



## Transcript of episode 58 – Preparing for Post-Pandemic Recovery

**Dave Morris:** [00:00:00] Hey everybody, this commercial free podcast is made possible through the support of listeners like you. If you can help, please go to [mindmatterspodcast.com](http://mindmatterspodcast.com) and click 'support' at the top of the page.

(intro)

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:01:24] Hi there. I'm Emily Kircher-Morris, and welcome to episode 58. We're all struggling to get accustomed to the new norm as we shelter in place and we're starting to imagine what the future will be like when we start stepping out in public again. We haven't even actually reached the trauma response yet.

We're still in the active pre-trauma stage of this event. Today, we'll talk about what to expect when we actually get to the trauma stage. Today's guest, Christine Fonseca, is the author of the new book, *Healing the Heart: Helping Your Child Thrive After Trauma*. Christine brings her expertise about raising intense, bright children and what the intersection might look like for those bright minds as we move through traumatic experiences like the pandemic we're facing now.

So that's straight ahead. I'm excited to co host a webinar with Susanna wood on Tuesday, April 21st on the topic of self-kindness and self-care, while taking care of those around you, whether they are family members, or students, or other people in your life. The webinar is sponsored by the Belin-Blank Center of the University of Iowa and the Iowa Talented and Gifted Association. The webinar's free, and if you hear this in time, you can register for it or find the recording. If you can't attend live in all of our online spaces, our website, [mindmatterspodcast.com](http://mindmatterspodcast.com) on Twitter, we are @mindmatterspod, or on Facebook, we are Mind Matters Podcast. Coming up next.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:03:08] Hi, this is Christine Fonseca and I'm the author of *Healing the Heart: Helping Your Child Thrive After Trauma*.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:03:16] Stay with us.

(break)

Our guest is Christine Fonseca. She is a return guest and she's just written a book called *Healing the Heart: Helping Your Child Thrive After Trauma*. Christine, thanks for being here.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:04:23] I'm so happy to be here. Thank you for inviting me.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:04:26] So you recently wrote this book about trauma and I'm curious about how you got interested in that topic, and then we'll start defining trauma as it pertains to where we are today.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:04:40] Trauma's been something that's been interesting to me from, from a study perspective, for a number of years, um, as a lot of the research was coming out on adverse childhood experiences and the impact of those on, on neurological functioning, the cross section between that and social emotional learning. That that whole juxtaposition has been really interesting.

But as I was kind of doing deep dive studies on that topic and seeing how it relates to the best ways to support kids in schools, what I felt was absent from a lot of the conversation was the parallel impact of things like natural disasters and kind of the secondary trauma when people lose homes and lose jobs as a result of those natural disasters, or community violence and the impact of school shootings and all of that.

And in most of the books I was reading, there was a lot of discussion around, um, kind of the traditional view of ACEs being neglect, child abuse, substance abuse, um, and those kinds of things within the home. But there wasn't a lot of conversation around the impact of some of these other traumatic kinds of events to both children and adults.

And, um, I happened, you know, I didn't know when I turned in this book, obviously, that we would be living through what we're living through now, and this book happened to release the 1st of March. And the timing of all of it is just eerie.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:06:06] Yeah. And so how do you feel like, you know, I'm sure that's causing you to reflect a lot on just the experience that you had writing it.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:06:16] Yeah.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:06:16] And what you're experiencing today and what you see other people experiencing today.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:06:21] When schools started closing, and this, the situation we're in now started getting very real, the very first thing I started talking about online was this concept of traumatic grief, and I really felt that what I was feeling and what I was seeing in others was this amazing, um, sense of traumatic grief and, and kind of that internal recognition that the entire world was changing, and was changing on a dime, and it was changing in a way that was unpredictable. And that's not something I talked about in extreme depth, in *Healing the Heart*. Um, but it was certainly what I was seeing.

I, there's a story in the book where I talk about going to Houston a month after hurricane Harvey and the vacant look that was in people's eyes and the fear that was still palpable in the air, mixed with the moisture in the air, and just kind of where people were at and kind of that shell-shocked look, um, that everyone had. And that's the same look I see now.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:07:23] Definitely.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:07:24] You know, we're all in shelter in places. We go out to the grocery store. It's the look you see on people's faces. Um, as you, as you can only see their eyes now, right? Cause everyone's wearing masks. It's the, it's the worn look that you see on newscasters as they're reporting day after day after day.

