



# Prepare

to Perform

## STUDENT BOOKLET

Name:

Tutor:

# STAYING CALM, FEELING GOOD, BEING EFFECTIVE

This booklet is designed to help you develop strategies to cope with the exam period so you are fully prepared to perform at your best.

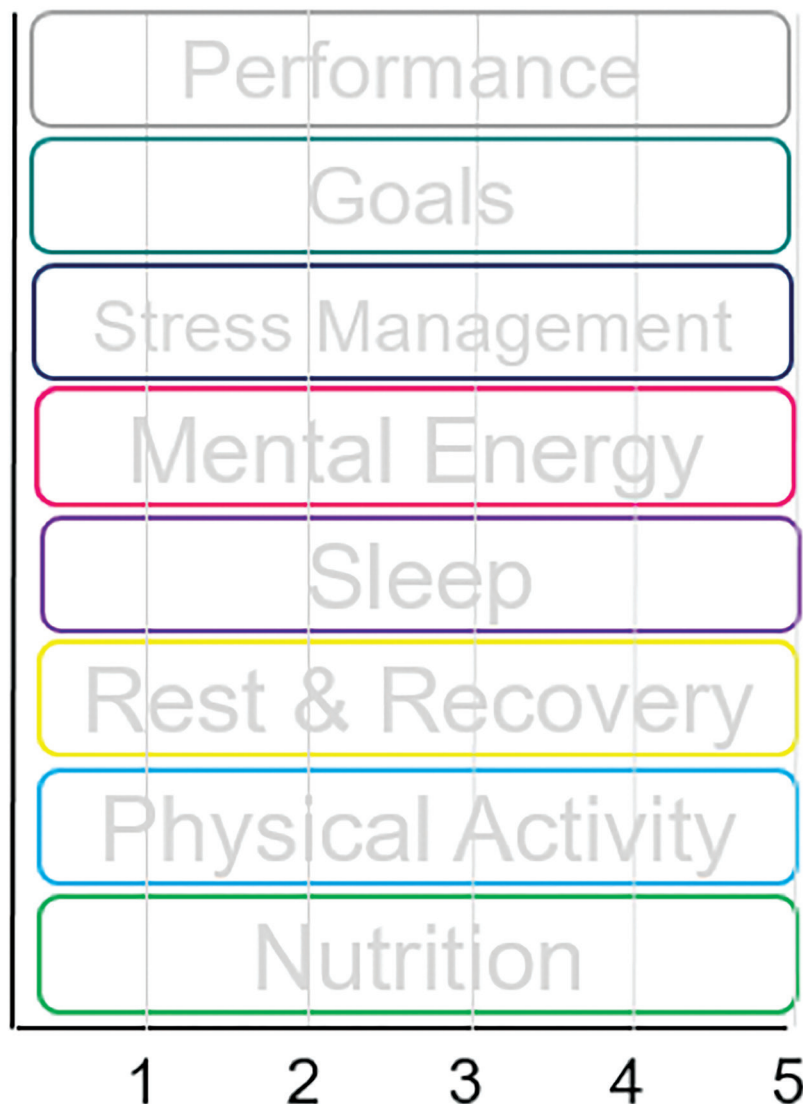
Managing a busy life when you are studying can be challenging but there are many areas which you can control to help you perform better when it comes to exam time. This booklet will explain each area and allow you to focus, set yourself a plan and work towards being prepared in the best possible way.

Making time for each area can have an impact on your energy levels and both your physical and mental wellbeing.

## HOW PERFORMANCE READY ARE YOU?

Complete the chart below by colouring in the areas in each section to see where you currently are for each area. 1 is the lowest and means you really need to improve in this area. 5 means you are really happy and feel like you are doing everything you can to perform at your best.

## Power to Perform



# HOW READY ARE YOU TO PERFORM?

All hard work is represented in a performance, whether it's an athlete competing at the biggest event of their career, or a student taking an exam. There are so many things that influence a performance and in order to be the best we can be, many of these things have to be worked on.

**What performance are you looking to achieve?**

**How ready are you to perform?**

Rate yourself out of 10

**What do you need to do to be more ready?**

**How can you be Prepared to Perform?**

# WE CAN ALL GROW

## GROWTH MINDSET

Be the best you can be – Preparing to Perform for when you need to Perform.

