

# Transcripts for No Guilt Mom Podcast Episode 187

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[00:00:00] **JoAnn Crohn:** Welcome to the No Guilt Mom podcast. I am your host, JoAnn Crohn. Joined here by the lovely Brie Tucker.

[00:00:07] **Brie Tucker:** Wow.

Hello. Hello, Every body!. How are you?

[00:00:10] **JoAnn Crohn:** And today we're talking about parental anxiety, which yeah, no, what that's about right. Oh my gosh. I feel like so many of you could probably relate specifically around achievement anxiety is our guest today, and like how anxious we get over our kids, making sure they have the best education, quote unquote, or like the best extracurricular activities or doing their best work. And all of this stuff just drives us crazy and it drives our kids crazy too, right, brie?

[00:00:39] **Brie Tucker:** Oh, 100%. That anxiety just eeks over into a lot of things.

Bleeds in, we'll say bleeds in.

[00:00:45] **JoAnn Crohn:** Bleeds in. So our guest today is Dr. Dana Dorfman. She's a psychotherapist and the author of *When Worry Works, how to Harness Your Parenting Stress and Guide Your Teen to Success*. She helps treat children, adolescents, and adults in therapy. She also helps parents recognize their own innate achievement anxiety in order to sharpen their self-awareness and forge better relationships.

With their teens. And the cool thing about this interview is Dr. Dana has these archetypes for parental anxieties. So listen to the episode, see if you're doing these things. And she also gives great suggestions on how to, well not fix it per se, but how to lessen it. So we hope you enjoy this episode and let's get on with the show.

You want mom life to be easier. That's our goal too. Our mission is to raise more self-sufficient and independent kids, and we are going to have fun doing it.

We're gonna help you delegate and step back. Each episode will tackle strategies for positive discipline, making our kids more responsible and making our lives better in the process.

Welcome to the No Guilt Mom Podcast.

Welcome to the podcast Dana. We are so excited to talk to you about all these things, parental anxiety, because oh my gosh, Brie and I are like poster children for that and we know a lot of other moms too who are so

Welcome. Welcome.

[00:02:25] **Dana Dorfman:** Thank you.

[00:02:26] **Brie Tucker:** Yeah. Even just yesterday, I was anxious about something and Miguel's like, okay, that's a lot of anxious energy.

What you music, dance something to get it all out. Because that's a little crazy, everything you just unloaded.

[00:02:40] **JoAnn Crohn:** So, yeah.

[00:02:40] **Dana Dorfman:** Yeah. It's so funny.

[00:02:41] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah, it's crazy. It's crazy how much our own anxieties as parents really filter into our parenting, but a lot of the times we're not aware of it. And this is what I love. In your book so much, can you tell us what you were seeing in the parents and the children in your practice that led you to down this path about talking about parental anxiety?

[00:03:05] **Dana Dorfman:** Well, thank you for having me. And I would say that in my, in my practice, this was sort of a multi-pronged. Motivation that I was seeing a lot of achievement anxiety in the teenagers that I was seeing, and I was seeing a lot of parents who were very inadvertently kind of, and very well. With the best of intentions we're actually kind of inadvertently perpetuating their kids' anxieties, particularly around achievement.

Mm-hmm. And as the years have gone on, I ha I was seeing this problem kind of worsening and I was seeing as we all have seen kind of the byproducts of it, partially resulting in the mental health epidemic that we're. That we're all seeing in our teenagers. And also I am the mom of two teenagers, so I have been navigating achievement stresses and anxieties for many years also.

And I also have my own history, which we all do with our experiences as teenagers or even as. Kids growing up and what our relationship is with achievement, and I have my own complicated relationship with achievement as well. So it was kind the combination of these three factors that I really wanted to dig into and lean into this topic.

[00:04:24] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah. It's so interesting this idea of a complicated relationship with achievement because we are raised to be like, yes, you need to get all A's, and you need to make sure you do your quote unquote best work. And something I'm seeing coming out now is that no, like this is really, really harmful to keep telling our kids.

I think it's kind of a lie about achievement that you always have to be pushing, pushing, pushing, pushing to do the best you can. Is that what you've seen kind of too.

