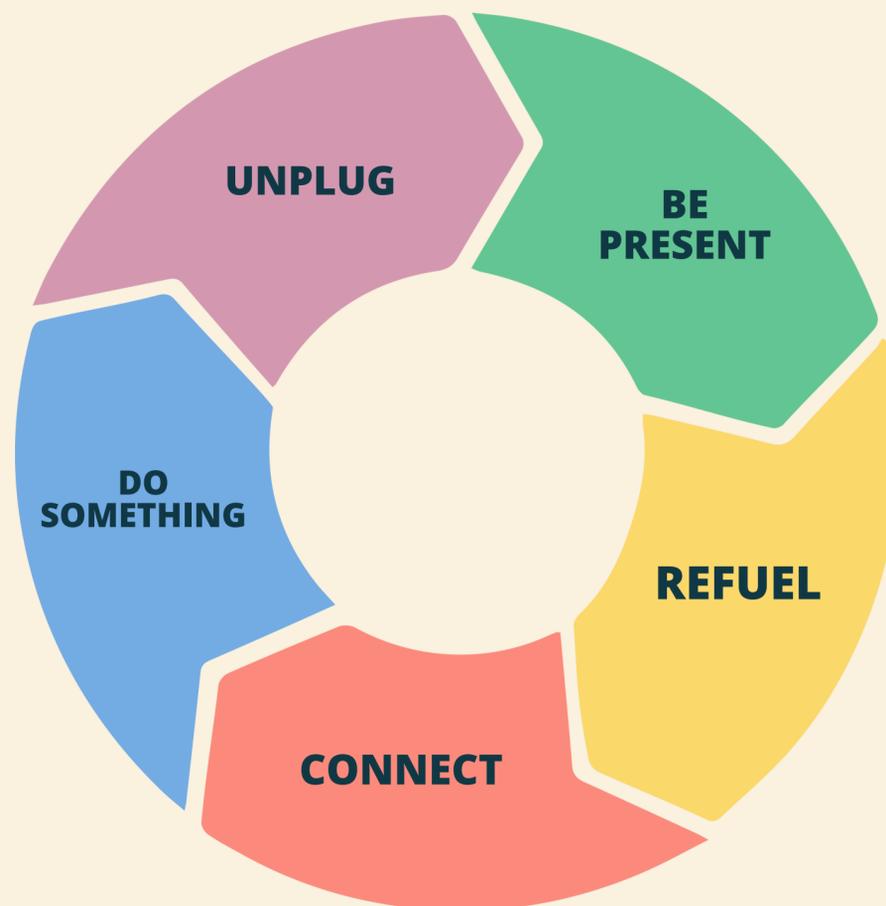


Information Provided by UNT Counseling and Testing Services

ELECTION STRESS KIT

Tips and resources to cope with the current national discourse

Adapted by and for the University of North Texas with permission from Penn State Harrisburg Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)



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 Counseling and Testing Services. We have a post-election drop-in support session on Wednesday 11/4 and Thursday 11/5.

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.

UNPLUG

STAY INFORMED, BUT KNOW YOUR LIMITS:

