



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 182 Raising Teens with Amy Betters-Midtvedt Eryn Eddy Adkins & Vivian Mabuni with Amy Betters-Midtvedt

[Music]

Amy: You've thought about connection. You have thought about your kid. You've involved them in the conversation. And you are like, this is just a hard pass for me. This is just going to be a no. I can handle your reaction. They need you to be able to handle it. You have to be the thing that's strong, cause they are not. And so when they try to hit at that boundary and you don't cave, it's actually creating additional safety for them in most instances.

Elisa: You're listening to *God Hears Her*, a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God hears you. Join our community of encouraging one another and learning to lean on God through Scripture, story, and conversation at godhearsher.org. God hears her, seek, and she will find.

Vivian: Well I'm ex...so excited about today's episode. We have a wonderful guest, Amy Betters-Midtvet. And she is an author of a great title of a book. It's *You'll Make It and They Will Too*.

Eryn: I love that title.

Vivian: So just a little bit of background about Amy. She is a contributing author for *Today Parenting* with more than a million readers. And she has 25 years of experience working with adolescents and families. She has a Master's degree in leadership curriculum and instruction, but probably her biggest like, you know, real life situation is she is a mother of three. 5m married to her husband Todd. And Amy, we are just thrilled to have you on *God Hears You*.

Eryn: Yes.

Vivian: So welcome.

Amy: I am so excited to be here, you guys. Thank you so much for having me. This is just such a treat. I'm so excited.

Eryn: Oh



Vivian: Well, we're excited to dive into this whole topic of raising teens. Everyone take a deep breath. It's a whole thing.

Amy: It's a whole thing.

Vivian: Eryn, I know you're going to be taking a lot of notes yourself.

Eryn: Oh yeah.

Amy: I'm feeling you right now. I'm feeling you right now. Yeah.

Vivian: But before we get into that chunk of, you know, talking through that, we would love to kind of hear some of your backstory, like, some of your background. Why is faith important to you, and some of your spiritual journey.

Amy: Oh, that's just like such a grounding, important thing to give context, I think, to the whole conversation, right? Um, so I actually was brought up Catholic, a Catholic school girl, retreat leader of all time when I was growing up, like that was it, right? Like, can you give me a retreat and a talk? Really faith has been just at the center of all the things for me and is...and raising kids was no different. It's like it was so important for me to instill this faith in my kids from very, very little on. And then as they grew, they ended up being people with their own ideas about what faith was, right? So they have been some of my biggest faith teachers. So my faith journey with them has just continued. And I feel like it has blossomed and been taken apart and put back together in all these brand-new ways that actually have made my faith stronger, as well as the only thing to lean on in some of the hardest moments parenting teens is...has been Jesus. It's been like on my...like, I will tell you raising teens has brought me to my knees. And really those moments where I am outside these doors, they do not want to let me in, knowing that Jesus is on the other side. And I can just be like, all right, I can't be there. Can You please be there? And He is. And somehow, He's also with me on the other side of the door at the same time. Right? Like it's just like this whole miracle. And so that has really...I couldn't have gotten through without that. And so that's just been really challenging and strengthening at the same time.

Eryn: Could you share maybe from the 50,000-foot view to the five-foot view of what that looks like in parenting and maybe if there's a memory that you can share? What was that moment like being on your knees on the other side of the door?



Amy: Sure, sure, absolutely I mean it is so clear to me and I actually had a kid that was so in the weeds and it had just gotten dire. And there was very little communication coming from this kid. And I, you know, having five kids, they're all very different. This one is a deeply personal...sharing is not going to be the thing that helps this person. And that's very difficult for me because I'm a talker. I want to, let's just talk it out. We can talk it out. I need to know all the things. And those weren't being shared, which heightened that anxiety for me.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: I remember...

Eryn: Cause you're probably guessing.

Amy: I'm guessing.

Eryn: You're trying to guess it.

Amy: And my brain is going to worst case scenario.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: Like, this is the most...

Eryn: You're probably overwhelming them, too, cause they're like [inaudible].

