



Secrets to Being a Child Care Professional

Secret #1

"No is Not a 4-Letter Word!"

Child care professionals are very good at caring for others, but often lack self-care skills. Sometimes they fear feeling guilty or selfish. Ask yourself the following questions to see how well you take care of yourself.

- *Do you feel your relationships are more giving than getting?*
- *Do you feel drained at the end of the week from taking care of others?*
- *Do you resent others who seem to have more energy than you?*
- *Do you have a difficult time letting others know what you need?*
- *Do you find yourself working more and playing less?*
- *Do you get an adequate amount of sleep at night?*
- *Do you consume too much sugar, caffeine or alcohol to help you get through the week?*
- *Do you exercise three or more times a week?*

Look at your answers above. If you answered any of these questions in a negative way, it is strongly suggested that you take some time for yourself! Develop and maintain a group of friends in both your personal and professional lives who can offer you support. Also, develop a smaller group of friends with whom you can maintain trusting relationships. Ask those people to be honest with you and return the honesty to them.

Let other people know what you need from them. People cannot read your mind to know what you need. We often get frustrated with people when they do not do something we need, however in most cases we never communicate our expectations. Evaluate your support system to see who is giving support to you and who is getting support from you. Find venting time with peer professionals as well as personal friends.



Don't give advice to others unless they ask for it. Even when they ask, be cautious about giving advice. Know the difference between giving advice and coaching! Encourage yourself and others to find your/their own solutions to problems. Brainstorming ideas is an alternative to giving direct advice. If you are a director/owner of a program, when a staff member comes to you with a problem, encourage them to also come to you with three possible solutions.

Get enough sleep at night. Don't wait for the weekend to do a crash course in resting and sleeping. Watch for signs of sleep deprivation such as touching your eye-lids or feeling the way you did after your seventh-grade slumber party. Learn what can happen to your body and mental state when you consume too much caffeine, sugar, and/or alcohol. Reclaim your time and energy for exercise. Develop a plan that works for you. Keep a jump rope in your office. When your school has a quiet moment, simply jump rope for 5-10 minutes.

Last, but not least, learn and practice saying "NO" techniques with others in your personal and professional lives. Don't bite off more than you can chew.

*Would you like to receive one clock hour of training for reading
"Secrets to being a Child Care Professional #1"?
If so, complete the worksheets at
www.tymthetrainer.com/onlinetraining.html
and follow the instructions.
A one-hour training certificate will be provided.*