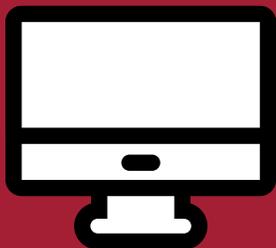


**Stay active
from your
couch.**



Fill out the Census,
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blog about an issue
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Call or write letters to
your representatives



More info: JMU.edu/civic
JMU.edu/vote

SO YOU'RE STUCK AT HOME WITH YOUR POLITICALLY POLARIZED FAMILY. NOW WHAT?

Mutually Decide to Debate

Some people enjoy the banter, but others want to avoid it at all costs. There's no right or wrong approach to discussing politics, just different preferences. Respect those of others. Understanding your goals when it comes to communicating with others, may be helpful to having productive conversations. Whether the conversation is on a sensitive topic, such as healthcare, or not, it's important to determine what you hope to achieve from the conversation. Is it that you want to change the person's mind or to simply hear and better understand their point of view? Establishing easy attainable goals, when communicating with others will help to ease tension in a conversation.

Acknowledge Their Opinion

When it comes to healthy debate it is important to acknowledge each others opinion. While you don't have to agree with their opinion, it's important to recognize their point of view and willingness to share it with you.

Be open, honest, and kind

When having conversations, avoid polarizing language and personal attacks. Remember with whom you are having the conversation. It's surprisingly effective to be open about how you're feeling in relation to the conversation. "If the words are becoming hurtful, tell them I'm feeling nervous, I'm feeling frustrated, I'm angry, upset, scared, or I'm just over it all," says Baldwin a counselor and social worker at Parham Doctors' Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. "It's okay to call a time-out or simply end the conversation mid-way."

It is okay to agree to disagree, but also try to find areas where you agree.

"The connection people feel with their city's sports team is the same way they feel with political candidates. If you attack someone's sports team, they are never going to agree with you, no matter how qualified your position is." said Suzanne-Deggs White, a university counselor, in an interview with Vox. You may disagree with someone but instead of strongly reacting, actively listen to the other person about what is important to them. For example, you might have different ideas about gun control but underneath you share the same concern for keeping your kids safe and healthy. You may find that by discussing shared viewpoints, areas of disagreement will feel less intense and your stress may decrease

Resources

- <https://my2020census.gov/>
- <https://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov/>
- <https://www.liveabout.com/marriage-and-politics-2302498>
- <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-conversations>
- <https://www.sharecare.com/health/relationship-challenges/article/how-talk-politics-partner>