



# God Hears Her Podcast

## Episode 38 - Practicing Courage

Elisa Morgan and Eryn Eddy with Dr. Alma

**Dr. Alma:** So basically, like, courage is practiced. It's not I'm courageous or I'm not, to kind of go back to my example of writing a book, like, creativity is also practiced, is not you're creative or you're not. We are made by a Creator. We are creative inherently, you know? But many times I think that we think, "Oh, those courageous people. I don't know how they can do that. It's so scary. I would never..." You know? And it's actually not those big moments that led you to that. It's those little moments along the way, when you didn't know you could speak up, when your emotions maybe were, like, you know, flushing over you, and you didn't speak up that one time. And...and all those times that finally lead you to being able to finally do it. You know? As you keep moving forward and expecting yourself to get there.

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**Voice:** You're listening to *God Hears Her*, a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God hears you. He sees you, and He loves you because you are His. Find out how these realities free you today on *God Hears Her*.

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**Elisa:** Welcome to *God Hears Her*. I'm Elisa Morgan.

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**Eryn:** And I'm Eryn Eddy. And today we will be discussing a variety of topics, including imposter syndrome, how to cope with failure and how to deal with the pressure of expectations, with Dr. Alma.

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**Elisa:** Dr. Alma Zaragoza-Petty was born in Los Angeles, but was raised in Acapulco, Mexico, really, for most of her childhood. She's the daughter of immigrant parents and a first-generation high school and college graduate. She also completed a master's in counseling and a doctoral degree in education. She is led by her desire to inspire others in her community to move past their own fears, their barriers, and to achieve their own life goals.



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**Eryn:** She's the co-founder of *Prickly Pear Collective*, a faith-based, trauma-informed collective, at the intersections of community, church, and therapy, bringing people together to move toward healing. And she's the co-host of *The Red Couch* podcast, with her husband, that most people know as the rapper Propaganda. So, let's get this conversation going with Dr. Alma. This is *God Hears Her*.

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**Dr. Alma:** Both my parents are from Mexico, from southwestern Mexico. My mother is from \_\_\_\_\_, the state of \_\_\_\_\_ and my father...my biological father was from \_\_\_\_\_. And my step-dad, who's raised me since I was 11, he...

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Dr. Alma:** ...is from Mexico City, from the district. So, yeah, I've just have...you know, Mexico heritage, I guess. I mean...

**Elisa:** That's gorgeous.

**Dr. Alma:** Which is itself, like a mixture of, obviously, indigenous and Spanish, from Spain, which is European. But, yeah, that's what I like to say.

**Eryn:** Yeah. Do you have any siblings?

**Dr. Alma:** I do. I have... So I'm the eldest.

**Eryn:** Oh!

**Dr. Alma:** And I definitely act like the eldest, just gonna...just...I'm just gonna say that. I'm just gonna say that. I love bossing people around.

**Elisa:** Just put it out there, yeah. Yeah.

**Eryn:** I love it!

**Dr. Alma:** But yeah, I'm 3 years older than my sister and 4 years older than my brother.



**Eryn:** Yeah, my sisters are...they're 6 and 8 years older than me, and I... I'm curious because I know, just because my sister is 8 years older than me, she had a lot of pressure on herself, growing up, to have certain accomplishments. And I'm curious. You know, just based on just your...your history and...and traveling and...and living in different places and then being the oldest...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...like, was there pressure on you at all to look a certain way or be a role model?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah. Yeah, because my parents were immigrants to this country and they left because they wanted their kids to have a better chance at an education and...and life to be able to move from, you know, working-class, poor background. There was a really big emphasis to do well in school from a very early age. We were rewarded when we did do well. We were chastised when we didn't. It was just very clear early on that you must do well in school. And so that was definitely a pressure that, you know, I took on as the oldest. And thankfully I actually really loved reading as a child. And I used to, like, get engrossed in books for, like, days and, like...which is obviously a great benefit when you're in school, because you need to be able to read and understand and...

**Elisa:** Totally.

**Dr. Alma:** ...write and that's...those are the kinds of things that you get graded on, so I did well. But I think it definitely put a lot of pressure on my siblings to...you know, to...to do a lot. And sometimes it's, you know, lots...decades of college is not what people want, so I get that. Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Dr. Alma:** So...

