# MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

**OCTOBER 2024**

## World Mental Health Day: Take Action

World Mental Health Day, observed annually on Oct. 10, is a global initiative to raise awareness about mental health issues and mobilize efforts to support mental well-being. Established by the World Federation for Mental Health in 1992, this day serves as a reminder of the importance of mental health and the need for accessible care for all.

### Mental Health in the United States

In the United States, mental health issues are prevalent, affecting millions of individuals. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, nearly 1 in 5 adults live with a mental illness. Conditions such as anxiety disorders, depression and bipolar disorder are common, yet many people do not seek the help they need due to stigma or lack of resources.

### How to Thrive Year-round

As the understanding of mental health grows, so do individuals' abilities to manage and improve it. Here are some strategies to help you thrive year-round:

- **Find the positive.** Cultivate a positive mindset by focusing on the good in your life. Practice gratitude by keeping a journal of things you are thankful for, no matter how small.

- **Create healthy routines.** Establish routines that promote physical and mental well-being. Regular exercise, balanced nutrition and adequate sleep are foundational to good mental health.

- **Own your feelings.** Acknowledge your emotions without judgment. Accepting your feelings can help you manage them more effectively and seek help when needed.

- **Connect with others.** Building and maintaining strong relationships can provide emotional support and a sense of belonging. Make time for family and friends, and don't hesitate to reach out when you need support.

World Mental Health Day is not just a day of awareness but also a call to action. Remember, mental health is just as important as physical health, and seeking help is OK.

## Managing Uncertainty During Election Season

Election season can be a particularly stressful time for many people. According to a recent American Psychiatric Association poll, 73% of Americans feel anxious about the presidential election. Additionally, a poll by Myriad Genetics found that 38% of people are experiencing anxiety or depression related to the election, and 35% feel overwhelmed by the constant news and social media coverage. It's normal to have heightened negative feelings during this period, but there are ways to manage election-fueled uncertainty and symptoms. Consider these tips:

- **Limit news and social media consumption.** While staying informed is important, constant exposure to political content can be overwhelming. Set specific times to check updates and avoid social media scrolling or news consumption before bed to ensure a good night's sleep.

- **Stay connected with supportive people.** Talking to friends and family who share your concerns can provide emotional support. Sometimes, just knowing you're not alone in your feelings can be comforting. However, don't stress spiral with those people.

- **Concentrate on what you can control.** Instead of worrying about the outcome, focus on actions you can take, such as volunteering, voting or participating in community discussions. Taking proactive steps can give you a sense of control and purpose.

- **Engage in enjoyable activities.** Make time for the hobbies and activities that bring you joy and relaxation. Activities can provide a much-needed mental break, whether it's reading, cooking or spending time in nature.

Election season can be challenging, but by taking proactive steps to manage your mental health, you can navigate this period with greater ease. For further guidance, contact a mental health provider.

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