Root Psychology
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Parenting Guidance from the Pros

- Learn to tolerate how your child expresses their emotions. Communicating what they are authentically feeling is necessary and will decrease their anxiety. Dismissing, avoiding or holding in emotions can create overwhelming internalization that can manifest as depression, eating problems, self-harm, anxiety, substance use, etc.

- Children need to see that you will be able to handle their emotions. This will invite them to open up to you more. If they believe you are too busy, frustrated, tired, or overwhelmed yourself, they will not bring their feelings to you.

- Don't let your anxiety seed or transfer anxiety onto your child. If they see that **you** are overly worried, then your child will believe there **must** be something to be worried about. You can acknowledge that you are also fearful or upset about what's going on in the world, but that you can also take care of them and their feelings.

- Try not to problem-solve or offer advice immediately. Often your child will just want to express or vent to you, rather than have you jump in with a quick solution. If you don't allow them time to problem solve on their own (with your support) – it short circuits an amazing opportunity to tap into their own inner resources. Coming up with their own solution will also provide an improved sense of competency and control - both of which are needed during this unsettling time.

- Try to be more "curious" about your child's inner emotional world, and specifically explore their fears and worries openly with them. If they express some irrational thoughts, don't dismiss them or tell them not to worry about it. Instead, say something like, "I can tell you're anxious about that, can you tell me more? OR "I don't get it... help me understand."

- Be as present as you can - turn off your own technology and open up space for your kids to come to you if they need. If they see you are available, they are more likely to seek you out with a concern. **Try** to set healthy work/home balance and boundaries. Have tech-free family dinners together. Etch out specific work times and specific family time. And stick to it, as best you can. Having tech-free bedrooms for all family members will improve everyone's sleep, which is essential for overall well-being.