**Eryn:** But there's a doctor in front of your name, so...

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

**Eryn:** ...tell us a little bit about how that came about. So you clearly loved books growing up and school, so...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah. Yeah. So when I first moved here, I was actually, you know, a little bit ahead of my peers in math. And so I...what I really had to learn was the language and get acclimated with that. And so I did. And it actually felt kind of seamless in about a year or two. I was kind of...



**Elisa:** Wow.

**Dr. Alma:** ...in track with everyone. At that time, California had this program of dual, like, language in schools. And that time it really served well, because I...that's how I learned the language right away. I was every one...you know, like, I had a special teacher, basically, in each class, teaching me. And so it really became kind of my thing. I really enjoyed it. You know, I tied a lot to my identity through also, which, you know, there's, like, some...some not so awesome parts about that, because when...then when you start to, like, not do well, right, it can...it can be very, like, what do you do with your life now? You know? Like, you've do so much of it, and that's been your sort of identity. Like, what do you do? So I definitely had a moment like that, but, yeah, when I started out, I was really encouraged by just different mentors to just keep sort of going. My parents were just glad that I finished high school. In Mexico at that time, you know, education is private, so you had to pay for it if you wanted it. And so they weren't able to afford much of an education. And they were so happy that I was able to get a high school diploma. And then when I went off to college, there was...they were like...they were...you know, they were happy for me, but I...it was also beyond their understanding of, like, "Why? Why are you continuing to do more schooling? Just go get a job. Like, stop doing all that." Like, to them, because of their sort of like worker...like, you know, like, working-class background, they just felt like I was trying to bypass working hard.

**Elisa:** Interesting.

**Dr. Alma:** I was like, "No, no, no..." I was like, "No..."

**Eryn:** Just stay in school longer?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, I was like, "No, work... This is really hard too. It's just different hard," you know? And so...

**Eryn:** That's so fascinating. That makes sense. Yeah, yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** So nobody...nobody in your family really had...had gone on like that...

**Dr. Alma:** No.

**Elisa:** ...right?



**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, no.

**Elisa:** With education.

**Dr. Alma:** I was the first high school, college graduate.

**Elisa:** You're trailblazer.

**Dr. Alma:** Kinda, yeah. In my family.

**Elisa:** Wow.

**Dr. Alma:** It's been... It's definitely did, like, a number on me, which wha...I'm sure we'll get into and just in terms of just, you know... It...it takes a toll on you. It's a lot of work. A lot of years of it. Trying to balance a family, you know. Marriage in the middle of all that. Kids also. So, yeah, after taking a few years after my bachelor's to...to work, I went and got a master's in counseling. And took another few years to continue working in the education field and then decided to get a PhD in educational policy. And so I really look at education from, like, a sociological and pol...like, political perspective. So not so much in the classroom, but as a system and so the inequities and the ways that we could have a better sort of system. So...

**Elisa:** Do you work in that field now?

**Dr. Alma:** I do, yeah. So I work for a non-profit, and I work as a mentor and advisor to current college-goers across the nation. Most of them are in California. They're all first generation, low-income backgrounds as well. So it's a non-profit that, you know, is basically interested in helping the specific population to really, like, just envision themselves going to college, getting a degree, and getting, like, their professional, like, you know, careers going.

**Elisa:** Powerful, yeah.

**Eryn:** Was there a moment when you...when you decided to pivot in your pursuit, cause you were pursuing counseling and then... When you pivoted, what was that thought? Was there a moment...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ...an experience?