And I just, um, I've been really compelled to kind of talk about how, what can we do right now, this minute in the middle of this event, that can help mitigate some of what could happen, um, post event if we don't do anything.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:07:57] So let's, let's back up just a tad, and you alluded to this a little bit, you know, some of those kind of common things that we think about when we are thinking about trauma in general. So what's a good working definition for trauma? And maybe a little bit broader than what some other people might think, and the different forms that it can take.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:08:20] Absolutely. So for me, I like the definition of trauma being any event that has the power to overwhelm your internal coping systems. And so, you know, that can be everything from what's defined as acute trauma, so a singular event that overwhelms the system, uh, your ability to cope. Or it could be complex trauma, which is more referring to the impact of multiple events that are happening, or events that are happening for a sustained period of time that you can't seem to escape. Um, and, and really what the book centers in on, and what I like to talk about is kind of the impact in terms of stress. And so the traumatic event in it, in and of itself, of course, can have an impact. But really it's the, the longterm stress of the event that changes our stress response from adaptive to maladaptive, and then finally to toxic, that causes some of those changes neurologically that I referenced earlier and kind of is the longterm kind of bugaboo.

Some of the things that can cause that are things that happen in our home settings. A, a parent who's, who is a substance abuser, or family member who's a substance abuse or, um, a parent who's been incarcerated. Uh, neglect in all of its forms, abuse in all of its forms, but it also extends out to things like, uh, natural disaster. The fires that happened in that happened in California, or the hurricanes that have happened over the last few years, definitely this pandemic would qualify under that category. It could also include things like school violence, community violence, um, it could include things like severe medical issues that are going on within the family or illness that's longterm.

And it can even include things that have histo... that have been kind of passed down generationally, um, co, uh, uh, different traumatic events that have happened to entire communities of people and kind of how that has shaped our DNA over time. And so it's, I don't, I don't go into extreme depth on that in the book, but all of those are different forms of events that can cause a traumatic response. And then certainly the reality we're living in right now, um, absolutely for the most part is, is testing people and is kind of testing that stress response and, and, and pushing on us in really different ways.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:10:45] You mentioned hurricane Harvey and like you said, when you have a whole community who has experienced this trauma collectively. And this is so strange because we're all in this together, but we're all really in it alone too, it feels.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:11:03] That's a great, yeah. I love the way you put that. I would say that's, that's very true.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:11:08] Yeah.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:11:09] It's a shared experience, but our individual, uh, our, our response to the experience is highly individualized.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:11:18] Right. And I think that gifted kids are not always great at asking for help. Gifted adults are perhaps not always great at asking for help because whether it's perfectionism or just that, you know, "I can usually take care of things on my own." Um, that sometimes there's just that underlying fear of some vulnerability. And I think that I'm worried. I'm worried about, you know, the people in that gifted and twice exceptional community for that reason.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:11:53] That makes sense to me. Like I think of, um, gifted individuals and I think, you know, there's this, there's this interesting phenomenon that happens as I, as I talk continuously with various different, um, gifted humans, whether they be kids or adults with this idea, um, that the world has this expectation that they can just handle themselves and they have an expectation of themselves that they can just handle themselves.

And I think if you have that expectation and you walk into this kind of a situation, you almost, you almost don't recognize how dysregulated you are until, until you're in crisis. And because you don't have a script in your head of how to ask for help when you're in crisis, you don't always know what to do with that.

And because you tend to feel the world at a very deep and profound level, right now, you're not only feeling your own emotions and how you feel getting through this pandemic, but you're feeling the entire world's emotions. And if you don't have a good way to ground that and, and to compartmentalize and then process through as you're able to, it can become very emotionally distressing.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:13:03] When you were writing this book, and as you educate professionals who work with gifted kids, what are the takeaways for these kids who are facing trauma?

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:13:14] So a couple of things come to mind as you ask the question. First is kind of who our gifted children are in terms of their empathy development and you know, those, those areas of over excitability that we talk a lot about in the gifted literature. And I see a lot of potentially problematic, um, coping mechanisms that are born out of that emotional intensity, right? And that are born out of that deep empathy that they have. What I often see with younger, uh, gifted humans so the kids as they're growing up is a lot of enmeshment with the emotional, uh, feelings of those around them. Not a lot of good boundaries with that. And so that's where I think this can get particularly problematic.

