

Stressed? Talk about it!

Think about the people you know who will listen to you and talk to them. Listeners can be friends, family, teachers or others.

Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of maturity and strength, to realise when you are having difficulties and to feel confident enough to share those difficulties with others.

Take time out to have fun

During the revision period make sure you give yourself some time to do the things you enjoy. Do the things that relax you and take your mind off your studies.

Do some exercise

One of the best ways of dealing with stress is to exercise. It will relax and calm your muscles as well as helping to clear your mind.

Exercise provides a way of releasing a great deal of muscle tension which stress produces.

Think positively

Thinking you may fail drains away your confidence, makes you worry more and makes you less enthusiastic about working hard.

Do not tell yourself things like "I'm useless at this subject" or "I haven't got enough time to revise properly". Replace this unhelpful thinking with statements like "This subject is difficult but I have had difficult subjects before and understood them" or "I can get my revision done in time when I plan a proper revision timetable".

Relax your muscles

Start by tensing and then relaxing the muscles around the head, face, neck and shoulders. Then work down your body tensing and relaxing your arms, hands, chest, back, stomach, hips, legs and feet.

Eat well.

Eating well reduces the overall stress on the body and can make you feel good about yourself. Try eating a variety of foods.

Use breathing techniques

Here is a step-by-step approach to helping you relax:

1. Sit comfortably and close your eyes.
2. Breathe in slowly through your nose to the count of ten.
3. Hold this breath while you count to ten again.
4. Now let out your breath while you count to ten once more.
5. Repeat this three times.

You can use this technique at any time you feel nervous, such as on examination days.

Use mental imagery

Mental imagery is a bit like a daydream and can help you relax your mind.

Start by getting yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and start to breathe deeply, concentrating all the time on your breathing.

Now form a picture in your mind of a pleasant scene such as a tropical island, a valley, a woodland area. Try to include smells and sounds.

Explore the scene and enjoy the surroundings. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.