**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, I think what it was was reflecting back on my own life, realizing the role of mentors. And that's why I had gone into counseling cause I was...I remember how pivotal, like, certain teachers and counselors were in my own trajectory and just basically letting me know that this was an option for me and encouraging me and, you know, wanting me to see myself in that kind of a place. And so I thought wow, that would be awesome if I could do that for anot...you know, the next generation of folks that are in the same positions and, you know, moving up or...or trying to get into college and that sort of thing. And then I realized, like, wow, there...as I went through my master's program, I realized that it's...the higher I go in my own journey, the less of me there are. Meaning, there's less Latinas, there's less people that are low-income, first-gen background as well.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** And no wonder things don't change because if it's all these people that are not from these backgrounds that doing the policies and teaching and all this, then how do we ever change anything? You know? It just kinda felt like, "Oh, we must change this." You know, the whole system. And so that's kind of what really propelled me into, like, wanting to get a doctorate and...and just wanting to impact at a wider scale. Cause I was like, this is a really big problem. We can't fix it with one person. You know? Like, in... And that's how it felt to me. It felt very limiting as a person. Which, of course, now I've been able to think back and be like, well, no. Because all those people that guided me along the way were so, so pivotal, you know?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** So there's just different ways to impact change. And at that time, that's how I felt, like, I could do more. And so that's what led me to my...my doctoral studies and wanting to be there. But, yeah, even there I think I was one of...I was the only Latina in my cohort. And there was, I believe, like, two other Latinas in the...in the school of education at that time, which was... you know, it was just...just continued sort of the...my...my...what I had tapped into, which was this idea that, like, oh, yeah, there's...the higher there...we go, the less power we can yield around things that affect us the most. And that's...there's something going on there, and I wanna be able to intercede at that pivotal point.

**Elisa:** That takes a...a unique...

**Eryn:** Gosh, that's amazing.

**Elisa:** ...insight, Alma. I've heard you and your husband in your own podcast, *The Red Couch* podcast, talking about how even counseling, even receiving counseling, is a privilege.



**Dr. Alma:** Oh, yes.

**Elisa:** And when you're describing having to pay, private pay for basic education in Mexico, that's very illuminating to us all. You know, I think women, uniquely as well, as some of other races and minorities, you know, have really faced being the only ones in different settings.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** Maybe you could speak to that. I...I just know I was one of six women in seminary 40 years ago. It was a long time ago...

**Dr. Alma:** Wow.

**Elisa:** ...but you know...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...there are a lot of women there now, but you...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...you feel... You know, both your culture and through our gender sometimes when we're going through these doors, we can feel incredibly alone.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** And...and I'm...I'm intrigued by the insight you had and...and the discernment you had to recognize the power you could harness there. Instead of pulling out of it and...

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

**Elisa:** ...disqualifying yourself, because you didn't look like everybody else. Can you talk about that some?

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Dr. Alma:** Yeah. Well, I definitely wanna say that I think as I've stepped in some of these spaces, it has always been with, like, so much, like, fear and trembling. You know? Like, it's never been, like, "I'm gonna be great at this," and, "I'm amazing." You know?

**Elisa:** Wonder Woman.

**Dr. Alma:** It's always been like...

**Elisa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** ...it's always been like, "Oh, shoot, like, do I really need to do this, God? I don't know."

**Eryn:** Yeah, maybe not.

**Dr. Alma:** "Get someone else."

**Elisa:** That's honest. Thank you for saying...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...that. Cause a lot of times we think it's easy for the heroes, and it isn't.

**Dr. Alma:** Right, yeah. And I actually have had to translate this for my teenager too, because, you know, she sees... And one...my therapist actually helped me to see this too, like, imagine being your teenager, like, imagine yourself...like, imagine being basically, like, who your kids are and what they're seeing, who their parents are, and the pressure and the, like, finished product that they're seeing. You know? Who they've become. And imagine now, like, your...that teenager that's still trying to find herself and trying to figure out their place in the world. You know? And I was just, like, "Oh, yeah." It doesn't take me long to get there, because even now I... Right? Like, as professional as, like, accomplished that we've become, there's always, like, this idea of my...of, like, am I really this worthy? And I really cut out for this? Is this really true? Like, you know? Like, there's always kind of...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** ...belief that I think being the only one or feeling like, you know, being the minority in a place can of...often make you question yourself and have those kinds of thoughts about oneself. And so, yeah, I...I...I think about this a lot and how... Even now I...I try to invite my kids and my teenager specifically, because she actually understands this, that, like, you know, I'm in the process of writing a book. And I'm





like this is scary, uncharted territory for me. Like, I've never written a book. You know? I'm not...I don't come from a...a long line of, like, writing books. Like, you know... Like, there's like families that...whose moms or parents or grandparents were writers. I'm like I have no idea, like...

