The way that news is reported has changed significantly over the past 10-20 years, often accompanied by graphic video, personal stories of suffering, and often shocking on-the-ground accounts. At the same time individuals can stay informed from any number of personal devices in real-time, from virtually anywhere, around the clock. It is certainly important to be informed, but it is also necessary to consider the impact of following negative news and being bombarded by coverage.

As news has become increasingly visual, it is more likely to convey fear, anger, sadness, and extreme empathy for others, while leaving us feeling powerless. Watching negative news can lead to worry, anxiety, and depression. Take an inventory of your news consumption habits and impact to determine whether some boundaries are in order. Do you find yourself experiencing any of the following?

- Checking the news several times a day
- Spending a great deal of time reading news stories
- Feeling compelled to check the news repeatedly out of concern that you will miss something
- Reading various articles about the same topic
- Fixating on negative news for many hours
- Feeling anxiety or upset most of the day after consuming the news
- Lack of time or energy to complete daily responsibilities due to time spent consuming news or due to its emotional impact on you afterwards
- Having difficulty sleeping after consuming the news

The terms “doomscrolling” was coined to describe the habit of scrolling through news from a personal device despite negative consequences. What should you do if this sounds like a habit you’ve developed?

- **Make a schedule.** Decide when you’ll check the news and give yourself a time limit. See if you can reduce the amount of time you’re spending consuming negative news and assess whether there is any positive impact on your mood.
- **Find new activities.** Replace the time you would typically check the news with a different activity. For example, if you find you’re checking news after dinner, take a walk instead.
- **Seek out good news.** Go out of your way to look for positive news stories. If you’re scrolling on social media, this will change your algorithms and you will start being sent positive news.
- **Reach out to a mental health counselor.** If you are having a hard time detaching from negative news and it is impacting your mood or daily life, it may be time to schedule an appointment with a counselor.

If you are feeling overwhelmed managing in the digital age, or with other matters, consider contacting your EAP.


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Anytime, any day, you have free, confidential access to professional consultants and online resources to help you be your best. To access these services, call or log on to get started.

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