



Counseling Department

Post-Election Support

Self-Care Guide: reducing stress during and after the election

Put yourself first

Students play multiple roles; parent, son/daughter, sibling, employee, etc. The responsibilities these roles bring are important but, without a stable foundation of wellbeing, they fall short. Taking care of yourself should always come first. Taking care of yourself first involves maintaining a healthy routine and balancing your life accordingly. Your routine should involve activities that you enjoy doing and that suit your personal life style. For example, waking up at the same time every day, eating healthy and sleeping eight hours or more may be beneficial. Consider activities that bring joy into your life and practice them daily. Be intentional about setting a healthy routine.

Acceptance

Acceptance is the first step in moving forward. Whether the Election outcome favored your candidate or not, it is crucial to accept the nature of the outcome. This does not mean that you have to agree with a specific political rhetoric, it simply means understanding that you don't have control over the outcome. You only have control over your feelings and behaviors. Knowing that you can manage your feelings and behaviors empowers you to move on and do something productive with those feelings. For example, you can continue to inform yourself on various ways to maintain and promote civic engagement.

Validate feelings and emotions

It is normal to have strong emotions about the Election results. Keep in mind that reactions to events are different for everyone. Some people may be experiencing intense feelings while others are indifferent about the same experience. It's important to allow yourself and others to feel without judgement. There are constructive ways to own, manage and express your feelings in a healthy way. For instance, through meditation, journaling, exercising, and or by reaching out to those around you for support.

Have productive and meaningful conversations

Allow yourself the time to reflect on your personal experiences with the Election process and how this impacts your personal values. Highlight items for discussion and be prepared to support them with examples. It is ok to share your personal opinion, experiences and emotions with others as long as you feel safe doing so. Having productive and meaningful conversations involves reflection and active participation. Seek community by engaging in healthy discussions with others.

Decide how you would like to proceed

If the election outcome did not favor your candidate, this may be an opportunity to continue learning positive and efficient ways to support your personal beliefs. In other words, think about the issues that matter to you and what you stand for; allot time to learn more about becoming an active supporter of those issues regardless of which administration is leading. Remember you have rights and means to express your convictions in a healthy way.



Other resources:

Self-compassion

<https://bravetherapy.com/self-compassion-with-kristin-neff-brene-brown/>

Fake or real? How to Self-check the news and get the facts

<https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/12/05/503581220/fake-or-real-how-to-self-check-the-news-and-get-the-facts%C2%A0>

Mindfulness

<https://www.mindful.org/>