**Eryn:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** This...this is scary and new and...

**Eryn:** Oh,

**Dr. Alma:** It's okay. We can... You know, like, this is the journey where I'm at now and how I'm challenging myself and showing up with courage. And, you know, and as a teenager, it's a...it's a different plight then, but it's still...I feel find so many similarities, right? Like, of...we're constantly in this kind of state of evolving or just, you know, growing, changing.

**Eryn:** I completely... Just side bar, I completely resonate with that, because I just recently published a book.

**Dr. Alma:** Okay.

**Eryn:** And it was the most loneliest experience...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ...I have ever... I mean being isolated in your own thoughts and then you're questioning them as you're typing them out. And you're just like, "None of this is good. Who is going to read this?" You're like...you're like googling...

**Dr. Alma:** So true.

**Eryn:** ...you're looking up dictionaries, and you're reading other books. And you're like, "Their...their sentence and their perspective is way sharper than mine."

**Dr. Alma:** Yes.

**Eryn:** "I'm not that sharp anymore." I think you really...

**Dr. Alma:** Yes.



**Eryn:** And you don't have to write a book to feel this way, but I love what you're saying. It's...it's... When you're in an uncharted area, where there's not many people around you that are in this same space, maybe, there's this feeling unqualified feeling, feeling, like, imposter syndrome, maybe almost?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Of, like, but wait, "This is, you know, maybe this is how I was treated growing up," or, "Maybe this is..."

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ...what somebody said over me," or, "These were my obstacles," or...

**Elisa:** And that imposter syndrome, Eryn, is so good. Because that is, I think, what you're describing, Alma. It's...it's this feeling of, "I'm pretending, and somebody's gonna find out I don't know what I'm doing in 10 seconds. And I'm gonna..."

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Elisa:** You know, there's...the floor's gonna up with a hole, and I'm gonna go down in it. And that... Or there's going to be a hook that takes me off, you know? I'm faking this. And somebody's gonna find out. And it's actually a thing, a thing...

**Dr. Alma:** It is.

**Elisa:** ...that's been studied. And especially women. We go through it. So thank you for talking about it. And, yeah, I think...I think that's what it is. It's... I feel like I'm faking it. But you're saying, Alma, that what we're doing is doing it. We're trying it.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** We're giving it a whirl.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, and sometimes depending on, like...like, your family structure or maybe, like, you're immediate, you know, kind of community, it can also feel... It can be...it could be worse. It could be, like, feeling, like, ridiculous or, like, how dare you? Right? There's that, like, indignant, like, "No, you're not creative." You know, like there's this...this judgement too that can come from folks on what's allowed and



not allowed, by who and when and why. You know? And it...and at the end of the day, like, you have to really just kinda sift through that as, like, "No, that is not how I want to live my life, with that fear of, like, you know, falling, like, flat on my face. If I fall flat on my face, let it be a learning lesson to myself and others...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** ...not a recoiling that needs to happen of myself for the rest of my life because I failed that one time," right? And...and sometimes that's... You know, failure, when we haven't also processed what...how it can be helpful, can also feel like a door shut that must never be opened again. You know?

**Elisa:** So you're really talking about this feeling of...of embarrassment that somebody's going to find out that I don't know...

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

**Elisa:** ...what I'm doing. And then you're adding a layer of potentially judgement, that...that what you're trying to do is not within the boundaries of what a normal female in your culture and your age should be doing, by the way, so you get that put on...

[music]

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

[music]

**Elisa:** ...top of you. and then you might actually, indeed, like we all do, make a mistake, which...

[music]

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

[music]

**Elisa:** ...which can also... This is so helpful. All of those can become barriers to our really stepping into what God has for us.

[music]



**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, definitely.

[music]

**Eryn:** And when we come back, Alma helps us grow in courage and shares a specific moment in her past that she can look back on now and see that God was with her, preparing her, even before she became a Christian. This is *God Hears Her*.

[music]

**Elisa:** Be an even bigger part of the *God Hears Her* community by signing up for our weekly newsletter. Visit [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org) today. That's [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). And now back to our show.

