

Special Edition Newsletter

June 2, 2020

Social Unrest Grips the Nation



Help is Available

We are experiencing an intense period of stress and turmoil in our country, which is having an impact on us all. Intense feelings are natural reactions to the current situation, where every day seems to bring new concerns, fear, and uncertainty.

We hope tips in this newsletter help you find ways to cope. However, if you feel stuck or have difficulty managing your feelings, consider contacting Concern for support. Our counselors are here to help you manage these challenging times and develop strategies consistent with your personal values.

Call 800-344-4222 or go to our website at employees.concernhealth.com. Calls are answered 24/7.

America in Crisis

The worst civil unrest in decades erupted in cities around the U.S. this past week, sparked by the tragic death of George Floyd, a Black man in police custody. Demonstrations stretching from coast to coast rocked the nation at a time when we're still grappling with an unchecked pandemic and an economic crisis that has put millions out of work.

This combination of issues has escalated tensions and frustrations, bringing into sharp relief resentment due to racism and inequality in our country.

The issues are big, important ones—social justice, institutional racism, and nonviolent and violent protest. Events of the past week have made these issues hard to ignore.

Tips to help you in this time

With emotions ranging from genuine anger to hopelessness, many of us don't know how to deal with our feelings. Here are a few suggestions.

- **Decide on the issues** that you believe in and are committed to. Find ways to become involved in organizations that advocate for the ideals and values that matter to you.
- **Commit** to creating a culture where hate and discrimination have no place. Acknowledge and accept responsibility to be part of the solution.
- **Uphold** principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all your practices.

- **Stay informed.** Find fact-based, credible resources so you can stay up to date as government initiatives and program status evolves.
- **Show tolerance and respect** for diversity and differences of perspective and opinion.
- **Lead with empathy.** Try to understand each other. Use compassion and a collective sense of humanity to acknowledge each other's feelings and pain.
- **Show compassion and caring.** Stand together with love, acceptance and support.
- **Challenge your perceptions of race and identity.** Encourage others to engage in the difficult but necessary work of self-reflection.
- **Create intentional space** to convene and process the emotional and psychological trauma of these events.
- **Talk to your kids about race.** Help kids learn about issues of race and equity at an early age so they can develop their own awareness of injustice.

For tools and resources for help with conversations about race, visit:

[National Museum of African American History and Culture—Talking about Race](#)
[Anti-racism resources](#)

Take care of yourself

This past week has left many people with a justifiable sense of helplessness, uncertainty and fear about rising racial tension and upheaval.

It's common for people to experience a variety of emotions, including shock, sorrow, numbness, anger, grief and disillusionment. You may have trouble sleeping, concentrating, or even doing simple tasks.

Here are a few tips that might help.

Build a support network. People with a strong network of family and friends manage stress better. Have open dialogues about race, your experience, and your needs and concerns.

Turn off and take a break. You may want to keep informed, but try to limit the amount of news you take in, whether from social media, television, or newspapers. Being overexposed can actually increase your stress.

Engage in healthy behaviors. Eat well, get enough rest, exercise. Try deep breathing, listen to music, play sports, walk in nature.

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 on the present and look at life from a more positive point of view.

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

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employees.concernhealth.com