

Looking At The ISSUES

Stark Education Partnership

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Put On YOUR Oxygen Mask First

This week's edition of *Looking at the Issues* is compiled from a paper by Dr. Julian D. Ford, University of Connecticut Health Center.



As weeks of uncertainty and stress continue, adults are faced with school at home, work from home, layoffs, heightened family dynamics, and of course, fear of illness and loss of loved ones.

A calming and steady influence on youth, families, and co-workers is the single most

powerful antidote to escalating fears, frustrations, confusion and grief. To have this crucial ability, it's essential that you "put on your oxygen mask first". You must check [how you are handling stressors](#) by doing a careful gut-check that allows you to focus knowing you've covered all your personal bases.

- What are you doing to ensure your family members' safety – if you can't be entirely sure (for example, because you can't be sure you're not bringing the virus home), what is your best plan?
- What is your main goal when you are with (a) your spouse/partner, (b) your child(ren), (c) your parents or other older adult family members – and how do you know when you're achieving that goal?
- What are you doing to have a sense of connection with your friends and other members of your personal support system? Are you ensuring that social distancing doesn't become emotional distancing?
- Who do you feel sad to have lost, or lost contact with, and how do you keep them in your heart?
- What support are you getting to help you balance work with a personal life?

After you've done your self-inventory, take steps to support others in your home:

- **Create a sense of safety** by communicating to the brain's fight or flight system that the stressful situation is over. Shield them from a disturbing scene, or explain that they are safe.
- **Create calm** by speaking and acting calmly to show they are in a safe place and can start calming themselves. Take a deep breath, count to four, then let your breath out slowly, and coach your subject to do the same.
- **Create self and collective efficacy** by reminding them of their existing strengths, allow them to help others and involve them in decisions about their own lives. Emphasize that they are no longer a victim, but a part of the team.
- **Create connection** by using their name, build a rescue partnership and connect them with loved ones or even pets.
- **Create hope** by pointing to specific, accurate and positive facts about events. Discuss realistic and predictable next steps.

The Stark Education Partnership (a 501(c)3 non-profit organization) collaborates with education, business, civic and community members across the entire spectrum – cradle to career – to create and respond to opportunities that will provide ALL students with education and career success.



Thank You to All of Our Teachers

In our eyes, teachers have always been superheroes who wear capes. Now they are also wearing face masks and have rapidly re-tooled to remotely teach, feed and connect with students and families in amazing and creative ways! [We see you, teachers, and we thank you!](#) If you know a teacher, please encourage them to take care of themselves as well. *"Rest and self care are so important. Take time to replenish your spirit. It allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel"* - Eleanor Brown

Teacher / te' chor /
n. one who inspires, guides, enlightens, motivates; tireless scholar. **Superhero.**

