

Self-Care Practices for Professionals for Remote Working



This leaflet offers some resources and tips for professionals' own self care.

Professionals who are supporting families during challenging times, in changing circumstances, can be taxing on ones own resources.

Compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatisation are a real threat for professionals working with those in distress.

Having a good self-care practice and some robust supports in place will in turn support the work, lessening the impact of secondary trauma.

Some tips to rememeber...

Working from home can evoke a sense of disconnection from colleagues and normal work routine. In order to have a sense of familiarity try to keep the working day as close to routine as possible.

Work and home life can seem to blend when working from home. What once was a personal space might not feel so personal anymore.

It is possible to keep this boundary if you keep work to a confined and designated space. Having a neutral room, with as little personal information as possible can help. This is especially important when using video as a medium to support clients.

Ensure there are no personal pictures or items on display for clients to see when video calling, that way you might still feel like home is home and will reduce the possibility of having to answer personal questions.

Keep in touch with your line manager regularly for any support or resources you might need.

Avail of video calls with your manager and team so you can keep in touch and stay connected.

Don't forget ...

Supervision is always available both ad-hoc and scheduled so please avail of this.

Make time for writing up notes and logging calls etc. and follow DoCCFS Policies and Procedures in relation to this.

Take regular stretch breaks between sessions.

If you need extra support in addition to your line manager, you can avail of the Employee Assistance Programme.

Remember to be gentle with yourself.



A final note...

When children are experiencing transition and re-adjusting they often feel separation anxiety. As professionals we might help them to find a "transitional object" that will help them re adjust and adapt.

As adults we can experience the same feelings. Being away from loved ones and not seeing them for long periods may bring up feelings of loss and grief. As a resource it might be helpful to create your own "transitional object" while working from home and isolating from loved ones.

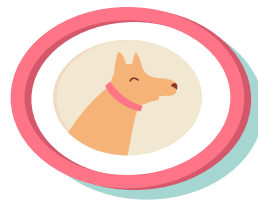
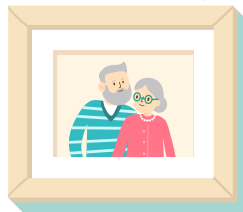
A photograph, scarf, necklace, tissue with a familiar scent/perfume can all act as resources in challenging times and help us feel connected to those whose love sustains and supports us .

This leaflet was put together by the staff in
Lisdeel Family Centre

Working from home



Prepare yourself and the room. If possible pick one designated room for taking calls. Have a ritual before the call, breathe deeply, light a candle. When you blow out the candle visualise a "letting go" of the client and the parts of the conversation that may have been triggering/challenging for you.



Keep a picture of somethings that bring you comfort nearby after sessions. Cuddling an animal/child reflecting on memories of children/grandchildren/friends, These will help separate you from the clients story. Sometimes it can be helpful to tell yourself "This is my clients story, it is not mine".

After a session



Sit for 5/10 minutes between sessions drink some tea/coffee/water. Open a window and take a "mindful moment" connecting to the senses, what can you see outside, what can you hear, what can you smell, what can you touch. Run some cold water on your hands.

Treat yourself to your favourite piece of chocolate/sweet. Sometimes sessions can be triggering causing low blood sugar. Having something sweet can help regulate the nervous system.

Dance like nobody is watching. Put on your favourite music and dance. Let yourself go and feel the energy change, have fun and do something lighthearted.

Resources

Reach out and check in with colleagues through phone or email. Plan a phone or video chat with friends/loved ones. If you know there is a day when you will be offering a lot of support, plan to connect with someone in your own support network either before or after that session.

Nurture the child within you. Sometimes when supporting clients with grief, loss and trauma it can bring up our own experiences in adulthood or early childhood. Taking time to connect, nurture and champion that little child within can be an act of compassion towards ourselves.