**Eryn:** Now, I don't have kids, but I've watched my sister. She has a very unconventional family, and it's beautiful. And...and I've seen her just press through when people want to judge on how she's raising her kids and... And some people are like, "You're...you're crazy," and other people are like, "Go, you! Stepping out of the box." And so she's got, like, these, like, two different, you know, two different perspectives coming at her.

**Dr. Alma:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Eryn:** And then, like, owning her own identity and stepping into it. How do you do that? How have you done that?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, well, I have to say that I have to credit Maya Angelou with this kinda quote, because she...she was being interviewed by Oprah on her podcast, and she was asked... So Maya Angelou is Oprah's mentor. And I... First of all, I was like, "Uh, can I be Oprah, please?"

**Elisa:** Wow. Yes. Okay.

**Eryn:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Dr. Alma:** She's amazing. She's amazing. I love her. And so she gave an example of herself throwing a party at her home and inviting different people from different walks of life and different backgrounds and, you know, religions and just... You know, she just wanted to have a place to invite all her people. And someone mentioned feeling very uncomfortable that someone was present and that they felt that they shouldn't have been invited or not been there. And her response... Which... What...what the whole topic of [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org)



the conversation was, like, you know, basically, “How did you become courageous?” Like, “How did you...?” Cause Oprah was, like, amazed that...that Maya Angelou, rather than...than trying to please or...or making things be okay, like, she...and...and not be the bad guy, she asked that person to leave. So she asked the person that was uncomfortable with this other person to leave instead of the actual person that was making them...

**Elisa:** Wow.

**Dr. Alma:** ...uncomfortable, right? And Oprah was like, “How did you do that? I would have felt so scared to speak up and to, like, say something and to...” You know, like... And she said it in a way that was, like, both loving, but firm and...you know, from her own place of conviction, right?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** And she said, “Well, you saw a moment in time, but I’ve been practicing for that moment my whole life.” You know? So basically, like, courage is practiced. It’s not I’m courageous or I’m not. You know? It’s... And just like creativity, actually as I’m, you know...to kind of go back to my example of writing a book, like, creativity is also practiced, is not you’re creative or you’re not. We are made by a Creator. We are creative inherently, you know? And so... But many times I think that we think, “Oh, those courageous people. I don’t know how they can do that. It’s so scary. I would never...” You know? And it’s actually not those big moments that led you to that. It’s those little moments along the way, when you didn’t know you could speak up, when your emotions maybe were, like, you know, flushing over you, and you didn’t speak up that one time. And all those times that finally lead you to being able to finally do it. You know? As you keep moving forward and expecting yourself to get there. So, it’s a lot of work.

**Elisa:** Yeah, and a lot of practice. And I wonder...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...if I...I might give an example and...and see if you think this is what you’re talking about, because I want to flesh this out. Sometimes I’ve had to practice it in specific relationships, where I’ve basically been wounded.

**Dr. Alma:** Okay.

**Elisa:** Like, majorly wounded. And on...I haven’t seen the person again, and there’s this great big rift, and there’s nothing I can do about it. I mean I have gone before God, and I’ve, “God, what do You want me to do?” And I have done...written the note or whatever, and nothing’s happened. And what I felt like God was



asking me to do was practice in my head...and that's what this quote is reminding me of...practice in my head, what are you going to do if you do ever run into that person? And I would practice over and over and over and over and over and over and over. Whenever I would start worrying about it, I would instead picture myself opening my arms and extending myself in a...in an embrace, not huge, just a nice one and a "How are you? Good to see you." I've practiced that. And that's a real concrete example. You know, sometimes we don't get to repeat back into specific relationships. They're over and they're done. We have to let them go. But...

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

**Elisa:** ...does that flesh out what you're talking about, Alma, here?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** In terms of practicing courage in the hard things.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, I...I think so. I think that especially in the realm of, like, relationships, you know, tho...those are definitely places where we can practice, just like you said, and also be able to, like, forgive ourselves for if we don't show up the way that we wanted to that one time. And then know that later you have an opportunity to practice that again.