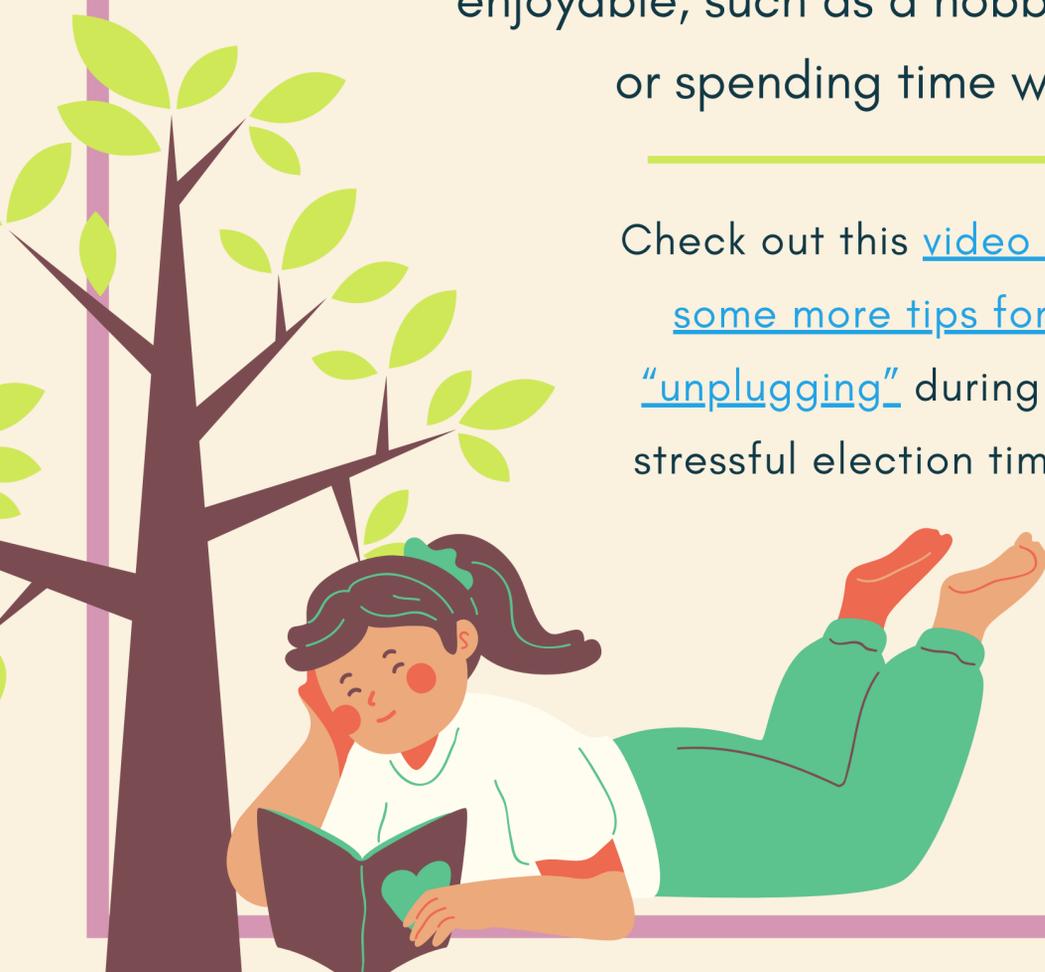
Monitor how you feel after news consumption. Feeling preoccupied or even upset by national events may be a sign to cut back on your news intake and limit social media discussions.



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.



BE PRESENT

SELF-COMPASSION

Consider practicing self-compassion as you work through challenging or uncertain times. Try some of these [self-compassion exercises](#) compiled by Dr. Kristin Neff, a renowned researcher of self-compassion news without checking for every new update during the day.

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.

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



SOUND

- [Calming Noise](#)
- ASMR Videos
- [Nature Sounds](#)
- Guided Meditations
- Binaural Beats



TOUCH



- Soft Things
- Cuddle Things
- Massage
- Hot/Cold Showers
- Heated/Weighted Blankets

SMELL

- Aromatherapy
- Fresh Air
- Candles/Incense
- Comforting Smells



TASTE

- Strong Flavors
- Eat Slowly
- Warm Drinks
- Nostalgic Flavors



MINDFULNESS

[The 10 minute mindfulness meditation](#) is free through UNT and is a great tool to calm your mind.

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

The [MyLife Youtube channel](#) offers introductory videos to mindfulness and guided meditations.