[00:04:53] **Dana Dorfman:** It's absolutely what I've seen and it's also, and I am a proponent of achievement. I don't want the message to be in any way like slack off and don't do anything.

And so I do want kids to be encouraged to work hard and do well. I also think though, that this has become sort of a socially acceptable avenue or channel for our anxieties because there are all of these quantifiable metrics like grades and scores, and. Numbers to indicate to us in some way, or sometimes the messaging can be, this is how my child is doing fundamentally, or This is my child's worth in the world.

Although we wouldn't necessarily think of it that way, but I think that the implicit messaging is. This is how well this child is doing. Mm-hmm. And there are so many other dimensions A, that go into achievement and also that go into a human being that I think we're being overlooked because of their ambiguity or even our difficulty in kind of measuring it.

[00:05:58] **JoAnn Crohn:** I think you've really stuck on a really great point there, because I was a former teacher and state testing and scores and everything were what we were measured against. They were the only thing that we were measured against. It wasn't a whole child perspective. It was, okay, well did you bring this class up from this average to this average?

Okay, you're doing your job when really like those scores are just such a like little snapshot of what kids are. Something that I love that you talked about in your book is talking about what real success is attributed to in life and society.

And it wasn't the achievement scores, but rather you said it was emotional intelligence.

[00:06:40] **Dana Dorfman:** Mm-hmm. Yeah. And that is what the, the research bears my research and also all of the research that I had done for the book is that, We know that actually where people lead the most, or from what people live the most fulfilling lives is oftentimes based on emotional intelligence relationships. And emotional awareness to some degree.

And I think that this has been something, and I know you've talked about it a lot on previous podcasts as well, or previous episodes, that this is something that is so easy to overlook. Emotional wellness, mental wellness.

[00:07:19] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah, and I think like it's good to note too that this mental wellness, this is what's taught in social emotional learning, which I know is getting a lot of pushback in the main mainstream society right here, not really understanding what it is.

[00:07:32] **Brie Tucker:** I don't know if I would say getting pushback is just being completely pushed out.

[00:07:37] **JoAnn Crohn:** Push, well, not like pushback. So I'm trying to say it kinda nicely and I don't think I need to say it nicely. Right.

[00:07:44] **Brie Tucker:** Well, I mean if you just think about it, cuz every area of the country is different, we're well aware of that.

But if you're gonna look at the school system, which is the main system that most of our youth are going through, at least here where we live in the greater Phoenix area, they have pretty much all but cut out. Any social emotional aspect of curriculum, and there's like no, no counselors or anybody being able to support students in that manner.

And like you just said, JoAnn, like it's not, the teachers can only do so much in the time that they have. Yeah. And, and we're being pushed that it's so important. I, again, as, as a parent of a teen, I have a sophomore, gonna be a junior. And I am listening to everything you guys are saying. He's a really great student.

He has like all As, but at the same time, In my head, I'm like, oh my gosh, he's not doing X, Y, Z extracurriculars. He's not volunteering his time. How's he gonna ever get into any college? There's only three state colleges in Arizona.

Our options were very limited cause we can't afford private. Mm-hmm. So it's like, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

That anxiety just like blowing up. And then again, like you just said, like there, there's, where are they gonna get emotional wellness from? If I'm freaking out at home? Sorry.

That is a

[00:08:56] **Dana Dorfman:** tangent, Brie has a lot of those.

[00:08:58] **JoAnn Crohn:** That's what a lot of people are thinking. No, I think it's what a lot of people are thinking, Brie, and I'm so happy that you brought that up because this is it.

This is it.

[00:09:08] **Brie Tucker:** Yeah.

[00:09:08] **Dana Dorfman:** Mm-hmm. It is, and also I think that and want something that I am also very aware of or conscious of not implying in the book is that there is something wrong with that or that we are being anxious. Can is an integral part of being alive and it is natural to be anxious. And it is also an integral part of parenting that part of anxiety's purpose is to protect us.

Yeah. And to prepare us for the future. And if you think of the jobs of a parent, it is to protect them and. Prepare them for the future. So you can see how this is prime breeding ground for anxiety. And, and a lot of times though we misinterpret love or we can conflate love and anxiety if we're worrying about somebody.

