



## Emotional Hygiene

- 1 Pay Attention to Emotional Pain** If a physical ache or pain doesn't get better in a few days, you should probably take some kind of action. The same should be true of psychological pain. If you find yourself hurting emotionally for several days because of a rejection, a failure, a bad mood, or any other reason, it means you've sustained a psychological wound and you need to *seek help*.
- 2 Stop Emotional Bleeding** Many psychological wounds launch vicious cycles that only make the pain worse. For example, failure can lead to a lack of confidence and feelings of helplessness that only make you more likely to fail again in the future. Having awareness of these consequences, catching these negative cycles, and stopping your emotional bleeding by correcting them is crucial in many such situations.
- 3 Protect Your Self-Esteem** Our self-esteem acts as an emotional immune system which can buffer us and lend us greater emotional resilience. Therefore, we should get in the habit of monitoring our self-esteem, boosting it when it is low, and avoiding negative self-talk of the kind that damages it further.
- 4 Battle Negative Thinking** It is natural to think about distressing events, but when our thinking becomes repetitive we are no longer problem-solving, we are *ruminating*. Ruminating can be very costly to our psychological health, as well as to our physical health, and can put us at risk for clinical depression and even cardiovascular disease. We have to battle negative thinking and avoid falling into the habit of over-focusing on distressing events.

**Become Informed about the impact of Psychological wounds** There is much more we need to learn about emotional hygiene and how to treat psychological wounds. When you learn how to treat psychological wounds—and teach your children how to do so as well—you will not only build emotional resilience, you will thrive.