

## Managing exam stress



We all get stressed at times. A little pressure can help us achieve our goals. Stress at exam time is normal and can help us focus on achieving our best. But excessive stress during exams can stop us doing our best and more importantly, impact upon our physical and emotional health.

It's essential to find ways to manage exam stress. This isn't about making huge changes, but rather about focusing on the one thing that's always within your control —You.

**And remember, that while exams are important, they are not the only key to a successful future!**

### TIPS FOR STUDENTS

**Manage your time and study routine:** Plan what you need to study and when you will study by making a 'To Do' list. Be realistic about how much you will do each day and remember to leave time to do things that you enjoy. Then stick to your plan.

**Listen to relaxing music:** Listening to music can create a positive and productive environment by elevating your mood and encouraging you to study more effectively and for longer. Classical music is recommended as the best type of music to boost your brain power but ambient music can work too.

**Stay active:** Take regular breaks during the day for a short walk and a change of scenery. Research has proven that exercise such as walking can boost your memory and brain power.

**The importance of relationships:** Sometimes you just need to talk to someone, other times you need to shout from the rooftop or scream from the top of your lungs. Figure out what you're feeling and then let it out. Speaking to a family member or friend can highlight the bigger picture for you and can help keep things in perspective.

**Try to get enough sleep:** The benefits of a proper night's sleep can never be underestimated. Most importantly, sleep helps your brain to assimilate new knowledge into your long-term memory so that you can recall it when it comes to exam day.

**Perform as well as you can:** You're you, so you can only do the best you can on the day. If you did well – congratulations! But remember, there's life beyond exam results. Disappointing grades are not the end of the world, even if it does feel that way at the time.



# SUPPORTING FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT EXAM TIME

**Give encouragement and support:** Lots of students say that most pressure at exam time comes from their family. So, be positive, give support and avoid criticism. Let them know that failing an exam isn't the end of the world.

**Help make a positive environment to study:** Try to make sure that there is quiet time and space in the house to study without any disturbance.

**Talk about exam nerves:** Remind the person doing the exams that feeling anxious is normal. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use.

**Encourage exercising:** Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. It doesn't matter what it is - walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all effective. Activities that involve other people can be particularly helpful.

**Encourage healthy eating:** A balanced diet will help the person taking exams to feel healthier, more energetic and more focussed.

**Encourage good sleeping habits:** A good sleep will improve thinking and concentration. Cramming all night before an exam is usually a bad idea. Sleep will be far more beneficial than a few hours of panicky last-minute study.

**Be flexible during exams:** Be flexible with the person taking exams. Don't worry about household jobs that are left undone or untidy bedrooms. Staying calm yourself can help. Exams don't last forever.

**REMEMBER: If you or someone you care about are feeling very stressed all or most of the time, we recommend speaking to a GP.**

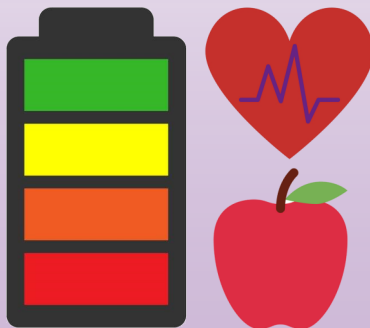
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