

The following is prepared by judi biniamow MA LMHP LADC.

There are numerous strategies to help reduce the impact of political fatigue, compassion fatigue or stress in general. The following is based on my framework called **Pathways to Resilience**. This framework identifies nine areas of life that can both strengthen and weakness our resilience. These are nine strategies – one from each of the nine Pathways – to support self- care.

1. **From the Physical Well-Being Pathway:** Both political fatigue and compassion fatigue have effects on our physical health as noted above. One tip from this Pathway is to prioritize sleep. Make a deal with yourself that you will turn off all of the electronics and create a sleep schedule that will allow for adequate rest.
2. **From the Emotional Bank Account Pathway:** We can lose ourselves in the events that are going on around us and forget to take care of our emotional needs. One tip from this Pathway is to make note of a couple of things that make your heart smile and are relaxing, and carve out at least a half hour at least twice a week to do one or more of those things. EBA activities should have a place on your calendar.
3. **From the Values, Purpose, and Personal Growth Pathway:** The chaos going on around us can distract us from those things that are important to us in our personal lives. A tip from this Pathway is to Identify your top 3 values and do something every day – it does not need to be anything big or grandiose – that is a reflection of one of those values.
4. **From the Core Beliefs and Thinking Patterns Pathway:** The political noise can get so loud that we question our own sanity and lose confidence in our own ability to think clearly and make good decisions. A tip from this Pathway is to remind yourself that you are human, this is a very overwhelming time, and you are having a normal response to a very abnormal set of circumstances. Talk to yourself the same way you would talk to a good friend or family member.
5. **From the Feelings Pathway:** As noted in the description about both political and compassion fatigue, these situations can have a huge effect on our emotions including feeling overwhelmed, irritated, scared, worried, depressed, and anxious. Two tips from this Pathway are: 1. Breathe (breathe in to a count of 4, hold to a count of 7, and breathe out to a count of 8). 2. Then, take a moment to write in a journal, a piece of paper, or even some toilet paper what you are feeling right now in this moment and why.
6. **From the Relationships Pathway:** The physical and emotional impact of these events can result in us being short-tempered with or distant from the people we care about the most. One tip from this Pathway is to be intentional with the people you care about the most by leaving them a sticky note on a mirror, a door, a lunch bag, the fridge, anywhere they will see it telling them how much you appreciate them.
7. **From the Communication Pathway:** One of the side effects of being overwhelmed is that we don't have a lot of energy to establish boundaries. When someone asks for something, we tend to say "ok" just to avoid a conflict. A tip from this Pathway is to practice saying "no" to things you really do not want to do or have time to do.
8. **From the Gratitude, Acceptance, and Spirituality Pathway:** It's easy to lose sight of gratitude and acceptance, not to mention any notion of a spiritual life when we are overwhelmed by the chaos going on. A tip from this Pathway is to say the Serenity Prayer or the Loving Kindness Meditation (or both). See below.

9. **From the Habits and Change Pathway:** The current political climate and the resulting stress are not things we are used to. These events have created significant changes to our daily lifestyle – the way we think, the way we feel, the way we behave, and what we pay attention to. A tip from this Pathway is to recognize that what we have going on is not the norm. It's not what we are used to and it is taking a toll on us. This is a time to show ourselves compassion. This is a time to add a new ritual to our day – maybe at the end of the day – that helps us to calm down, get grounded, and experience some peace.

The Serenity Prayer: Some people start this prayer with the word God.

*Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.*

The Loving Kindness Meditation: This is intended to be directed towards someone you care about, someone you maybe don't care about so much, yourself, your community, the world at large.

*May you be happy
May you be safe
May you be healthy
May you live with ease.*

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