
A Nation in Crisis

Supporting our emotional health

Recent mass shootings and police brutality have been prevalent and never fail to send shock waves of fear and anger. Violence, specifically hate related crimes can trigger a host of complex and difficult emotions. The trial for Derek Chauvin, the police officer involved in the death of George Floyd is currently unfolding in real time, which re-opens a wound that has yet to be healed. Each one of us will respond in their own unique way, but the emotions experienced can range from anger, to feelings of disillusionment, despair, anxiety, and helplessness.

As advocates of mental health, Ulliance also recognizes one can become saturated and overwhelmed by these feelings. Just as it is important to stay informed and active in advocating for positive change for our nation, we must also be mindful of our own mental health. We cannot fight the good fight if we're paralyzed or overwhelmed. We cannot pour from an empty cup.

What Can We Do?

- **Make sure you have the facts:** You will have a reaction to news events, whether you want to or not, so make sure you know all the facts. Rumors and unproven theories are just fodder for anxiety and anguish.
- **Limit your exposure to upsetting news.** No one advocates ignoring the problems of our nation, but at the same time we must be vigilant in preserving our mental health and, by extension, physical health. There is such a thing as "too much." To limit your (and/or your family's) exposure to distressing news, consider customizing your news and social media feeds. Try condensing news and allowing a time limit on how much you spend processing news events, especially before bedtime. Build a pre-determined schedule for consuming news and opinion, and instead of
- "surfing the web," be deliberate in your search for information.

- **Don't go it alone!** Reach out to those trusted souls in your life and talk about your feelings and experiences. Be sure to choose people who will not fan the flames of anxiety, but rather people you know to be good listeners. Call your Life Advisor EAP and speak with a counselor to help sort out feelings and develop a plan to maintain your mental health and optimal functioning.
- **Use mindfulness to help temper difficult emotions.** It's human to experience a range of emotions that can sometimes be overwhelming. Instead of trying to control what we feel and how we feel it, try sitting with it for a minute. Identify what you're feeling first and try to experience it without judgement. With mindfulness, we bring ourselves back to the here and now, instead of worrying about the past, and fearing the future. A quick mindfulness tool is called "grounding". Close your eyes, take in the sounds, and the smells. Or walk around and focus on what you feel beneath your feet. Tuning in to our environment in a purposeful way has been shown to temper flares of anxiety or other intense emotions. Just breathe. These feelings are normal.
- **Try incorporating other relaxation techniques into your daily routine.** Think of activities such as yoga, deep breathing, and guided meditation. These techniques can calm negative thought patterns and help with our mental well-being

Should you feel distressed, unable to focus or go about your daily activities, contact Ulliance for emotional support 24/7, to help move you through this challenging time.



**Ulliance provides no cost, confidential, short term counseling
for you & your family.**

Contact us at **800.448.8326**