Can you have a “can do” mindset - “I love a challenge”.

We all have the ability to be a bit better than we are now, so what do you need to prepare to perform?

- Know what you want – goals.
- Want/desire to achieve it – motivation.
- Work hard at the right things – focus.
- Always believe you can achieve it – belief.

Performance also includes the ability to recognise and take the opportunities that come your way. Do you see them and embrace them as an opportunity, or do you see challenge?

### Who or what can support you?

Friends

Family

Teachers

Revision Guide

Resources

Apps

What other opportunities could you access?

How can you go about accessing these opportunities?

# PERFORMANCE GOALS

In order to achieve our Outcome Goals we need to know what we need to do to be successful. Performance goals are measurable and sometimes SMART goals.

## HOW TO SET YOURSELF SOME GOALS:

1. Be realistic and specific - specify when and what you will do. This will increase your chances of getting it done.
2. Break each goal into simple, digestible parts. The easier you make it to complete each step of the goal, the more likely it is that you will eventually achieve it.
3. Each goal must have a target time frame. Make a note of them on your daily or weekly planner and on your overall revision plan.
4. Write down your goals on a piece of paper and keep them close by. It's important that you make a record of them; it will keep you focused and remind you of what still has to be done. Read the list every day to keep you aware of them and reinforce them in your mind.
5. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Start off with a relatively small number of goals and gradually increase their number and size as you become more effective at completing them.

**If you are to achieve your outcome goal what do you need to deliver in your performance?**

E.g. achieving 65% in my biology exam

E.g. getting 8 hours sleep a night

**Marginal Gains** (made famous through GB Cycling) – it is important to identify and work on the areas that are going to have the biggest impact on your performance.

Choose your top 10 areas from both your strengths and areas to develop which you are going to spend your time and energy on.

My top 10

**How to stick to your goals:**

- Review your goals regularly.
- Measure and assess your progress.
- Make changes if they are needed. Be honest with yourself.
- Keep your goals visible - if they are out of sight, then they may be out of mind.



Outline your revision plan by setting yourself goals to achieve.



Keep track of what you have achieved. Create a timeline so you keep on track.



Define what tasks you need to complete in order to achieve your goals. Tick off complete tasks.

Use your outcome, performance and process goals to start thinking about your daily priorities. Use the daily planner to ensure you are working towards your goals. The aim is for you to gain 10 points every day by completing all your micro goals identified earlier.

# PLANNING TO PERFORM

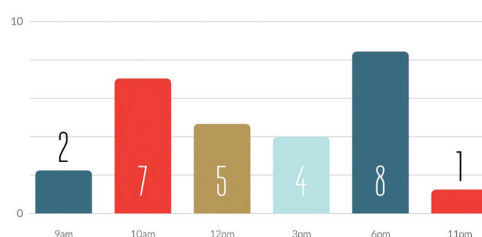
## HOW TO APPROACH THE EXAM PERIOD:

Time management and planning is essential to make sure you can realistically keep on track of your work, revision and ultimately your health and wellbeing.

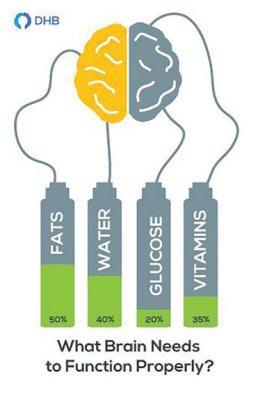
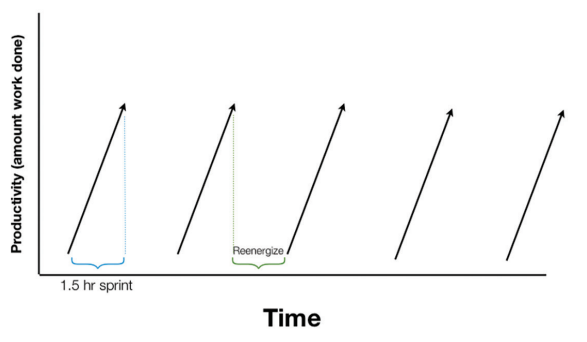
We all have our own internal body clock called a circadian rhythm. All of our physical, mental and behavioural changes follow a 24-hour cycle. There are times when we:

- Have natural energy levels
- When you are 'on fire' – a good time to tackle difficult tasks
- When you are lethargic – a good time to take a break or do a different task.

