



News Release

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Minding Your Mental Health During Election Season *Therapist Offers Tips for Coping with Election-Related Stress, Anxiety*

Now that early voting is underway and political messages are starting to increase in frequency, many are feeling the strain on their mental health. The constant barrage of political rhetoric, candidate information and media coverage can feel staggering. To help individuals cope, Madison Bishop, a senior therapist at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Counseling Center, offered advice on managing stress and maintaining well-being during this time.

“More people are getting involved in talking about politics, which is great,” Bishop said. “However, it can be overwhelming at times. As we research candidates and learn more about new things that are happening in the world, it can feel like it’s too much sometimes. It can definitely cause us more stress.”

While staying informed is important, the emotional toll of absorbing political updates can be significant. Knowledge of political events may lead to feelings of fatigue, low motivation or even escalate to depression and anxiety. Recognizing these signs early and taking steps to protect one’s mental health is crucial.

Bishop suggested balancing civic engagement with self-care.

“Creative activities, exercise, medication, reading or speaking with a licensed counselor can be incredibly beneficial during these stressful periods,” she said. “Limiting exposure to news and social media can also help prevent emotional overload.”

Another key coping strategy is to set boundaries, especially when engaging in difficult conversations about politics.

“If a discussion becomes too intense, it’s OK to pause or leave the conversation,” Bishop said. “It’s important to communicate this openly to avoid further tension. By using active listening and focusing on understanding rather than reacting, we can foster healthier dialogues, even when opinions differ.”

For those who encounter political stress in daily life, Bishop suggested rating the intensity of the situation on a scale of one to five. If a minor annoyance arises, such as seeing a political bumper sticker, it’s best to let it go. However, if the situation feels more personal or distressing, setting boundaries or seeking professional support may be necessary.

“Ultimately, we’re all human, and our emotions and values may not always align,” Bishop said. “But by prioritizing mental health, we can navigate these conversations and the election season in a healthier way.”

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