

Wellbeing. Done Well.



Emotional Resilience

During Times of Civil Unrest



CARING FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Get reliable information. One of the best ways to manage fear is to understand what is being done to address the situation.

Minimize exposure to the media. Once you have the facts, it's a good idea to limit replay of events. Try to give yourself and your family a break from the intensity of what's going on. Being overexposed to media can increase your stress.

Allow your feelings. If you notice that you are having strong feelings, acknowledge them. Don't try to ignore or deny them.

Take care of yourself. Make sure you get enough rest and eat a healthy diet so that you feel your best. Avoid overuse of alcohol and/or other substances.

Gain perspective. It's natural to worry about "what ifs" and your mind can easily go to worse-case scenarios. Sometimes practicing mindful self-awareness can help you stay focused in the moment and look at life from a more positive point of view.

Talk about your fears or concerns. Get emotional support by giving voice to and sharing your concerns with people you trust.

Coping with Stress Caused by Riots at U.S. Capitol

Unlawful riots broke out in the United States capitol recently, causing havoc, injuries, conflict, and damage. Images of angry and armed people storming the nation's capitol have flooded social media and the news. If you are fearful and anxious, you're not alone.

This is an unprecedented moment. Seeing images of violence and destruction may have direct impact on your health and wellbeing, potentially resulting in anxiety, elevated blood pressure and other physical and emotional symptoms. With emotions ranging from grief and genuine anger to shock and disillusionment, it's no surprise that many of us are feeling unsettled.

According to Vaile Wright, senior director at the American Psychological Association, "We have to take care of ourselves, even when things are bad." It's about focusing on what's in your control — your thoughts, your feelings, your behavior — and doing a check-in with yourself. How are you doing, and how can you assert some control in a situation that feels out of control?

While there is no single "right" way to cope with fear and confusion surrounding acts of violence in our country, here are a few suggestions that may be useful.

Helping Children Cope with Emotions Related to Violence

Our children are particularly vulnerable to fear in the wake of violence. They have a harder time understanding what's happening and putting it into perspective. We need to pay special attention to their needs. Here are some tips.

- **Be available.** Make time to talk. Be sure they know they can come to you when they have questions. Listen to their concerns, and then reassure them. For example, point out that these events are limited and the risk to any particular individual is very low. Communicate that you will always do your best to keep them safe.
- **Be honest.** Give them information that is truthful and appropriate for age and maturity level. Talk to them about how some stories on the internet and social media may be inaccurate or based on rumors.
- **Be calm.** Children will react to both what you say and how you say it. Even if you're feeling tense, try to speak with them as calmly as possible. This will set the tone for ongoing conversations.

- **Share stories** about heroes, volunteers and public servants. This may help to counteract some of the negative events.
- **Maintain family routines**, particularly around meals, bedtimes, and scheduled social and leisure activities. Structure helps a child feel safe. Make time for soothing activities such as reading with them or playing board games as a family.
- **Be especially patient** with your children, your family, and other loved ones. Give them signs of reassurance such as hugs and affection. Also be patient with yourself and understanding your own needs.

When to get help

If you can't shake the distressful thoughts and emotions caused by the riot, or if you are feeling overwhelmed and stress is interfering with your everyday life, consulting with a counselor may be beneficial.

For a consultation with Concern, call 800-344-4222 or visit our website at employees.concernhealth.com

Employees and eligible dependents can request Concern counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

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