

ELECTION STRESS KIT

TIPS AND RESOURCES TO COPE WITH THE CURRENT NATIONAL DISCOURSE

Brought to you by The Counseling Center

Originally developed by Penn State Harrisburg Counseling and Psychological Services who generously allowed us to edit and share this wonderful resource.



UNPLUG

Limit your consumption of social media and the 24 hour non stop images. It's important to stay informed, but creating boundaries is important.

BE PRESENT

Use reflection to recognize your inner thoughts and feelings. Be curious and non judgmental and give yourself permission to feel the way you do. Although avoiding can be useful, "stuffing" or ignoring strong emotions can have negative impacts.

REFUEL

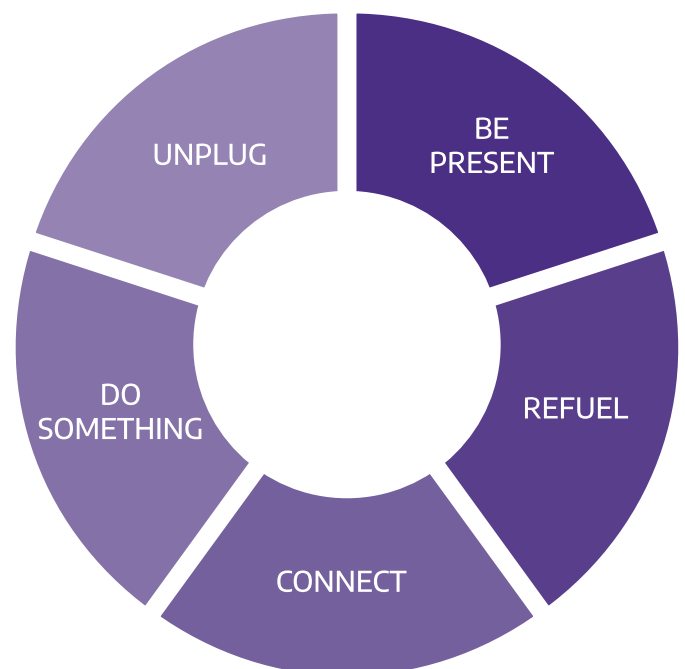
Focus on restoring yourself with rest and healthy food. Drink water and try to limit caffeine. Move a little every day. Take a walk; look at the sky; be in nature. Journal or meditate. Make art or watch funny videos. Read something fun.

CONNECT

Engage with supportive friends and allies. Talk about current issues, if needed, but be aware of when you're feeling overwhelmed. Not everyone will share your perspective, so it's OK to limit your topics and avoid heated conflict. Reach out to supportive services on campus, including The Counseling Center.

DO SOMETHING

Channel what you're feeling into positive, meaningful activity. Be informed and proactive around issues that matter to you. Find ways to engage in your community through advocacy in ways that fit for you.



Stay informed, but know your limits

Monitor how you feel after news consumption. Feeling preoccupied or even upset by national events may be a sign to cut back on your news intake and limit social media discussions.



Consider scheduling a short block of time in the morning and one in the evening to catch up on news without checking for every new update during the day.