## DAILY ENERGY LEVELS



Your brain uses up more glucose than any other bodily activity. Typically you will have spent most of it after 45-90 minutes. Productive people work smarter and not harder!

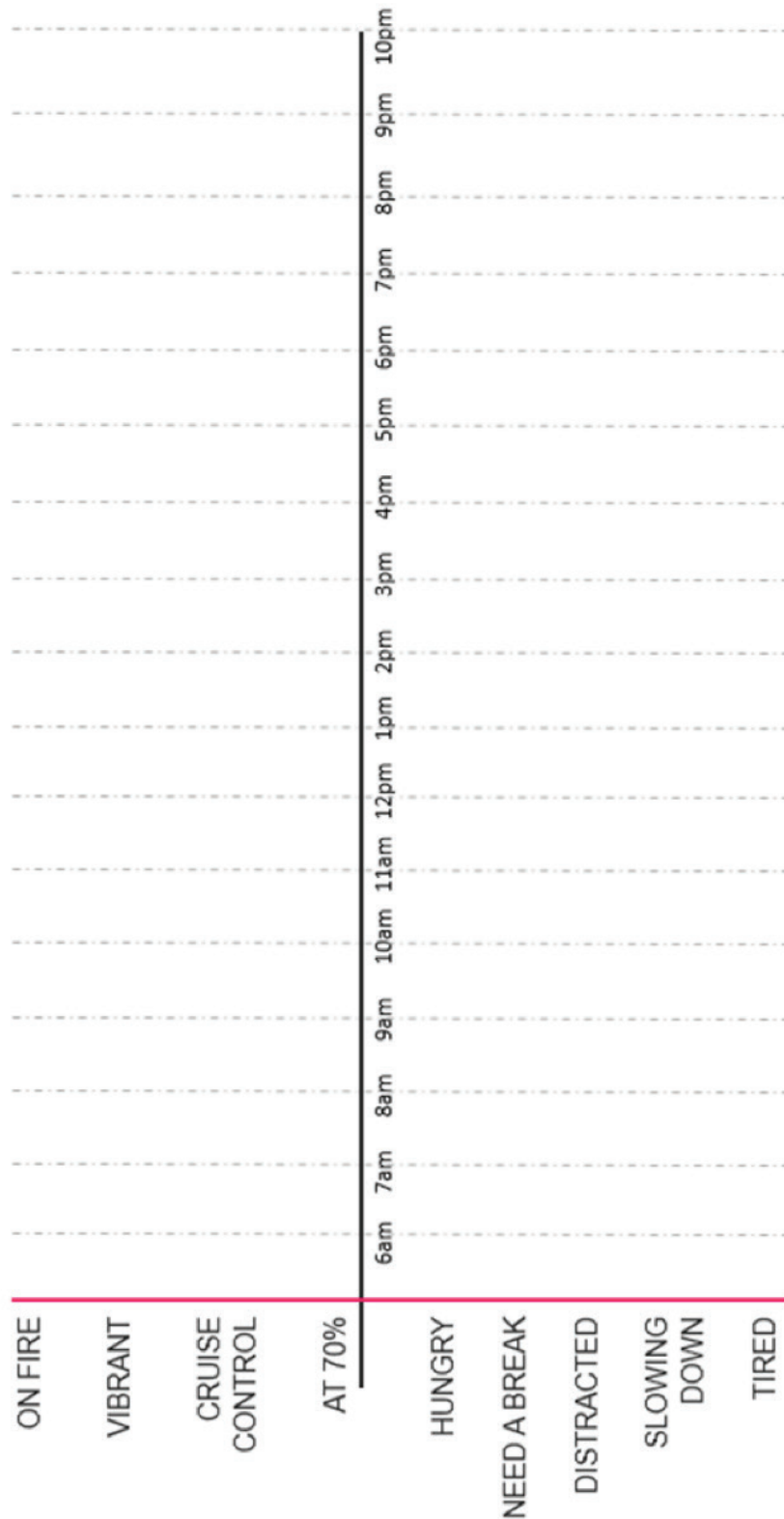


## TOP TIPS FOR PLANNING TO PERFORM:

- Plan out your revision timetable so that you can track and monitor your progress. Make sure you allow time for fun and relaxation so that you avoid burning out.
- Leave plenty of time to revise. Giving yourself adequate time will help to boost your confidence and reduce any pre-exam stress as you know you have prepared well.
- During revision aim to work in 45 to 90 minute intervals.
- Track your natural energy levels throughout the day so you know when to tackle harder tasks.
- Take a break as soon as you notice your mind is losing concentration. You will then come back to your revision refreshed. Get up and go for a walk or have a healthy snack.
- Experiment with alternative revision techniques so that revision is more fun and your motivation to study is high.
- Do something completely different to recharge yourself during your exam periods.
- Plan to reward yourself for your hard work after an exam. Do something you enjoy that makes you feel good such as going for a walk, going out for dinner and seeing friends. It's important that you let the stress of the exam go if you have more exams to sit over the next few days or weeks.

# YOUR IDEAL WORK SCHEDULE

Plot your day from waking up to going to sleep in hourly blocks and identify when you are naturally one of the following:





# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

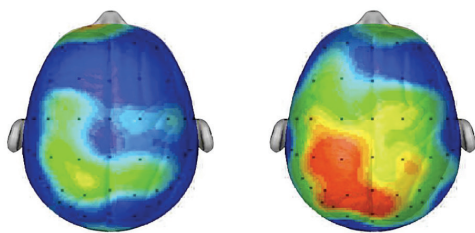
## REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPACTS THE BRAIN, IT...

- Boosts your memory
- Improves your concentration
- Helps reduce stress
- Lengthens attention span

PHYSICALLY  
ACTIVE  
STUDENTS HAVE  
MORE ACTIVE  
BRAINS

YOUR BRAIN  
FUNCTIONS WELL  
AFTER EXERCISE  
SO TRY CARRYING  
OUT SOME REVISION  
AFTERWARDS.

Composite of 20 student brains taking the same test



After sitting quietly

After 20 minute walk

