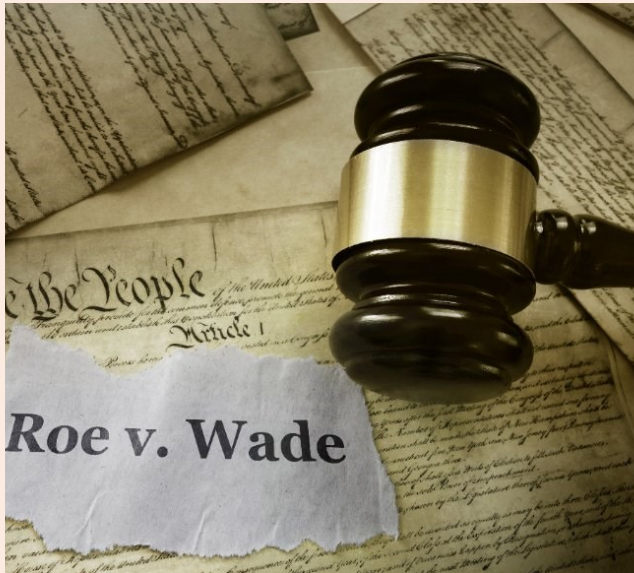


Special Edition

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Roe v. Wade. Coping with the Emotional Fallout



Help is Available

Research confirms what we already know — unexpected shifts in our lives, loss of control, and traumatic events can stress us out.

We all react in different ways. There is no right or wrong way to think, feel, or respond, so don't judge your own reactions by those of others. Emotions can include shock, anger, disbelief, anxiety, and hopelessness.

Feelings typically last from a few days to a few months, gradually fading as you process the event. But even if you're feeling better, you may be periodically troubled by triggers such as media coverage, rallies, or other related events.

If you feel stress is interfering with your everyday life, Concern can help. For information about self-help resources or consulting with a counselor, call **800-344-4222** or visit our website at employees.concernhealth.com

The Supreme Court ruling to overturn Roe v. Wade has triggered a cascade of intense emotions nationwide. The decision is traumatic for many as it reflects a loss of rights and personal autonomy. The more helpless someone feels, the more likely they are to feel very distressed.

Add to that the uncertainty about what might happen next, civil unrest, a widening political divide, the ongoing pandemic, and a struggling economy. The result is an accumulation of stressors that are taking a physical and emotional toll on Americans.

Whatever shape your response takes, know that your feelings are a normal reaction to abnormal events. But there are things you can do to minimize tension and take care of yourself.

Here are a few tips

- **Allow your feelings.**
If you notice that you're having strong feelings, acknowledge them. Don't try to ignore or deny them. Remember, it's common to experience a range of emotions after a seriously upsetting event.
- **Focus on what you can control.**
If following the news, watching the rallies, or scrolling through social media is causing you stress, control your medial exposure. Take measures to log off when you can, and set a time once a day to check the news.

- **Arm yourself with the facts.**

Once you validate your feelings, do some research so you know what's going on. Look for answers to any questions you might have.

- **Take action.**

Feelings of stress can be underscored by a sense of powerlessness. Managing your stress might include participating in an organization that aligns with your beliefs, or getting together with people of like mind. Consider volunteering your time or making a donation to a non-profit organization or meaningful fund.

- **Lean on others.**

Share your point of view or concerns with people you trust. It may make you feel less alone if you talk with others who are also experiencing emotional reactions. You may be able to help them, too, as they deal with their own thoughts and feelings.

- **Practice self-care.**

Engage in healthy behaviors to enhance your ability to cope. Make sure you get enough rest, eat well-balanced meals, and build physical activity into your day. Avoid drugs and alcohol as they can suppress your feelings rather than help you manage or lessen your distress. If you are having trouble sleeping, try some relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, guided meditation, or yoga.

- **Set boundaries.**

Some experts suggest setting boundaries for potentially heated conversations. Boundaries can be set with kindness and respect. If you draw the line and someone continues to cross it, you can agree to disagree as a positive way to end the conversation.

- **Gain perspective.**

When there is uncertainty, it's natural to worry about "what ifs." Your mind can easily go to worse-case scenarios. Sometimes practicing a simple mindfulness meditation can help you stay in the present moment. You can meditate anywhere you like, for as long as you like. Ideally try to meditate 15 minutes once or twice a day. Try this simple meditation.

- *Begin in a comfortable seated position. Once settled, close your eyes.*
- *Follow your breath as it goes in and as it goes out.*
- *Imagine that you are breathing in calmness, peace, and strength*
- *There is nothing for you to worry about in this present moment. All there is to do is breathe.*
- *If your mind wanders, notice it without judgment, and simply return your attention to the breath.*
- *Notice how calm you feel as you sit and breathe.*
- *When you're ready, gently open your eyes. Take a moment to notice any sounds in the environment.*
- *Notice how your body feels right then. Notice your thoughts and emotions.*



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

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