Sometimes we think that that means that we love them. As a matter of fact, I, the other night, my son had been out at a party and he's a teenager, he's 17 and I. Fell asleep, as did my husband. And then in the morning my husband had sort of like kept an ear open and had greeted him at some point when he came home.

And in the morning I said to my husband, like, oh, did he come home? And he said, yes. And I said, what kind of mother falls asleep when her teenager is out and allows herself to sleep through the night? And he said, yeah, you must not love him. Oh my God

[00:10:39] **Brie Tucker:** kidding

[00:10:43] **Dana Dorfman:** idea wouldn't then indicated like, wait, does that mean that I don't love him? If you're not worrying about somebody, which I think is just kind interesting. That's interesting

[00:10:54] **JoAnn Crohn:** because using that same framework, it's like we're never allowed to relax either. Yeah. And that really gets in the way of our relaxation if we're equating this worry with caring about someone.

I remember when I, mm-hmm. I was in therapy years ago and I was discussing my worries with my therapist, and she's like, well, why do you worry? And she's, I'm like, well, you know, if, if I worry, then I'm prepared for everything that happens and it won't happen. And she's like, so what good am I here? What good am I?

If your worrying is preventing things from happening, then what's the benefit to you to stop worrying? And I'm like, oh, good point. Like obviously I can't control things from happening, but if I have that thought process, then I'm always gonna hang onto it.

[00:11:41] **Dana Dorfman:** Yes. Exactly. Yeah. And it's sort of like a magical thinking thing.

I mean, I think that sometimes my grandmother used to say, You'll see when you're a mother, you're gonna worry in a different way. You never stop worrying. Mm-hmm. Even when your kids are grown up and married and then you have grandchildren, you worry about them. And I think that that was her love language.

Yeah. But she used to worry. And many people do. You know, like if we were going on a flight or something, as if her worrying was then preventing the plane from crashing or even keeping it in the air, I thought like, wow, you're really powerful.

[00:12:15] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah. I identify with that comment. Yes. And I wanna civilian on planes.

[00:12:21] **Brie Tucker:** Yeah. Like, I'm the same. I I, that is what I always say to my husband because he's, he's very chill and, and laid back. And I always tell him, you're the, you're the reason and I'm the worry. Like I, if I already know the 16 different things that can go wrong and I'm already coming up with a plan. And you're the one who gets to be chill about it.

And he's like, and how's that working for you? How you feeling, worrying, thinking about those 16 things that could go wrong? And I'm like, I hate it. My stomach hurts all the time and I get migraines.

[00:12:50] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah. Well here's, here's the thing, the opposite end, cuz I was raised by a worrier. And from the child's standpoint, it is very overwhelming to feel like you have to manage your parents' emotions as well as your own.

And just wondering if what I was going to do was going to worry my mom or were upset my mom, or make her feel any distress whatsoever. So looking at it from that vantage point, I know that my anxiety isn't something that I wanna pass down to my kids. I know it's also unavoidable to pass it down to my kids.

And so we're also taking some other steps to prep them in terms of therapy and talking about things and emotions and everything. But it's good to get that parental anxiety under control because Bree, like you said, Your stomach hurts. Yeah. You're getting migraines. You can't let, it sucks. Yeah.

[00:13:38] **Brie Tucker:** You can't let it rule your life.

Because like you said, if I'm anxious all the time about everything possibly going wrong, and I am either articulating that to my kids or showing it to them all the time, then they're going to, like you just said, gonna, I'm gonna pass on that anxiety and who wants to try out new things in, in, in life when they're constantly afraid of everything going wrong?

Like, all I'm going to do is squash my kids. Sense of, of security and their ability to try things. If I, if I keep projecting that out. I work really hard at stuffing it down well.

[00:14:12] **Dana Dorfman:** Yeah. Well, and also it sounds like you work really hard at being aware of it, which I think is, so much of the work is kind of like if it's one thing to be acting or reacting to our anxiety unknowingly, and it's another thing to know when it's operating because then at least we have a little bit more control or even ability to direct it.