Red areas are very active; Blue areas are least active

You should be aiming to do 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Ideally focus on these three areas:

- Cardiovascular - benefits your heart, circulatory system and lungs.
- Strength and muscle endurance - benefits you by making you stronger and/or giving you better endurance, so you can do things longer.
- Flexibility - aimed at giving you greater range of motion in joints and more suppleness in your body.

You don't need to complete 60 minutes a day all at once so think about how this could be broken down into smaller chunks such as:

10 min walk to school

10 min walk at lunch time

30 min after school sports club/gym/swim

10 min stretching/flexibility

Use the following tips to help you plan out how you can keep active on a daily basis:

### FIT TIPS:

1. Plan your weekly workouts.
2. Have a morning stretching routine - e.g. yoga poses, meditation, seated stretching exercises.
3. Walk or be active to or from school.
4. Get some fresh air at break and lunch times.
5. Carry out some exercises whilst sitting down - e.g. arm stretches, leg lifts, shoulder rolls etc.
6. Carry out strength exercises at least twice a week such as bicep curls, squats, press ups, sit ups or lunges etc.
7. Carry out housework or tidy your bedroom.
8. Push yourself to work harder each time.
9. Plan to do 30 minutes of cardio exercise at least three days a week.
10. Do something you enjoy so you will keep doing it and stay motivated!

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Weekly Fitness Schedule – plan out your weekly workouts using the table below.

Time / Duration	Activity Type & Details
<b>Goals &amp; Notes</b>	

## NUTRITION

### – POWER YOURSELF TO PERFORM

You need to fuel your body with the right foods at the right times to energise your system, improve your alertness and sustain you through long exams. The wrong food choices can make you feel sluggish, jittery, burned out and crash your energy levels. Exams are like mental marathons so endurance is the key. Use the following nutrition tips to help you perform at your best on exam day.

