

Episode 2_What is the CA_v3

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Welcome. I'm Dr. Rachel Coakley, a pediatric pain psychologist at Boston Children's Hospital and the founder and director of the comfortability program. And this is chronic pain as you've never heard it talked about before. A podcast series developed and produced by the comfortability program peer advisory board. The amazing teens and young adults you're going to meet in this podcast episode aren't here to offer up some of their best learn tips and tricks for coping with pain spread from great science back knowledge. And importantly, to let people who are struggling with chronic pain know you are not alone. So let's dive in. We're really glad you're here

welcome back to the comfortability programs peer advisory board Podcast. I'm Fiona, you heard me on the first episode with the rest of our group. And today I have Dr. Rachel Coakley with me who is the founder and director of the comfortability program. Today we're going to talk a little bit about who Dr. Coakley is what the comfortability program is, and what a comfortability workshop looks like. So Dr. Coakley, thank you for being with me today. To start Can I welcome

you to be here?

To start, can you just tell us a little bit about yourself?

Absolutely. So I'm a pediatric psychologist, I work at Boston Children's Hospital, in the pain treatment service, which is in the Division of anesthesiology, critical care and pain medicine. And my job is to help young people and young adults with persistent or chronic pain. So in terms of my background, I got my PhD in Clinical Psychology. And I've been at Boston Children's for a long time. 17 years now. Working Yeah, I know, it's been a long time. And I've been at our pain treatment service for about 15 of those years. And I am really excited to be here to talk with you a little bit about the work that I do.

Right now. Why don't we start I guess by talking about what the comfortability program is how you came up with it, how it started. Yeah,

absolutely. So let me back up and tell you just two quick stories that really I think were sort of how I got to this idea of the comfortability program. So the first is back when I was a resident early in my training, and I was working with teens who had osteosarcoma, which is a bone tumor type of cancer. And One patient in particular that I was working with, who had a lot of pain from the cancer itself. But she also had a lot of pain from these sores that are part of what happens when you get cancer treatment called

mucositis. And there were very, very painful sores in her mouth. And she really couldn't talk very well because of these sores. And I came in as a young pediatric psychologist in my training, really wanting to help her with pain management, but she couldn't really talk very well. So I started in with some of the tools that we use in pediatric psychology, deep breathing strategies, guided imagery, muscle relaxation, and she just absolutely took to the so quickly. And her dad who was in the room with her could not believe how effective these were and helping her to feel more comfort. You know, cancer can be really uncomfortable. And she had no tools for how to manage this. And he got really excited, but he's like, can you teach me how to do these things with her like I've never seen this done before. So over the next several weeks, I worked with this team and with her dad to teach them a whole group of skills that they could use. And he got super excited about and started telling the other patients on the floor, the other doctors he worked with, and he was excited to have them. But coupled with that. He was really angry that these weren't taught right at the beginning of her treatment. He was wondering why they weren't just part of the routine care and at the time, they weren't this was you know, 20 years ago. And so it started to get the wheels turning in my mind, why aren't these routinely being delivered to kids who have pain because we know that they work? So then fast forward after I have completed my training and took a job at Boston Children's really integrated these into a lot of the work that I did working with kids with chronic illness and various types of pain. And then I move over to the pain treatment service. And at the time that I was hired, there was such a long waitlist to work with a pain psychologist, you know, we're teaching all of these tools and techniques to kids with persistent pain. And there were kids waiting, like four or five months for services. And I was a little horrified by that. Because when you're in pain, you don't want to wait four or five months to learn some tools and tips and techniques for how to manage your symptoms, like you want to get better now, you know, and there's this real sense of panic and urgency. And I thought we we just we have to do better. And that was really like those experiences sort of this idea that how effective they were, how easy they can be to teach, and how few people have access to them. And I was like, right, alright, let's get moving. How do we do this better. And that was really the impetus for the comfortability program. So what I did. So broadly, I would say, the program was founded in 2011. And from the ground up, it's had two interconnected initiatives, one, to mobilize our knowledge base to get the information that we know from a REIT that is research proven, like evidence based to help kids with pain, how do we get that out to as many teens as and parents as possible? So really sort of a big push to make this accessible? And then also, how do we train more people to do this kind of work to because it's really, to be honest, it's a niche, right? Like, like, there's the clinical psychology, that's one umbrella. And then there's pediatric psychology that's working kids are ready in the health arena. And then pain psychology is like a niche within a niche within a niche. Right. So how do we started training more providers to feel sturdy and their skills and their experiences to be able to roll this information out broadly? Yeah. So that's what we're doing in the comfortability. So our goal is to kind of, like close this knowledge to practice gap is what it's called, like, we've got our evidence base, we've got our clinical skills, how do we sort of get this information out. And so under the umbrella of the comfortability program, we have several kinds of workshops that we run. And the workshops are what we call a brief intervention, they are sort of a deep dive into engaging kids and families and learning these skills. But it's we do it all in less than 12 hours. And all of our programs have a component for kids and a component for parents or carers. And about six hours each. So six hours for our teens, six hours for our parents, and that's what we're doing in our workshops.

