

# UBUNTU

## Building Emotional Resilience: The Soul Muscle That Helps You to Keep Going

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Dr. Chinwé shares the honest truth about parenting in today's world and how emotional resilience is key. Our kids don't need perfect parents; they need connected ones. When we lead with empathy, validate feelings and stay calm-ish, we help their brains grow strong. Jesus cares about our kids' mental health and ours too.

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### **WELCOME: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE**

Instructions:

Go around the table and have everyone share two truths and a lie about themselves. Together, guess which statement is a lie.

### **CONNECT:**

- When your child is having big emotions, how easy is it for you to connect before correcting? What gets in the way?
- What does "calm-ish" look like for you right now? Are there moments when you're proud of how you stayed grounded?
- Have you ever felt pressure to be a perfect mom? How does it feel to be reminded that connection—not perfection—is what matters most?
- How can you model emotional resilience for your kids when you're going through something hard yourself?
- Which of Jesus' mental health rhythms (rest, expressing emotion, speaking truth) do you need more of right now?

DEVOTIONAL

# Building Resilience in the Midst of Big Emotions

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***You are not alone, and you are doing holy work.***

As moms, it can feel like we're running on empty, trying to keep our little ones grounded while balancing the stressors of everyday life. Some days, the best we can do is laugh to keep from crying as we navigate the big feelings of our children. Whether it's the frustration over a snack that was "loved yesterday" but is "hated today," or the monumental task of getting shoes on without a battle, we know that parenting is tough.

But here's the truth: *You are not alone in this.* Jesus is with you, guiding you through every moment of overwhelm, every tear and every sigh of exhaustion. And even when things feel out of control, He's still there, reminding you that what you're doing is important—*holy work.*

## **Understanding the Storm of Big Emotions**

Modern parenting can be especially challenging. Research shows that more parents than ever are struggling with stress, anxiety and the pressures of raising children in a world that feels more complex and uncertain than before. We worry about their mental health, their futures and how we're shaping them emotionally. The numbers can be daunting—teenagers struggling with mental health issues, rising rates of suicide, and the unique challenges faced by children of color. It's heavy.

But remember: Even in these challenging moments, we have a God who sees us. A God who cares about the mental health of our children as much as He cares about their spiritual health. Jesus didn't shy away from the hard things. He faced grief, pain and overwhelming emotion—and He invites us to do the same.

When your child is facing big emotions, like frustration or sadness, know that you don't have to have all the answers, but your presence is everything. As parents, the best thing we can offer is connection—a deep, intentional bond where our children know they are safe, loved and understood. This connection is the foundation of emotional resilience.

## **Building Emotional Resilience**

You may wonder, "*How do I help my child build emotional resilience in such a chaotic world?*" It's simpler than you think, but it starts with you. Moms, when you *remain connected*, you are modeling the very resilience you want to cultivate in your child.

Here are three practical ways you can support your child in building emotional resilience, starting with your connection:

### **1. Connection Over Correction:**

It's easy to jump to correcting behavior when a meltdown happens, but what your child needs first is connection. They need to feel seen and heard. When your child is struggling with their emotions—whether it's over a small thing like a snack or something bigger—take a deep breath and remember that their brain is still developing. They may not yet have the capacity to process their emotions the way adults can. *Pause, connect, then correct.* Say things like, "I see you're upset," or "I understand this is really hard for you." This doesn't excuse the behavior, but it acknowledges their feelings and helps their brain begin to regulate. It's the heart of emotional resilience—knowing they're not alone in their feelings.

## 2. Recognize the Brain's Development:

Children's brains are still under construction, so it's no surprise that they struggle to manage emotions. Acknowledge their big feelings, but remember that their ability to regulate those emotions is still growing. When we remind ourselves that our kids are working with a child's brain (not an adult brain), it helps us respond with patience. When kids don't do what we've asked, it's not rebellion—it's often a sign their emotional regulation isn't fully developed yet. Be the safe presence they need while helping them learn the skills to handle big feelings.

## 3. Give Them the Tools to Bounce Back:

Emotional resilience is a skill that every child can develop with the right tools. As a mom, you are the best guide to teaching them how to cope with frustration, anxiety or sadness. Teach them coping strategies like taking deep breaths, going for a walk or jumping on a trampoline. Model these skills yourself! But remember, this doesn't just happen in the moment of crisis. Resilience is built over time through consistent moments of connection, empathy and teaching.

### Jesus Shows Us the Way

In all of this, remember that Jesus is not only the Savior of our souls but the healer of our hearts and the example of emotional resilience. Jesus Himself faced moments of anxiety, frustration and sorrow—yet **He always turned to His Father for strength.**

Jesus took time for rest. Moms, your well-being is just as important. Without healthy rhythms of rest, we can't be the calm, grounded presence our children need. Just like Jesus withdrew from the crowds to spend time with God, you too must find space to rest in His presence. Let Him restore you.

Jesus also expressed His emotions. He didn't hide His feelings. From the sorrow in Gethsemane to the frustration with the disciples, Jesus showed us that it's okay to feel deeply. Don't bottle up your emotions. Allow yourself to process them with God, and let Him guide you through those tough moments.

Finally, Jesus anchored Himself in truth. When the enemy tried to lie to Him in the wilderness, He responded with the Word of God. Moms, when the lies of overwhelm, exhaustion and fear come against you, anchor your soul in the truth of God's Word. Remind yourself that you are loved, you are held by grace, and you are not alone.

### A Prayer for You:

Father, we come to You with full hearts, knowing that the work we do as moms is holy. Thank You for the precious gift of our children. Please help us to be the calm presence they need, the One who leads them through their big emotions with empathy and love. Teach us to connect with them first, and to model emotional resilience as we lean on You.

We pray that You will help us to stay grounded in Your truth, to find moments of rest and to lean on You when we feel overwhelmed. Lord, we know we are not perfect, but we trust that You are working in us and through us for Your glory.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

**Moms, remember this:** You are doing holy work. Your connection, your love and your guidance are shaping the emotional resilience of your child. You are never alone—God is with you every step of the way.

