

## CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULT WORK

Our work can be overwhelming. Our challenge is to maintain our resilience so that we can keep doing the work with care, energy, and compassion.

### 10 things to do for each day

1. Get enough sleep.
2. Get enough to eat.
3. Do some light exercise.
4. Vary the work that you do.
5. Do something pleasurable.
6. Focus on what you did well.
7. Learn from your mistakes.
8. Share a private joke.
9. Pray, meditate or relax.
10. Support a colleague.

For more information see your supervisor and visit [www.psychosocial.org](http://www.psychosocial.org) or [www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)

Beth Hudnall Stamm, Ph.D., *ProQOL.org* and *Idaho State University*  
Craig Higson-Smith, M.A., *South African Institute of Traumatic Stress*  
Amy C. Hudnall, M.A., *ProQOL.org* and *Appalachian State University*  
Henry E. Stamm, Ph.D., *ProQOL.org*

## SWITCHING ON AND OFF

It is your empathy for others helps you do this work. It is vital to take good care of your thoughts and feelings by monitoring how you use them. Resilient workers know how to turn their feelings off when they go on duty, but on again when they go off duty. This is not denial; it is a coping strategy. It is a way they get maximum protection while working (switched off) and maximum support while resting (switched on).

### How to become better at switching on and off

1. Switching is a conscious process. Talk to yourself as you switch.
2. Use images that make you feel safe and protected (switch off) or connected and cared for (switch on) to help you switch.
3. Find rituals that help you switch as you start and stop work.
4. Breathe slowly and deeply to calm yourself when starting a tough job.

We encourage you to copy and share this card. This is a template for making the pocket cards. You may make as many copies as you like. We have heard from some organizations that they have made thousands of copies. Some people find that it is helpful to laminate the cards for long-term use. The ProQOL helper card may be freely copied as long as (a) author is credited, (b) no changes are made other than those authorized below, and (c) it is not sold.  
[www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)