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Dr. Alma:** That's something that I feel like it's definitely practiced and also there's always room for forgiving ourselves and...but still doing better, still being accountable to ourselves and saying, "Let me live up to that expectation that I...that God holds for me, that I hold for myself in, like, honoring others." You know?

**Eryn:** I love that.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** It's...it's having the courage to not conform for somebody else to feel better, like leaning into that discomfort...

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Eryn:** ...and just standing by...



**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...it and giving yourself compassion along the way and giving compassion to other people along the way, that they're also learning.

**Dr. Alma:** Right.

**Elisa:** I'm just so struck by, Alma, how you're pointing out how many people shape us if we let them, if we listen to what's happening. You know, you've talked about your daughters. You've talked about your parents. You've talked about mentors. You've talked about the judges. You've talked about those who were not like you in certain circles. And what I'm really struck by is how receptive you have been, how open you have been (I'm not saying it's easy) but to take in and to learn about yourself and to lovingly accept what you're being informed of. I'm thinking maybe God shaped that in you somehow. Can you speak to that? How that was...

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...how you got to be that way?

**Dr. Alma:** Honestly, I wonder too, how many times I didn't listen though. Because for a long time I also was like, "All right, God, where You at? I can't hear You, via people or directly. What's going on?" You know? And I think I was also, like, not listening because it wasn't what I wanted to hear. So I wasn't attuned to that. You know? And I was like, "La, la, la. Can't hear You."

**Elisa:** Yup. That's... Yup.

**Dr. Alma:** But, you know, in terms of my temperament, I'm very nonjudgmental, like, even as a girl, I remember I was very confused by the judgement of...of adults. Like, I remember when adults had things to say about me. I was utterly confused. I was like, "Wow. Why do you have such a negative opinion?" You know? Or, "Why don't you see, like, the splendor of, like, how the world is and, like, the creativity?" You know? Like, I definitely have an attunement to that via nature. I think God and just being raised in, like, a very tropical place in Mexico, where I was barefoot often and taking showers outside. You know, I just kinda have, like, an attunement to that.

**Eryn:** That's a wonder. You have, like, a childlike wonder.



**Dr. Alma:** I do. Yeah, I think I do have a childlike wonder about a lot of stuff, where I'm just like... Everything is always so dramatic and impressive to me. And I'm just like, "Calm down. Not everything is \_\_\_\_." You know? But I want it to be.

**Eryn:** I love that. I totally understand that. So... Well, I have a question in regards to that, because you said, you know, it wasn't that sometimes that you couldn't hear God, but maybe that you didn't want to listen. And...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ...I went through a really hard season of life. I've shared previously. I went through a divorce. And there's just a lot of stuff that came catapulting forward. All my baggage just came flying forward that I had to, you know, deal with and process and understand more of. But when I look back, I can actually see moments of when I could hear from God that at that time I was just like, "Where are You? I can't hear You. I don't see You. I don't know You. I feel like I don't know You." And I just...I...I felt so far away from Him. But it was really He was always right there. That was a...a traumatic circumstance that I went through that allowed me to start to be able to process and come to Him with my honest thoughts and, you know, start that journey of being able to...to hear Him and...and walk with Him in a way that I've never walked before. I'm curious for you, like, was there a moment that you were like, "Ah..." Was there a moment or was it a collection of moments? What was it for you to position your ears to acknowledging that God hears you and you can hear Him?

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah, I think a lot of it came from, honestly, my own sort of inner healing. I think... I'm not sure if I shared by bio with you all, but I've...I've come from a pretty...just rough childhood. There was, like, a lot of just growing up in poverty with...you know, just working-class background, poor background and then also, you know, just generational trauma of just...that comes with that, right? Like, it's just...it's not like these things are isolated. They're all kind of co-exist. And there's just a lot of stress and... Because of that, the...there's just a lot of ways that people react to their environment and to others. And so through my own, just, work and healing is how... There was one activity in particular, which I feel like anyone can do. Is we had to, like, look back at our...whatever...whatever part of your life you want to look back at and really start to...especially if it's like a painful part, you know, of your life, and start to, yes, talk a...you know, like, bring up all the stuff that's really hard and that...that was really, like, just difficult about that. But also try to see if you can find how God did speak to you through that time. So it was initially really hard because you have to face, sort of like, your demons and your, like, the scariness and the hurt and the trauma. Sometimes when you have to visit those kinds of, like, maybe, like, different stages of your life. But I have found through, you know, just all of my therapy and just my own healing that the more you face it, the less scary it becomes and the less power it has over you. And the more you can see, like, those...the light that was there too basi... You know? So, like the days that...like, "Oh, yeah, that was





really..." So for instance, like I have an example of...which I love giving the story because I'm still kind of, like, that was so crazy. When I was a teenager... I mean first of all, teenage angst and just, you know, all that comes with teenagerhood is...

