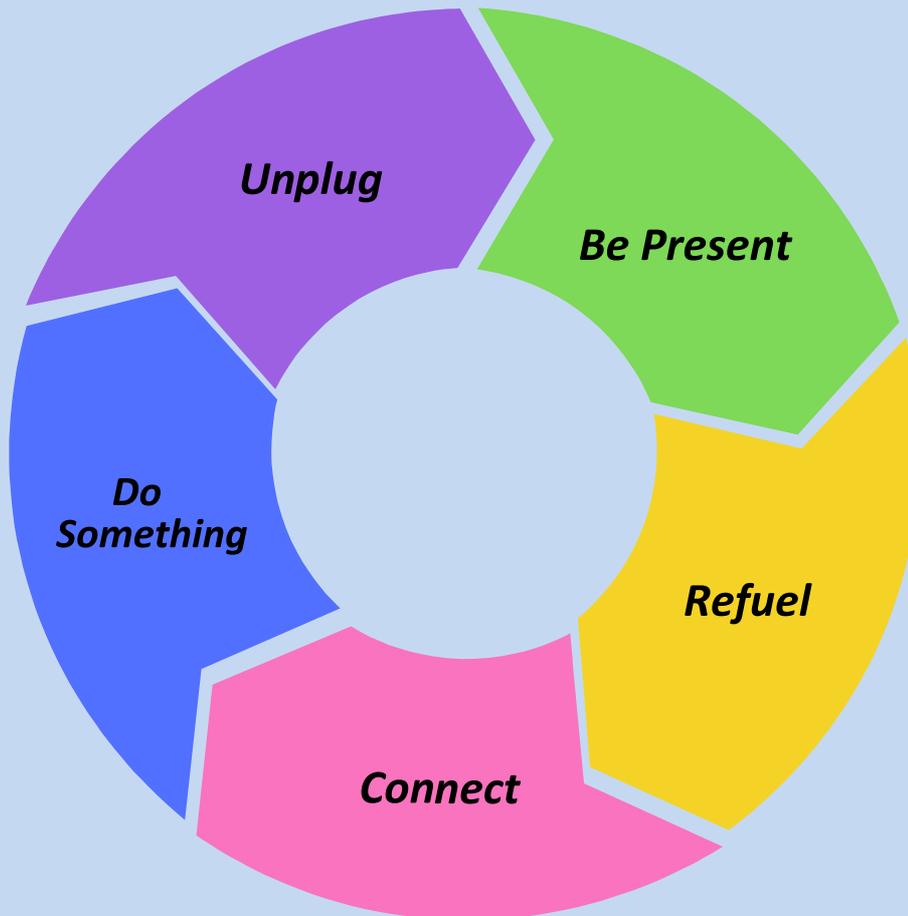


Election Stress Kit

Tips and resources to cope with the current
national discourse

(adapted from Penn State 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 CAPS.

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.

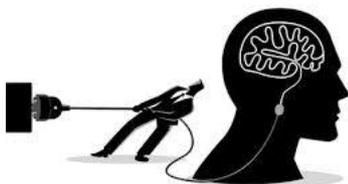


Consider scheduling a short block of time in the morning and one in the evening to catch up on news without checking for every new update during the day.



During “digital breaks,” take time to focus on something enjoyable, such as art, talk a walk around campus, go to the Rec Barn, talk with friends.

Check out [this video](#) for some more tips for “unplugging” during a stressful election time.



BE PRESENT

Consider practicing **self-compassion** as you work through challenging or uncertain times. Try some of [these](#) exercises compiled by Dr. Kristin Neff, a renowned researcher of self-compassion.

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

Top Meditation Apps by Downloads in the U.S. for 2018

sensortower.com

Overall Downloads

- 1  Calm
- 2  Headspace
- 3  Insight Timer
- 4  Aura
- 5  Simple Habit
- 6  Breethe
- 7  10% Happier
- 8  BetterMe
- 9  Pacifica
- 10  Abide

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

CAPS would like to acknowledge that mindfulness originated in Eastern spiritual traditions, namely Buddhism, and has since been popularized in Western countries in ways inconsistent with its original purpose.