#### P – Preparation

Start the day with a nutritious breakfast. Your brain needs the energy from food to work efficiently. You need to keep your mental focus on your exam and not on your hunger. The best breakfasts should include slow-release carbohydrates, such as porridge oats, whole grain bread or low-sugar muesli, as these provide slow-release energy. Add a protein food, such as milk, 0% fat yoghurt or eggs, to keep you feeling full for longer, you can also add a banana, berries or nuts and seeds. If you really cannot stomach food, then try having a healthy smoothie.



#### E – Energy Levels

Eat at regular times throughout the day and avoid high sugary foods such as pastries, sweets, caffeine and fizzy drinks. These will give you energy highs and crashes. The aim is to keep your blood sugars and energy levels stable by eating a combination of wholegrain carbohydrates, proteins and healthy fats. Example foods for lunch include wholegrain sandwich, jacket or sweet potatoes with tuna, baked beans or a protein filling. Wholegrain rice or pasta mixed with protein. Wholemeal roll/wrap with cold meat, fish, egg, cheese or peanut butter and salad. Omelette with cheese, ham, mushrooms or tomatoes.

#### R – Re-hydrate

Drink a glass of water ideally with lemon at the start of the day. Carry a bottle of water around with you and take it into the exam. Limit your caffeine, fizzy or sugary drinks as this will lead to energy highs and lows. Dehydration can cause your brain to shut down, not work effectively and give you headaches. Aim to drink at least 2 litres of water every day to help you think faster, keep focused and give your brain energy to function.

#### F – Focus Fuels

Snack on brain boosting foods throughout the day such as fresh and dried fruit, nuts and seeds. Snacks such as peanut butter on rice cakes or cottage cheese on celery sticks, cheese and oat cakes or crackers, toast and marmite or peanut butter, non-sugary popcorn, 0% fat yogurt, raw vegetables – carrots, avocado, peppers, tomatoes or a small amount of dark chocolate are all good options.

#### O – Omega 3s

Omega 3 has been shown to help brain function and increases concentration. It also helps to improve your immune system when your body and mind are stressed. The best source of Omega 3 is oily fish such as mackerel, sardines, salmon and trout. A great lunch would be fish on wholemeal toast. Other foods include walnuts, chia seeds, spinach and eggs. You could even take a supplement of cod liver oil tablets.

# REST AND RECOVERY

Taking a break makes a big difference to our day to day stress management. Without a break, we risk burnout so book things in your diary which are relaxing and time-out from the norm.

We all need something to take our minds off the day to day. Good outlets are activities that completely engage our bodies and minds. These are neurologically important activities that give our brain a chance to get back to neutral, to re-boot and re-charge.

## THE POWER OF REST:

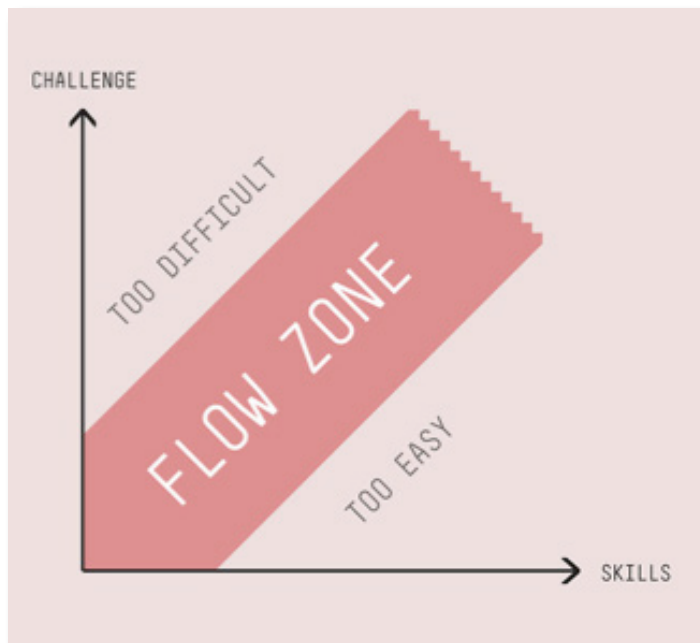
- Regeneration of our bodies
- Required for life
- Helps us survive
- Renew and restore cells
- Keeps us functioning well
- Rebuild and revive ourselves
- Productivity and concentration
- Efficiency at school or work
- For growth and development
- To replenish our muscles, bones, tissues and cells



## GET YOURSELF IN THE 'FLOW'

Flow experiences can occur in different ways for different people. These are moments in which your mind becomes so entirely absorbed in the activity that you "forget yourself" and begin to act effortlessly.

