

TESTING TIMES

Revising for and sitting exams can be a stressful time, but remember it's normal to feel a little bit of stress.

This can help you focus; though too much of it can make you feel overwhelmed or out of control and can make it harder for you to take in information.

Learning how to de-stress is really important. Straightforward, effective, self-help techniques are going to be helpful when you have a heavy workload, in the run-up to exams.



Here are a few useful tips...

How and where you work

Think about the time of the day that you feel most alert and the place that makes you focus and feel calm. Why not alternate your work space to keep revision fresh and to avoid boredom?

Have an early night

Revising late at night can make it very hard for you to get up for the actual exam. Ensure you have done some revision before dinner and stop revising one hour before you go to sleep, so that you have a chance to switch off.

Try not to compare

Avoid comparing your knowledge with friends before or after the exam. Just because they appear to know more, does not mean that they actually do, or that they will do better in the exam. Comparing will only make you or your friends worry more about things you can't change.

HOW CAN YOU BEAT EXAM STRESS?



Eat well

A quick fast food fix may look tempting when you are up late revising. However, your body and brain need proper fuel for revision. Eat fresh fruit and veg, swap chocolate snacks for high protein nuts, and try not to consume too much caffeine to ensure good quality sleep.

Treat yourself

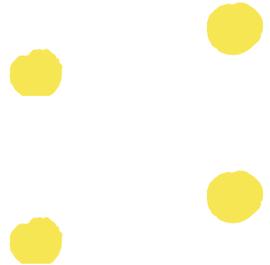
Make sure you plan in revision breaks to rest your brain. Treat yourself with something you enjoy; go for a walk or watch 20 minutes of your favourite TV show. It will motivate you to concentrate on your revision.

Exercise

It can seem like you don't have the time to exercise when you are revising, but it actually makes you more productive afterwards. It helps you to de-stress and releases feel-good endorphins. Try walking, going to the gym, or for a jog.

Recognise stress signals

If you are feeling stressed, take a break and talk to someone. If you feel yourself starting to panic, stop what you're doing and try a breathing technique; breathing slowly and deeply. Do this for a few minutes until you begin to feel calmer.



Remember, you have worked hard and you can't change anything after you have sat the exam.

Yes, it is great to do well in exams, but exams aren't the only thing that will help you succeed in life, equally important factors include your attitude, work ethic or ability to communicate well.

www.samh.org.uk

SAMH is the Scottish Association for Mental Health.

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