



Coping in times of political uncertainty.

Political uncertainty can bring with it fear and doubt about the present and the future. This article provides information on ways to cope with feelings of worry and stress you may be experiencing during times of political uncertainty, such as a change in political leadership or changes in government policies.

How you may feel.

National events affect everyday citizens in many ways. This is especially true of major changes that may bring along excitement for some but also may be accompanied by feelings of:

- Uncertainty
- Insecurity
- Loss of control
- Worry
- Anxiety
- Concern about the future



You may be concerned about everything from your finances and economic future as well as the state of the nation, particularly if civil unrest—or the threat of it—is present.

How the changes may affect you.

Economic worry. Experts agree that this major political change is sure to affect business, savings, taxes, investments and tuition costs, not only in the country where you live but also globally. Until the dust settles, it is uncertain what the change will mean for the economy. However, financial experts caution against making big financial decisions during this time.

Divided interpersonal relationships. A political change can cause division within a country and also impact personal relationships. We sometimes find ourselves on opposite sides of hard-fought political battles. This can cause strain and conflict among friends, peers, relatives, coworkers or neighbors, not to mention strangers. It is best to steer clear of conversations about politics in certain settings, for example at work or in classrooms. It is also best to avoid discussing recent political events if this adds to your own feelings of worry or stress.



Fear about national security. In the wake of a major political change, you may have fears or worries about national or international security. With their mission to “safeguard the American people, our homeland and our values,” the U.S. Department of Homeland Security will remain vigilant and prepared for any potential dangers. Keep in mind if you are traveling to places where there is political uncertainty or unrest, be aware that there may be public demonstrations. These can escalate quickly, so consider staying away. It is also a good idea to enter emergency numbers on your phone in case you do get caught up in a situation where you need to call for help fast.

Managing fear and anxiety during political uncertainty.

Major political change can leave us feeling anxious or worried about things over which we have little control. Here are some ways to effectively manage these feelings:

Stay informed. Rely on credible and trustworthy sources of information for news updates, guidance and advice.

Avoid the rumor mill. Rampant spread of rumors can heighten feelings of anxiety and are typically unfounded.

Do the things you would normally do during difficult times to manage feelings of stress and anxiety. Make a point of eating well-balanced meals. Drink plenty of water—stress can sometimes lead to dehydration. Make regular physical activity a priority. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to reduce stress and improve your mood.

Take a break from social media. During times of political, social, and cultural change, social media is full of people posting opinions, articles, conspiracies, petitions, disagreements and misinformation. Avoiding social media gives you space to process your own thoughts and feelings without being influenced by others.

Strive for unity, compassion and kindness. Unfortunately, during times of uncertainty, reports of hate crimes and verbal abuse are not uncommon. The more compassion and understanding you exhibit toward others—friends and strangers alike—the less tension-filled the situation will be.

Take breaks. Go for a walk. Get some fresh air. Practice deep breathing or meditation.

Connect with friends and family. You'll probably find that other people are just as worried as you are about the same or similar things. Talking things over helps relieve stress.

Reduce other stress in your life. Try to avoid making big life changes during times of uncertainty.

Seek professional help.

Seek out support in your community and contact TELUS Health Student Support through our app or website. Our network of providers is here to support you 24/7.