You must see the activities as voluntary, enjoyable (intrinsically motivating), and it must require skill and be challenging (but not too challenging) with clear goals towards success.



### How to stick to your goals:

- Drawing
- Writing
- Reading
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Learning a new skill
- Mindfulness
- Sport
- Playing an instrument
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Dancing
- Running
- Painting

To be more productive, healthy and creative, we need to make break-taking a regular practice.

Day	Breakfast session	School Day	7 <sup>th</sup> Session	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm
Monday									
Tuesday									
Wednesday									
Thursday									
Friday									
Saturday									
Sunday									

1<sup>st</sup>: Shade in your sleep, eating and exercise blocks (Power to perform) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Shade in the blocks to cover any jobs 3<sup>rd</sup>: Shade in the blocks that cover any activities that you are committed to on a regular basis. 4<sup>th</sup>: Now you must identify the time for revision (including 7<sup>th</sup> sessions) 5<sup>th</sup>: Leave the time that is left blank. This is your FREE time that can be spent as you wish/reward time.

# SLEEP

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP?

- Reduced decision-making skills
- Poorer memory
- Reduced concentration
- Reduced work efficiency
- Shortened attention span
- Reduced alertness
- Reduced awareness of the environment and situation
- Slower than normal reaction time



Here are some top tips for getting a better night's sleep. The key is to make some small changes to your sleep routine and give it some time to notice a difference in your sleep habits.

### TOP TIPS

1. **CONSISTENCY:** Keep a relatively consistent bedtime and wake time. Staying up late and sleeping in on weekends can disrupt your routine during the week.
2. **WORK:** Complete your revision or work by a certain time.
3. **RELAXATION/ROUTINE:** Develop a pre-bed routine that is relaxing and familiar. Television, work, computer use, movies and deep/stressful discussions late at night can disrupt sleep.
4. **UNPLUG:** Shut off all electronics at least 30 mins before you go to sleep.
5. **STIMULANTS:** Eliminate stimulants like caffeine and sugar, especially later in the day.
6. **EXERCISE:** Incorporate this daily but not too close to bedtime.
7. **FULLNESS:** Eating a dinner that makes you overly full can disturb sleep.
8. **THOUGHTS:** Write them all down before you go to bed so you have a clear mind.

The perfect night's sleep starts long before you get into bed. Use this example sleep routine to help you plan your own.

### HOURS BEFORE BED ▶



# SLEEP – MY PERSONAL SLEEP ROUTINE

**Your personal sleep routine:** plan out a perfect evening to help you get the best possible night's sleep. Think about two different routines that fit in with your weekly schedule and commitments.

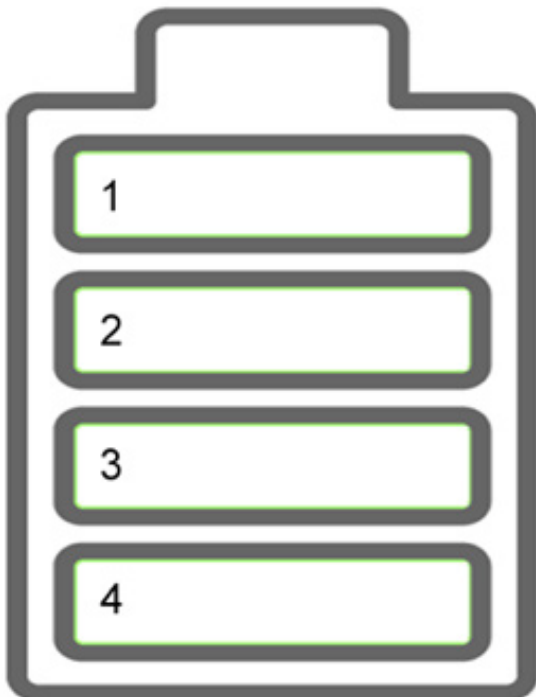
ROUTINE 1:

5 pm 11 pm

ROUTINE 2:

5 pm 11 pm

Write down your top 4 ways that you are going to use to recharge yourself.