**Elisa:** Absolutely.

**Dr. Alma:** ...already hard.

**Elisa:** Eryn's still there, right. She's raising her hand.

**Eryn:** I'm there. I'm there with you.

**Dr. Alma:** And so...so on top of that, like, you know, we have all these, like, factors that are just created out of a very stressful home. And I'm just, like, I just have this vivid memory of myself, like, being in my room and feeling kind of, like, lonely or, like, just alone. And I remember even thinking that...at that time, as I'm looking at my wall, and in my wall my m...my mom, she used to collect... Do you guys know who Precious Moments are? Like, the cartoon...?

**Elisa:** Sure. Sure.

**Dr. Alma:** Okay. So back in the 90s these things were...

**Elisa:** Back in the days. Yeah.

**Dr. Alma:** These things were so...the hot item that all the moms had.

**Elisa:** Oh, my gosh, yes.

**Eryn:** You go to, like, the Hallmark store to get them.

**Dr. Alma:** Yes. And then Mex...then Mexican moms that were brown bought these little, like, white cherub-looking...

**Elisa:** Oh, gosh, yes.

**Dr. Alma:** ...kids and the posters of them. And so we had...

**Eryn:** So great.



**Dr. Alma:** ...like, two little plaques of these, you know, like, Precious Moments. And they have Scripture written on them. So they...there's, like, "He leads me to green pastures." And I remember thinking when I did this exercise the first time, I was just, like, "Oh, my gosh. I was reading Scripture in that time." I wasn't even a believer at that time. I never thought about how that was, like, God giving me a promise, you know, like, of just leading me to still waters and... Reading the whole verse now, I'm just like, "Oh, my gosh," like, God was speaking but it through this weird cherub-looking, like, poster thing in my room that my mom put up for whatever reason, you know?

**Elisa:** Makes me feel better that some of those cheesy things I did for my kids maybe got through, but anyway, yeah. Oh, geeze.

**Dr. Alma:** I know, right?

**Elisa:** That's awesome.

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** So you're saying look back at a specific situation that maybe was painful and look for God in it and bring it out.\

[music]

**Dr. Alma:** Yeah.

[music]

**Elisa:** That's so powerful.

[music]

**Eryn:** I mean this whole...this whole conversation is courage. I mean it's like the courage to not conform and the courage to have conversations and the courage to face health...healthy ways of conflict and the courage to give yourself compassion and the courage to look back and...and see God in your circumstances then and what you are experiencing now. I just think that is...that has just been interwoven in this conversation this entire time, and I just love that so much.

[music]



**Eryn:** Conversations on courage are always so good for my soul. I'm so grateful for our time with Dr. Alma. This is *God Hears Her*.

[music]

**Elisa:** And before we close out today's episode, just a quick reminder that the show notes are available in the podcast description. The show notes not only contain the talking points for today's episode, but you'll also find a link to connect with Eryn and me on social. So check out the show notes on our website, [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org).

**Eryn:** The show notes also contain a link to sign up for the *God Hears Her* newsletter, featuring helpful articles and stories from women just like you, who are discovering what it means to be seen and heard by God.

[music]

**Elisa:** Thanks for joining us. Don't forget God hears you. He sees you, and He loves you because you are His.

[music]

**Eryn:** Today's episode was engineered by Ann Stevens and produced by Daniel Ryan Day and Mary Jo Clark. And today we also want to recognize Barry and Kathy for their help in creating and promoting this episode of the *God Hears Her* podcast. Thanks, friends.

[music]

**Elisa:** *God Hears Her* is a production of Our Daily Bread Ministries.