

Johns Hopkins MySupport:

Dealing with Election Stress and The Breach on the Capitol

Who can help?

The university recognizes that employees and family members may be dealing with today's stresses. MySupport counselors are available to faculty, staff, house staff, post-docs, and their household family members at 443-997-7000, option #2, 24/7/365 to assist with emotional support and daily life assistance. You can call us when you are having problems getting through day-to-day life, sleeplessness for two weeks or more, trouble focusing, changes in appetite, feeling irritable, or increased worrying or feelings of panic.

How do I care for myself during this stressful time?

Election season can be stressful. And this time it comes as we're also dealing with the breaching at the Capitol, COVID-19, racial tensions, issues around children's schooling, job and financial security and more. Is it any wonder people's emotions are running high?

If you have been exposed to violence, you've gone through an event that may challenge your beliefs about the world. It is natural to be upset whether you're directly or indirectly involved. You could feel shaken and confused. You may notice that you are fearful, sad, angry, worried, or have physical symptoms like stomach upset or pain in your chest- these are normal emotions, and reactions, and right now, you may feel them intensely. Or you may even feel numb? Why? it may be that life has never seemed so fragile. And perhaps you've never felt so vulnerable. You are not alone. You may not be able to control the larger issues going on around you but you can control you and how you cope.

Remember:

It is okay to deal with your feelings. Here are some steps:

- - **Accept them.** If you are human, you've got feelings about what's happening all around you.
 - **Express them.** If you're sad and scared, cry or talk about it with a trusted friend. If you are about to blow up, walk away, listen to music or take deep breaths to calm down. If you need time alone, ask for it.
 - **Explore them.** You may want to get professional help to deal with your feelings. Reach out to mySupport. We are here for you.
- **Eat well.** Be gentle on your stomach. Eat small, evenly spaced meals or snacks. And go for foods that are easy to digest.
- **Get rest.** Try to get a healthy amount of sleep. Being well-rested helps you function better.
- **Move your body.** Find ways to get some exercise. This can help reduce physical stress and help you think more clearly.
- **Be patient.** People cope in their own ways and in their own time. So be patient- with yourself and others. Limit the use of alcohol or other drugs, unless prescribed by your doctor.

- **You can control your reactions:** You can't fix every problem or react to every stressor with the same level of emotion. That will simply wear you out. Turn yourself down a few notches to keep your reactions from overwhelming you.
- **You can control your actions.** Make time to connect with friend and family every day. Limit the TV news if that gets you worked up. Get involved as a volunteer to help others. Remember to be grateful for the good people and things in your life.
- **You can reach out for help.** You can call mySupport anytime, any day for more ways to cope and for in-the-moment support.

Source: Aetna Resources For Living, © 2019 Aetna, Inc.

What resources are available to me, my family, my co-workers, and my team?

- **Coping and Thriving Webinar Series:** Click [here](#) to discover upcoming webinars to help you to cope and adjust to these overwhelming and difficult times.
- **MyStrength App.** Click [here](#) to access the myStrength portal using one of the following access codes: JHHS or JHU. This app has a mood tracker and evidence-based modules for mood and anxiety management. There is also a module available on [releasing fear](#).
- **Additional Resources.**
 - 2020 Election Sanity Guide: Click [here](#) for a guide that will help you stay sane and engaged during the 2020 US Elections, without burning out. There's something for everyone in this resource.
 - Eight Questions that can help you survive election stress: Click [here](#) to get tips on how to stay grounded during the 2020 US Election.

How can I get emotional support for myself or a family member immediately?

To receive emotional support in the moment, call 443-997-7000, press option #2. You will be connected to a clinician in the moment, who will provide free, confidential, emotional support, and can help you to identify resources and next steps.

What if I am a manager concerned about a member of my team or my whole team related to election stress and the breach on the Capitol?

Click [here](#) for more information on consulting with a mySupport OnSite clinician, referring employees to mySupport directly, making a referral, informal referrals, and crisis response services.