



Counseling, Health and Wellness Services **Counseling Center**

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Ten Tips for Self-Care During Anxious Times ***Political Stress***

1. *Elections Generate Anxiety / Stress*

- Real World Consequences (hardship, suffering)
- Safety Concerns for Self, Family, Friends

2. *History of Common Human Patterns with Difficult Emotions*

- Tend to Use Short-Term Strategies (Avoid, Distract)
- Less Effective as Time Goes By → Increased Anxiety
- Benefit from Learning / Practicing a Different Approach

3. *Emotions are Important*

- Inform Us About What We Believe, Care About, Find Important
- Warn Us About Potential Danger to Assist Survival
- Motivate / Activate Behavior to Move Towards Safety
- Cannot Be Brushed Aside or Wished Away

4. *Goal is Not to Control Our Emotions; Instead the Goal is to Form a New Relationship with Our Emotions Via*

- Body: Carries Our Life Experience (The Inner Dance)
- Memory Systems: Un/conscious, 'Constructed', and Changes Over Time
- Self-Story: The Story I Tell Myself, About Myself, Every Day

5. *New Relationship with Emotions*

- Develop Supportive Peer Network (Safe People/Places, Friends, Counselor...)
- Face the Feelings → With Added Information (e.g., I Don't Have to Face This Alone, I Am a Survivor)
- Embrace the Energy → In Changing Situations (e.g., Each Day Brings Opportunity to Grow, Learn, Practice New Skills)
- Redirect the Behavior → Important to Identify Our 'Preferred Direction' (e.g., Choose Where You Want to Go from This Day Forward, Reduce Avoidance Behaviors, No One Else Knows Your Preferences, No One Else Can Give You 'Your Dreams')

6. *Metaphor: Natural Disaster Preparation*

- Cannot Predict or Prevent
- So the Best We Can Do is to PREPARE, PRACTICE, PARTNER-UP

7. *Metaphor: House Fire Safety Plan - Identify Steps To*

- Exit the Danger
- Meet at Safe Places
- With Caring Others

8. **Exit from Danger**

- Do Not Stay on Constant Negative Loop
- Limit Time on Media/TV, Social Media (Rehashing Ad Infinitum)
- Limit Negative Self-Talk (e.g., Ongoing Blame, Shame, Fault-Finding of Self)
- Disengage from Arguing
- Detach from Difficult People
- Use a Script (Proactive Conversational Skill, can be Learned / Practiced)

9. **Meet at Safe Place**

- ARE YOU a Safe Place for You?
- Embrace Kindness, Practice Compassion, Offer Hope ESPECIALLY TO OUR SELF
- Daily Walk (1/2 hour, Brisk)
 - To be 'Safely Present' in Our Body
 - 'Creating New Memories' of a Stronger Self that Strides Forward
 - 'Moving Confidently' in the World Towards Our Preferred Direction
 - Stimulating Our Body's Natural Anti-stress/Anti-depressed Mechanisms
 - Stimulating Our Body's Natural Good Feeling (Endorphins, Deep Breathes)
- Nutrition (KristinAllott.com)
 - Access Useful Information to FEED OUR CELLS in Healthy Way
 - Develop Positive Relationship with Body and Food
 - Decrease Hypoglycemia (e.g., Sugar Spikes/Drops, Fatigue)
 - Decrease Viewing Our Body as 'The Enemy'
 - Increase Viewing Our Body as 'An Ally'
 - Increase Acceptance of Our Body-Type
- Sleep (Develop Healthy Routine)
 - Often Overlooked as 'Unimportant'
 - Often Viewed as 'Not Able to Be Changed'
 - Often Respond with 'Anger' When Others Suggest Change
 - Often the Product of 'Years' of Bad Habits
 - Often 'Flooded' with all the Negative Thoughts/Feelings Which Were 'Avoided' During the Day
 - Increase Restorative, Restful, Revitalizing Sleep
 - Increase Harmonious 'Inner Dance' as a Holistic Body

10. **Ask for help**

Campus Ministry(253) 534-7464
Center for Gender Equity(253) 535-8759
Diversity Center(253) 535-8750

Lute Telehealth – www.plu.edu/lute-telehealth
Counseling Center (253) 535-7206
Counseling Crisis Line ... (253) 535-7075