

RESPONSE TIPS FOR THIS EVER-CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

- 1 Remember and recognize common individual and collective responses to stress. These will include: hyperarousal/hyperactivity, emotional dysregulation, decrease in critical thinking and perspective-taking, and aggression, withdrawal/denial, and the inability to choose and act (fight, flight and freeze).
- 2 Recognize that these are normal responses for abnormal circumstances.
- 3 Use the language, structures and knowledge of the Sanctuary Model to make sense of what is happening. Safety includes all 4 domains of safety (physical, psychological, social and moral). The structure of the 7 commitments are there for us to lean on and use as a filter when our PFC is compromised. We are at higher risk for negative parallel processes to take hold (re-enactment, collective disturbance, etc.)
- 4 Use SELF in problem-solving, planning and responding.
- 5 Structure, consistency and high expectations are the antidotes to the effects of fear and uncertainty.
- 6 For some, this level of fear and uncertainty will be triggering and potentially (re)traumatizing. Watch for people (staff and clients) who are struggling and do not hesitate to reach out for support and services.
- 7 Make time and space for staff and clients to express their perspectives and emotions while reminding them to exercise their commitment to Non-Violence, Emotional Intelligence and Social Responsibility.
- 8 Provide information and updates regularly, even when there is nothing particularly new to say.
- 9 Avoid a “What’s wrong with us/them/me?” language and thought processes, and rely on “What’s happened/happening?” to enhance compassion, connectivity AND effective solutions!

