

How You Can Help Your Loved Ones Manage Their Anxiety and Moods

I have struggled with loving others unconditionally when they don't behave the way I like. Have you?

My husband has struggled with anxiety. I would get frustrated with him because of what the anxiety would cause him to think and do. I focused on this annoying behavior.

I would spend a lot of time thinking about what I could do or say to "help him." I would pray for the anxiety to leave and bring him peace. I was genuine about these prayers, but something was off. I still felt like I needed to control him and the anxiety.

If his mood wasn't quite up to how I wanted it, I would approach him and say, "You know, I remember the other weekend when you were in such a good mood. We had so much fun as a family. It would be awesome if you could be that way right now."

Yeah! I told him. He will now become happy. Right? Wrong. Not only is this the wrong approach, but it's also the wrong time, the wrong attitude and it could even potentially lead to an argument. Ecclesiastes 3:7-8 (NIV) says, "There is a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace." It's unintentional and it's not my desire, but my eyes and heart were only seeing from *my* perspective. It was not the lens to lead my husband to receiving healing to the anxiety.

There are many unintentional misses with our loved ones' anxiety and difficult moods. The problem isn't that we aren't

trying but it's that we aren't accurately listening before we speak or do something. We don't always filter our mouths through the Holy Spirit. When I tried to encourage my husband, I wasn't thinking through how it would be received. I was thinking factually and from my point of view. *I would like him to "be happy" for me. Maybe he's in a bad mood because of me. Did I do something wrong?*

I got a revelation from God that I wasn't loving him unconditionally. God was gentle with me and it helped shift me to a new place of loving my husband no matter what. I said out loud, "I love my husband even when he has anxiety." At first it was really hard for me to do because I didn't want to accept the anxiety. However, when I was able to truly believe that I love my husband even *with* the anxiety, the anxiety decreased. When I allowed God's revelation to fuel my thoughts, the enemy's influence on anxiety decreased. I moved into my God-given authority over the enemy.

In Matthew 28:18 (MEV), Jesus says, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." The revelation changed me from within and my prayer strategy changed as well. I saw that my husband and I are not the problem, but the anxiety is.

Many of us go down this road with our loved ones because of our own insecurities and lack of boundaries. We think their mood is our problem to fix. I was looking at my husband and focusing on his "mood" and allowing his mood to influence me. I was interpreting that he wasn't happy based on what I thought when he could actually be content. I think that what is best for him is that I tell him what I think. It's not that he doesn't want my influence or to hear me, but my interpretation isn't seeing him the way God does.

What he would have received most from me was that I not say anything; or that I would focus on my own joyful mood. I can bring the presence of joy; I can shift the environment (if it even needs shifting) with joy. That is encouraging. I am not

in control of his life. What I do have control over is me. What I can do is give him unconditional love consistently and encouragement without any hooks that benefit me.

The best way to help our loved ones' anxiety and moods is be Jesus to them. Listen closely to what the Holy Spirit shows you. It could be to draw a boundary and communicate something difficult like "I will leave the house if you talk like that again." It might actually be advice or a suggestion to meet with a counselor or pastor. It might be to just sit and have a cup of coffee with them. We need to let the Holy Spirit do His job and we be the heavenly vessels.

If you are in crisis, help is available by calling or texting 1-800-273-8255 24/7. You can also visit [. You are loved!](#) {eoa}

Heidi Mortenson *is a licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of Bridging Hope Counseling in Minnesota. She received her Master's in Counseling Psychology from Bethel University. She is currently attending Bethel Supernatural School of Ministry (BSSM) and is ordained through Patricia King's Women in Ministry Network. Her website is [.](#)*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.