with help or on your own. There are lots of books and resources out there. It's really, I think, self-awareness that is kind of the first step to point you in the direction you need to go.

[Kianna:] Can you imagine for a moment a parent coming to their child and saying, "I'm so sorry, I lashed out. That was wrong of me. I just messed up. Can you forgive me?"

And then to have a marriage where you do it in front of the children and you're consistently building this culture of—because you're not going to get it. We're going to give you all the tools and all the stuff we've got, but you just have the one chance. You're—there's instant by instant.

And so with slowing down, you have the opportunity to build a family that goes into those moments and builds their own families someday that is able to say, "I missed it and can you forgive me?"

[Dr. Ali:] Did anyone grow up in a household where their parents hid all of the arguments? Like you never really saw a lot?

My parents have been married like 56/57 years, and it was when I first got married—I've been married almost 30 years—but that first year it was like I couldn't get over how much we were arguing. You know, like, "Is this—? I might have picked the wrong guy," you know, like, "What in the world?"

And what I realized is, no, they argued just as much. There were just as many disagreements. They just did it privately. And so I want to really illustrate how important the term is. Becky Kennedy, she's a child psychologist out of New York, she calls it repair.

But you know, how important the concept of repair is—that you not only offer to your partner repair when you know that there is something you have done that has injured that relationship and that bond, and that you acknowledge and take responsibility for it. It's a very powerful tool with your children, and it teaches them that it's okay to be vulnerable.

It's okay to say that you're sorry. It's okay to be imperfect, and to try harder the next time. It's all part of being human. Those are some powerful lessons for them to learn, either through observing you or experiencing it themselves.