

# *Stress of an Election*

Many people are feeling anxious about the upcoming election. We would like to remind you that there are many things one can do to help oneself manage such anxiety. The following tips may be helpful:

- Avoid political conversations - Politics has always been a hot debatable topic. Engaging in conversations that you know will just increase your angst won't be helpful. Try limiting or avoiding discussing politics especially when you know that a person has an opposing view.
- Monitor your exposure to news and social media—as much as it's helpful to know the facts, it's also important to avoid information and opinion overload. Get the details you need, but be sure to also allow time to unplug from news sources and social media such as Facebook or Twitter.
- Focus on what is within your power to change— by identifying the things that are within your power to change. Often when we are concerned about an outcome, one's anxiety will increase and even spill over to other things in our lives. Taking action will allow you to feel both calmer and more empowered. Create healthy and fun diversions to help yourself not focus on the election such as calling an old friend, write a letter, re-read a good book.
- Reach out—it's tempting to isolate when we're feeling anxious. But one of the best things to do is connect with supportive others. Volunteering can be a wonderful way to help while, at the same time, boosting your own sense of connectedness. Or, look for events and opportunities to connect within your community.
- Stick to your routines—they will help to ground you and allow you to feel more in control. Routines around exercise are particularly important, as exercise has been proven to help mitigate feelings of anxiety.
- Make time for stress management—it's important all of the time, and particularly during periods of increased anxiety. Whether it's practicing yoga or meditation, exercising, journaling, deep breathing, or engaging in another form of stress management, slot it into your day and honor it as you would any other appointment.
- Practice self-care—some anxiety is normal but sometimes it can also lead to rage. It's important to take care of yourself especially during such times. Stress management is a large part of self-care. It's always crucial to get enough sleep, eat a balanced diet, and exercise regularly and be active. Avoid overconsumption of food and stimulants such as caffeine, as these can aggravate feelings of anxiety.
- Seek professional support—particularly if you're feeling persistently anxious, unable to sleep, having physical symptoms, or unable to face daily tasks, it is important to speak to a helping professional. New Directions EAP has licensed counselors that are available to provide free and confidential telephonic in-the-moment support and referrals to a licensed in network EAP provider in your area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service is available to all employees, as well as to household and family members.

**New Directions is here for you.**

**1-800-624-5566** We're available to support you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.