Or manage it, or even to include our rational brain or our reason within it, so that we may even say in these moments like, look, I'm feeling really anxious. I, I am trying to keep myself, you know, whatever. I'm trying to contain it. Or, and I think that the other thing, just to be clear for all of us, and I say to my patients a lot and to myself, is that like that,

what you are doing, Brie is all in an attempt to protect yourself. It's sort of like, if I can prepare, I will be

[00:15:10] **Brie Tucker:** Yeah.

[00:15:10] **Dana Dorfman:** Protected and I will be so that there is, there is an innate mechanism within us that is conditioned to signal us if there's any potential threat in our environment, which there are always social, emotional, or physical.

Threats and Yeah, and the more that we can be aware of it and almost appreciate the fact that our brain or our body is trying to protect us and then determine if. Is protecting, is it, as your husband says, is it, is how that working for you? Yeah, but like, is this helpful? Like do I need this protection in this moment or do I not?

Yeah, like what would happen if I were to allow things to unfold organically? What would be the worst thing that could happen? Or what will, what is it that I'm actually afraid of? And am I actually preventing that from happening? Like we cannot prevent our kids' pain as much as we would like to, and as hard as its for us to contain.

[00:16:12] **Brie Tucker:** Yeah.

[00:16:12] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah. True.

[00:16:13] **Dana Dorfman:** I just say one other thing too, then I'll shut up that this idea, JoAnn, was like into both of these, these good points that you were bringing up. The idea of a parent. Being very anxious and not necessarily knowing or, you know, passing it down or unable to manage it themselves is very scary for kids.

It also conveys to kids like, Since all of us experience anxiety, we have to, it's also conveying to kids like, this is a bad thing. You do not want this. Mm-hmm. You do not, you know, watching your mom suffer was also a way to say like, this is not something you want to, this is unmanageable, distressing. I don't wanna live with it, and so I also have to like push these feelings away, which they are inevitable.

Like it's going to come up, it shouldn't come up. It's all part of our operation system.



[00:17:10] **JoAnn Crohn:** Yeah. It's the appropriate emotion at the appropriate time is. The beautiful. Thank you. The good thing. Yes, the good thing. Yes. The thing I wanna dial in with if you, is that you mentioned that being aware of your anxiety is really the most important thing in how it plays out.

And what I love in your book is that you give these archetypes of how anxiety plays out and some of them are like, whoa, like didn't even think that's an anxiety thing. So I wanted to go through them with you and have you just briefly describe these archetypes. So that people who are listening may be able to find themselves in them.

And the first one you have is the sculptor. What does the sculptor usually do?

[00:17:51] **Dana Dorfman:** The sculptor is a parent who, and these are, these are specifically around achievement anxiety, but certainly they are also parenting anxieties. You know, in general as well, but a sculptor parent is oftentimes concerned that they need, that their child does not have something or needs to be something, and so it's incumbent upon the parent to, or create kind.

For that child and that parent is oftentimes the one who is very resourceful in being able to find every possible class and hobby and enrichment opportunity to sort of create or sculpt something either from nothing or even from what, from what material they're given.

[00:18:43] **JoAnn Crohn:** It's so interesting cuz like these people who are sculptors are usually the high, really high achievers who are used to being able to create that change just by their own actions and when it's their kids.

It's like you don't have as much control over your kids as you do over your own circumstances.

[00:19:00] **Dana Dorfman:** Yeah. And so you could see how sort of first sculptors that they are triggered oftentimes by feelings of powerlessness or helplessness. And so then their, their anxiety re reaction kind of. Kicks in, they usually kick it into high gear.

Then in, their kind of high, capable, capable way, will, will try to solve the problem or try to take care of things or direct it in a certain way.

[00:19:26] **JoAnn Crohn:** What about the game show contestant? What does that parent usually show up as?

[00:19:32] **Dana Dorfman:** The game show contestant is that parent who thinks that there must be a right or wrong way, and it's just a matter of their finding or making the right or wrong decision.

And so this is a trap that many of us fall into, especially when we're anxious, like, is this the right school? Or, I don't know what the right answer is. Or am I dealing with this the wrong way? As if there are two options and as if human beings are as binary as this would imply, and I think that that is a natural place.

To go when you are anxious. It's sort of like we wanna distill things down to either a right or a wrong, a good or a bad. A good school. A bad school.