REFUEL



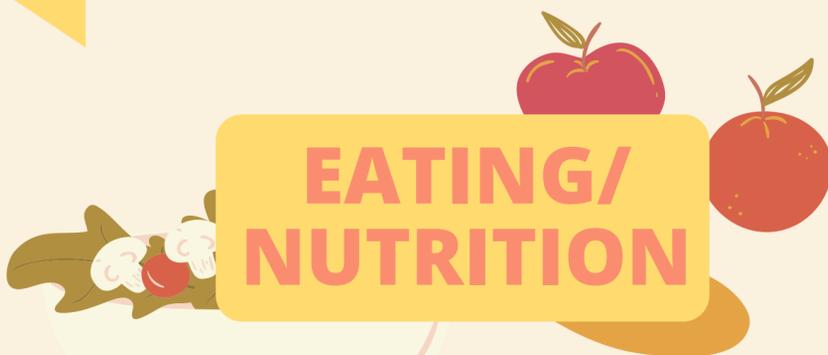
BALANCE

A national election during COVID? 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 or 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/ NUTRITION

Check out this [great resource for tips, guidelines, and health information](#). You can also check out the [UNT food pantry](#) for assistance!



EXERCISE

UNT Rec Center offers a TON of [FREE virtual group fitness classes](#) for students! See the [online weekly Fitness/wellness plan](#). Or see [Popsugar's resources for healthy habits](#)!

CONNECT

5 WAYS TO BUILD A STRONGER CONNECTION

1. Write a letter
2. Pick up the phone and call
3. Ask a meaningful question
4. Answer questions with honesty
5. Connect via video

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 VIRTUALLY

- Zoom dance party
- [Netflix Party](#)
- [House Party](#) App
- TikTok challenges
- Virtual group workouts

- [CTS support groups and workshops!](#)
- Online [support groups](#) for all topics!
- Virtual book clubs
- Virtual karaoke on Google Hangouts

ANIMAL/ NATURE LIVE CAMS



LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION



SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

Spirituality can be one way to connect with yourself, others, nature, or a higher power(s). Find local or online spiritual communities.

Zoom fatigue is real, but sometimes it's our only option. So how do we connect without MORE stress?

Try these tips:

- 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 can be a relief, make sure you don't do it all the time. Leaving your camera on, even if you can only see your instructor and one other brave student, 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 Zooming, 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!

DO SOMETHING

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 a cause or the environment means we're not powerless.

[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 out this article on [becoming more politically active](#) for ideas! Simply want to support a cause that you care about? You can [volunteer locally](#) or for a chapter of a [national non-profit organization](#).

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](#)



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.

LEARN ABOUT
[VISION BOARDS.](#)

WHOLENESS

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

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Desire to become the most that one can be

ESTEEM

Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

LOVE AND BELONGING

Friendship, intimacy, sense of connection

SAFETY NEEDS

Personal security, employment, resources, health, property

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

- [Division of Student Affairs](#)
 - [Dean of Students](#)
 - [Seeking Options and Solutions](#)
 - [Survivor Advocate](#)
 - [Care Team](#)
- [Division of Institutional Equity & Diversity](#)
 - [Graduate Studies](#)
- [Housing and Resident Life](#)
 - [Student Health and Wellness Center](#)
- [Office of Disability Access](#)
 - [International Affairs](#)
 - [Student Activities](#)
 - [Student Organizations](#)
 - [Learning Center](#)
 - [Academic Advising](#)
 - [International Affairs](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
 - [Recreational Sports](#)

Visit the [Counseling and Testing Services \(CTS\) website](#).

We offer individual and group services to students.

Follow CTS on Social Media



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[Sign up with TAO](#) for self help resources for UNT Students

NEED IMMEDIATE SUPPORT?

Denton County MHMR Crisis line:
1-800-762-0157

National Suicide Prevention
Hotline:
1-800-273-8255

Visit [Speak Out UNT](#) for additional ways to get help!

YOU CAN REACH US AT:
COUNSELINGANDTESTINGSERVICES@UNT.EDU
956-565-2741