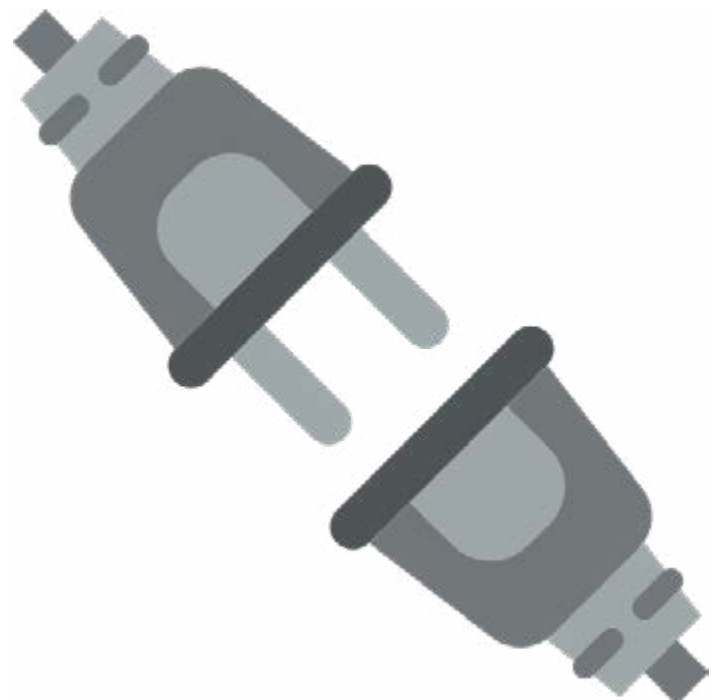


During “digital breaks,” take time to focus on something enjoyable, such as a hobby, exercising, being in nature or spending time with family and friends.



Check out [this video](#) for some more tips for “unplugging” during a stressful election time.

Please note this video is from 2020, but the coping tips are still relevant for our current election.



BE PRESENT













Consider practicing self-compassion as you work through challenging or uncertain times. Try some of [these](#) exercises compiled by Dr. Kristin Neff, a renowned researcher of self-compassion.

Grab your phone and your earbuds and head outside for a guided [mindful walk](#) to de-stress.

Listen to nature and [soothing Tibetan singing bowls](#)

Top Meditation Apps by Downloads in the U.S. for 2020

www.sensortower.com

-  Calm
-  Headspace
-  Meditopia
-  Breethe
-  Synctuition
-  Insight Timer
-  Meditation App
-  Abide
-  Sanity & Self
-  Aura

Self-Soothing

Self-soothing is a quick and effective way to reduce the intensity of negative emotions.

Sight

- Low lighting
- Soothing colors
- Sleeping masks
- Coloring books
- Pinterest Collages

Smell

- Aromatherapy
- Fresh air
- Candles/incense
- Comforting smells

Touch

- Soft things
- Cuddle things
- Massage
- Hot/cold shower
- Heated/weighted blanket

Taste

- Strong flavors
- Warm drinks
- Eat slowly
- Nostalgic flavors

Sound

- Calming noise
- ASMR videos
- Nature sounds
- Guided meditations
- Binaural beats

[This YouTube Channel](#) offers introductory videos to mindfulness and guided meditations.

The Counseling Center would like to acknowledge that mindfulness originated in Eastern spiritual traditions, namely Buddhism, and has since been popularized in Western countries in ways inconsistent with its original purpose.

Grounding

Grounding strategies can help us get in touch with our bodies and surroundings in the present moment. Pause what you are doing and pay attention to what you can see, hear, smell, and touch in your environment.

Balance

A national election is stressful Focusing on your well-being is more important than ever! Trying to keep a balance in most areas of your life will help you roll through challenging days more smoothly and keep you on the road to wellness!



Sleep

Is your sleep schedule irregular? Are you sleeping more than you want to be? Are you having **trouble falling asleep**? If the answer to any of these questions is “yes,” you may benefit from **these** sleep hygiene tips and resources!



Eating and Nutrition

For tips, guidelines, and health information, this is a **great resource!** You can find a food bank in your neighborhood by entering your address and zip code at **Washington Food Pantries**.



Exercise

The Activities and Recreation Center (The ARC) offers free virtual group fitness classes for students! See the calendar **here**. Popsugar offers **more resources** for healthy habits!



You can also check out The **UWB Husky Pantry** and The **Kodiak Cave**.

Why Connect?

- To decrease loneliness stress, depression, and anxiety
- To acknowledge collective trauma and experience solidarity
- To experiencing love and belonging
- To give and receive care and compassion

Connecting... Connecting... Connecting...

Although the isolation of the pandemic and mandatory quarantine are largely behind us, screen fatigue is still real for many. See the tips below for ideas to reduce stress if connecting online is necessary for you.

- Establish “no screen” blocks of time in your day - times when you don’t have classes, meetings, etc. (See “UNPLUG” above)
- While turning off your camera during class or a meeting can be a relief, make sure you don’t do it all the time. Leaving your camera on can help you feel connected and more focused on content.
- Avoid multi-tasking. Even though it can be tempting to use more than one device at a time or check emails and respond to texts while in a virtual meeting space, focusing on the content of the meeting will actually give your brain a break! And we all need a bit more peace and focus right now!