Amy: Oh, a hundred percent. Because, like, I actually, after this situation ended, that was the feedback. Like, every time you came at me, my anxiety just ramped. Right? And I'm thinking I'm bringing comfort. So that door is just closed. And I did not know what to do, so I brought my blanket and my pillow to the door of this kid and just laid there. And I thought if they need something and they try to leave this room, I am right... I'm right...literally right here, right? Like I...this is...like I know you don't want to listen to me. I know you don't want to talk to me. I can't be with you, but I can be in front of this door. And it just felt like what I needed to do. And I can remember just praying just deeply, like, *Please, dear God, be with this kid and please speak to their heart and You can know what they need. I don't get to know, but You know what they need* and having a visual of Jesus actually like being God, being with my kid. And then also in my heart, I heard like, *I've got you too. I've got you too. I am right here with you too.* It was such a strong moment where I was able to surrender, because I had been trying to control the whole thing, with my



words and my actions. And I was trying to fix it, and you can't fix it. And so just knowing if I surrender this to God and knowing that He loves this kid in a way I can't even understand. And I love this kid so much. How could this surpass me? Right, like we can't as a human like even intellectualize that but to feel that in my heart that that was true and that felt that love was also there for me. And it got me through that night. Because in that...that moment, I felt the most alone I'd ever felt in my life. I have a husband who is wonderful and parenting alongside me does not worry in the same way I worry, typically, right? I don't know, but they're different, like, worry meters. And I felt like nobody else had a kid that was in this. Like, nobody else was feeling this. It was just me. Everybody else's kids seemed fine. Everything I was seeing is everybody else's killing it. And I am here in this moment and I have nothing. But that, in that surrender is where I'm really giving my kid what they need, right? I am giving them room to fail, to feel their hurt, and to know they can work through it. And hopefully I've laid some prayer foundation where they can feel that as well. And I know I've had...I've had kids come back to me and tell me that they felt those prayers or have prayed on the other side, even when they're bucking it. So it is just those deep moments of good Lord, this has only got to be me. And it's not. It's absolutely not.

Eryn: Yeah, so good.

Vivian: Okay, so tell us, you have five kids. What are their ages currently?

Amy: Currently they are 13, 17, 19, 21, and 23, and as a bonus this year, they're all living at home.

Eryn: Woo.

Vivian: Woo! Well, Amy, you are living it.

Amy: Absolutely.

Vivian: And, you know, one of the things that I've learned as I've been a friend, and as I've been in a 12-step group before, so, you know, just unsolicited advice is one of those things that is not very helpful for our teens, for our friends, for future reference when we are mothers-in-law or whatever, just unsolicited advice, right?

Amy: So true.

Vivian: But we're here talking about teens, and Eryn, and I are soliciting advice.



Amy: Okay, great.

Eryn: Yes.

Vivian: So we are asking you, Amy, from your experience, from what you have learned from your own parenting and from what you've observed, like what's some nuggets of advice that you kind of like anchor yourself in and you would give to someone who asks you, like us?

Amy: One of my biggest anchors is wondering in my mind, as I'm making a step forward, and I've learned this through trial, so I'm going to say this, and know like, there's a million times I didn't do this, so that's why I know it works, okay? So...so like I am like standing on a, like picture me standing on a heap of my failures, and now I can tell you, okay, from all this stuff, here's what I'm holding on to, and here's what is...is working for us. Is every move...is this going to keep me in connection and relationship with my teenager? And that lens drastically changes things. That's the first one, right? If I'm pushing them away, am I...or am I keeping them in this space? So when you talk about unsolicited advice, that's a push, that's not going to keep you in connection, right? Like, you can actually physically sometimes watch my kids walking away and trying to get their arm on the bedroom door so they can get back away from me. Right? Because it...cause it is me just imparting this wisdom and they have...they have no need of it because they already have their wisdom. Right? And so I, sometimes I enter into a conversation. I just did this with my daughter the other day. Like I fully expect honey, that you are not going to listen to 90 percent of what I'm about to say. Right? And, but she kind of approached me first. So I knew she was kind of listening and I wanted to just be like, oh my gosh, here's the answer. Here's exactly what you should do. I know. But no, that's not going to keep me in connection. What is going to connect her to me in this relationship in this moment so that our hearts can kind of be together. And so that's why I love...I love you so much. I'm going to tell you some of the things I can see from 20 years down the road from you, 25 years down the road from you, I really don't want to say the number because it's big. But, you know, I'm this far out, and I can see these are the things that, if it were me, I would want to be thinking about, or I would wish I thought about. And that's it, you take it or leave it. You take those things or leave it. And I know, I ultimately, I want you to listen to what's in your own heart. Like God has put a voice inside of you. That actually even overrides mine because sometimes mine's going to speak fear, right? And then just saying, what does that sound like to you in this moment? Like do you feel like that is, works for you, doesn't work for you? Like what is your reaction to that? Do you want to think about it longer? I don't know. Like this is just what I'm giving you.

