



# PLAN:

## *Dealing with your own stress*

Stress management is an important part of avoiding burn-out, especially when you are working with parents and families dealing with many challenges or living in adverse conditions. You can search online and easily find examples of strategies for stress management. Here are three examples you can try out for yourself or with the parents you see.

### **IDENTIFY PRIORITIES TO MAKE A CHANGE.**

Think about your own priorities. Envision a change you might like to make – perhaps find a new apartment or take an advanced course in motivational interviewing. Think through the steps it will take (e.g., check Craig’s list, ask friends if they know of anything, etc.). Write down examples of action steps, identify who might help you take the step or what other resources you may need to take the next step. Set reasonable deadlines and review your progress periodically to add new steps, revise steps and add new deadlines. Celebrate each step along the way and the final achievement of your goal.

### **ADJUST YOUR PLAN TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL.**

Feelings of anxiety and stress may be a sign that you are not taking good care of yourself. Oftentimes, these feeling can happen when you are not able to do what you want to do, or when you feel like you have failed at an important task. One reason this may happen is that we may set ourselves up for failure by setting goals that are too difficult to achieve. One strategy to help you address feelings of anxiety and stress is to modify or reframe professional and personal tasks to make them more achievable. For example, a challenging professional goal may be to complete a master’s degree this year while you are working full-time at the agency. You might need to modify your timeframe or cut back on your work hours to set a more reasonable, do-able goal. Instead of saying “I’m going to run a marathon at the end of one month of exercising,” a more achievable goal might be to say, “I’m going to run as far as I can, hopefully two miles, at the end of one month of exercising.” Remember, creating opportunities for

your own success is just as important as helping the parents you work with be successful.

**MAKE SELF-CARE A PRIORITY.**

Generate a list of activities that help you feel better and identify how they make you feel. Some examples are provided below. Include activities you find particularly helpful when you want to relax.

<b>POSITIVE SELF CARE STRATEGY</b>	<b>THIS HELPS ME FEEL</b>
doing a crossword puzzle	relaxed, calm, smart
exercise	energized, good about my body, healthy
participate in a religious activity	spiritual, involved in a community, centered

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