[00:20:16] **JoAnn Crohn:** I hear it a lot like, is this the best school for my child? Is this the best? And when best is comes into play, it's like, oh, there's no best one.

[00:20:26] **Brie Tucker:** There's a slippery slope.

[00:20:29] **JoAnn Crohn:** What about the crowd pleaser?

[00:20:31] **Dana Dorfman:** The crowd pleaser is that person who kind of manages their anxiety by taking kind of close assessment of the people around them. They're usually people who are pretty, they're socially aware and they're conscious of what their peers are doing, and so oftentimes, like the crowd pleaser will be triggered by.

When they hear that their friend's daughter is signed up for the so-and-so class. Yep. And they think, oh wait, we didn't do that. Or What is it? What does it mean if I don't do what everyone else is doing? They're kind of, they're more influenced by the, the social group or the peers.

[00:21:12] **Brie Tucker:** So they kind of, so what I'm hearing is that they basically will assess how well they're doing based on what everybody else is doing.

[00:21:20] **Dana Dorfman:** Absolutely. And these are also, these are completely, there are many ways in which this is adaptive and healthy and normal. It's just sort of the way that your anxiety, the like, the predominant way that your anxiety might manifest and the real, the what is behind all of it is really just to be aware, as you were saying, JoAnn that this is anxiety that's operating. We think we are doing something for some rational reason, which we might be doing. And also there is an anxiety piece. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

[00:21:51] **JoAnn Crohn:** And there's an anxiety piece. Yeah. What about the avoider?

[00:21:56] **Dana Dorfman:** The avoider is that parent who looks kind of laissez faire. It sounds like Brie, maybe your husband might fit into this category.

[00:22:04] **JoAnn Crohn:** My husband is totally that, yes.

[00:22:12] **Dana Dorfman:** Who. Let trust the process in a way or trust the systems around them. And in some way sort of avoids participating in the hyper competition and just allows things to unfold organically. And while that can sometimes be helpful, it is also sometimes just a way to avoid the competition or to avoid the anxiety that will arise by virtue of addressing some of these conflicts for themselves. So that's the avoider. I'm gonna plea the fifth

on that. The avoider as well.

[00:22:46] **Brie Tucker:** Actually, I'm gonna be the fifth on that one just to keep my marriage going.

[00:22:50] **JoAnn Crohn:** Well, hearing that he may or may not be the avoider, whenever there's Yeah. May or may not. May or may not. Definitely may Not. Hearing the avoider though, like I'm definitely, that anytime a competition comes up, I'm like, mm, no, I'm not gonna do it. Mm-hmm. Not worth it. Not worth this set. Not worth it. That's interesting.

That's interesting to hear. What about the clairvoyant?

[00:23:14] **Dana Dorfman:** The clairvoyant is that parent who sort of sees a gift or a skill or an ability in their child and wants to really cultivate or foster it if their child is. Singing in the bathroom and they hear them and the parent decides, ah, oh, you know, she has good pitch or good.

I dunno. Anything about singing neither. I

[00:23:38] **Brie Tucker:** pitch pitch works. There you go.

[00:23:41] **Dana Dorfman:** Oh, okay, thanks. And if you heard me sing, it would completely explain how little I know, but it they, and so they see something in their, in their kid and they are determined to sort of cultivate it. Ah, yes. You know, she, she seems to be quite a character.

Maybe I should sign her up for acting lessons, you know?

[00:24:01] **JoAnn Crohn:** And that's

good to some extent. Like if a kid is lost a little bit, like doesn't really know what to try, I mean, that could be a good way to get them into trying things. But I could also see how that could go very, very wrong

[00:24:13] **Dana Dorfman:** and well, I also Totally, all of these are good.

It's funny, my dad actually read the book when it first came out and he said as he went through each chapter, and he's not somebody who typically like sort of reflects on his parenting or reflects so much psychologically, I don't think, and he said, Okay. After he read the first chapter, he's like, okay, I'm one for one.

And then he called back. He's like, okay, I'm two for two. And by the end he was like, all right, I'm eight for eight. Cause all of us can see ourselves in this. And it's not. It's actually very adaptive and healthy. It's when we're not able to calibrate it or we're doing it so unknowingly or without our awareness of our own anxiety, that that's when sort of things can go off the rails.