Eryn: Yeah.



Amy: And just putting that trust back in them and letting them know, whatever it is, you're gonna own the outcome of this decision. I trust that you're going to do the best that you can right now with this. And it's a very different way of approaching as opposed to like, all right, this...you should not be doing this. This is absolutely the wrong choice. Here's why. Here's what I'm worried about. Here are all the things. Like, you can actually feel those words break your connection, whether it's a big thing or a small thing. You know, that's a thing with my older kid. With a small, like I have a 13-year-old boy. So everybody needs to pray for me right now for like at least 30 seconds, because it is really hard.

[laughter]

Amy: It's really, really hard to stay in connection with your 13-year-old when you pick him up from tennis every day and he's dripping with sweat and you say, "Oh honey, you look so hot. Actually, I'm really cold." Okay, okay. Right, like where are we finding the connections?

Eryn: That's good. You know, I will say, I have said this many times and I don't mean this in a degrading way, so we can delete it if we...if that is the case, but children are like creatures. They are like...they are little wild creatures that you're...you're watching develop into...into an adult.

Amy: Yes.

Eryn: And adults are also creatures too, but you're watching because they don't have that...

Amy: No, no.

Eryn: ... part of their brain formed.

Amy: The brain has not used yet. And sometimes I think it's like sizzling up there...

Vivian: For real.

Amy: ...in this really weird way, like there's like weird misfires...

Eryn: Yes.

Amy: ...coming and happening and...and they're just trying to make it through their day. They have no idea who they are. They're trying to figure it out constantly. I mean, I work for...in a middle school, you



guys. Like it's the whole...and in high school, so I see, it's like just primming and you're right, it's like watching creatures develop and it's really hard. And you...you...you just somehow build this connection that's gonna last a lifetime, right?

[laughter]

Amy: Sometimes that feels like a big ask.

Vivian: Okay, so number one, build a connection. What's your next one?

Amy: My second one is really this idea of, I talk about it as noticing and naming in the book. And really what it is...and it's, we use it in education all the time, it really is this idea of you're ascribing this most positive intent to your kid. My 13-year-old, when he says that, I'm ascribing the most positive intent, right? I just realize his frontal lobe is not ready.

Eryn: What'd you say? Positive intent?

Amy: Positive intent. So it's like they're...assume the most positive thing about your kid. And then, right?

Eryn: Ooh.

Amy: We are...we are assuming every kid wants to be good. Every kid wants to please you. Every kid wants to succeed. That's really...it's really true. Like, research-based, that's true. And so we have to notice and name those things that we see, those moments when they are doing that, so that they know we see it. Now, my every instinct is to walk into a disgusting bedroom and say, this bedroom is disgusting. You are a wreck. What is happening? Like, or to like, I've got a lot of neurodivergence in my house. I've got kids that have got missing assignments, messy backpacks. Like, you are missing every assignment. Like how are you even going to make it through? Like I do not understand, right? So like, that's your instinct. Okay, that you can also see is not going to bring connection. And it also is like naming this identity to our kids indirectly. Like you are a mess. You cannot do this. You are in big trouble, right? And so instead, what we want to do is find those moments, and sometimes it means ignoring some things. There are hills I no longer die on. The bedroom is actually a hill I no longer die on. It's not worth my time. It's not worth my connection. But it is instead noticing, like, okay, so sit back and look at your kids. And you could do this right now, and you think about the things that are wonderful about them. No human, no adult wants to walk into a room where someone is about to lecture you on all the things you are not doing right. And somehow, we feel like we are entitled to do that with our teens. And mostly it's, we're like trying.



