



Regardless of personal politics, everyone recognizes that our country is facing tremendous disagreement over policies and ideologies. Change and disagreement affect us politically, but they also affect us personally, creating stress and anxiety that we carry with us at work and at home.

This article isn't about politics. It is about how you can live and thrive even in the face of anxiety and discord. After all, how can you take care of the world when you're not taking care of yourself?

## 1. Identify what you can control.

When facing uncertainty, regroup yourself. When we're anxious, we tend to be paralyzed by the enormity of what we can't control in our lives. Turn that around and focus on things you can control, including your thoughts, actions, associations, and lifestyle.

## 2. Make a plan.

If you want to get more involved in issues that are important to you, list some tangible and realistic goals for doing so. Agree to do what you can, when you can, and let that be enough. Pay attention to how you can make an impact and have meaning in your life, one action at a time.

## 3. Stay in touch.

Turn to your friends and family for support. Getting out and connecting with others can lower your distress levels and help make you feel safe and supported.

## 4. Get physical.

Anxiety isn't just mental; it affects your whole body. Take time throughout the day, even if it is 5 minutes, to give your body a break by doing breath or relaxation exercises. Similarly, doing yoga or exercising regularly can help you feel stronger, happier, and more focused.

## 5. Get back to routine.

When you are constantly in "crisis" mode, you can get stuck in negative feedback loops that play out "what if" and worst-case scenarios in your head. By getting back to routine, you can refocus that worry into positive and productive energy that will get you through the day. Remember, it is ok to live your life and experience happiness even in the face of misfortune.

## 6. Know when to unplug.

The news cycle is 24-7, and we can easily get caught up in anxiety-inducing stories and images from dawn to dusk. While you certainly want to stay tuned to the issues that matter to you, choose your sources wisely and acknowledge when it's time to put down the phone and disconnect. Enjoy time with yourself, your family or your friends.

### Are you or someone in your household feeling anxious?

Anxiety can affect you emotionally and physically, leading to difficulty concentrating, exhaustion, increased conflict, and feelings of helplessness.

If you are feeling anxious, there is free, local help available through your EAP. As part of your benefits, you may receive up to four meetings in person with a Masters Level counselor. If you are experiencing a non-emergency concern, call our general number to receive assistance from a Master's level counselor at anytime. For emergencies, dial 911 directly.