

58: How to cope with anxiety and find calm with Dr. Jack Anderson

Are you lonely? Do you fear separation from family and friends? Maybe facing financial uncertainty? Or simply fear contracting the virus?

You're not alone.

We're feeling a collective unsettling in this time, which is lasting longer than any of us would like.

So how do we cope?

As Dr. Jack Anderson will tell you, fear is natural, it's instinctive. But calmness has to be learned.

A clinical psychologist for some 30 years in private practice in Southern California, Anderson serves as the Director of Officer Care and Development for The Salvation Army in the western U.S., helping to support and care for the mental health of Salvation Army officers.

We can find calmness, he says, through integrity. Through ship-like integrity.

All sea vessels go through extensive testing for integrity to ensure there are no leaks. They're tested by the most amount of stress so we know that under any circumstance, the hull will not crack.

We're facing upheaval in our lives as we are all being tested in numerous ways. But that testing is not unique to pandemic times. We're tested throughout our lives and so we must find our ship-like integrity.

Anderson is on the show to share more about how we can learn to be calm, how we can cope with fear to take on a mindset of hope, a promise of a better future.

Show highlights include:

- Dr. Jack Anderson's role with The Salvation Army: Director of Officer Care and Development, which coordinates all the mental healthcare needs for officers and their families in the Western



U.S.

- 2020 from a psychologist's perspective: Not something to take lightly, pervasive and ongoing
- Two things to keep in mind: Learn as much as we can, we will get through this eventually
- Dealing with anxiety and depression: Actually a defense mechanism but can reach a tipping point where it becomes disabling in some way
- Role of integrity: Build strength, look for opportunities to take care of self
- Reminder of vulnerability: Sometimes under delusion of invulnerability without pandemic
- Hope is greater than fear: Hope can help counteract fear, about looking at the future
- Courage during the pandemic: Can either avoid danger or learn skills to help confront danger
- Power of perceptions: Important in regulating emotions, consider not just what we see but how we interpret it
- What parents can do to help kids: Be a good listener and role model to children
- Practical ways to cope with changes: Look for opportunities for positive activities

Good words from Dr. Jack Anderson in this show:

“The natural state is to be afraid of something and that fear calls you into action. You get yourself to safety and you solve the problem and then you can relax. That has been difficult to do because this continues day after day, week after week.”

“We all have feelings of anxiousness and fear but there is a tipping point where it becomes disabling in some way... It starts disrupting your sleep or it prevents you from carrying on with normal daily activities and when it reaches that level it is often good to talk to a professional who can teach you some skills and methods to reduce your level of anxiety.”

“Integrity is really about strength. When a person is facing some kind of danger in life, there are two things you could do. Number one is you could try and find a way to get out of the danger or secondly you could build the strength and skills to overcome the danger...I think during this pandemic people need to be doing both.”

“Fear sometimes has a lot more to do with our perception than about reality... Our perceptions are so powerful in regulating our emotions, so we need to take a lot of care in not just what we are seeing but how we interpret what we are seeing.”

“There are two things parents can do. One thing is to be a good listener. Let your children express whatever it is they are going through... The second thing is to be a good role model. Kids look at you more than you realize and if they see a parent who is unsteady, unsure, fearful and not coping well, they are going to mimic that behavior and maybe even exaggerate it. As a parent you have the responsibility to be someone they can look up to.”

“Look at your own mind and heart and discover that wisdom, and make a determination everyday when you wake up and apply what you know to how you are living.”

Additional resources:

<https://caringmagazine.org>

- See more about this season of The Do Gooders Podcast: [The Refining and How to Emerge From This Year Better Than Before](#).
- Read “[It’s time to build your ship-like integrity](#)” by Dr. Jack Anderson
- [Join The Salvation Army](#) in the fight for good in your community.
- What’s your story? [Take our free email course](#) to see why your voice matters and how to find your story.

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