Exam Stress

Taking exams can be one of the most stressful experiences in your life, particularly if you've had parents and teachers constantly reminding you about how important they are, and while some of your mates may seem to be able to handle the pressure, others will get anxious, agitated, bad-tempered and may even become ill or seriously depressed. But it really doesn't have to be like that. A lot of people find that the stress before exams is often worse than the actual exam. Here are some tips to help you get though it.

Exam Stress-Busting Tips:

Believe in yourself. If you prepare for the exams properly you should do fine, meaning that there is no need to worry excessively.

Don't try to be perfect. It's great to succeed and get the best results but keep things in balance. If you think that "anything less than A+ means I've failed" then you are creating mountains of unnecessary stress for yourself. Aim to do your best but recognise that none of us can be perfect all of the time.

Take steps to overcome problems. If you find you don't understand some of your study material, getting stressed won't help. Instead, take action to address the problem directly by seeing your course tutor/teacher or getting help from your class mates.

Don't keep things bottled up. Confiding in someone you trust and who will be supportive is a great way of alleviating stress and worry.

Keep things in perspective. The exams might seem like the most crucial thing right now, but in the grander scheme of your whole life they are only a small part.

The Revision Period

Leave plenty of time to revise so that you don't get into a situation of having to do last minute cramming. This approach will help to boost your confidence and reduce any pre-exam stress as you know you have prepared well.

Develop a timetable. Make sure you allow time for fun and relaxation so that you avoid burning out.

As soon as you notice your mind is losing concentration, take a short break. You will then come back to your revision refreshed.

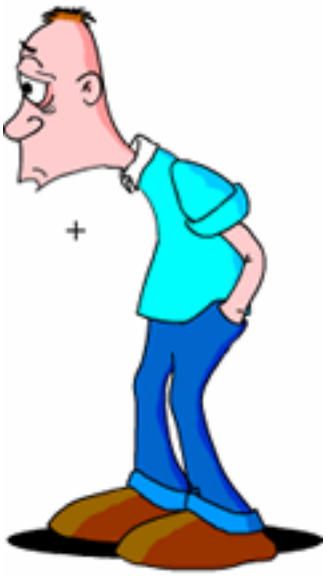
Don't drink too much coffee, tea or fizzy drinks; the caffeine will 'hype' you and make your thinking less clear. Eat healthily and regularly; your brain will benefit from the nutrients.

Regular moderate exercise will boost your energy, clear your mind and reduce any feelings of stress.

Tips for the Exam

Avoid panic. It's natural to feel some exam nerves prior to starting the exam, but getting excessively nervous is counterproductive as you will not be able to think as clearly.

The quickest and most effective way of eliminating feelings of stress and panic is to close your eyes and take several long, slow deep breaths. Breathing in this way calms your whole nervous system. Simultaneously you could give yourself some mental pep-talk by mentally repeating "I am calm and relaxed" or "I know I will do fine".



If your mind goes blank, don't panic! Panicking will just make it harder to recall information. Instead, focus on slow, deep breathing for about one minute. If you still can't remember the information then move on to another question and return to this question later.

After the exam don't spend endless time criticising yourself for where you think you went wrong. Congratulate yourself for the things you did right and then move on.

Best of Luck!!