



TIPS FOR FAMILIES, FROM FAMILIES

About Resourcing Your Journey



Breaking Barriers



Making Connections



Building Confidence



INTRODUCTION

The following tips and suggestions are about caring for oneself as a parent, carer, family member or kin supporting a child or young person experiencing complex mental health challenges.

All these ideas came from parents, carers, families or kin who have been involved in the Resilience in Reach Project in some way.

Some will resonate with you, and others may not. We hope some of them may be useful for you.

We welcome any further learnings you may have from your own experience that you would like to share. (See the end of this resource to find out how you can contribute to this list.)

TIPS FOR FAMILIES



One step at a time

- It might sound 'trite' but it's true – remember to breathe.
- Take time, slow down, reflect on what's happening.
- The journey is long and unpredictable – try to pace yourself.
- Got to take time for yourself – it feels selfish, but even a small time – even 5 mins for a coffee, or a walk in the garden.

Don't forget the basics

- Basic routine, nutrition, and rest really helps. It's hard to prioritise yourself but it is essential.
- Keep doing things that sustain you, e.g. movies, walking, being with friends.
- Take time to reset and regulate. Allow time for rest.

TIPS FOR FAMILIES



Find your tribe

- Connect with others with similar experiences.
- Find someone who can sit in the 'grey' with you – who can listen without giving advice.
- Find your tribe – likeminded and understanding family and friends.
- As we all know, it can be very lonely and isolating, and we all think it's just us and our child, where really it's not. We all need a tribe.

Consider getting support for yourself

- For me, it was just realising that I needed help too.
- I needed to find people who could work through the situation and support me to process it, so that I didn't have to work through it with the person.
- Getting professional support as a parent is not just about your mental health but also allows you to vent in a safe space.

TIPS FOR FAMILIES



Prepare for challenging times

- When things get really tough – an emergency tool box to help regulate in tough times, a collection of strategies and resources that are easy to access.
- During calmer times, reflect and prepare for what's ahead using tools you have learned and do things that restore and replenish you.

Trust your lived/living expertise

- I was continually rethinking what my instincts were telling me and sometimes I didn't trust myself when I should have. Trust your instincts.
- Trust your instincts. I took on the system response and lost track of my own personal framework.

TIPS FOR FAMILIES



Set boundaries in relation to unhelpful advice

- Learn to say 'no'.
- You may need to set boundaries with other people, to say 'no, thank you' without damaging or severing relationships.
- Setting boundaries with online relationships and information is also important. This includes accessing needed information and support without getting caught in the intensity - 'being your own moderator'.
- Lots of people will give you advice, but everyone develops their own solutions. We all need to be able to develop and access our own strategies.

Families need broader community and government support

- Sometimes we might blame ourselves for not taking better care of ourselves, when it's actually that the system doesn't sufficiently resource and support families and carers.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?



Are you a parent, carer, family member or kin of a child or young person who has experienced complex mental health challenges with valuable information or advice for other parents, carers, families, or kin of children or young people?

Is there anything you have learned from your experience that you would like to offer people going through something similar?

Would you like your advice added to the Resilience in Reach resources for parents, carers, families and kin?

You can let us know your suggestions by sending them to us via email: info@raisingminds.org.au or via website [here](#)