# Self-Care for Election Season



If election season has you feeling stressed, overwhelmed, excited, powerless, down, fearful, depressed, powerful (or all of those) we want you to know that you are not alone in your feelings. Here are things that you can do before, during, and after the election to care for your mental health and to reduce stress.

For many members of our community, there is significant fear for personal and emotional safety and for the well-being of one’s identity groups following the election.  These fears are often rooted in historical and recent traumas based on race, gender, and national origin.  What can you do if you experience trauma responses activated by injustices, or if the outcome of the election floods you with emotion?  Here are some tips that you may find useful before, during, and after the election:

## **Find support at Clark College**

### The Counseling and Health Center is offering some drop-in hours during election week.

* Tuesday, November 5th from 12-2pm in person drop-in counseling. Visit us at HSC 124.
* Wednesday, November 6th  from 9-10am via Zoom. Contact chc@clark.edu for the Zoom link.
* Thursday, November 7th  from 1-3pm Zoom drop-in counseling. Contact chc@clark.edu for the Zoom link.

If you would rather schedule an appointment, please contact the CHC Front Desk 360-992-2614 (phone/text), email chc@clark.edu, or visit HSC 124 M-F 9am-4pm.  There are also ongoing free student counseling appointments and support groups.  Current offerings can be found on our [website](http://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/counseling/index.php). We also have a [sensory room](https://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/counseling/sensory-room.php) available for students to self-regulate and reduce stress.

Clark College has a CARE team that is focused on your personal well-being or concerns you may have for yourself or others that need care.

You can self-refer or submit a referral for care support here: [https://clark-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report/index.php/pid640759?](https://clark-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid640759)

**In addition to Clark College resources, we offer some self-care tips as you move through the stress of mid-quarter, and election season.**

Supportive preparation
**Look into support groups:**[Clark College Counseling and Health Center](http://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/counseling/index.php) offers weekly support groups as well as many other ongoing groups. Seek support from a mental health professional if you are concerned about your wellbeing, or if you need a safe space to talk about what’s going on.

**Have an emergency plan ready**: Reach out to crisis support lines, if you need to talk to someone immediately.

* [**Call or text 988**](https://988lifeline.org/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=onebox)**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline available 24/7**
* Clark County Crisis Line: 1-800-626-8137
* TTY: 1-800-799-4889
* Text: "HOME" to 741741

**We know that folx with historically non-dominant identities may be feeling additional stress.**

* Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio: 1-888-628-9454
* [Native/Indigenous Helpline:](https://strongheartshelpline.org/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhufk__XjiAMVvAatBh0rvjvhEAAYASAAEgLaTPD_BwE) 1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483)
* [Call BlackLine](https://www.callblackline.com/): (for QTBIPoC folx): 800-604-5841
* Trans Lifeline 1-877-565-8860

[**Additional crisis resources available**](https://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/counseling/county.php)

Emotional preparation
**Try guided meditation**: Even if you’ve never thought of yourself as a meditation person, there’s never been a better time to try it. [Healthy Minds](https://hminnovations.org/meditation-app) is a free app that is a super easy way to get started with the basics of meditation. They have options for active or still meditation, science info on why meditation works, and even meditations specifically for coping with election-related stress. Too overwhelmed to even download an app? Here’s a [5 min mediation](https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mpeg/01_Breathing_Meditation.mp3) online.

**Sweat it out:** Exercising for even five minutes can help lower stress levels. Go for a quick walk, do jumping jacks or check out a free 5 minute [yoga](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQFf38xeBww) or [workout](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2NZyW5EP5A) video.

**Find comforting distractions**: Make a list of the shows, movies, podcasts, games, books, songs, or other pieces of entertainment that reliably get you out of your head and comfort you when you’re feeling down. Same goes for entertainment that you’ve been meaning to check out that might be engrossing enough to distract you. That way they’re ready to go.

**Stay connected:** Have a plan to check in with close friends or family on difficult days.

Practical preparation
**Back off social media and limit news consumption:** It can be difficult to do, but experts say it’s a good idea to reduce how much time you spend on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media. It’s also important not to get caught up in watching the news.

**Take good care of yourself:** Practice self-care by being active, eating nourishing food, getting enough sleep, and making time to get outdoors.

 **Prep some food:** If you anticipate you won’t want to have to do a bunch of cooking or shopping, do some [meal prep](https://www.self.com/topic/meal-prep) ahead of the election. If you need support and access to food, request a food box from the [Penguin Pantry](http://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-support/penguinpantry/index.php)

**Knock out important chores and schoolwork:** Maybe you want to make sure your laundry is done so all of your comfy sweats are nice and clean. Or maybe you want to just pick up your space because you know mess can add to stress levels. Try to avoid having to tackle big assignments on days you know may be extra stressful.

**Alter your schedule:** To whatever extent you can, rearrange standing commitments or lighten your load so you don’t have to do a bunch of stuff in the event that you’re feeling emotionally compromised

**Get active:** When you are in a place to do so, consider choosing something you care about to take action on/volunteer for. Focusing on what you have the power to change can be very helpful in managing overwhelm.

From your team at the Clark College Counseling and Health Center

360-992-2614 (phone/text), email chc@clark.edu

We are here for you!