



Exam self-care

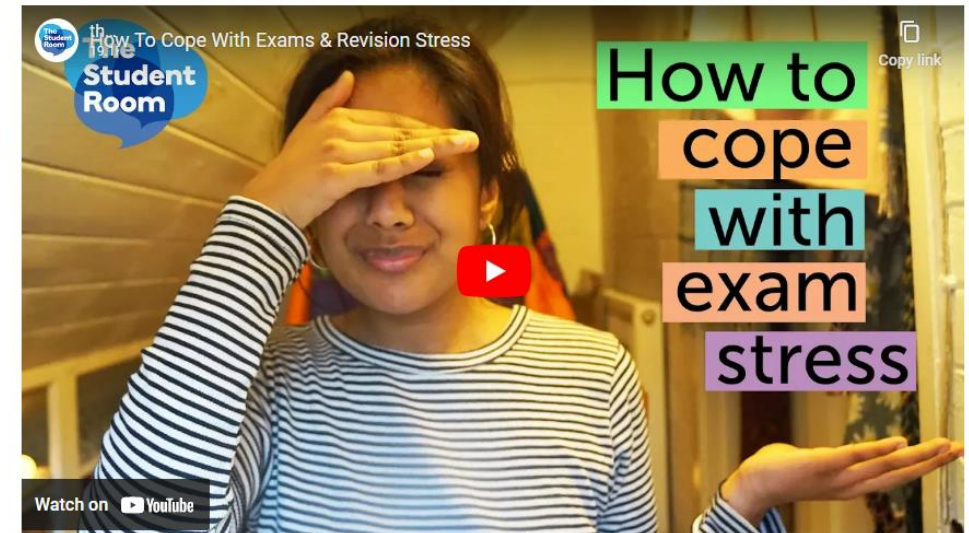
Coping with the exam season

Many of the tips in this presentation have been taken from Young Minds and the Anna Freud Centre



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

- If you're stressed with exams, revision can be a form of self-care, because it can make you feel more in control of your exam stress or anxiety, and make you feel better prepared to get the grade that you are hoping for.
- It's important that revision is balanced with other activities, so that your mind doesn't become too over-worked. A good way of achieving this balance is by making a revision timetable, and allocating yourself time for treats or breaks regularly. You could also start a study group with some friends, so that you have people to talk to or keep your spirits up if you feel worn out. That is also a great way to pool your resources and help each other out, for example, your friend may be able to help you with a subject you struggle with, or vice versa.



<https://www.annafreud.org/>



Getting a job



Unsupported online,
computer or app-
based CBT



Drama



Letting off steam



Developing a
balanced sense of
self

The website suggests many ways to deal with stress



Pilates



Crafting



Mindfulness



Rewards



Email support



Learning a language



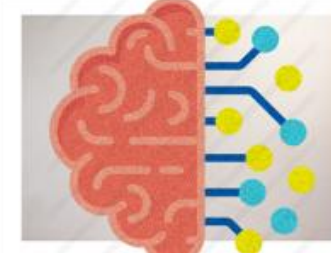
Spending time with
animals / pets



Boardgames



Self-talk



Psychoeducation

9 Ways to Beat Revision Stress

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk



Do the actual work – revise!



When really stressed, talk to someone about it



Get some fresh air each day



Stick to regular meal times



Do something to switch off an hour before bed



Don't dwell on worst case scenarios



A good sleep the night before is better than last minute cramming



Once you've done the exam, move on to the next one



Don't aim for perfection – it's a myth and doesn't exist

1. Which of these do you have in place?
2. Which is most useful to you?
3. Which habit could you try to adopt?

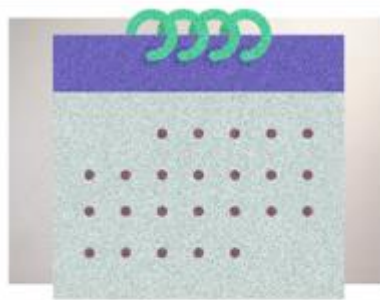
Healthy Balance

No one can revise 24 hours a day, nor is this healthy. Sleep is an important part of your revision and the NHS states you need 8-10 hours. Skipping sleep makes you forgetful and stressed.

It's also important to keep up healthy habits such as spending time with friends and family, spending time outside and taking some exercise.



Spending time in nature



Organise your day



Physical exercise



Spending time with supportive people



Letting off steam

7 Things to Think About the Night Before an Exam

by @Inner_Drive
www.innerdrive.co.uk

1 POSITIVE IMAGERY
Spend some time visualising a positive exam experience. This will increase your confidence, help with nerves and enhance your mood.

2 YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE
Think about a previous good performance. What helped you do well that time and how will you apply that tomorrow?

3 YOUR PREPARATION
Boost your confidence by reminding yourself of how well you have prepared and how much revision you have done.

4 FOCUS ON YOU
Focus on yourself and don't compare yourself to others as this will make you feel stressed. Instead, focus on what you can control.