I think you were saying you started in 2011. I think I went to one of the first workshops it was in like 2011 2012, like, a long time. Right. And then I went again, actually in 2016. I think so yeah. Been to two.

Yeah, you've been to two. At the very beginning, we really worked on this development phase for for several years, actually, where we were thinking about how do we provide? I'll say all of the workshops have four main goals. One is to provide what we call psychoeducation, which is to teach everyone what is cognitive behavioral therapy? Why does it matter in terms of pain treatment? And how is it that psychological skills can help with something that is clearly experienced as a physical problem? Right. And I think one of the things that's so important to teach is that just because these skills and tools work does not imply that pain itself is a psychological problem. It's not it's biological. There's a psychological component. There's also a social component to it as well. But in any event, our early workshops, were, how do we like really engage people and make it fun and interesting and compelling to learn this information? How do we teach them how painful functions give social support? Because, gosh, I don't know if this was your experience, Fiona, but so many people with ongoing pain feel like they must be the only ones they just feel so alone with their symptoms. Yeah. And so we really wanted it to be a group experience so you could meet other people that were struggling in similar kinds of ways and really know that you're not alone. And And then the other thing is, we didn't want to just tell people like, you have to learn breathing skills, or you have to learn how to relax. We actually wanted them to do it and to try it, and to practice it in the workshop itself. So it's very hands on that way. Yeah. Do you remember doing that stuff?

I absolutely do. I also remember the first time I went to a workshop being like having this realization that I wasn't the only person who had chronic pain, and feeling like immediately just a sense of community with the other people there, because it was like, Oh, they have a similar lived experience. They're also going through a lot of the same challenges, especially social that I was. So I remember that being a pretty amazing woman.

Yeah, yeah. A lot of people have shared that experience with me just like walking into the room and seeing a group of people there and knowing that, oh, you know, maybe they don't have the same exact kind of pain, but they're struggling in similar kinds of ways. And the parents to To be quite honest, like, the parents think that they're figuring this out. And they're the only ones trying to figure it out. So they really benefit from knowing they're not alone. Also,

yeah. Can you walk through a little bit of what a workshop looks like? And then I, I know that there are also there are in person workshops and virtual workshops. Do they vary in components? Or how they're held?

Yeah, great question. So I'll tell you about the in person workshops first, that's how the program started, or these in person workshops. We run it so so I should say right at the top too, that the comfortability program now runs workshops, at 27 children's hospitals in the US and Canada, and Australia. So we have really spread. So I'm going to talk about what we do at Boston Children's Hospital, which is where I'm based, but some of the specifics of how the workshops are run could vary a little bit site to site even though the content is the same. Right? So the the in person workshop at Boston Children's, we run it

