

American Election

Issue

People are having various reactions to the recent American election results based on the campaign publicity & potential implications for America & Canada in relation.

The media has been inundated with coverage of the results & potential implications; such coverage can create additional / significant stress.

The results demonstrate how polarized the USA has been. When people are polarized about a major election, political & cultural discussions may heighten concern & frustration. Given our close relationship between the two nations, there will be spillover stress for Canadians.

It is dangerous when we cannot see ourselves in each other. That is our challenge now.

Solutions

Now is a time to unite -- to work for what each of us believes to be good & true, & to provide hope to our diverse communities that we can, in many cases, find common ground.

As our social psychology tells us, we must listen not only to those who agree with us but also to those who do not, & we need to work to understand each other more fully.

It is a time for all of us to clarify what we stand for, to stay true to our values, & model civility & hope for the future. We must recommit ourselves to promoting health & well-being for all our people, most especially during this time of stress & concern. Now is a time for compassion & healing, a time to promote our inherent resilience.

Election-Specific Stress Management Tips

- Limit your media consumption to just enough to stay informed. Take some time for yourself, go for a walk, or spend time with friends & family doing things that you enjoy.
- Avoid getting into discussions about the election if you think they have the potential to escalate to conflict. Be cognizant of the frequency with which you're discussing the election.
- Stress & anxiety about the future implications is not productive. Channel your concerns to make a positive difference on issues you care about.
- Keep in mind that life will go on. The design of the American political system means that there will be a significant degree of stability even after significant change.
- Avoid catastrophizing, & maintain a balanced perspective.
- Vote. In a democracy, a citizen's voice does matter. By voting in elections, you will hopefully feel you are taking a proactive step & participating in what can be a stressful process. When there is an election, find balanced information to learn about all the candidates & issues on your ballot, make informed decisions, & role model your decision to vote.

Sources

APA. (13 October 2016). APA Survey Reveals 2016 Presidential Election Source of Significant Stress for More Than Half of Americans. Press Release. <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2016/10/presidential-election-stress.aspx>