[00:24:58] **Brie Tucker:** Like when it's starting to cause a problem. When it's. It's making it so that we are stressed out about it or it's making things difficult with our, our kids are being, are seeing the negative side of it. With the clairvoyant, I could imagine like constantly having to go to classes and if somebody were to say like, my personality is a dancer, my personality is a gymnast, and then they don't realize they, they can't see anything outside of that.

Right. Or am I off on this?

[00:25:25] **Dana Dorfman:** Yeah. Well, and it's also, I think it's most problematic too when we become so sort of invested in it that we lose sight of our kids or we lose sight of what their needs are. Or we can't be responsive to them because we're so busy reacting to our internal anxiety about it, that then we're unable to sort of hear our kids thoroughly. This happens a lot. I mean, I hear all the time and certainly know the experience myself of should we allow our kid to quit the OBO or you know, or this class that they have, they've been very invested in if this is their thing or this is something that we. Want or they have demonstrated as an integral part of, of their identity.

Mm-hmm. We don't want them to just forego it or, and if they've demonstrated great skill in it, it's sort of like this could flourish into something, you know? I

know one of my kids is, is happens to be very musical and has no interest in taking any kind of formal lessons. And I keep saying, you don't wanna just join the jazz club or you know, where or take a lesson or something and he's like, no, I, I, no, no. I just like to do it for fun. Like, God forbids, I do something just for the sheer pleasure of it without instruction and guidance and like, you know, he loves to do it. The end. And so

[00:26:51] **JoAnn Crohn:** that's an achievement thing for sure.

[00:26:52] **Dana Dorfman:** I feel like I'm a bad parent's.

[00:26:53] **JoAnn Crohn:** No, that's an achievement thing for sure in society. Like how dare someone do something for fun? They need to be using every single moment of every day to make sure they get like the life we want down the

road best. Yeah,

the best. And you have this gift. Don't squander it. It's so hard to have a gift in the world.

Like if you are a good dancer, why wouldn't you want to then, you know, do something, use your body in that way. I mean, we see it in all of the sports or the, the kids athletics. It's kind of gone whole hog in that.

Oh, Dana, the stories I have for you about my daughter that I cannot share yet, cuz she's still on the team, but yes, no.

But I mean these, these do show up and the way our schools are run, it shows up in that. And achievement is a really tricky thing to really tell people that, Hey, achievement's not the end all, be all goal here. We need to pull back.

Because I think when you tell, especially schools that, or other parents that who are used to being very achievement focused, the immediate response is, oh, don't you care about your kid? Don't you want the best for your kid? And so it prevents me from pushing back against people on it. I'll say whatever I want on this show, cause this is our podcast, but you know, it's mm-hmm.

It's a hard thing and you have more archetypes in your book and I'm gonna let people go and get your book. For that one because the shepherd's, the corrector and the replicator. I think that a lot of the rep, the archetypes we talked about so

far, that if you see yourself in those, you should go and get Dana's book and read the other ones.

So,

[00:28:31] **Brie Tucker:** so my question is, if you see yourself as one of those archetypes. How do you break out of that? If you, if, okay, so you've gotten to the point where you're self aware, you're like, okay, mm-hmm. I got a bit of an anxiety issue and it might be running the way I'm parenting and I know at least one to five of those archetypes sounds like me.

How, what's the next step for, for us to go to as parents to move in a positive direction?

[00:28:59] **Dana Dorfman:** So the first thing I think, is to be aware of it, and I think in a way it doesn't necessarily have to be pathological anxiety or excessive anxiety. It just has to be an awareness of why we are doing what we're doing and what kind of emotions are fueling it.

And the other thing is, and I think that as, as I did outline in the book, a lot of times too, there are these common thematic patterns of thinking, or what we call cognitive distortions. When you're anxious, it is likely that you're, that you are thinking in a narrowed way and falling into one of these styles of thinking, which is also an indication to us like, ah, yes, I'm anxious. And then to pause and take a step back, which I think is so hard. I think about that a lot, like sort of when we're on the treadmill to actually say like the treadmill of life to just say like, Okay, wait, I'm gonna stop and take a break.

