

How to Handle Election Stress and Anxiety



The upcoming election is adding to the stress, anxiety and fears our society is already facing. Differing views on the direction of our country, states and localities can be divisive, creating stress and tension between family, friends, and colleagues.

Being proactive about managing stress and anxiety can make a difference in times of political change. Focus on controlling what you can control to minimize the strain you might be feeling during the election cycle.

The following are tips you have control over to help handle election stress and anxiety.

Limit news exposure. The endless 24/7 news cycle can expose you to facts and opinions that you may not always agree with, taking a toll on your mental well-being. While it is important to stay informed, it's also important to know your limits. Try setting a short block of time in the morning and one in the evening to catch up on news that is important to you.

Set boundaries. Engaging in political discussions with family, friends, and colleagues can be contentious causing high levels of stress. It's okay to say that "I prefer not to discuss politics" and leave it at that. Even if the conversation is not contentious, if you are feeling overwhelmed, it is okay to change the topic.

Stick with the facts. We are living in an age of misinformation. It is easy to share a social media post or read a click bait headline that contains inaccurate information. Make sure to do your research about a candidate's position and perform a fact check prior to taking that information at face value.

Get involved. Believe it or not, you can influence change in your community. Consider attending a city council meeting or town hall meeting to listen and share your ideas. Taking active steps to address your concerns can lessen feelings of stress.

Vote. Not only is voting important, it is also beneficial to your mental well-being. Exercise your rights and let your voice be heard!

Take a step back. This Presidential election is one of the most contentious in recent memory. For many, it has added to the fear and anxiety that we are experiencing with the pandemic. It is important to remember that no matter what the result, there is a system in place for transition of power.

Take care of yourself. Stress and anxiety can have an impact on your overall health. Activities such as exercise and meditation can help you recharge and reduce stress. Find something that works for you and get your body moving. It is also important to prioritize eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, and limit alcohol consumption. When you take care of yourself, it is easier to manage your emotional reactions.

Connect with your EAP. If you need support with any of these tips, your employee assistance program is available to help. They can help you manage stress, anxiety and relationship concerns related to the election.

Sources:

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