on a weekend day, so that kids don't miss work or kids don't miss work, don't miss school, and parents don't miss work. And every and the family can attend together. It's a two parent family. We like for to provider to parents or carers to be there. And everybody comes together, the teens and their parents or caregivers at the beginning of the day, we provide an introduction. But then the groups are split up all day, the teens are in their own group, and the parents or carers are in their own group as well. And the teen group, we take some time to get to know each other a little bit. And the whole idea is around the whole workshop is around. What can you do to boost comfort in your own life. And so we really want to expand this idea of what does comfort mean for you, it's different for everybody. You know, some kids really love to get back to sports, or, you know, active hobbies, other kids are trying to get back to music or art or whatever, in whatever way pain has interfered with them. We want them to start thinking about how do you build back to those things that you value. So the whole day is around boosting comfort. And like I said, we you know, we, we often we teach about skills, so we provide some education. But then we you know, really practice these skills, we talk about what those experiences are like, kids get their own workbook where they're sort of recording what they liked, what they didn't like, how it felt to them to try these different techniques and tools. And then at the end of the day in the kids program, we're putting together an individual comfort plan for the for the child. So what did you learn today? That could be helpful? What skills could you use at school? If you were feeling uncomfortable? What school? What skills could you use to help you fall asleep at night? Those kinds of things. So we really want them to think about how does this map onto their own life. And in the peer group, we're teaching parents a lot of parent training, tips and tools and techniques. So how can they support their child? How do they help their child build back to being a little bit more active in their day to day? How do they communicate with their child when their child's feeling really stuck? That's not easy. That's a big one. Right? Because, you know, it's, it's super hard for the people experiencing pain. But, you know, for parents, this is really tough too. So we need to give them some of their own tools and tips and techniques. Yeah, so the parent group, they're, they're trying things out too, and they're working on building plans as well. And the goal is at the end of the day, you know, the programs are similar but They're not the same, I often say that they sort of dovetail that they fit together. So at the end of the day, everybody's going home with some new information with some new skills. And then they get to try it out and put them into practice.

How in a virtual workshop? How does that look? Is it similar? It's on a weekend day, it's all day, and there's a parent child group running simultaneously.

So good question. And I Sorry, I forgot to loop back to that, that virtual groups run a little differently. You know, I think we would burn everybody out, if we put them on zoom all day to do a full day workshop. So you know, raise it to giving, we're like, we can't, we just can't do that. So we do the adolescent program in four sessions over two weeks. So it's twice a week for two weeks. And again, some of our partner sites have a little bit of a different schedule that they run on. But at Boston Children's, that's how we do it, we do two sessions a week for two weeks, and the parent program is run on the weekend. We do ours on Saturday and Sunday, for three hours each time, and it's the same content. But of course, over zoom, we have to teach the skills, we had to get creative in terms of how we engage everybody how we practice the skills. So we're learning the same core skills and principles, but in a really sort of creative format, to make it as hands on and engaging as possible over zoom. Yeah,

that's a big feat. I know that it's harder to stay present and doing all of the things you guys do over zoom. So

totally, you know, I often say to families that like our whole goal, you know, our whole motivation is to boost comfort, right? So if we need an extra, you know, if you have to get up and stretch, if you need a little break, or you have to turn your screen off for a second to rest your eyes, like whatever. And whether that's the virtual group or the in person group. We're really trying to empower people to think about what I need to boost my comfort, and making sure that's accessible.

Yeah, that I was going to ask you actually, when I was going to the workshops, I remember feeling nervous about being in pain during the workshop, and also kind of being shy at that time, when I was a teenager, I definitely was more nervous about, like interacting with the group. And so I'm just wondering what you would say to people who are listening who maybe feel like, nervous about going because they're shy? Or because they might be in pain during the workshop?

