

I'm stressed about current events.

How Can I Practice Self-Care During Uncertain Times?

The world feels heavy right now. Constant news updates, uncertainty about the future, and changes in laws or programs that affect us and our families can stir up strong emotions. These feelings tell us what matters most to us, but when they pile up, they can feel overwhelming and draining.



The good news? There are steps you can take to protect your well-being and regain balance. This week, we're sharing self-care strategies to help you navigate uncertainty, find support, and remember that you are not alone.

Set Limits on How Much Time you Spend with News/Social Media

It's understandable to want to stay informed, especially if current events could impact the health and safety of you, your family, or communities you care for. However, news and social media posts are endless and can cause stress and anxiety. It's important to set personal limits on how much time you engage with this content.

You can do this by:

- Setting screen time limits for certain apps on your phone and computer.
- Scheduling "offline" activities like time spent outdoors, on hobbies, creating, moving, or with love ones.

Set Boundaries About How and When you Engage in Discussions about Current Events

While conversations with loved ones can help spread awareness and let your loved ones know what matters to you, spending a lot of time talking about current events can be exhausting, and can bring feelings of anger and sadness.

Here are a few examples of how you can set boundaries with others:

- "Focusing too much on current events is bringing me a lot of stress. Could we talk about something different during our time together today?"
- "I like talking with you about this, but I get burnt out when I focus on current events too much. Let's spend 5 minutes chatting about this and then pick something else to do together."

Connect with Other People

Uncertain times can make us feel isolated, even though many others share similar worries. Connecting with your community is a way to remind that you're not alone. Try joining a group or class based on your interests, or attend a local event to meet new people.

Social support is essential for protecting your mental health. Stay connected with close friends and family by scheduling regular coffee chats or check-ins, and don't hesitate to ask for help. You can also join a NAMI support group to connect with others who understand your experiences.



Put your Emotions into Action

One of the most powerful ways to manage stress from current events is to put your strong feelings into action. Remind yourself that your voice matters and that you can bring about positive change in your community.



Here are a few strategies for putting your feelings into action:

- Visit the [NAMI Advocacy Action Center](#) to learn about different ways you can get involved with local and national advocacy.
- [Learn about your legislators](#), so you can contact your elected officials to advocate for change in mental health policy.
- Sign up for advocacy alerts to [#Act4MentalHealth during the 119th Congress](#). Enter your information and receive alerts about actions you can take to advocate for change in mental health policy.
- Volunteer your time to make a positive change in your community. Join NAMI CCNS or other local advocacy organizations.

Find Opportunities to Feel Hope and Joy

It may feel wrong, at first, to want to feel hopeful when it seems like so many terrible things are going on around you, but hope is the antidote to hopelessness. Seeking out hope and joy can help remind you that you still have power and choice, even in times when you feel especially powerless.

Here are a few ideas for facilitating hope and joy:

- **Keep doing the things you like to do.** Hobbies might not feel like a priority right now, but doing things that bring you joy is crucial.
- **Search for hopeful news stories.** Click on the “positive news” section of news websites or follow social media accounts sharing inspiring stories.
- **Find reasons to laugh.** When your child is making a funny face, your pet has gotten themselves covered in mud, or you’re re-watching your favorite sitcom, remind yourself that it’s OK and important to laugh.
- **"Look for the helpers.** You will always find people who are helping,” - Mr. Rogers. Take comfort in the fact that many, many people in this world are standing up to make things better.

Seek Help When You Need It

Don’t be afraid to reach out for help if your stress becomes too much, and you begin noticing symptoms of poor mental health like constant low moods, crying spells, avoiding people or activities you used to enjoy, or having suicidal thoughts. You are not alone, and help is available. A few resources for connecting to mental health help are included below.

Finding a Mental Health Provider

Psychotherapeutic services require a very personal connection with a provider, and it’s not uncommon to go through a trial-and-error process to find a provider who is a good “fit.” It’s important to find one that you/your loved one trusts, where you feel “heard” by the provider.

988 Crisis Line

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 9-8-8 or visit [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org) to connect with a counselor. To reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for Veterans, select "1" and for Spanish, select "2"