

Navigating Political Anxiety and Social Stress

A mental health resource*

**This is not a political document.* This resource is intended to support mental wellbeing during times of political and social stress, wherever you sit on the political spectrum.

Why this feels hard right now:

People are consuming more news and social media than ever before. Add to that algorithms that amplify emotionally charged content, and it makes sense we feel an increase in stress.

Research has linked frequent news exposure with higher levels of anxiety and depression. In fact, political stress has increased from 52% (2016) to 69% in 2024. Feeling overwhelmed is a normal response to these abnormal circumstances.

Common Signs of Political and Social Stress:

- Excessive worrying or rumination
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling constantly on edge or agitated
- Endless scrolling or compulsive news checking
- Hopelessness about the future
- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomach issues, muscle tension)
- Changes in appetite
- Misdirected anger

What Can Help:

- Set boundaries with news and social media (time limits, breaks, deleting apps)
- Choose reputable news sources and avoid sensationalist headlines
- Engage your voice in ways that feel sustainable and supportive
- Redefine self-care: rest, boundaries, movement, support
- Talk with people you trust, if you have safe spaces
- Focus on what you can control, including local community action

Taking a step back from the news does not mean you don't care, it builds capacity to invest in causes you can devote time and energy to.

Sources and Further Reading:

- Peachey Counselling – How Canadians Can Navigate Political and Social Anxiety
<https://www.peacheycounselling.ca/blog/2025/how-canadians-can-navigate-political-and-social-anxiety>
- Mental Health Commission of Canada – Political Anxiety
<https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/public-resources/equityindiversity/political-anxiety/>
- Canadian Mental Health Association – Election Anxiety
https://cmhaw.ca/election-anxiety-what-is-it-and-how-to-cope/#_ftnref1