5 THE CHALLENGE
If you see the exam as a threat, it will make you stressed. View the exam as an opportunity or as a challenge. This will make you feel better.

6 OVERCOMING SETBACKS
Remind yourself how you overcame previous setbacks. This will help you deal with future challenges and build mental resilience.

7 A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP
A good night's sleep helps improve creativity, problem solving, concentration and memory. This is more important than last minute cramming.

Positive Imagery –Picturing yourself doing well has been found to be more effective at enhancing mood and reducing anxiety than telling yourself you will do well. Thinking positively for a few minutes the evening before an exam will help boost your mood.

Remember Your Previous Best – Thinking about previous positive experiences will help improve confidence. Students should remind themselves of a successful exam to help them feel more confident about an upcoming one.

Remind Yourself Of Your Preparation Getting students to remind themselves of the preparation work they have put in will increase feelings of confidence and control in the build-up to the exam.

Focus On Yourself and Don't Compare to Others –. Reminding themselves of what they can do will help them to feel more confident in their ability to perform.

How You Have Overcome Setbacks – Research into mental resilience of Olympic champions has shown how overcoming setbacks has helped them deal with future challenges. Encourage students to think back to previous setbacks that they have had and what was successful in helping them overcome these.

See the Exam as a Challenge, not a Threat –reframe the exam as an opportunity to succeed.

Get a Good Night's Sleep –Getting a good night's sleep will help students by improving their memory and concentration.

Studies have shown that eating a typical breakfast of cereal, made up of complex carbohydrates, helps improve memory and concentration over the course of the morning.

On the morning of your exam, think about who makes you feel calm and confident and actively seek them out. Avoid spending the time before your exam surrounded by people (friends or otherwise) who are particularly negative, competitive or who stress you out.

Legendary American football coach Bill Walsh wrote a great book, The Score Takes Care of Itself, in which he details his leadership philosophy. His approach was to focus on executing a game strategy and not worry about the goal tally. If you do this, he says, the result will often take care of itself. The same is true during exams. Focus less on what grade you might get, and more on executing your exam strategy. This might mean the amount of time you should spend per question, reading each question first, writing five minutes of rough notes before answering the long question or any other technique. If in doubt what your exam tactic should be, ask your teacher.



6 Tips for the Morning of an Exam

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

Tip 1:  Eat breakfast as this will help fuel your brain

Tip 2:  Arrive at school with plenty of time

Tip 3:  Avoid people who stress you out

Tip 4:  Remind yourself of all the hard work and preparation you have put in

Tip 5:  Feeling nervous? Pause for a minute and take some deep breaths

Tip 6:  Remind yourself of your exam strategy



Exam self-care

The Charity Young Minds recommends the following tips for Exam Self Care – looking after yourself so you keep exams in perspective.

Five minutes

- Try a grounding exercise. Grab a (non-academic!) book or sheet of paper and count how many letters there are on the page, or count how many blue things you can see in the room.
- These types of exercises help to reduce [anxiety](#) by focusing your brain on a specific task that is unrelated to your work.
- Another grounding exercise is the 54321 trick. You need to find:
 - 5 things you can see
 - 4 things you can touch
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you can smell/taste
 - 1 good thing about yourself

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/exam-self-care/>

Mistakes to avoid 1

- ***Cramming***
- Many students rely on cramming in hours of revision the day before an exam in a last ditch attempt to try and prepare themselves. However, cramming should not be relied upon; and whilst it might make students feel as though they are learning more, this is an illusion. Instead, cramming can make students feel stressed, an emotion which is not ideal for exam preparation.

Mistake to Avoid 2

- ***Re-reading***
- [Recent research found](#) that 84% of students re-read their notes when revising, whilst 55% claimed this was their number one strategy. Such results make for worrying reading, as countless studies have proven the [ineffectiveness of re-reading](#), showing that when students employ this strategy they simply skim read the text. This means that the information is neither considered nor processed, and does not become embedded in the long term memory.

Mistake to avoid 3

- ***Distractions***

- Multi-tasking is a myth. Revising with your phone next to you just doesn't lead to better learning. Research has found that simply having a mobile phone out whilst revising causes a decrease in concentration and [a reduction of 20% in performance](#). Similarly, revising with music on can distract students, with recent research showing that [a quiet environment is preferable](#) and leads to an exam performance that is 60% better than those who revise whilst listening to music with lyrics.

Strengthening the Student ToolBox – revision strategies



Revision strategy of the week



Strategy 1: Elaborative interrogation

When you answer a question, develop your answer by thinking about 'why?' For example:

- In science, increasing the temperature can increase the rate of a chemical reaction....why?
- In geography, the leisure industry in British seaside towns like Porthcawl in South Wales has deteriorated in the last 4 decades....why?
- In history, the 1929 American stock exchange collapsed. This supported Hitler's rise to power....why?