We're trying to help them, right? But it's not. So instead we're going in and we're saying like, man, okay, and like this, man, I notice you are so into this video game. Like tell me about it. And noticing you are a huge problem solver. I can tell like you are really into this because you love to problem-solve. You are so good at figuring things out. This is absolutely amazing, right? And then I also notice that you're able to do that in other ways, which is really cool. And so sometimes I then piggyback off that later and say like, you know, we were...you are the best problem solver, and this kitchen needs to be clean. I'm just putting you in charge. You figure out how that has to be done. I have such faith in you. And sometimes they'll...they'll roll with it. Sometimes they'll grumble, but it is like I am naming the good in you. I am naming like if you are constantly wanting to be on the phone with your friends...

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: ...[inaudible] you are the best friend. I notice how you are there for your friends all the time. It is so amazing. You are...could you though, we're gonna have dinner. I need you to pause that and like let your friends know if this is an important time for them. Like you're just gonna be off the grid for a couple hours. Right? And then you'll be able to come back to those relationships.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: And you know what? I love how you also bring that to our family. So we're just naming whatever that good thing is that we can see in our kids. And we are reinforcing it and transferring it into those other situations where we might be a little more in the weeds, and naming what a great friend you are and what you're doing and then asking you to kind of just pause that and come over to us is such a different vibe than like, I cannot look at you on the phone for one more second. Turn that off. I'm taking it away. I can't take it. I'm locking it up.

Vivian: Right.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: And if my kids listen to this, like, they will all be like, sometimes you do that, Mom. Hundred percent I do. I'm a human person. You guys aren't perfect, and neither am I. So there are going to be times we're course correcting that, but that is like when you talk about that pillar inside, that connection and that positive intent; those things really go together to keep us, you know, maybe into that umbrella rock of like being in this relationship with this human person that you want them to come back to for their whole lives.



Vivian: Yes.

Eryn: I love...

Vivian: Oh, that's beautiful.

Eryn: ...I love speaking into identity, how you said, I think you just have to be really intentional with even the small acts and the big acts of speaking into identity.

Vivian: It seems like in the teen years, it can be times when the parents are pushed away...

Amy: Oh, yes.

Vivian: ...because they're actually naturally supposed to be splitting.

Amy: Yes.

Vivian: And so it's a good thing. It's hard for the mom.

Amy: It's hard!

Eryn: [inaudible] yeah.

Vivian: But in the same way, like in developmental psychology, we understand that two-year-olds need to learn no...

Eryn: Yes.

Vivian: ...need to learn to get off of the lap and start to explore the world. And in the teen years is really the individualization of the growing into an adult. So it's...it's actually a wonderful process. We don't...we ultimately don't want them living in our basement...

Amy: Really don't.

Vivian: ...all the days of their life as much as we love them. We want to teach independence to our teens but not give them total free range.



Amy: And that's really hard, because I went into this like as a rule following kid. I was like, well, let's lay down the rules. We're good to go. And then the...the first person was like, awesome, those are the things I'm supposed to actually do. Let me break all those rules. Right? And then trying to figure out, and then I'm like, well, I'll just ground you for...I...I talked about in the book. I'm just gonna ground you for three months. And then she's gonna back...and come back and be like, cool. I wanted to work on my art anyway. Right? So...so which is like...

Eryn: Yes.

Amy: ...right?

Eryn: Oh my goodness, that's so true.

Amy: It's like true story. That's how it went out. So I was like, okay, how are we gonna work this? And as it turns out, the second kid's different. And so is the third. And so is the fourth. So what I found is, like, your boundaries, it's just like dealing with, like, anybody you have in your life. We have different boundaries around different relationships and different things. Now with our teens, we're helping them develop. We're trying to give each kid enough freedom to make some mistakes and learn from them when they're in a place that's their soft place to land. So we have to give them some freedom. We can't just like ground them for three months and be like, now I'm just gonna keep you home forever because you're making mistakes. No, like, sorry, that did not work. But not too much where they're really getting out there into some things that...that they're in over their head for that decision making. Every one of my kids needed something different. And so I had to be honest with them up front, like, we're not, like, I remember my second kid saying, what's the rule for my curfew? Well, your rule for your curfew is...may actually be later than your older sibling. Because the older sibling has tested all the boundaries, has done all the things, like has gone off the grid, has just, you know, it just really is. We had some wild times. And we talk in my family about the bank of trust. So when you break an agreement, like to say you're gonna be home at noon or at midnight, you're not home at midnight, you have withdrawn from the bank of trust. And every time you withdraw, you have less trust in there and then your boundaries shrink. So if you can't come home at 12, I had to go get, I actually had to show up at a bonfire, like in my pajamas and take a child home. Right? Cause I...we were, more, and all the kids, plus...

