SELF-CARE STRATEGIES FOR STRESSFUL TIMES

The COVID-19 pandemic naturally puts us under enormous stress. When we feel our emotions taking over and feel like we are losing control, or we see it happening with a co-worker, a client, or someone in our family, we can help by using techniques to get control of our feelings.

First, recognize clues that emotions are rising:
- The face gets hot
- Breathing gets shallow
- We may start to shake
- Our mouth may feel dry
- Often there is a noticeable and sudden shift to anger, irritability, sadness or numbness
- Thoughts start to get in the way of getting things done or relating to others

When you recognize emotions rising, use these strategies to stay in control:
1. Take deep breaths
2. Walk away from the situation to get centered
3. Feel your feet supported by the floor
4. Use a trauma lens by asking “I wonder what happened?” rather than “What’s wrong with this?”

To manage emotions it is also important to maintain self-care by having regular routines of:
- Exercise
- Sleeping well
- Eating well
- Ensuring safety
- Using support systems

Keep in touch to let us know what you have found helpful and how we can be of assistance by sharing at CAIkeepintouch@caiglobal.org.