Our gifted kiddos also understand kind of a real world, big picture at a younger age than we often realize. And so we've got, you know, I've got six and seven and eight year olds, um, that I work with who are looking at this event and kind of playing chess in their head with

how this could lay out, you know, months, years from now and what this might mean and the good things that this might mean, but also the bad things that this might mean. And I think that's what happens a lot of times when our gifted individuals are faced with traumatic events.

At the same time, they also tend to develop, um, some strong resilience, depending on how well they've been learning those social emotional skills and how young they've been as they're, as they're starting to learn that emotional literacy and, and, and some good coping strategies. And so their response to this situation and similar other traumatic situations is really going to be dependent on some of those pieces of resilience and, and how well they're developed and how well, um, what their relationships are with the adults in their lives. To have those adults help coach them to use some of those strategies.

So just like all humans are pretty independent and individual in how they respond to something like what we're going through, I think that's particularly true for our gifted kids too. Lots of potential strengths there to pull from, but if they haven't, um, had some practice using them, those strengths are there, but they may be really difficult to tap into.

And that's where where parents and family members and other adults who are in these children's lives can, can really be helpful right now in helping them tap into that logical brain of theirs that can help them orient to, you know, what's true right now in this moment as opposed to what's my, what am I projecting as being a future worry, or what am I ruminating about from the past.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:15:48] You bring up an important point I think, that often, whether it's parents or teachers, a lot of people just forget about kids in general, not necessarily only gifted or, or 2e kids, but, and that is that sometimes they actually need to be taught these skills. They don't know how to self regulate always just on their own.

They don't know how to, you know, manage all those emotions. But we do assume that there's going to just figure that out on their own.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:16:17] 100%, and I think that's a missed opportunity, right? And, and when I coach parents, I'm always talking about just explicitly start teaching these things. It doesn't have to be some formalized, you know, lesson.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:16:30] Right.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:16:31] It's just making use of the day in, day out conversations that are going on and bringing that emotional awareness, um, to bear in those conversations and being willing to go there. And I think, I think the challenge for adults right now is that they're also in varying shape, you know, varying states of crises right? They're depending on, on their experience navigating through really hard times and their success or how much success they've, perceived success they've had in that navigation, kind of determines how available they are for their children right now, and to be able to recognize when their children need it, to be able to act as a coach to their children and coach them through these difficult times.

I think it's just, it's a, it's a really unique situation that we're in. Oftentimes when our kids are going through, um, some difficulties, somebody, uh, you know, some adult around that kid is, is in a stronger emotional state to be able to help them. And I think right now we're all on, uh, very unique roller coasters and it really just depends on the moment how capable we are to help.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:17:39] Yeah. What ideas do you have that can help kids who are struggling or even the adults who are struggling? You know, we've talked to him about the explicit coaching for the kids and just kind of being able to be more in tune with that emotional intensity.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:17:54] So there's three areas that I think we need to focus on right now. Um, and I really think these are probably the only things we really need to focus on.

One is connections. Just cause we're all physically isolated, doesn't mean that we should be socially isolated. And so it's really looking for opportunities to connect and getting creative about that, whether it's online games that we're playing together, or, um, you know, let's all color together or whatever. What, let's all do some imaginative play together online. Whatever it is, it's looking for ways to connect and still be physically safe.

The second area is safety. And for safety, it's not just our physical safety, which we're all trying to do a good job with, with our health, hygiene, et cetera, but it's also that psychological safety. So what are some ways that we as parents can, or as adults can communicate safety to, psychological safety to our children? One of the ways is to keep things as normal - and I say that only half joking, right, because what the heck is normal right now - but try to keep things as normal as possible. So establish a routine that makes sense for you and your family right now, and maybe the routine is we don't really have a routine, but we're going to day by day establish something. Right? And we're, we have these three buckets of things that we're going to do every day, and it's just going to vary a little bit as to when, but some sort of structure because structure communicates safety.

Some of the, um, rules maybe that were rules of our household before all of this, we might need to tweak and change those, but it doesn't mean that this is the wild wild west and we don't have any now. We actually still need to have those rules and expectations in place. We just need to be more flexible with them and we need to establish them within the context of understanding that we're all a bit of an emotional mess, and so we need to have some flexibility around that.

