

# Getting Through a Difficult Day

## PREPARE BEFORE BEGINNING YOUR SHIFT

- ✓ Be aware of what to expect, both practically and emotionally.
- ✓ Be aware of signs of stress or burnout in yourself and in co-workers.
- ✓ Remind yourself of the skills and knowledge that you bring with you.
- ✓ Create some statements that you can use throughout the day to remind yourself of your skills e.g.
  - 'I can cope right now'
  - 'I am strong enough to get through this'
  - 'I bring my compassion and care to my work'
- ✓ A helpful video that you can use to prepare yourself for your shift can be found here: [Hope in Work - Belfast Health and Social Care Trust YouTube](#)

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF DURING THE SHIFT

- ✓ Take care of your body – try to eat properly and get enough rest.
- ✓ Talk to co-workers and supervisors about your experiences – what information and support do you need?
- ✓ Try some simple stress management skills to protect yourself emotionally e.g.
  - **Drop anchor** - Plant your feet into the floor, pushing them down, noticing the floor beneath you supporting you. Notice the muscle tension in your legs, notice the feeling of gravity flowing down through your head, spine and legs into your feet. Look around and notice what you can see and hear around you. [Dropping Anchor - Walk in my shoes YouTube](#)
  - **Notice 5 things** – Notice 5 things you can see, 5 things you can hear, 5 things you can feel in contact with your body. Finally notice all these things at the same time. [Notice 5 Things - Walk in my shoes YouTube](#)
  - **Visualise a safe space** – Create a pleasant image of a safe space where you feel calm and peaceful. Try to visualise the scene in some detail, engaging all of your senses. [Safe Place Visualisation YouTube](#)
  - **Reduce muscle tension** - Breathe deeply. Imagine that the tension in the muscles of your forehead is flowing out of your body with each exhalation. Do the same thing, breath by breath, with the muscles of your jaw, shoulders, arms, and legs.

## LET GO OF YOUR SHIFT

- ✓ Expect that your return home after an intense and demanding work day may be more complicated than you may anticipate. As much as we love them, time with families is not always restful or relaxing.
- ✓ Have a plan in advance of how you will wind down. Try to engage in enjoyable activities e.g. drawing, listening to music, baking.
- ✓ Take a few minutes to review the challenges you faced at work. What would you say to a colleague with similar experiences?
- ✓ Think of 3 things that you felt went well. Why are you proud of these?
- ✓ Shed the professional you and pass the shift onto your co-workers.
- ✓ A helpful video for moving back into your home life after shift can be found here: [Joy at Home - Belfast Health and Social Care Trust YouTube](#)