Yeah, you know, we get that question a lot from parents when they're thinking about registering. And it's so important. I often tell them like, this isn't school, it's, you know, we have, like, these inflatable chairs at our workshops that the kids can sit on, we've got yoga mats for them to stretch out on, we've got digits for them to play with. We've got snack breaks built in, like as much as possible, we are trying to make this as comfortable as possible, we recognize that everyone who's coming is hurting, that's why they're there. So we don't lose sight of that. And right off the bat, we say, Listen, if you're not if you're not comfortable sharing your thoughts, or ideas with the group, that's okay, like, well, we'll ask But anybody can pass. And if you need a break, we're happy to build those. And we do the same thing on Zoom. What I often tell parents too, is like, just just bring your team like, well, we'll take care of them promise we'll take care of that when they get there. And the vast majority of the time, once teens get there, and they see what we're all about. And they understand that this is a really relaxed setting. And that there's really something here for everyone. I think about it like a buffet of comfort boosting skills. All of them are evidence based, but that doesn't mean that every skill works well for everybody. And so our job is to really think about introducing them providing an opportunity to try them out. And then really encouraging people to think about, well, I really liked this. I didn't like this. I'll give you an example. Like one of the things we do is aromatherapy. Some people love it. Some people hate it. Some people don't want to do it, although that is fine. You know, we just want you to know it's there. And sometimes when you have a scent that you experience as being really soothing or relaxing, and you match that scent with a breathing technique, or a guided imagery, it can really enhance the feeling of relaxation. So some people really love putting that together as a package. And other people pick one thing or another thing And that works better for them totally cool.

The first thing I think that we did in my workshop, the first workshop that I went to, was learn belly breathing. And I know throughout this podcast in other episodes, I'm definitely going to mention belly breathing, because it is my favorite coping strategy. But I was wondering if you could give just a little bit of background of I tried explaining what belly breathing is to me, but from the psychologists point of view, could you explain belly breathing or deep breathing a little bit?

Absolutely. So I'm so glad to hear you say that, because it's one, it's really one of the starter strategies. So we often teach belly breathing, and then we go on to teach lots of other kinds of things. But we encourage that kind of deep breathing. So the technical term for it is diaphragmatic breathing. And but it's belly breathing is an easy way to think about it. But your diaphragm is a mess, a muscle, it sits underneath your ribcage, and we target that muscle to pull the breath into the belly. You know, a lot of times when you say tell people to take a deep breath, they kind of suck it in like kinda like you know, breathing and like that. But really, what we want to do is pull air into the belly when we're taking a nice deep breath, and then use that diaphragm to push the air back out. And what that does, so when you are in a state of high arousal, which is often where people are, when they're experiencing pain, their nervous system is really amped up, they often say like, it's like the volume is turned up on a on a dial or on a dimmer switch. And our goal with diaphragmatic breathing is to send the all clear signal to the nervous system. And so your heart rate and your breath rate are actually paired together. When your heart is beating really quickly, you're often taking very shallow breaths as well, that's a state of higher arousal for your nervous system. And to unwind that, if you start breathing, these really slow rhythmic breaths into your belly, your heart rate slows down, also, often called the heart breath, as well. So we teach kids to breathe in for five seconds to hold for one second and breathe out for five seconds. That creates what we call a bio rhythm. So you breathe in for five, hold for one, out for five, breathe in for five, hold for one, out for five. And when you continue to breathe in that way, your heart starts to slow down and create a really even heart rhythm as well. And that's the override for your hyper aroused nervous system. So then your whole nervous system starts chilling out. And when people realize this, like it is like a superpower. Truly, because it not only works for pain, but it works for just feeling edgy, or anxious or frustrated. Like it really is this like magic override, it hits the All Clear button for your nervous system. So I'm happy to hear that you're using it. I'll be honest, I use it too, all the time in my day to day life, before I go to sleep at night, like it is so nice to know that you can use your breath to reset your nervous system in that way.

Yeah. It's funny that you say that, because I was also going to ask if there were any techniques that you teach people that you use in your day to day life. So it sounds like that's what

I do. I use all of them. I honestly, I feel really lucky to be able to talk about teach about, you know, use these techniques, clinically, and professionally. Because it keeps them all front and center in my mind too. So as soon as you start to feel unbalanced, you think, Alright, well, what's in my repertoire? What can I do to sort of bring back some balance and some some sense of calm and relaxation. So I use all of them. And not all of them all of the time. Like, right? There are some different times where I've got one that's like my go to, and then that'll fall out of favor. And I might, you know, instead of doing guided imagery, I might be really into mindfulness for a little while. Where I might do yoga, where I pair breath with movement, but I use all of them is the short answer.

