BUILDING AND MAINTAINING SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN JUDICIAL OFFICERS AND THEIR LOVED ONES

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SOURCES OF JUDICIAL STRESS

- TOO MANY CASES
- EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC OR EMOTIONALLY-CHARGED SITUATIONS
- POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PRESSURES, PARTICULARLY IN SMALLER COMMUNITIES OR VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
- CONCERNS ABOUT SECURITY AND SAFETY
- ISOLATION
- CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS: "COMPLAINING" IS INAPPROPRIATE BECAUSE HAVING THE JOB IS A PRIVILEGE
- TENDENCY OF MANY JUDICIAL OFFICERS TO BE PERFECTIONISTS
- TENDENCY OF MANY JUDICIAL OFFICERS TO AVOID EMOTIONAL CONFLICT

SIGNS OF CHRONIC JUDICIAL STRESS

- PREOCCUPATION WITH WORK
- EMOTIONAL DISTANCE, MOODINESS, IMPATIENCE
- INSOMNIA
- PERSEVERATION (REPEATING THE SAME NARRATIVE OVER AND OVER)
- INCREASED USE OF ALCOHOL OR OTHER SUBSTANCES
- PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS (HYPERTENSION, COMPROMISED IMMUNE SYSTEM RESULTING IN FREQUENT ILLNESS)

SOURCES OF STRESS FOR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS

- LESS SATISFYING DAY TO DAY COMPANIONSHIP
- DEALING WITH EMOTIONAL CHANGES
- SECURITY AND SAFETY CONCERNS
- POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PRESSURES, PARTICULARLY IN SMALLER COMMUNITIES OR VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
- LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH JUDICIAL OR LEGAL CONTEXT
- NOT KNOWING WHAT TO SAY OR HOW TO HELP

COPING STRATEGIES—ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

AUTHENTICITY: BEING HONEST AND CONSISTENT

EMPATHY: SEEING THE WORLD AS ANOTHER SEES IT

COMPASSION: LETTING YOUR CARING SHOW

APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES: KNOWING THAT YOU CAN'T FIX EVERYTHING AND NOT TRYING TO DO SO

COPING STRATEGIES—COMMON PITFALLS

LACK OF CANDOR: SAYING THINGS YOU DON'T BELIEVE

- IDENTIFICATION: THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU WOULD DO RATHER THAN ABOUT WHAT MAKES SENSE FOR ANOTHER PERSON TO DO
- TRYING TO DO TOO MUCH: TRYING TO FIX EVERYTHING OR TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANOTHER PERSON'S CHOICES
- DOING TOO LITTLE: MINIMIZING A PROBLEM OR BEING NAIVELY REASSURING

COPING STRATEGIES—ESSENTIAL SKILLS

ACTIVE LISTENING

Drawing out and reflecting back

DETACHED CONCERN

Being non-judgmental while exercising good judgment

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Noticing how you feel, holding rather than suppressing your response, and expressing emotion when helpful to the relationship

THINKING FAST AND SLOW

SYSTEM ONE:

INTUITIVE, REACTIVE, SPONTANEOUS GENUINE, BUT PRONE TO UNCONSCIOUS BIASES AND ASSUMPTIONS

SYSTEM TWO:

REFLECTIVE, REASONED, DELIBERATE

NOT ALWAYS ACCESSIBLE IN EMOTIONALLY-CHARGED SITUATIONS, BUT CAPACITY CAN BE INCREASED THROUGH MINDFULNESS AND OTHER ATTENTION-BUILDING PRACTICES

MINDFULNESS

- BEING IN THE PRESENT INSTEAD OF THE PAST OR THE FUTURE
- LIMITING THE EFFECTS OF SYSTEM ONE AND GIVING SYSTEM TWO MORE SPACE IN WHICH TO FUNCTION
- CREATING SPACE FOR DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS OR SITUATIONS
- ALLOWING ONE TO CHOOSE ONE'S RESPONSE, INCLUDING EXPRESSION OF EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

HUMILITY

- THIS IS HARD WORK
- YOU WILL DISAPPOINT YOURSELF OR YOUR LOVED ONE REPEATEDLY
- FORTUNATELY, YOU WILL HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE AND LEARN