



# Motivation

## How can I deal with stress?

Stress can be a perfectly normal reaction to have when things like exams are worrying you: but it's important to learn to deal with this normal stress and put things into perspective. You should always remind yourself that it's temporary and things will get better.

### Eight ways to beat stress:

1. Talk to your friends about what's worrying you; you'll probably find you're not alone.
2. Get enough sleep, but don't overdo it as you'll feel groggy.
3. Even if you aren't hungry, eat small regular meals with plenty of water.
4. Make sure you take time out of studying to do something relaxing. You should spend at least 10 minutes of every hour to switch off.
5. Physical exercise such as sport or yoga is very good for stress because it will take your mind off what is worrying you. Yoga will also teach you relaxation and calming breathing techniques.
6. Take a deep breath. If you take a few slow deep breaths to calm your normal breathing it will help you feel more in control.
7. Plan your workload and don't let it pile up - that'll panic you more.
8. Treat yourself; make sure you create 'you' time where you go and do something that cheers you up. Finding time to look after yourself will help you cope with stress.

### Physical effects of stress:

- Racing heartbeat
- Breathlessness
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Panic attacks
- Loss of appetite

No matter what other people may say, exams are not the most important thing you will ever do in your life. Remember these points and hopefully they will help you to remain stress free...

Pass or fail, you are more than just a grade on a piece of paper  
If you do fail an exam, you can usually take it again

It's not the end of the world if you don't get the highest grade  
Tell yourself it is only a test, nothing more

Not everyone who is successful was great in exams!

### Top student tip

Make sure you reward yourself for completing your revision successfully or having a productive day. Appreciating your achievements is important otherwise you will find your self becoming demotivated. Treat yourself to an evening at the cinema, a nice dinner out or a shopping trip.



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## How can I stay motivated?

Your level of motivation will affect your success, especially in slow or difficult patches. It's likely that there will be times when you get bored, frustrated or anxious. You may feel you can't be bothered with a piece of work, or that you're struggling with to keep on top of your revision. You may even feel like giving up altogether.

### Set goals

Make tasks more manageable by breaking them down into mini-goals. Set yourself small, short-term goals so that you are able to have lots of small successes. In time these add up to greater achievements.

### Find support

Find someone who encourages you and makes you feel good about yourself. Talk to this person about your work, and the goals and ambitions you have.

### Celebrate successes

Set targets that are easy to meet – increase your chances of success. When you achieve a short-term goal (i.e. 2 hours of reading), reward yourself (i.e. half hour TV break and some chocolate).

Give yourself bigger rewards for completing whole tasks, to encourage yourself next time. Get other people involved too, giving you the rewards when you show them or can explain to them what you have done.

When you first sit down to work why don't you write down what it is you want to achieve by the end of the revision session. For example: "a better understanding of module 3", or 'ten coloured revision cards summarizing topic A.'. This will give you something to work toward and keep you focused.

### Top student tip

### Try it out

Attitude is very important when it comes to learning. Try to think of any difficulties you encounter as challenges. If there is something you have to learn which seems threatening, consider the ways in which it can also be an opportunity to do something new.



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## More stress management tips...

If you do not think the above will work here are a few quite simple tips and techniques to help relieve that exam and revision stress!

- **Go for a walk** – Take a break and get out in the open for a bit!
- **Talking** – It is good to get things off your chest by letting a friend or teacher know. This is especially true with parents. They may be pressuring you in the run up to exams and this could be doing you more harm than good. Tell them of your anxieties and they might be able to help, or at least will try and understand and get off your back!
- **Other people's nerves** – But sometimes talking to other people can make it even worse! Try to talk about something else or put a DVD and avoid very nervous people – it rubs off!
- **Don't cram** – good preparation prevents poor performance!
- **Positive thinking** – Go into an exam thinking that you know it all and that you are going to do really well!
- **Treat yourself** – Give yourself rewards when revising, like a TV break after an hour of reading or some chocolate. After you finish an exam, give yourself a treat too!
- **Music** – Use an iPod/Mp3 player etc and put some calm and relaxing onto it to listen to on the way to the exam and in your lunch breaks during revision. Or use your favourite songs when revising to trigger the answers in exams. Thinking of your favourite song will make you feel better and help you answer questions!
- **Hobbies** – Keeping doing other things that you are interested in will stop you getting bored of revision and give you a release from the stress! If you don't already have a hobby, get one! It will give you a balance to your work and a good outlet for the stress.
- **Priorities** – make a list! Helps you to see what is important, what your goals are and helps you to manage your time effectively!
- **Visualisation** – Use an item or image that you like to help calm you down when you are getting stressed – stop and take a few deep breaths while looking at a photo of you and your mates, for example. Also, try imagining yourself in the exam room, flying through the exam or opening the results envelop!
- **Breaks** – If you are one of those people who always forget to take a break then set an alarm to go off at certain times of the day. This will remind you to go have a cup of tea, have a bite to eat and some time off to absorb the info and relax!