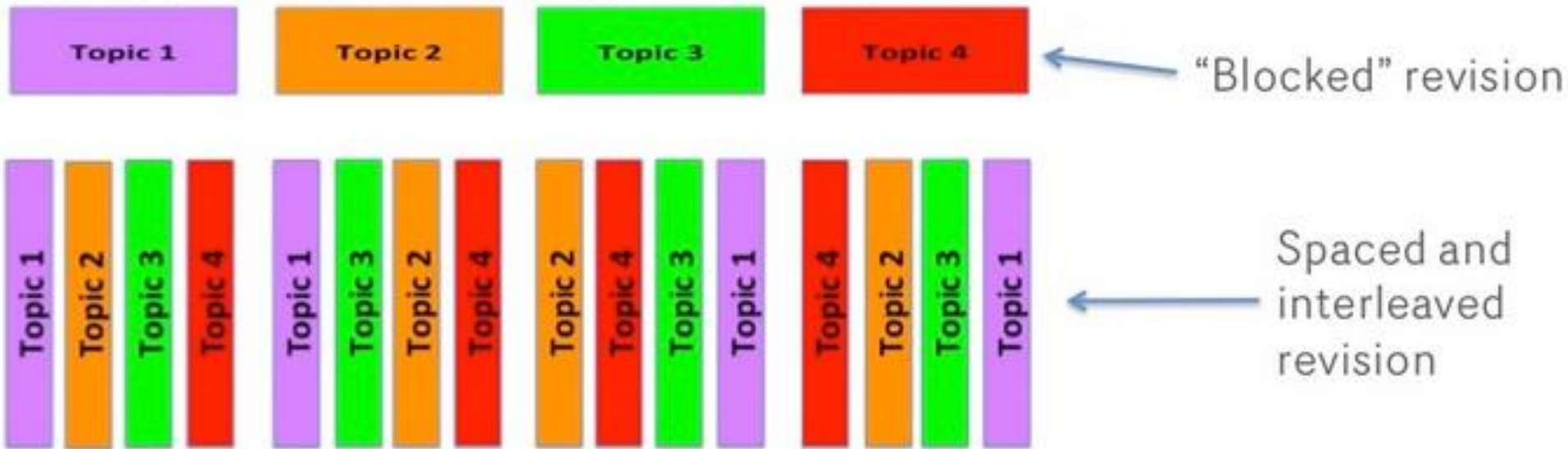
Revision strategy of the week



Strategy 2: Spacing and Interleaving

“Blocking” your revision – focusing on one topic for a long time – is less efficient than “spacing” it into shorter chunks.

“Interleaving” (mixing up) these shorter chunks of revision is even more effective.



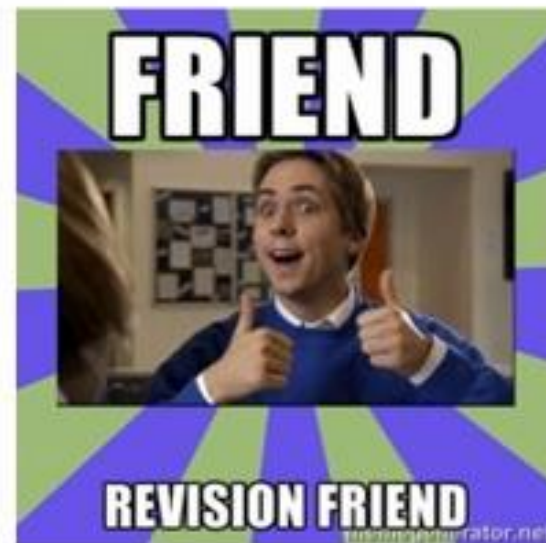
Revision strategy of the week

Strategy 3: Practice Testing

Create some flashcards, with questions on one side and answers on the other – and keep testing yourself, or each other.

This technique has been shown to have the highest impact in terms of supporting student learning.

Play Articulate / Taboo with a friend using the flashcards for variety.



Revision strategy of the week

Strategy 4: Teach someone

After you have tested yourself, teach the material to someone else. This has been found to help aid memory and recall: it is known as “the Protégé Effect”.

Teaching someone else requires you to learn and organise your knowledge in a clear and structured manner.

**While we
teach, we
learn.**

-Seneca



Revision strategy of the week

Strategy 5: Practise output, not input

Keep testing yourself in the way that you will be tested – so do lots and lots of past exam papers and/or get someone to ask you questions.

This is far more effective than just reading through/highlighting your notes.



Revision strategy of the week

Strategy 6: Effort, not flow

The most effective revision is hard, not easy.



- Focus on the things you know least well, not the things you know best.

Revision shouldn't be for reassuring yourself about what you know, it needs to be the deliberate effort to identify what you don't.



Leitner System for Flashcards

1. Test yourself on your flashcards
2. If you answer the questions, move it to the mastered section at the back. Test yourself once a week.
3. If you can't recall all of it, put it in the middle section. Test yourself every three days
4. If you don't know it, put it at the front and test yourself daily.

You can do this with traffic colour coded tabs

- **Tab system to organize mastered vs unmastered cards**



- **High quality box for storing cards - no bulky rings!**

Create a mindmap from memory in one pen colour; then use your notes to add more detail in a second colour.