Um, but, those two ways in particular really start to set a foundation for psychological safety. And then it's helping kids develop a mindset that helps foster also that psychological safety. So it's that mindset of optimism and that mindset of growth and that mindset of hope. Um, the more we can help kids establish that, um, the better.

And then the last thing I would really focus in on are skills. And by skills, I mean social emotional skills, and in particular, I'd really just focus in on self awareness and self regulation. You know, practicing strategies of self awareness. So if you don't have a mindfulness practice, for example, start a mindfulness practice, now is a really good time.

Um, look for ways to connect mind and body. Lots and lots and lots of humans right now, and gifted humans as well, are doing a whole lot of dissociation, right? You're walking from the bedroom to the kitchen and you have no idea why you just walk there, or you went to go put something away and you put it in some random spot instead of where you normally put it. And we're doing that because we're not connected. Our brains and our bodies are just not well connected right now. It's a natural response to the stress that we're all feeling. So looking for ways to reconnect all of that. I recommended to a lot of families this week, have a dance party in the middle of the day, like if you have Just Dance, turn that on. If you don't turn on a radio and just do silly dancing together and that can help you work the stress through your body and through all the cells and kind of purge all the yuck out and kind of reconnect your brain and your body. But looking for ways to do that.

Looking for ways to, um, practice coping strategies, whether it's some sort of a breathing technique, my favorite that I use a lot is something called breathing colors. But there's all kinds of ways to breathe. Um, so practice that. Practice, um, taking mini vacations mentally, just all of the different kinds of coping strategies that we can use. I think if adults focus on those three broad areas right now for themselves and for their children that, that they have some influence over, we can navigate through this. It's not that it's not going to be hard, it is going to be hard and we don't, you know it's going to be different on the other side of this, and we don't really know what that difference is, but if we can establish some of those things, we can at least get to the other side of it in much better shape than we would have if we did nothing.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:22:21] You mentioned that dissociation, and I feel that, like you said, a lot of people are dealing with that. I know you can relate to this, but I feel like, um, I'm somebody who is pretty driven and creative and that's part of my self care routine a lot of times. Like that's what, that's how I recharge and I've had a really hard time doing those things. I just can't motivate myself to do the things. And it's like, and I, I, I can't even come up with the ideas sometimes, it feels like.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:22:50] Yeah.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:22:51] And so I've actually gone back to, I used to, um, always make time to work out and that's kinda gone by the wayside the last few years because I've just had a lot of things on my plate. And like that part of self care I can do, I can go for a walk every day. I can do that. Um, but I've had to make that a much higher priority than I've had to in the past because a lot of my other skills just aren't, they're not working for me.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:23:16] Oh, I can totally relate. I've had, um, my own self care challenges as well. Um, and creativity challenges as well, and so, you know, looking for opportunities to kind of redefine all of that for myself, and, and what does that mean and how best can I do it? And how can I encourage my child who's home to do that? And my other child who's, um, in her own household? Like, how can I encourage her? And just really paying attention.

And, and I know for me personally, when I find myself being particularly, um, disconnected mind body, it's like, okay, that's a call. That's a, a kind of red flashing light, if you will, that I

am not, um, practicing self care the way I need to. And so really making that a huge priority and, and I've learned, um, every couple of days I have to take stock personally and kind of really check in with myself as to where I'm at. And I've been encouraging families to do that as well. And just flexibility's the name of the game right now in terms of figuring out how best to navigate through this.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:24:20] Yeah. I find that some of the kids that I'm working with through online counseling now, because we're all online, that some of the kids who maybe I wouldn't have even expected to make that transition as easily as they did, they're almost thriving in this new environment in different ways. It's like we took away some of the other stresses them that they were dealing with.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:24:43] It's so funny you should say that. Um, I actually, so, uh, my boss and I were on the phone the other day and he, uh, asked me, you know, how's the isolation treating you? And I said, dude, I'm an introvert. Like there's a whole part of this that actually is not bad, that I'm totally okay with. I said, as long as I get opportunities to connect, um, online in certain ways that are not work-related, like I'm good. But the rest I'm good. And he said, wow, I'm, I'm really struggling. Like I, I look for any excuse to go run to the store or whatever, just to be around other humans. And I said, yeah, cause you're an extrovert. I said, you actually need the human connection physically in a way that's different. And he goes, yeah, but I don't need to talk with people. And I said, yeah, cause that's not what being an extrovert's about.

