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.
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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>App Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Headspace</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Insight Timer</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Aura</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Simple Habit</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Breathe</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10% Happier</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>BetterMe</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pacifica</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Abide</td>
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**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/insense
- Comforting smells

**Taste**
- Strong flavors
- Warm drinks
- Nostalgic flavors

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.
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? 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

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.

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!
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

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 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!
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.**

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**Wholeness**

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

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**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](#)

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**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.

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**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

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**Image from simplepsychology.org**
 сможет или не сможет. Если у вас есть что-то, что вы хотите упомянуть, вы можете,  
мы всегда здесь, чтобы помочь. Если вы хотите поговорить о своих чувствах с кем-то  
внешним, наши ресурсы, такие как психоаналитические группы, могут быть полезны.

**Ресурсы на кампусе**

- **Группы:**
  - FLoWing с вашего Power: Группа поддержки и усилительная группа для FLoW-студентов
    с Kait Daley и Jocelyn Salcedo
    Вторник 12:00-13:00 EST
    [https://bennington.doxy.me/kat](https://bennington.doxy.me/kat)
  - Mindfulness Wednesdays
    Начните свой день с Kait Daley, Rage Hezekiah, и Penny Owen
    Среда 09:00-09:30 EST на Среды
    Зум: ID: 99079887458, Пароль: 340246
  - Survivors Support Group
    С Ali Tartaglia
    Понедельник 19:00-20:00 CET
    Зум: ID: 4424345023
    (US) +1 929-205-6099
  - Support group for international students studying on campus and remotely
    С Rage Hezekiah and Heidie Vazquez-Garcia
    Вторник 14:00 - 15:00 CET
    Зум: ID: 941 9234 3786, Пароль: 424564
  - Better Together Support Group
    С Ali Tartaglia и Kait Daley
    Израиль 12:00-13:00 CET
    Зум: ID: 4424345023
    (US) +1 929-205-6099

- **СВЯЗИ**
  - Несмотря на то, что мы здесь, чтобы помочь, мы также понимаем, что иногда им может быть трудно. Если вы чувствуете, что вам нужна дополнительная помощь, поговорите с нас.

**Совместные ресурсы**

- **Question and concerns about mental health? Check out the JED Foundation’s Mental Health Resource Center.**

**Нужна незамедлительная помощь?**

- **Contact Campus Safety at 802-447-4250 and ask to be put in touch with the on-call therapist.**