

# Conquering Election Time Stress

BY DR. JEFF CLARK, TRUE HEALTH MEDICINE PC

We are at election time with so many heated topics on the ballot. Who will be our next president with four years to attempt to nominate Supreme Court Justices, and possibly frighten us all with their command of our foreign policy and mighty military?

We have measure 97, a new spin on an Oregon sales tax aimed at closing a yawning state budget gap. A measure that wants to have big business finally pay its fair share, yet creates uncertain consequences for businesses we all find essential – like grocery store chains. And lets not overlook the decision whether to eliminate the institutional memory and long term relationships of Tualatin's entrenched elected officials by restricting how many times the same unpaid rascals can be re-elected – by us!

These ballot questions and many more are creating a lot of stress in our community. Everyone please take a deep breath right now and let it out slowly. On Nov. 9th the sun will rise, probably hidden by clouds, it is November, and this is Western Oregon! Most of us will still be here carrying on as before, and happiness will still be possible whatever the election results.

Thankfully it will be over soon. Here are more stress management tips in addition to remembering to breath deeply, which releases calming endorphins.

- Get outside for 10 minutes every day, no matter the rain. Fresh air and sunlight, even cloud filtered sunlight, freshens our minds and contributes to vitamin D production in our skin – so important for health and mood.

- Get regular exercise. Move your body at the gym, in your home, around your neighborhood under an umbrella, or walking inside the mall. 80% of the health benefits of regular exercise

can be yours by walking at your own pace, 45 minutes, three times per week. Comfortable exercise helps lift your mood every time.

- Don't forget to socialize with real people in person! Just about everyone has made up their political minds by now, so talk about other subjects that bring shared joy, happiness, and anticipation. Think and talk about gardens, recipes, travel, weddings, babies, visitors, hikes, music, home projects and other personal goals and adventures you are planning for 2017.



- Avoid venting and arguing politics on Face Book and other social media. Most people have made up their minds and this just amplifies stress and sometimes incites anger and permanent bad feelings. Respect the right of others to hold their own opinions. Lead by example so they can see how you want them to respect you and yours.

- This is a good time for hobbies and home projects that satisfy you and the ones you love. I recently canned 44 quarts of homegrown tomato sauce in my kitchen. That joy will renew every time we crack open or gift a jar!

- Remember that happiness is a decision. A decision that is easier to make when your body is healthy. Your health is also a decision made out of your daily choices. We are here to help you with that health decision by addressing your immediate medical concerns with you, and to teach you excellent self-care for an optimistic long life.

See you all on the other side of the election, smiles intact please!



**Dr. Jeff Clark** is a naturopathic physician with True Health Medicine, PC, a group practice in Tualatin serving the whole family with naturopathic primary care and acupuncture. The clinic is located at 8555 SW Tualatin Rd, 503-691-0901.