



COPING WITH POLITICAL
EVENTS OR LEGAL DECISIONS
THAT FEEL THREATENING

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A legal decision or political events that you believe violates human rights or your personal freedoms is likely to stir up strong reactions. You may feel a mixture of emotions, including anger, fear, sadness, helplessness, and hopelessness. Here are some tips on coping during this time.

1. Identify and accept how you are feeling

Acknowledging your feelings (rather than ignoring or denying them) is important. Any decision or event that suggests a loss, threat, or violation of rights creates uncertainty and a sense of danger and losing control. Feeling angry and scared in response to this is normal. You will likely find it helpful to name how you are feeling and reflect on why. Ask yourself, “How am I reacting right now?” and “Why am I reacting this way?”

2. Address the stress reactions you’re having now

Fear and uncertainty cause physical responses—your body prepares to protect you and the result is tension and arousal. Look for ways to use and express this energy, rather than only trying to contain it. This can help restore some equilibrium. You may find it particularly helpful to involve your body or creativity—get some exercise, cry, scream underwater or into pillows, create something, or organize something.

3. Learn more

Learn more about the decision and/or surrounding events so that you are well-informed about what has happened and how you may be able to take action. Read some relevant articles or listen to podcasts published by sources with a reputation for balanced and quality reporting. Look for answers to any questions you have.

4. Take action

When you are well-informed and understand what is fueling your own reactions, you will be better placed to take purposeful action that helps restore some sense of control. There may be multiple ways you can do this, including donating, demonstrating, protesting, sharing your own story, offering practical help to those in need of support, and having conversations with those around you and in power about these issues.

5. Limit news consumption and social media use

There is a difference between “learning more” and compulsively surfing social media or the news. Monitor and limit your time on social media and reading news. Past a certain point, exposure to a other’s anguish and outrage is likely to intensify your own sense of helplessness and grief in unhelpful ways.

6. Connect with other people

Others within your community are also likely to feel angry and upset. Talking to other people who are like-minded can help you feel less isolated and overwhelmed. Speaking to a counselor or other mental health professional may also help. Ask how others are doing if you can (especially those who are vulnerable to the impact of these events) and be trustworthy and supportive with regards to what they may tell you about their own feelings and experiences.

In many situations, managing your distress at these events is likely to be an ongoing process.

Repeat all tips as necessary.

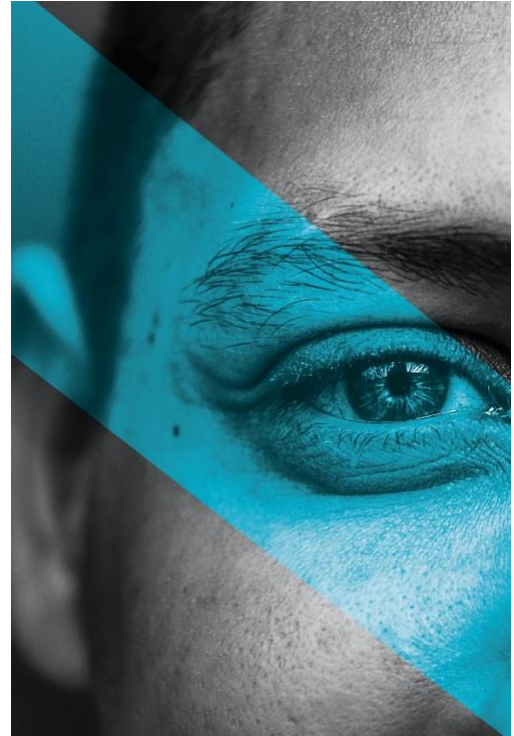
- 1. Identify and accept how you are feeling**
- 2. Address the stress reactions you are having now**
- 3. Learn more**
- 4. Take action**
- 5. Limit new consumption and social media use**
- 6. Connect with other people**

ABOUT KON TERRA

At KonTerra, we specialize in supporting clients that operate in complex and high-stress environments where organizations and their staff face difficult challenges.

When staff work in high-pressure roles or locations with elevated exposure to threat, suffering, graphic content, or conflict, they are at risk of experiencing overload, attrition, and stress reactions such as burnout. The KonTerra Group works directly with individuals, leaders, and teams to equip them with tools to better understand and manage the challenges they face.

Providing support in a meaningful way is only possible with the right people. The experience and sensitivity of our counselors, trainers, and coaches allows us to work with clients in a way that is unique. Our specialists all share two attributes which equip them to deliver excellent support: all are veteran mental health clinicians (master's or doctoral-level); and experienced supporting staff in high-stress and high-stakes environments and roles.



Services delivered by our uniquely positioned professionals include:

- Individual Counseling and Coaching
- Virtual and Onsite Training and Educational Events
- Staff Wellbeing Assessments
- Manager Support and Consultations for Organizations and Leaders
- Critical Incident Response Services

If you are interested in learning more about any of the above services, please contact your KonTerra Account Manager or email: info@konterragroup.net.