

Taking Care of Ourselves

Resiliency is the power of recovery - Garmezy, 1992, Parent to Parent of Vermont

When working with families who are in pain, it is very important to make self care a priority. If we give away all our energy to others and their problems, we deplete the personal energy needed to work and care for ourselves and our families.

- 1. Carve out some personal time and space, and use it.**
 - Claim time alone-- running, reading, a night out or time with a friend, etc.

- 2. Explore and define self knowledge and understanding.**
 - Identify personal biases and stress triggers. Learn to recognize them when they show up.
 - Set clear boundaries with families.
 - Get personal needs met in places other than work.

- 3. Be willing to ask for help.**
 - Know when to refer.
 - Ask for help as a way to grow stronger.
 - Request and expect ongoing support and supervision as critical to growth and learning.
 - Grow. Go to trainings.
 - Find peer support outside of work.

- 4. Develop and guard self respect.**
 - Do not become more invested in families than they are in themselves.
 - Keep relationships balanced.
 - Meet the expectations of the role, but keep them reasonable.
 - Let actions reflect beliefs.
 - Be selective about issues for increased involvement.

- 5. Enjoy life.**
 - Laugh a lot.
 - Acknowledge and rejoice in accomplishments, big and small.
 - Maintain physical health through sleep, exercise, good nutrition.
 - Seek emotional health through loving, supportive relationships and obtaining counsel when needed.
 - Employ a spiritual practice such as prayer, meditation or reflection to make life meaningful.

