

Stay Informed without Burning Out from Politics

Politics are everywhere. You can't scroll through your phone or turn on the TV without running into them. All that noise can feel overwhelming. In 2024, more than 70% of U.S. adults found political uncertainty to be a source of stress (American Psychological Association).

Today, the average American spends over 7 hours a day looking at screens (Exploding Topics). A lot of that time is spent reading or watching current events. Staying informed is important, but research shows that we feel worse the longer we spend consuming the news. People who check the news several times a day have more anxiety, depression and trouble sleeping (American Psychological Association).

Politics also impact our relationships. Nearly a quarter of Americans say they have ended relationships over politics (Yahoo News/YouGov Poll). Even more say politics have caused tension in their families or at work.

Luckily, we can combat this stress. First, manage how you talk about politics. With family, friends or coworkers, you can say things like, "Let's agree to disagree," or "This topic feels heavy — can we take a break from it?" You don't have to avoid tough topics, but you can speak about them respectfully.

Second, stay connected with people who think differently. Listening doesn't mean agreeing. It means staying curious instead of getting defensive.

Third, unplug sometimes. Set daily time limits for news and social media. Give your brain space to rest. Studies show that taking intentional breaks from media improves focus, mood and sleep (Mayo Clinic).

[More on Page 2](#)



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American Psychological Association

LCT0231-20251027



Finally, find balance. Stay informed only with trusted, balanced sources. Pay attention to how you feel after reading or watching something. If it leaves you anxious, angry or hopeless, it's time to step back.

You can care about what's happening in the world and still take care of your mental health. Protect your peace with boundaries, balance and perspective.

Reviewed by Clinical Director, EAP (Certified Employee Assistance Professional)

#StressLess

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issue, help is out there.
Contact the Mental Health America 24/7 Crisis Text Line (Text MHA to 741-741).