Quotations from the late Irving Miller, Professor of Social Work at Columbia University School of Social Work

Try to be the best informed person on what we are doing and how we get paid for it.

Professions are a basically conservative force within a complex society, and that the social welfare professions plays a definite social control function, but that as individual professionals and as organized professionals we have to play as progressive a role as possible.

Social workers are doing a good job when they are lifting up the table cloth and seeing what is underneath.

Recognize the intricate ways in which every organization has its preferred clients and to ask why.

Step outside of our role and take a good look at it and the organization.

Constantly examine the parameters of what is professionally appropriate to do in an agency, and attempt to work at these boundaries and broaden what is acceptable for a practitioner to do.

Use organizational ambiguity to do the things we want rather than always trying to eliminate the ambiguity.

Try to be the best informed person on what we are doing and how we get paid for it.

Professionals use secrecy to protect confidentiality, they don't use confidentiality to excuse secrecy.

It is important to recognize and accept that often the professional staff of an agency is no better quality of person than the other staff, but just has the credentials.

The role of supervision is to help the supervisee to walk the plank: to help them do what they have to do.

A therapeutic alliance consists of persuading and encouraging client involvement.

By the time you finally give an interpretation, you don't really have to.

When you tell the client what is going on with them they won't listen.

Every single little practice decision takes places in an organization context.

Services delayed are services denied.

When we say we are doing it for the client, we are not also often doing it for ourselves.
Every client auditions for the role.

The importance of having the ability to see ourselves as our clients see us, rather than as we would like to be seen or think we really are.

We have to deal with clients, colleagues and organizations as they are and not as we wish they were or as some abstract notion.

There is always rebellion: refusal to do.

No one ever died from the lack of a social worker (so it's okay to go on strike).

When you're working you have no right to indulge yourself, but when you're learning you do.

Less is more.