Vivian: Mortifying all of them.

Amy: ...I like teach in this district, right? So it's like I know all the kids. They're like, "Hi, Ms. Betters." Like, hi, kids that are still at a bonfire. And...and my daughter, who like, I did do the walk of shame to my car,



which was humiliating. Right? But that was like, my...the bank of trust was legitimately empty. There was none left. And so that's...it was in debt. You are in debt. You are coming home and your curfew's nine o'clock until you...you know, and then it'll be 9:30, 10:00, 10:30. So then your sibling who is just like more like me, like, okay, I'm supposed to be home at 10:00, I'm at home at 9:58, right? Like, it's just like, she's like putting deposits in that bank of trust like crazy, so you might be out later. And that's just the way it is. You know, that's really kind of that idea. If we're trying to teach them to be in relationship, there's consequences to not living up to what you say you're going to do but also involving them in that. So it's not like this arbitrary, when you're this age, you're home at this age. And I made the rule, and that's what it is. It's really like because different situations I found call for different things too. Then all of a sudden someone's asking you like, can I go here for the weekend? I just didn't even know that was the thing people did. And...and, right? And so you're like, I don't know if you can go away.

Vivian: Right, right.

Amy: I don't know if you can. So like we're...let's talk about what all the pieces. It's not like a yes or no. It's what's happening? Okay, there's no parents there, and like a 16-year old's driving. That's no.

Vivian: Yeah.

Amy: But you know, whatever it is, we're trying to figure out if it's a yes or no with you in relationship based on who you are and what the risk is involved, that's perceived. And we're not always gonna agree. And so sometimes you're going to be like, I 100 percent could handle this. But I'm looking at the vantage point of experience. So at the end, you know, you live here. It's probably my car, whatever it is, but it is like, you know, that's the boundary. The boundary for you is this. And then go from there and hope that, um, you know, there's moments where we are and just not...we're in disagreement and it's super uncomfortable like disagreements are. And a lot of times I want to be like, I want to repair this relationship right away by saying, Oh, well, how about instead we'll all go to dinner. No, we have to be able to sit in it and work through it to the other side of like we just sat in a disagreement. Like I trust we're going to come out the other side. Our relationship is strong enough to make it through this conflict

Eryn: I think it's getting on that, like having that headspace of our relationship will be stronger. Because I feel like when you're in the midst of the muck of laying down the boundary and having the emotional response be so...

Amy: Oh yeah.



Eryn: ...heightened, what would you speak into that? Because that's like, that's so hard to decipher between like, is my boundary literally severing this connection because this child is going insane by the boundary? Or is it that I need to stick strong to this? Like, how do you find that...that groove?

Amy: Some of it's trial and error. I, like, and I will...I will say I g...I messed this up.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: With my first, what I call my first pancake in the book, my oldest, right?

Vivian: Right, the first pancake.

Amy: Daughter...the first pancake, you're trying to like make this pan, and it's just like...

[inaudible]

Amy: ...you don't have quite any of it, right? And then like...

Vivian: Yes.

Amy: ...the second pancake's so much better because you're all adjusted. So uh, you know, I...

Eryn: And you don't put enough Pam or butter on to flip it.

Amy: Yeah, right, and it's like sticking, and it's the whole, it's a whole thing. And then that second pancake, you're like, I got it, right? And so it's...it's, some of it is, you just like to give yourself the grace to mess up and then also now like when you say heightened emotion it...you're exactly right. To really understand emotions will be heightened And they're...you are gonna have a kid who says they hate you. They can't wait to get rid of you. Those words will come out of their mouths. But we have to be, if you are really you have gone through like, you've thought about connection, you have thought about your kid, you've involved them in the conversation; and you are like, this is just a hard pass for me. This is just going to be a no. I can handle your reaction. They need you to be able to handle it. You have to be the thing that's strong cause they are not. And so when they try to hit at that boundary and you don't cave, it's actually creating additional safety for them in most instances, right?

