

How to Manage Election Stress and Prioritize Self-Care

According to an American Psychological Association survey, 69% of respondents said elections are a significant source of stress for them.¹

During these times it is vital that we turn to internal and external support systems that allow us to function, move forward with respect, and prioritize our emotional and physical health.

Internal Supports

Identify Positive Aspects of your Life

What parts of your life will continue to be satisfying regardless of the election outcomes? Which of your interests, talents, or positive habits can become a source of strength during these times?

How are you Resilient?

What helps you bounce back during hard times? Is it your sense of humor, determination, mindset, or something else? Recalling past situations that you overcame can help remind you of your resilience.

Safety, Predictability, Control (SPC)

SPC is a framework to help us manage stress. Prioritize self-care to keep yourself safe and healthy, ensure predictability by keeping a routine, and do your best to control the things you can - while letting go of what you cannot.

Be Mindful

Mindfulness refers to being in the moment, whether with a friend, taking a walk, etc. Try to focus your attention and energy by being present - even if only for 10 minutes - to relieve stress on your mind and body.

Meditate

Meditation had be on this list, right? The benefits of meditation for the mind and body are huge.

External Supports

Be Social

Connect with your friends, family, and colleagues. Try to veer away from politics if possible, particularly with those that have differing views. Additionally, while talking politics with like-minded folks can be supportive and cathartic, it's also important to take breaks to avoid mental overload.

Take a Break from the Media

This is important to prevent cognitive overload. With a 24/7 news cycle, it's tempting to check the news repeatedly throughout the day. This can become exhausting. Try to designate specific times of the day to unplug and not check the news or social media.

Nurture Yourself

Whether it's with healthy foods, spiritual or religious practices, or a long walk, make the time to be kind to yourself. This may involve social interactions or be deeply personal and singular.

Prepare for Potential Pitfalls

Stressful times can make you more vulnerable to substance use, alcohol, food misuses, and more. Make sure to turn to supports that have helped in the past - whether professional, groups, or friends and family to prevent relapses.