Yeah. I think that's one of my favorite parts about all of this is that these are strategies that help you with pain, but they're also strategies you can keep using for the rest of your life just in school in stressful situations. And it's just like at this toolbox that we got to build that isn't just for pain. Yeah. And it's been really helpful in my adult life. I'm so

glad to hear that. And, you know, I don't often get to talk to people like you Fiona who You are well into their adult life and, you know, have really learned how to bring that balance. But I have some that I get to talk to and like you, they just say, you know, glad to have learned these when I did because they are such life skills. And it really is true. When you remember that, you know, pain itself is this hypersensitivity or hyper arousal of the nervous system, that pain, we're naturally designed to be fearful of pain. So it makes perfect sense that everything's in high gear. When you're uncomfortable like that, then you sort of it makes sense that that these strategies also work, more globally unjust other things that might amp up your nervous system. Yeah. Yeah.

I also wanted to ask you what your favorite part of doing the comfortability of

this is gonna sound like, real. Like, I don't know, you're cliché, I'm not sure. But like all of it, I really do. I think, in the program at Boston Children's, I often lead the parent group. And not because I don't like doing the teen group, I really do love to do the teen group too. It's just kind of how things have percolated. But I do love teaching the parents because I, it's so easy to just, you know, I start the day really trying to put myself in the shoes of these parents that are feeling so worried about their kids, you know, as a parent myself, I fully understand that panic, that sense of like futility, like, there's nothing I can do to help my child, they they're suffering, really with these symptoms. And there's really like this arc to the day and we see it in the parent group. And we see it in the teen group, where people come in, like you said, Fiona, like nervous, a little apprehensive, a little unsure of what they're going to learn, maybe a little doubtful that it's really going to be useful, especially when they've been in pain for a long time. And within a day, or a couple of sessions, if we're doing it virtually, we really see this important shift from this place of feeling fearful, or maybe hopeless, or helpless, like I don't, I don't know what to do about this situation, to a place of feeling a little sturdier, having a little bit more calm, a greater understanding. And just like a sense of relief, like, oh, there's something I can do about this. And that arc, that sort of movement from this place, where people come in feeling nervous, to a place where they leave feeling a little stronger, a little sturdier, is just like bliss for me, because I'm like, you know, not that a day cures people, right? Like I never have false. I never give people false hope like that, like, just come do this brief program, and you'll feel better. It's not that it's that they can see the glide path, they can start to see that there is this path to recovery. And that really instills a sense of hopefulness. That's, that's critical in pain recovery.

Yeah. I also have to put in a little shameless plug. There's often a guest speaker portion of it workshops. Yeah, it's not

shameless. It's such a good plug. Yeah.

Usually in the teen group and the parent group, and a lot of times at the Boston Children's group and at different sites. The peer advisory board will be the guest speakers. So definitely, that I think that was one of my favorite parts. When I went to the workshop, the first time was hearing somebody else speak who is in a different place in life. Yes,

it's important because it's one thing for like doctors or psychologists or physical therapists, or whoever you might be working with on YouTube, it's one thing for them to be like, Yeah, you're you will learn to

manage this or get better from it, like it's either gonna go away, or for some kids, if they have underlying medical conditions, disease related pain, sometimes pain doesn't fully go away. But that doesn't mean they don't learn how to manage it and go on to do amazing things with their lives. Right. So I think, knowing that that's a possibility that that could be done. And I will say like, one of my favorite things, absolutely. From the beginning of this program, like back at weigh up. I always knew that hearing from somebody who had walked this walk was an essential ingredient because that really does help people be like, okay, you know, just maybe that could be me. Maybe that could be my pathway to and it is very empowering. But occasionally we get people in the group who after hearing the guest speakers, after attending the program will come up to me right afterwards and say, This was great. This was really helpful. Also, I'm going to come back to be one of your guest speakers. That's gonna be me. And that was really like, that just gives me these, like happy little goosebumps. Because once you say like, oh, I'm going to do that. That's just a self fulfilling prophecy. Right? And we know that those people are going to be successful. Yeah, yeah.

So to wrap up today, we have a special little treat for everyone listening, Dr. Coakley is going to lead us in a mini guided imagery session.