Vivian: Yes, yes.



Amy: They learn that your love can hold, and I will say that, like, I can absolutely handle this relation this...this reaction you are having. You are entitled to your feelings. You are entitled to feel like you hate me right now, and that is absolutely okay. Right now, I don't feel the best about you either, to be honest, right? Like, this has been a hard conversation, and you've said some things that have hurt my feelings, but I love you so much, and I believe in this boundary so much that it's fine. Like, when you come out the other side and are ready to talk to me, that's great. And I've had kids who have disappeared for days, right?

Eryn: Wow. That's...

Amy: Like, they don't want to talk for a long time.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: It stinks. It's terrible. And I hate it. But it's my job.

Eryn: Honestly, I think somebody listening feels very freed to hear that.

Amy: Good.

Eryn: Being a parent to a teenager can be...it feels very lonely.

Vivian: So lonely.

Eryn: Um, because you...cause you feel like it reflects the type of person that you are by how your child is responding.

Amy: It's a hundred percent true.

Vivian: Right. What you're talking about, Amy, is just the longing.

Amy: Yes.

Vivian: Because everything that you've described to me communicates life skills.

Eryn: Yes.



Vivian: Because this is about learning to work it out with your roommates.

Amy: Yes.

Vivian: This is about working it out with your spouse one day

Amy: Amen.

Eryn: So true.

Vivian: So this is modeling that there can be conflict and it's not all bad, that we can work it through. And it just sets the child with a lot more security, I think, to see it come out the other side and to know that connection is worthwhile...

Amy: [inaudible]

Vivian: ...that boundaries are a good thing.

Amy: Yes.

Vivian: And now I know how to give a boundary as well. And that will, I think in many ways protect, especially young women.

Amy: Yes.

Vivian: But sometimes when women have never experienced boundaries, or they don't know that they can have a boundary, that they can then be taken advantage of. And so to have a mom...this is where I realize that for me, my biggest mistakes were when I was so stretched out thin, my own dysregulation, where I am completely losing it. And had I maybe taken a nap in the middle of the day or something...

Amy: Amen, amen.

Vivian: ...where I could just kind of like, I definitely leaned on my girlfriends. And so I'm thankful that I had some women that I could you know, scream and cry with not to the kids. But I...I just wonder you know with five, were there any helpful tips just for getting centered yourself so that you weren't the crazy mom?



Amy: Yes, absolutely...that's 100 percent true. And I was a very like conflict-averse person, extremely reactive, tended to be when I was dysregulated. It was like, that's it. I'm grabbing a garbage bag and throwing everything away. You know, like...like that...that and that was not serving me. And a lot of times it was, that's what I needed. I needed some kind of grounding. So truly like finding the thing and the time, like I have become a person that my parents still can't believe it, because I was like the kid you couldn't get out of bed. I am up at 4 47 in the morning and I do a little meditation. That's when I listen to my Bible. That's when I do my yoga. And I, if I don't start the day, my family can actually tell. They'll be like, I can tell you didn't do your yoga this morning, Mom. Yeah, a hundred percent. You're right. I am off the wall. Thank you for reminding me, right? So and like I need to take a...I need to take a hot minute. Cause we've worked for...to identify that.

Eryn: Yeah.