It's about your nervous system and how your, what supports your nervous system about, you know, best. And I go, that's all about energy. And I said, it's just two different approaches. And so with regards to your question, I think we do have a whole classification of kids and, for whatever reason, gifted kids tend to fall more in the introvert camp than in the extrovert camp, um, in general. But I just think there's a whole hunk of people that are like, Oh, finally, I don't have to deal with it, like human to human contact for six hours a day.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:26:00] Right. Yeah.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:26:01] I'm okay. I can do this. You know?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:26:04] Well, especially in some of the 2e kids too, who, who...

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:26:07] Oh, 100%.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:26:08] You know, it's like, oh, this is, you know, I don't have the distractions. I don't, I'm not constantly getting in trouble. I'm not, you know, whatever.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:26:14] I think you brought up a good point too with, I'm not constantly getting in trouble, right? Because I think where the, where it gets toxic, where our work environment or school environments can be toxic right now is if there's that pressure of feeling like if I don't perform at a certain way in a certain way, the way people expect me to, that somehow I'm going to be in trouble. I think that's where it starts to. Backfire.



And so for the kids who are having really healthy school experiences, maybe for the first time ever right now, because lots and lots of schools are saying, Hey, we're going to convert to pass fail, or the only kinds of you know, assessment you'll get can help you and they can't hurt you. Like that just took all of the performance based anxiety off the table and now we can just learn for the sake of learning. And I kind of hope going forward that's something we would look at hard, um, in the field of education and say, Hey, did we stumble on to something here?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:27:11] Speaking of, you know, looking towards the future, I'm just asking for your prediction now.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:27:16] My crystal ball.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:27:17] Yeah. Well, I mean, and it's just interesting to kind of think about, but what do you, what do you think is going to change? What do you think we'll gain or lose?

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:27:23] Everything? Is that a good answer?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:27:25] All of the things, they're all going to be gone.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:27:27] All the things. I think the entire world, I think we're in a huge, uh, world shift, right? Because this has impacted, there's nobody who's not impacted in some way by this. And so I, I think if, if, if any of us are thinking it's going to be what, uh, whatever our perception of life was before this, that that's somehow coming back, I think we need to all just let go of that expectation right now because I think things are going to be different.

I think we have the potential to make them different in a really, really positive way. So if we think about schools, for example, we have lots of schools who are involving parents in a really dynamic way, and they're helping kids, and maybe they're helping kids with parents. So instead of just teaching social skills to kids, maybe they're doing it more collectively now. I think that's super positive. I would love to see more of that. When we go back to a more traditional educational kind of setting, I would love to see that continued involvement in partnership with parents. Um, so I'm hoping that that changes. I'm hoping that the public in general, um, continues their appreciation for, uh, different scopes of work that maybe we just took for granted before, like grocery store workers and delivery people and your favorite restaurant down the corner, and teachers who are now having to learn a brand new skillset on a dime and try to deliver. And, um, support staff within schools who are going out of their way to try to, to try to help students and help families.

And so I just, I think there's this great opportunity for our eyes to get open and for us to realign with, you know, how are we going to define what's important in our lives and, and how do we continue that after all of this? Um, so I think that's, I think there's some, some positive potential. I think the saddest thing to happen would be if we went back and then just forgot that we all just lived through this collectively and tried to just be who we were before. 'Cause I don't, I think that genie's out of the bottle. I don't think we can do that.

Um, again, um, I think the struggle, a few things. I think those of us who think that they can get back to whatever life was, I think, I think that's going to be a big struggle afterwards, and I think there's some potential for some very severe trauma impact of that. Most trauma researchers call the time that we're in right now actually pre-trauma, because when you're going through the event, you don't know what you're, what the true traumatic response will be. And so this is kind of pre-trauma. That time immediately after, so when all the shelters in places are lifted and places start opening again and schools are open, that'll be trauma. That's our trauma moment.