Spiritual Connection

Spirituality can be one way to connect with yourself, others, nature, or a higher power(s). Watch a video on [loving-kindness meditation](#) or enjoy these [animal/nature live cams](#).

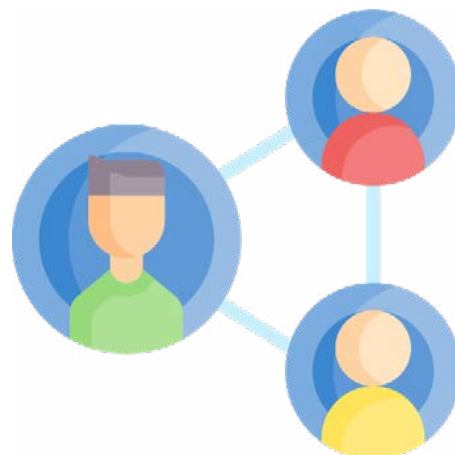
Five Ways To Build Stronger Connections

- 01** Write a letter
- 02** Pick up the phone and call
- 03** Ask meaningful questions
- 04** Answer questions with honesty
- 05** Connect via video

Brought to you by Robert Reffkin, Founder & CEO of COMPASS

Finding Connection

- Make eye contact with our smile at someone while walking on campus
- Say hi to someone you don't know in class
- Introduce yourself to your professor in office hours
- Attend a campus event or check out a club
- Have a dance party
- [Netflix Party](#)
- TikTok challenges
- Group workouts
- Amazing [support groups](#) for everyone and all topics
- Virtual karaoke on Google Hangouts or in person with friends!



DO SOMETHING

W

It can be challenging to stay motivated when everything around us seems chaotic and scary. But doing something – some action, no matter how small – can lessen some of the uncertainty. What you do doesn't need to be political – taking a step to stand up for or stand in for a person, or cause, or the environment means we're not powerless. Check out the ideas on this page!

Volunteer

Activism, service and generosity are a few ways to promote a sense of empowerment and contribution when we may be feeling helpless. Want to have a voice in local or national politics? Check [this](#) out for ideas!

Simply want to support a cause that you care about? You can [volunteer locally](#) or for a chapter of a national organization. Start [here](#)!

Connect With Your Values

Identifying what is important to us can be one way to foster motivation. Try one of the values card sorts below and then consider how you can express your values on a daily basis.

- [Online values card sort](#)
- [Printable version](#)

Join A Club Or Organization

Getting involved with a club or organization can also generate confidence and purpose.

- [UWB Clubs](#)
- [Cascadia College Clubs](#)

Lean On Your Strengths

Knowing your strengths can help you address problems more effectively and engage in activities that generate confidence and purpose. Try taking the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#) to identify your strongest traits.

Vision Boards

Learn about vision boards [here](#).

Wholeness

Think about what makes you feel whole, grounded, or like you. It can be helpful to consider Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Image from [simplepsychology.org](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Resources On Campus

- [Student Diversity Center](#)
- [Student Engagement and Activities](#)
- [Division of Student Affairs](#)
- [Care Team](#)
- [Clubs and Organizations](#)
- [Health and Wellness Resource Center \(HaWRC\)](#)
- [Disability Resources for Students \(DRS\)](#)
- [International Student Services](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Qualitative Skills Center \(QSC\)](#)
- [Writing and Communication Center \(WaCC\)](#)
- [Academic Advising](#)
- [Recreation and Fitness](#)

Counseling Center Services & Hours

Visit The Counseling Center [webpage](#). We are offering services to students virtually.

The Counseling Center is available

Monday through Friday

from **9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

and **1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.**

Contact us at

(425) 352-3183

Counseling Center Online Resources

Check out the [Phone Apps](#) on the UWB Counseling Center [website](#).

Follow The Counseling Center on social media:



Need Immediate Support?

Crisis Connection 24-hr Crisis Line:

1.866.427.4747

Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741741

Questions and concerns about mental health?

Check out the [JED Foundation's Mental Health Resource Center](#).

Thank you to our colleagues at other institutions for sharing their resources. Some information in this document was adapted from Penn State, Michigan State University, California State, and University at Long Beach.