1

2

3

4

#### TOP TIPS TO RECHARGE:

- Turn your phone off!
- Have some alone time
- Try a new hobby
- Get some fresh air
- Go for a walk
- Have a bath
- Try some yoga or stretching
- Do a 5 minute meditation
- Listen to music
- Read a book
- Watch a feel good film

# STRESS MANAGEMENT

STRESS IS A STATE OF MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL STRAIN OR TENSION RESULTING FROM ADVERSE OR DEMANDING CIRCUMSTANCES.

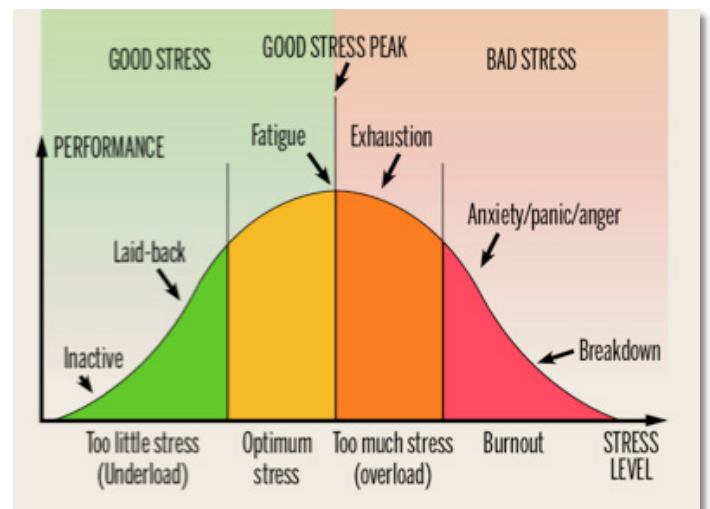
## WHY SHOULD YOU MANAGE YOUR STRESS LEVELS?

Everyone gets stressed during exams but it's important not to let it get out of control. Some stress can be a good thing as it motivates us to work hard, can make you feel mentally alert and ready to tackle exam challenges. However, if stress levels get out of hand, it can stop us from learning and performing at our best, so it's important to address your stress to keep it under control.

You'll be less stressed if you've got an idea of how the lead-up to your exams is going to look, so plan what you're going to study and when, and stick it up on the wall. Break it down into manageable chunks and start working through it at the rate you planned.

## WHAT IS EXAM ANXIETY?

- Butterflies in your stomach
- Headaches, tiredness or shakiness
- Excessive worry about upcoming exams
- Exam fear
- Apprehension about the consequences
- Difficulty concentrating
- Inability to recall information
- Panic attacks or rapid breathing



## MANAGING YOUR STRESS LEVELS:

It is completely possible to manage some of the stress that's brought on by exams if you use different strategies. The four main areas which can contribute to your exam stress / anxiety are:

### 1. LIFESTYLE FACTORS

- inadequate rest
- poor nutrition
- too many stimulants
- insufficient exercise
- not scheduling available time
- not prioritising commitments

### 2. INFORMATION NEEDS

- strategies for exam-taking
- exam information, dates and exam locations
- knowledge of how to apply anxiety reduction techniques

### 3. PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

- feeling little or no control
- negative thinking and self-criticism
- irrational thinking about exams and outcomes
- pressuring yourself

### 4. POOR STUDYING STYLES

- Inefficient: inconsistent content coverage; trying to memorise the textbook; binge studying; all-night studying before exams
- Ineffective: reading without understanding; cannot recall the material; not making revision notes; not revising

If you're finding things tough, ask for help.



# STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

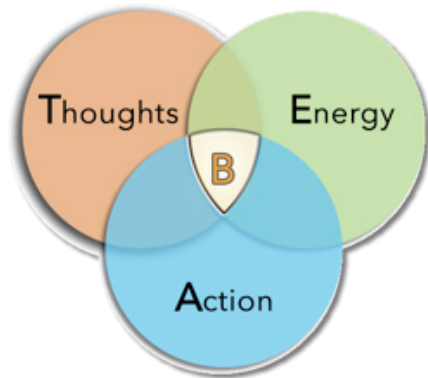
USE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES TO HELP MANAGE YOUR STRESS LEVELS:

## POSITIVE SELF-TALK - IT'S AS SIMPLE AS A-B-C:

**A = Activating Event** - While taking a difficult test you begin to feel physically tense.

**B = Belief** - "I know I can do this, I will do some deep breaths to re-focus myself and feel more relaxed."

**C = Consequences** - You calm yourself down, feel a lot better and feel able to complete the test.



**B = Best You Can Be**

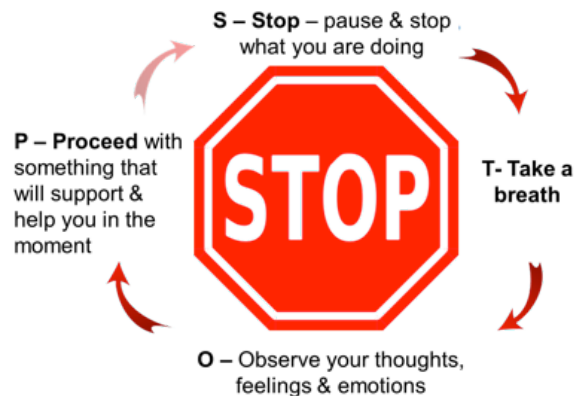
**A** - Plan in advance what you will do when the activating event occurs.

**B** - Develop a set of positive or rational self-statements which you can practice.

**C** - You will help calm yourself down and re-divert your energy to being more positive.

## HOW TO CALM DOWN IN UNDER A MINUTE

- Breathe in through your nose and on a slow count of three.
- Push your stomach out as you breathe in.
- Breathe out through your mouth on a slow count of six.
- Repeat two more times



## THE MINDFUL UNPLUG

- Try to unplug from technology everyday
- Switch off from technology at least 30 mins to 1 hr before going to sleep
- Appreciate the world around you and what you are doing rather than being governed by your phone
- Put your phone away and on silent while you are concentrating on tasks / revision / homework
- Learn to have the control to not be obsessed with your phone!
- Choose some time each day and week to switch off and unplug from technology

# STRESS MANAGEMENT

## – STRESS BUSTING PLAN

1. Planning and priorities – write down a list of things you need to do to be fully prepared for the exam period – number them in order of priority.
2. Tackling the problems – you can only control the controllables. Write down everything you can control and focus on to help you with the exam period and try to let go of the things you can't control.
3. Self-statements – write down all the statements you could use to help you when you are thinking negatively prior or during an exam.
4. Dealing with your emotions – identify any stressful situations you may face and write down a couple of strategies which you can do to help you deal with that situation better.

**1. Planning and priorities :**

**2. Things I can control:**

**Things I can't control:**

**3. Self-statements:**

**4. Dealing with your emotions**

**Stressful situations:**

**Strategy:**

# RE-FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE

## Be calm, confident and focused

Develop a winning mindset and perform at your best whilst under pressure. To achieve peak performance and succeed, mental preparation is necessary.

**YOUR OUTCOME GOAL IS THERE TO MOTIVATE YOU, TRY TO FOCUS ON THE PROCESS WHEN YOU ARE PERFORMING.**

**USE PERFORMANCE GOALS TO CHECK YOU ARE ON TARGET TO ACHIEVE YOUR OUTCOME GOAL.**

**FOCUS ON YOUR PROCESS GOALS DURING REVISION AND EXAMS.**

### BELIEF

We achieve so much in our lives but all too often the moment passes and the power of the achievement is lost too. Over the next few weeks and through your exams keep a Belief List.

Your Belief List includes things you have achieved, things you are proud of, things that make you feel good. Nothing is wrong and you can make it as long as you want!

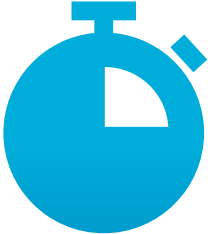
**BELIEF LIST**

- Great relationship with my family
- 74% on past paper
- Personal Best in High Jump

**BELIEF LIST**

Remember to include things that make you feel good before going into an exam. Can this be the last thing you look at before your exam?

Try to look at your list often, every day, if you are having a wobble or just need a lift have a look and remind yourself just how good you are.

PiXL   
**Prepare**  
to Perform