

# Building the Support You Need; Being the Support They Need

## Self-care is not a luxury:

- ◆ Treat the stress as a physical job - get in shape!
- ◆ Focus on the Boring Basics: sleep, unplug, eat well, exercise
- ◆ Breath: Try these exercises - 4-7-8, deep breathing, equal breathing, breath focus, lion breath
- ◆ Meditation and prayer
- ◆ Practices that fill you
- ◆ Bless yourself with an open mind
- ◆ Focus on strengthening relationships that support you, including your spouse or partner
- ◆ Build a support team NOW
- ◆ Apply healthy supportive people liberally, unsafe people (judgmental, critical, "I would never") with great caution.
- ◆ Go outside!
- ◆ Self-soothing toolkit - know what works for you, all five senses.
- ◆ Know how to ask for and accept help (*use handout*)
- ◆ Deal with what's in YOUR head! Adjust your own attitude, get your own mental health help.

## Things your teen needs that only YOU can do:

- ◆ Let them know they are loved unconditionally, even AFTER hearing their feelings & fears
- ◆ Listen, without judgment, with interest, "I'd like to know more, help me understand"
- ◆ Be the safe, calm space in their storm; let them know they are not alone
- ◆ Take them seriously, including safety. Don't brush them off or hope it's just a phase
- ◆ Don't be afraid to ask hard questions, and respond calmly to tough answers
- ◆ Hope FOR them when they do not feel hopeful. Help them see a future, and have dreams.
- ◆ **Remind them who they REALLY are, their strengths and gifts for the world.**