This is going to be so fun. So thank you for inviting me to do this. So let me just give a little background on what guided imagery is. So guided imagery is using the power of your mind to either change your experience, your sort of sensory and experience of sort of what's happening, what you're thinking about, or how you're feeling. And so we use really detailed imagery, it's why it's called guided imagery. And think of it like a storytime. And your job, when you do a guided imagery, as you're listening along, is really as much as possible, just focus on my voice, just try to stay present. And when your mind wanders away, which it often does, just bring it back to focus on what you're trying to imagine. And see if you can notice any changes. And so the one I'm going to do just to give you a little precursor is about relaxing your body, it's called a passive muscle relaxation. So we're just going to imagine we're gonna go body part by body part, or imagining relaxing each part of your body as you go. And so you'll put your attention on that part of the body and try to release some tension. So we'll give that a go. And like you said, to be on it, we talked about the breathing, just start off just regulating breath a little bit, because that really helps your body get primed to do this in a really powerful way. Okay, so let's go ahead, let's start by just focusing on your breathing. And the first thing I want you to do is empty all the air out of your belly, like a big exhale. And then slowly breathe in through your nose and feel like right around your belly button, fill that area expand, with a full breath of air, hold it for a second. And when you're ready, release the air slowly and feel your body start to relax. And I want you to just find your own rhythm as you're listening to this slow deep breaths into your belly. Breathing in pausing and slowly breathing out. So continue with that breath. And I'll invite you to close your eyes if that feels okay to you. And that will really help you use your mind to help your muscles relax. So when when your eyes are closed, I want you to imagine a soft, soothing color. This could be any color you want. Maybe it's blue, like a sky blue, maybe a soft yellow, purple, any color that you find soothing, any color. Now imagine that you've got a soft paintbrush, and I want you to imagine dipping this paintbrush into your soothing color and very gently stroking the paintbrush up your right leg. Imagine that you're painting your whole right leg with this soft, soothing color. Stroking up and down and taking your time. As you cover your leg with a soft, soothing color. Feel the muscles start to release from your foot to your ankle up to your knee and your hip. And notice as you do this that your leg might feel heavier, softer and

more relaxed. Now let's brush your left leg with this healing color. Feel the paint brush gently stroke the bottom of your foot pass over the top of your foot. Allow the paintbrush to continue up your shin, your thigh covering all of your left leg with the soft, soothing color. Breathe deeply and notice any changes you might feel in your legs. Now pass this paintbrush dipped in your soothing color over the palm of your right hand and up over each one of your fingertips. Allow the brush to move up your wrist, your forearm into the top of your arm. Now cover the brush in your soothing color and apply it to your right shoulder. And as you do feel your shoulder relax, prop away from your ear. Just notice how calm and still your right arm and shoulder has become. Now move the paintbrush dip in your soothing color over your left hand. Feel the soft bristles gently stroke the palm of your left hand and then pass over each of your fingertips. Watch as your soothing color covers your left wrist, forearm and the top of your arm. And notice now that your arm might feel warmer, heavier, more relaxed. Have hover the paintbrush in your soothing color and cover your left shoulder with this color so that it too becomes relaxed, soft, dropping away from your ears. Now pass this paintbrush dipped in your soothing color up the back of your neck across the top of your head. Feel your scalp, gently tingle. And then relax. Pass this soft brush over your forehead, nose, eyes, cheeks, and chin. And just notice how all the tension just drains from your face. Take a deep breath in and enjoy this feeling of relaxation. You have as much of your soothing color as you need to make your body feel comfortable and relaxed. Focus your breath on releasing any leftover stress or tension or discomfort in your body. Notice how you've helped to make yourself feel very relaxed. We've done a wonderful job. So now let's turn to feeling a little bit more awake and focused. But know that you can take these soothing, relaxing feelings with you throughout the rest of your day. I will slowly count backwards from five to one. And when I reach one, you can open your eyes feeling rested. Alert and also very relaxed. Eyes. Four, start to wiggle your fingers and toes. Three brings some feeling back into your legs and your shoulders and your arms to take a deep breath in. And one open your eyes feeling refreshed.

That was amazing. I think you have the most relaxing voice. It's perfect.

