

Managing Exam Stress – Six Tips for Success

Stress should be a powerful driving force, not an obstacle.
-Bill Phillips, fitness expert-

1. Avoid stressful people.

Stress actually is contagious. During exam week, resist the urge to have a study session with a classmate who is known for complaining about failing grades or not returning next semester. Identify a classmate who is doing well in school and establish a peer-peer relationship.

2. Eat healthy and exercise.

This seems like a no-brainer, but it's a wonder how many people forget it. Skip the sugar, which will make you crash, and go for snacks like granola bars, healthy cereal or fruits and veggies to keep your blood sugar stable. If you're studying for a long period of time, eat some protein too. Also, try to get some form of exercise. Even a 10 minute walk will leave you calmer and more focused.

3. Just say NO.

I don't mean to drugs, although I'm not recommending them or anything. What you need to say no to are the people who want to take up your time. Everyone has that one friend who calls frequently to complain about everything that's wrong with his or her life. You'll probably be tempted to blow off studying just to hear about the latest "drama." Resist the urge. Say no to the distractions and be selfish as you prepare for exam. You want a good GPA, right?

4. Force yourself to take breaks.

For every hour or so that you work, take a 10 or 15 minute break. Let yourself do whatever you want (check Facebook, send an email offer support to a fellow classmate) for those 10-15 minutes, then start working again. This gives your brain a little rest and will help keep you more focused when you are actually doing work.

5. Visualize a positive outcome.

Imagine yourself taking the test and feeling confident that you know all the information. Picture getting all of the answers right, and focus on how relaxed you feel. Then picture the A on your test paper. When you imagine a happy ending, that's often what happens, because you make the decisions that lead to it without even realizing.

6. If you've studied all you can, get up your confidence!

When test-time rolls around, it's time to get yourself into confidence mode. You've prepared as much as you could, and now it's time to ace the test. The tip here is to do whatever works to convince yourself you are going to do really well. Again, I know this tip sounds a little crazy but you just have to try it for yourself. I think you'll like the results.