It's like, no, I don't wanna lose my momentum or I don't wanna become like to be stagnant or, you know, inertia to set in. But if we can trust just by taking a pause and reflecting in a moment, in a noncritical way. Even reminding ourselves like we are doing this in an effort to protect ourselves and to protect our kids, and that is this necessarily warranted?

Like is it whatever it is that I'm doing, is this warranted? The other thing is, if there is a way to identify what your values are, a lot of times when you're in the throes of having to make some kind of really difficult parenting decision, if you have isolated or identified sort of what your two or three or four Key fundamental values for living your life.

What is most important to you, not what you think you should be doing, but really what it is that you feel makes you, feel that life is purposeful. Mm-hmm. Then you can always integrate that into your decision so that that can, your values can override. Your anxiety that we can say, you know, what's most important to me is that my kid knows themselves.

Mm-hmm. So if, if he's saying to me, I don't wanna take the SATs because I know that it's going to actually, require six additional hours of work and I'm already on the school soccer team and doing all of these other things, and I actually, and I also wanna be able to sleep and see my friends like mm-hmm.

Knowing themselves is what our value is, then that would be sort of what, how that would drive our decision more than our anxiety, particularly, once again, if you're unaware of it. So I. So being aware of what your values are, identifying them and integrating them into your decision. Mm-hmm. Identifying sort of what it is that triggers you and your anxiety, and then figuring out the ways that you can challenge some of the thoughts that you have when you are anxious.

[00:32:10] **JoAnn Crohn:** I love it. I love the work you do, Dana, and Yes. Especially addressing these issues with parental anxiety in terms of achievement. I think it's something that needs to get out to all parents. What in your life are you really excited about that's coming up for you?

[00:32:26] **Dana Dorfman:** I'm actually, I just got off the phone with my daughter.

My daughter's actually graduating from college in a couple of weeks. Yay. And so that is super, it's very exciting for me. It's kind of exciting for her, I think a little anxiety producing, obviously for her, but it's a, you know, it's a really, my parents are coming. It's gonna be , it just, it's such a.

You know, my oldest first child, and not because it, not only because it's an achievement, but I feel like she used this time to really learn, grow, expand herself. She invested in, she explored a bunch of things she really like. So it's not just the acquisition of the diploma as much as like she, she enriched herself and grew and learn and flourished kind of in this, in this four year period despite the pandemic or, yeah,

[00:33:21] **Brie Tucker:** she's truly graduating into a new section of her life.

[00:33:25] **Dana Dorfman:** Yeah.

[00:33:25] **JoAnn Crohn:** That's really what we want for our kids. Definitely. Yeah. Well, thank you data so much for coming on and sharing this with us and have a wonderful day.

[00:33:36] **Dana Dorfman:** Thank you. Thank you so much. And thank you for all of the work that you guys do as well.

[00:33:41] **Brie Tucker:** I really loved talking to Dana because I have a lot of parental anxiety that I am not giving my kids everything that they need to have, and it's nice to hear that I'm not crazy.

It's not just me. This is a thing.

[00:33:56] **JoAnn Crohn:** This is a thing.

You this's a thing outta her like archetypes. Did you find one that you identified with like just like the characteristics of one or just like something that you saw that you do in there?

[00:34:09] **Brie Tucker:** So, yeah, I would say that if, as weird as this sounds, Kind of a game show host one.

[00:34:15] **JoAnn Crohn:** Really? Oh, the black and white thinking.

[00:34:18] **Brie Tucker:** Well, yes and no. I'm well aware that there's not one right answer for everybody, right? Like we talk about that all the time here. In No Guilt, mom, every family is different, every situation is different, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. But my anxiety pulls into that.

There is a right answer and a wrong answer, and my anxiety is constantly that I am making the wrong answer. Choice. Okay, I see that and always second guessing what decisions I make as a parent for my kids. And a lot of it rolls back into, and you've heard me talk about this all the time, of the whole like, I'm a bad mom because X, Y, Z.

Mm-hmm. So yeah. So I guess that would be like a game show host. Cause I always think that there's a right and wrong answer somehow when I'm somehow always picking the wrong answer. Or not always, but

[00:35:00] **JoAnn Crohn:** I get into those like I'm a bad mom, tirades. A lot too, like Oh yeah. Times where I'm like, oh, I'm so sucky at this.



