



***I give out, day after day, but who is there for me?***  
*(Social media post 23 February 2023, by Silvia Purdie)*

It hasn't exactly been an easy start to 2023, and if you're hoping for a cruisy year – dream on! There's no more important time to set in place for yourself good social support. Silvia Purdie suggests 3 ways to sustain your work, right through the year.

We are in the community sector because we genuinely care for people. But do we let others care for us? Do you suffer from the cognitive glitch that over-estimates your own capacity to keep giving out, week after week? What are the warning signs that tell you that you need some looking after also? Here are 3 strategies for nurturing your ability to care.

### **1: You Got to Have Friends<sup>1</sup>**

Sure, you have friends, but how often do you actually see them?? They're busy, you're busy, months slide by without catching up. My advice is, pick three people you like a lot. Call them and tell them you need their friendship (how scary is that?) and invite them to meet up on a planned regular basis, not just ad-hoc. Together figure out what you enjoy doing together, and write that in your calendar, not just for this month but through the whole year. Why do we think that work meetings are important enough to plan and friend meetings should just magically happen at the last minute?

### **2: Professional Supervision**

By this stage in the year, it is a Very Good Thing to establish a sustaining pattern of (at least monthly) supervision.

- a) Does your work pay for supervision? (you can probably negotiate for it)
- b) Is your supervisor right for you? (if not, find a new one)
- c) What do you want from supervision?

Professional supervision is expensive, but the whole point is to invest in you. You should look forward to your next session, and come away feeling topped up with confidence, clarity and care.

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<sup>1</sup> That's a Shriek quote, in case you missed it, originally from the fabulous Bette Midler!

### **3: Join something**

And no, not just a Facebook group. An actual group of actual people doing something they enjoy. Sure, it's old school, but NZ has loads of different groups, from knitting to tramping, African drumming to meditation. When you are tired it's easier to fall into the sofa, but something magic happens when you do fun stuff regularly with the same bunch of people; it's called community. And we all need that.

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