

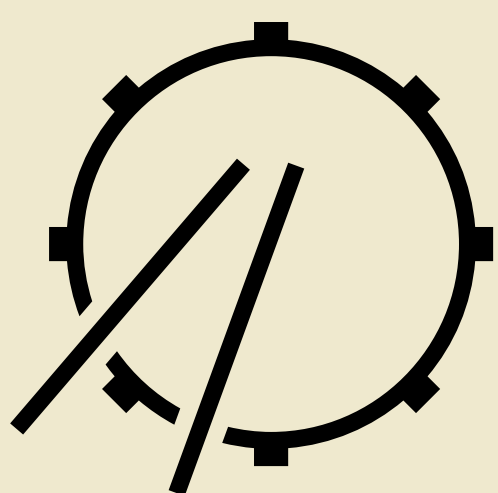
COPING STRATEGIES

How to deal with exam stress and anxiety

GENERAL AND EXAM TIPS

BE PREPARED

Anxiety often comes from uncertainty or not knowing what to expect. Review notes, lecture slides, past quizzes and tests, talk it out with another student in the course, and think about what you expect the exam questions to be and try to answer them.



TAKE A BREAK

Make a study schedule with breaks built in to do something you enjoy – have a snack, stretch, chat with a friend or family member, do yoga, listen to relaxing music, draw, or another favourite activity!

EXERCISE

Exercise is a great way to bring down cortisol and adrenaline (the body's stress hormones). It also helps you produce endorphins (chemicals in the brain that naturally reduce pain in the body and improve your mood).



TAKE DEEP BREATHS

Breathe in for 5 counts, then breathe out for 5 counts. Repeat and try to take longer breaths. This will lower your heart rate.

GO OUTSIDE

Fresh air and sunlight help make outdoor activities more effective at lowering cortisol levels than indoor activities.



GENERAL AND EXAM TIPS

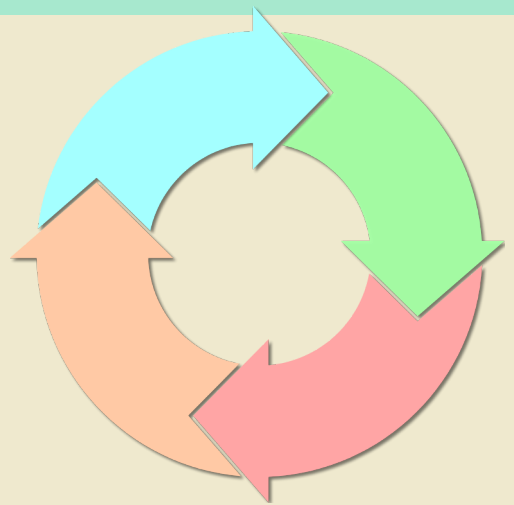


FIGURE OUT WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU

Talk with someone or write in a journal about what specifically is stressing you out. Brainstorm how you can resolve the issue.

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CHANGE

Separate what you have control over and what is out of your control.



INTERRUPT NEGATIVE THOUGHTS



about the worst possible outcome like “what if I fail” with the best possible outcome like “what if I get a great mark”? Don’t ask yourself “Am I good enough for this?”, but rather “Is this good enough for me?”. Build up your confidence by saying to yourself “I got this!”

DO YOUR BEST

Strive for excellence, not perfection. Put your stress into perspective - is it really as bad as you think?



ACKNOWLEDGE AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND YOUR STRESSFUL THOUGHTS



This will allow you to become an objective observer of your thoughts instead of being a victim of them. Then you can decide on a reaction to them. For some causes of guilt, fixing the source will mean making a change in your life. For other causes, it will mean forgiving yourself or others in order to improve your sense of well-being.

TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

Speak to a counsellor, mental health nurse, or trusted adult. Reach out to the resources available to you in your community, through your school, or free helplines through phone, text, or online



GENERAL AND EXAM TIPS



HAVE A GOOD LAUGH

Laugh with a friend, watch a funny show, or remember something that made you laugh in the past. It will help you feel better.

LET GO OF WORRY

We worry because it makes us feel like we are being productive when we're stressed...like if we think about our problem enough, we can figure it out. But actually, worrying is not effective in helping us solve our problems.



FOCUS ON THE PRESENT



Avoid spiralling and worrying about too far in the future. Ground yourself by focusing on your senses. How fast is your heart beating? What can you see, hear, and smell around you? Do a body scan to notice if there are any areas of tension in your body.

GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Your brain needs sleep in order to form memories and put together new information. Plan your time out so that you don't stay up all night before the exam!!



FUEL YOUR BODY

with healthy food, water, and not too much coffee or sugar. Caffeine can make you feel jittery and more anxious! Sugar and dehydration are major triggers of stress in the body.



Contact

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resources