Thank you. Thank you. You know, I will just say we have on our website for anyone that's interested. Lots of recorded exercises at the [comfortability.com](https://www.comfortability.com). So check those out under guided exercises. We've got a bunch for general relaxation. We've got some from mindfulness practice, and they're free and easy to download. So if you like that there's some longer ones, some different ones. And like I was saying, you know, it's just about finding the kind of exercise that works best for you.

Yeah. Also on the website, that's where people can sign up for workshops and online chat,

right? Yes. Yeah, absolutely. So there's a page on the workshop called find a site called Find a workshop, you can put in your zip code and see where the closest workshop to you might be. And if there's not one close to you, you know, some of some people are doing them virtually, we're not the only site that does them virtually at Boston Children's. So it's worth doing a little exploring. And if you click on the workshop site, it will give you information on how to register at any of the sites. And I'm glad you mentioned the online chats because even if you can't get to a workshop, and you're interested to get some support, learn some about some different skills or ideas or tips or tools for managing pain. We run monthly free online health chats. And like you were saying to be on our peer Advisory Board is a big part of our team chats. They're always there, there's always somebody there to offer some advice

and some lived experience. We also always have a psychologist on the chat as well. And same thing with our parent chats.

Yeah. And the chats I believe, are anonymous, so there's no worrying about having your name, full name, like out there on the internet or anything.

Exactly that we use nicknames on the chats. They're all text based. So they're it's easy to sort of submit a question anonymously. Sometimes people just like to log in and see what the conversations about. And yeah, you can do that, too. You can you have to register even just to sort of see what's going on. But we'll send you a link and you can just see what the chatter is all about.

Yeah, I've definitely been on several chat groups, actually, where people have said, Oh, I'm a returning user. Like, this is my third. You know, team chat that, yeah, so

people love them. And it's just, you know, it's just nice to know, you're not alone in this. And so that's another way to get some good social support. And to ask questions and explore ideas, like my favorite part of them is that, honestly, I mean, the psychologist is there to offer some ideas if needed. But But so often, there's cross talk between the people that are on the chat where they're offering each other ideas and suggestions and things like that. So that's, that's a really fun way to connect and to get some good skills.

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Well, thank you so much for talking with me Dr. Coakley, it's been really good to hear a little bit more about what the comfortability is and what it workshop looks like, um, to hopefully give people more information and maybe put people who are listening at ease, thinking about signing up for a chat.

I hope so. I hope so. We are we're you know, at the comfortability program we're so happy that the pier board is, is diving into this and interested also to share information and get it out there. So it has been a pleasure talking with you Fiona. Truly, this is this is wonderful.

To everyone listening, be on the lookout for the next episode, where you're all hear from Dr. Coakley, again, along with Dr. Bobby Riley, and Bridget Brooke and Sophia, where they're going to talk about the science of pain. So stay tuned for that.

On behalf of the comfortability program, I want to thank Sophia, Fiona, Brooke, Bridget and Katie for their incredible work in writing, producing and recording this amazing podcast. We are so lucky to have the privilege of learning from you and working with you on the comfortability peer advisory board. I am also so grateful to my comfortability team, especially Dr. Amy Hill, who provided support and guidance to the peer board and staff throughout the project. Thanks to Dr. Hale. We all got a little zippier and felt a lot more confident. I also want to thank the Department of Anesthesia, critical care and pain medicine, Boston Children's for supporting this work, and the team at open pediatrics for the podcast post production. Finally, the shout out of gratitude to our strong and growing network of dedicated partner sites in the US, Canada and Australia. If you're looking for more great science backed information about managing chronic pain, check out our website that comfortability that calm. We've got lots of

helpful resources online including information about how to find a comfortability workshop near you. If you enjoyed the podcast, and you want to help the comfortability program grow, so we can continue to support young people with pain. Please consider a tax deductible donation to the comfortability program through Boston Children's Hospital. How do you donate? It's easy. Just go to our website, the comfortability.com and look for the donation button in the upper right hand corner. For more great content. You can follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. We are at a comfortability across all social media. Finally, I just want to say I'm so happy you tuned in to listen today I know I speak for myself our peer Advisory Board and the comfortability team when I say