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

Touch

Soft things
Cuddle things
Massage
Hot/cold shower
Heated/weighted blanket



Sound

Calming noise
ASMR videos
Nature sounds
Guided meditations
Binaural beats



Smell

Aromatherapy
Fresh air
Candles/incense
Comforting smells



Taste

Strong flavors
Warm drinks
Eat slowly
Nostalgic flavors



www.blessingmanifesting.com

Listen to nature and [soothing Tibetan singing bowls](#)



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.

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!



Eating and Nutrition

For tips, guidelines, and health information, this is a [great resource!](#) Enjoy your meal in DHall. Make some food with your house community. For questions, or to connect around nutrition, contact Ali at alisontartaglia@bennington.edu.



Sleep

Is your sleep schedule irregular? Are you sleeping more than you want to be? Are you having [trouble falling asleep](#)? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," you may benefit from these sleep hygiene tips and resources!

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/sleep-hygiene>



Exercise

Enjoy some exercise at the Meyer Rec Barn. Take a walk or run around campus. Enjoy yoga with Thea on Thursdays at 5pm in the Atrium of Commons (masked and socially distant). Popsugar offers [more resources](#) for healthy habits!

CONNECT

Five ways to build stronger connections

- 01 Write a letter
- 02 Pick up the phone and call
- 03 Ask meaningful questions
- 04 Answer questions with honesty
- 05 Connect via video

COMPASS

Robert Reffkin, Founder & CEO

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..connecting.... connecting....

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!

Connecting Virtually

- ◆ Attend your house's coffee hour
- ◆ Join a club or org
- ◆ Attend a PAC event!

- Come to our support group on Saturdays from 2pm to 3pm EST on [Zoom](#)

Spiritual Connection

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



[Loving-kindness meditation](#)

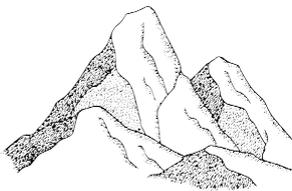
Find local or online spiritual communities

[Animal/Nature live cams!](#)

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*. Check out the ideas on this page!



Learn
about
Vision
Boards
[here.](#)

There are lots of ways to get involved!

Tell us some of the ways you have been involved. Whether it is through phone banking, connecting with Planned Parenthood or learning other ways through CAPA, take a moment and let us know through our social media:

Facebook : Bennington Student Health Promotion

Instagram:

benningtonstudenthealthpromo

Twitter: @btonhealthpromo

Tag us with #benningtonSHP

#benningtonwellbeing

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.



Wholeness

Think about what makes you feel whole, grounded, or like *you*.
It can be helpful to consider Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



Additional Resources

RESOURCES on campus

Groups:

FLoWing with your Power: Support and empowerment group for FLoW students

with Kat Daley and Jocelyn Salcedo

Mondays 12:00-1:00 EST

<https://bennington.doxy.me/kat>

Mindfulness Wednesdays

Start your day Well with Kat Daley, Rage Hezekiah, and Penny Owen

Open to students, staff, and faculty

9:00-9:30am EST on Wednesdays

Zoom: ID: 99079887458, Password: 340246

survivors support group

With Ali Tartaglia

wednesdays 7pm to 8pm EST

Zoom Meeting ID: 4424345023

(US) +1 929-205-6099

Support group for international students studying on campus and remotely

with Rage Hezekiah and Heidie Vazquez-Garcia

Fridays 3:00 - 4:00 pm EST

Zoom Meeting ID: 941 9234 3786, Passcode: 424564

better together support group

With Ali Tartaglia and Kat Daley

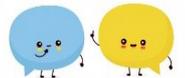
saturdays at 2pm-3pm est

Zoom Meeting ID: 4424345023

(US) +1 929-205-6099

All zoom meetings at <https://bennington.zoom.us> enter zoom ID and passcode if required.

Visit [Psych Services](#) webpage



Schedule an appointment by emailing healthservices@bennington.edu or calling 802-440-445.

Questions and concerns about mental health? Check out the [JED Foundation's Mental Health Resource Center](#).

Check out the [Student Health Promotion](#) webpage!

★ **NEED IMMEDIATE SUPPORT?**

Contact Campus Safety at

802-447-4250 and ask to be put in touch with the on-call therapist.

This document was adapted from Michigan State University and California State University at Long Beach and Penn State University .