Amy: And given them the freedom to say, like, take a breath. And that's a boundary they set too. Like, I don't...like I don't think you're ready to talk about it either, Mom. You are correct. Um, so finding that moment for me, that's what it is. I got myself a therapist when I was parenting teens because I needed help regulating myself. I could not do it. I didn't have the right tools. So working through that, to get myself very regulated, one of the tools she gave me was like the worst time of my day is after school, before dinner, has been since they were little, still is as teens. If I'm going to go off the rails, it's between four and six. I will guarantee it. And she's like, well, then why are you engaging with your people in this manner between four and six? Why is that like the hill you're dying on? Don't do it. She's like, go...come home. My kids are old enough. They're teenagers. You don't need to watch them. Right? Who cares if Sam is playing a video game for 45 minutes. Who cares if Kate is scrolling and making Pinterest boards? I don't care. I am gonna lay down and play my Hay Day Farm on my phone, maybe, or I'm gonna watch a dumb show. She's like, you don't...don't do anything productive. Take that hat off and just let yourself be a person. Read, lay there and stare at the ceiling, whatever it is. I take that little bit of time to regulate myself. That was really hard for me to be...give permission to do. I felt like a good mom after school, like checked their homework, made sure people had a snack, got dinner ready, kept the train moving. And that's not what a good mom has to do. A good mom needs to be, like, regulated and healthy.

Eryn: Yes.

Amy: Right? So they can actually, like, do any of those things. We deserve that. Our family just...if you have to think about it in a giving way, cause it's really hard sometimes for us to say we deserve it, if you have to make that transition by thinking of other people, you can think your family deserves to have a regulated mom. Right? If that helps you get there, ultimately, people who are listening, you just deserve it



cause you're a human on the earth. You just deserve care and love and quiet and time and peace because you are human in the world. You don't have to be cultivating that for everybody else every minute. You just get it. Okay? So listen to that message. You just get it and give it to yourself. And the side benefit is everybody benefits. It's the same thing. Like I will tell my teenagers still like when they were two, like, have a snack. Why don't you...why don't you have a snack and go lay down? Why don't you just put on a show that you love right now? Like, let's just stop the madness. Let's take a break before it's all escalated. And do that for yourself. Like I talk about shower, sleep, and snacks, right? For our kids. Like, I'm one who just like, I'm just gonna take a shower now. Great, water is the key. So do those things. Give yourself that permission and get...and get yourself in a better headspace. It's okay to let it sit. Never is anything an emergency. There's...it's not an emergency to figure out pretty much any question with a teenager. It can all be fixed later.

Eryn: Yes, that's good.

Vivian: I love it. This has been such a wonderful conversation. And we would just love it if you could just pray us out and just pray for those parents of teens from your well of experience and your passion for them.

Amy: I have little prayers at the end of every chapter of the book.

Eryn: Oh yeah, read one of those.

Amy: This one is about letting go. But I know a lot of parents right now too that are listening might have kids that have been in transitions, that have left. And it can be hard to listen to this too, if your kids are gone and you're thinking about what I could have done. Right? And we want to think there's still a lot we can do. Okay? So this prayer is kind of around that. *Dear Lord, please hold our children close as we leave them in all the places and drive away as they walk into dorms and apartments and have to do life on their own. Let our hugs not be too crushing and let our tears not make them worry that we think they won't survive. Rather, let them know that those tears mean they are truly and deeply loved. Help us drive away and not swing back around because we forgot something when we really just want to see them for one more second. Help us in the dead of the night when we are thinking about all the things we forgot to say. Help us realize that they know enough to get through and that we can always call them tomorrow to remind them how much detergent to put in the wash and to be sure they have enough pillows. When they are really sad and homesick, help us discern whether it is a real problem, or they just need time to get themselves into the new world. Let us support them from afar and pray over them from our own homes. I believe our prayers can stretch just like our hearts. Help us guide them where we can and remind them*



that we are there for them no matter what weird thing happens while they are away. Love them for us, Lord, in the night when they are lonesome, as You always guide them in Your footsteps and not in those of the person down the hall going to the parties. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

[music]

Eryn: Raising teens can be such a hard season of life. I'm in the midst of that right now. So I'm thankful we got to hear from Amy. If you know a parent in the thick of it, send this episode to them.

Vivian: Yes, and before we go, be sure to check out our show notes for links to learn more about Amy and her book, *You'll Make It And They Will Too*. You can find that and more at godhearsher.org. That's godhearsher.org.

Eryn: Thank you for joining us and don't forget, God hears you, He sees you, and He loves you because you are His.

[music]

Vivian: Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank Steph and Heidi for all their help and support. Thanks everyone.

Eryn: Our Daily Bread Ministries is a donor-supported nonprofit ministry dedicated to making the life-changing wisdom and stories of the Bible come alive for all people around the world.

[music]

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