Or like, I'm such the horrible mother for this. And then I think about, wait a minute, are there like horrible fathers for the same thing? No, no, they're not

[00:35:18] **Brie Tucker:** right?

[00:35:19] **JoAnn Crohn:** It, it stops me from going down there, but I'm also like, okay, something in my tank is depleted. And lately I've been, okay, I need some. Some time to myself where I'm wrapped in my little blanket and not dealing with other humans because something else is really bothering me and getting me down.

And I've gotten to that point in my awareness now that the bad mom thing doesn't go on for too long.

[00:35:41] **Brie Tucker:** Right. No, I, I just, I was telling you, like, just last night, I went on a tarrot for an hour that I was a bad mom because I didn't cook my kids dinner. And the reason I didn't cook them dinner, by the way, I didn't tell you this part of the story was because we had gone to brunch at my family's house.

So like we didn't even like finish eating lunch until like almost three.

[00:36:04] **JoAnn Crohn:** Mm-hmm.

So, yeah, it would be real coming home being like, all right, well, I'm not sure about cooking dinner at five now, because not everybody's gonna be hungry. Some of us ate more at brunch than others and da da, da, da. But somehow in my head, because one of my kids came down and wanted something to eat, and they, by the way did not ask me to help at all.

Didn't ask for anything to eat. They were just in the kitchen perusing and they, they didn't find anything that they wanted to eat. They wouldn't let me make them anything to eat. And they just said it like, I love that tea, that meme too for teens. Like they see a full kitchen and they're like, Ugh, we have nothing to eat.

Like that's what my kids said. And I was all the time. Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

[00:36:39] **Brie Tucker:** And I'm like, oh, I'm terrible. I didn't make them anything to eat. And my, my husband's like, yeah, you might be, yeah. Might be fixating on something right now.

[00:36:48] **JoAnn Crohn:** Well, that's so interesting that you like go to the thing that it's your fault that they don't have anything to eat.

But I think it's normal. I think like, well, not normal, but I think it's typical of like so many other parents too. Like we go right to that. I am a horrible person. My kids don't like the food I have at home.

[00:37:05] **Brie Tucker:** Well, and that's where I'm like, right, there's a right and a wrong answer. And I picked the wrong answer because I didn't cook dinner.

[00:37:11] **JoAnn Crohn:** Oh yeah.

[00:37:11] **Brie Tucker:** Even though I knew that nobody was hungry at the same time in my household. So, It's

[00:37:19] **JoAnn Crohn:** hard. It's hard, and I think the only thing we could do is to try to be more aware of this thinking,

[00:37:25] **Brie Tucker:** oh, that's what Dr. Dorfman said. Mm-hmm. The first thing we can do is have the awareness. Right.

That's the first step.

[00:37:31] **JoAnn Crohn:** So yeah, the first step. And if we know that what we're thinking is a typical behavior of humans, then it can't be easily pegged on ourselves and we can use things to counter it. Yes. Or. Just cuddling on the couch with our blankets and our dogs watching outer banks on Netflix, like I'm doing that later.

[00:37:48] **Brie Tucker:** That's a perfect pause and step back if you ask me. Mm-hmm. But, so hopefully everybody got out of this episode that A, you are not alone in your parental anxiety and that B.

[00:38:01] **JoAnn Crohn:** Mm-hmm.

[00:38:01] **Brie Tucker:** It's not gonna totally damage your kids. There are things that you can do to help fix it, and some of the biggest thing is the self-awareness and take it a step back.

Wrapping yourself up in a blanket, doing what brings you joy.

[00:38:13] **JoAnn Crohn:** Exactly. We hope you enjoyed this episode and if you have the chance, please, please, please rate us and review us on iTunes. That is how we are. Shown to more and more people, cuz we wanna get so many more moms on the No Get Mom Podcast and spread this message of you are not alone and you are worth spending that time on yourself and worth relaxing in particular.

So the best mom's a happy mom, take care of you and we will see you next time.

[00:38:44] **Brie Tucker:** Thanks for stopping by.