And then post-recovery will be whatever that is afterwards. Um. I think it's going to be an interesting time. I think there's some very big fiscal realities for a lot of people. I think this, uh, what we're going through right now, this shared experience has turned a light on some disparities within our culture that maybe we didn't want to really look at before. And so I think that's both a struggle and something, an asset, because we, we've become aware of some things maybe we weren't aware of before. And so now, hopefully now that we're aware, we can actively seek to change and make sure that, that, that people don't suffer unnecessarily. If we have the means to change that.

So I don't, I dunno. I think this is the time for innovation and to think about things differently and to throw all the rules out the window and say, okay, well, if we could create anything, what do we want to create?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:30:56] Let's start it over.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:30:58] Yeah. When in history has the, all of humanity kind of gotten a reset, right? I mean, and thank gosh we have technology. Can you imagine trying to do what we've been doing over the last month without tech?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:31:09] I've thought about it. You know, we can be adaptive and we can be flexible and find new ways to do things. I mean, as resistant as I've always been to doing counseling online, especially for kids, I'm like finding some ways to do it and make it interactive. And I'm like, Oh, this is not so terrible. You know? But...

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:31:26] And that's huge, because think about the potential for that.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:31:29] Absolutely.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:31:30] Schools that have talked about going one to one with devices, but maybe didn't have the fiscal wherewithal to be able to do that now haven't had a choice. And so they've been supported in getting that done.

And companies that have talked a good game about wanting to make sure everybody's got access to the internet, but now have stepped up and ensured that all people, that all students have access, which that's a game changer. That's a game changer for people. You know, there was all kinds of assumptions I think we made in this country, in our country in particular, just about who had access and who didn't. And I think we just didn't realize until this happened, where those disparities really words. It's actually potentially a very exciting time. I just, you know, it just depends, you know, how, are we all going to deal with our

traumas enough that we can make decisions that are good for the collective group as opposed to decisions that are good or driven in fear. you know?

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:32:31] This is just a process. And like you said, we're, we're at the very beginning of it. I'm curious to see the kids who are growing up now, like when they're adults and they look back, what are they going to remember and reflect on?

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:32:46] Oh yeah.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:32:46] About how it was handled and how they got through it.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:32:50] I don't know if you had an opportunity when, you know, growing up to like interview your grandparents or whatever, but I distinctly remember having an assignment for school when I was in like third or fourth grade, um, that required me, I can't remember what the assignment was. I just remember interviewing my grandmother over, like about her life, getting her, writing a biography about her. And I remember asking her, cause she was alive during the depression, and so I remember asking her about her experiences with the great depression and with Spanish flu and you know, those kinds of things.

And you know, I'm looking at this now going, you know, 50 60 70 years from now, that'll be some kid asking their grandparents, who are my children, right? What was it like to live through the great pandemic of 2020.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:33:39] That's interesting. Well, Christine, I really appreciate your time talking with us, and I know that we're all going to get through it.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:33:47] Yep.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:33:47] One way or the other. One day at a time.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:33:50] One beat at a time.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:33:52] Thank you for your thoughts.

**Christine Fonseca:** [00:33:54] My pleasure. Truly, truly, my pleasure.

**Emily Kircher-Morris:** [00:34:04] Each of us has a different set of skills and resilience that will influence how we process traumatic events and how we come out the other side. Gifted kids have their intelligence, which in a lot of ways can be a strength, and it can also be a burden depending on the other tools that they have in their toolbox.

As parents and teachers, we should ask ourselves, what can we do during this time to help them create those skills? Whether at home or through distance learning, we can model self-regulation and positive coping skills. We can teach our kids to set healthy boundaries. Let me be the first to admit that I have intermittent success and failures when it comes to providing these skills for my own kids. But also there's value in modeling vulnerability. The most important thing for anyone dealing with trauma is connection, feeling safe and supported. And if that's our only priority during this time, we're doing just fine.

I'm Emily Kircher-Morris. See you next time on Mind Matters.

(music)

**Dave Morris:** [00:35:59] Thanks again to Christine Fonseca, you can visit our episode page at [mindmatterspodcast.com](http://mindmatterspodcast.com) to find links to her website, to buy her book, and of course for a transcription of the interview. Also, thanks to our Patreon patrons who help us defray the expenses of producing the podcast. You can become one at [patreon.com/mindmatters](http://patreon.com/mindmatters).

For Emily, I'm executive producer Dave Morris. See you next time. Stay safe. Stay healthy.

Mind Matters is a production of Morris Creative Services.