

GOD IS MY STRENGTH

by Alice Granleese

As adults, it is easy for us to think that childhood is a carefree existence. But we forget that childhood is our first experience of trials and challenges which prepare us for life as an adult. Kids of course have their own struggles at times; dealing with change, pressures in the classroom, self-esteem, anxiety, homework, being bullied or left out, and dealing with family problems just to name a few. Helping to build resilience is essential in raising a child who is able to bounce back from future adversities. Resilience can allow us to grow as a person and is a trait that can always be developed and taught. Though our inclination is to protect our children from suffering, and we do our best to do so, we cannot always stop them experiencing hardship and nor should we. Teaching our children to turn to God in good times and in bad helps them to know and understand the sanctuary God always provides for us.

TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING

We can empower children by teaching them how to problem solve. The best way to do this is to seize the teachable moments. Ask questions like, 'What do you think you could do about that?' or 'How did that make you feel?'. Try not to jump quickly to give solutions, your child may just want you to listen. You can help your child evaluate possible options. Teaching kids to solve their own problems gives them ownership over their actions and builds their confidence in their capabilities.

ENCOURAGE A GROWTH MINDSET

It is vital we acknowledge and allow children to feel and explore their feelings whether they be happy or sad. But encouraging a growth mindset can support the development of resilience and belief in one's abilities. A growth mindset is when you hold the belief that you can change, grow and learn rather than having a fixed mindset. It can help develop optimism and faith.

LEAD THEM BACK TO GOD

Our relationship with God is our main source of strength. Through this relationship, we know that we are never truly alone and when we talk and pray to God, we allow ourselves to develop hope and faith and be vulnerable to God's grace in our life. Suffering is a part of being human, and in some ways, we come to know God more when we endure hardship. There are many stories from the bible that tell us of resilient heroes such as Moses, Joseph, Ruth and Mary. Talk with your child about them. You can also share your experiences of how God has helped you through difficult times.

CULTIVATE OPEN COMMUNICATION AND USE ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

Communication is key in any relationship. It's a wonderful thing to develop a bond with a child where they feel they can come and talk honestly to you about their problems and feelings, without feeling judged. Creating moments where they can chat about their day, such as at dinner or before bed, is a great way to improve communication. Chatting about everyday things can make it easier when bigger issues arise. Use active listening skills to let them know that you have heard them, for e.g. you might say, 'It sounds like you felt a bit left out when Mary played with the other kids.'

ACTIVITIES / QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

What is resilience?

Can you think of a time when you were resilient?

Make a list with your parent of all the things that make you special.

Make a list of all the things you are thankful for.

Can you think of people you know who are strong in tough times?

Who are some resilient heroes of the bible? Read some stories from the bible with your parent.

Words to find:

Optimism

Challenge

Daniel

Mary

Ruth

Moses

Jesus

God

Resilience

David

Strong

a	z	c	d	r	b	b	z	c	g	g	f	y	j	p
o	p	t	i	m	i	s	m	u	s	b	m	r	p	f
z	o	a	f	l	u	s	i	y	e	t	f	a	u	d
g	o	d	i	a	c	k	c	g	d	s	r	m	x	r
a	n	z	s	j	j	l	n	v	a	t	e	o	e	a
e	g	n	a	h	d	e	f	p	n	x	b	s	n	f
c	s	i	t	a	l	n	s	w	i	g	c	e	o	g
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