

Less Stress: Understanding exam stress



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING TEAM KENT
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM MEDWAY

Agenda

- **Assembly content:**
 1. What is stress?
 2. Developing coping
- **Questions and feedback**



Session 1: 9am (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

On a scale of 0-10 (10 being the highest) please score your personal level of confidence around managing exam stress



Session 2: 9:35am (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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Session 3: 10:10am (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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Session 4: 10:45am (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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Session 5: 11:30am (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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Session 6: 12:05pm (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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Session 7: 12:40pm (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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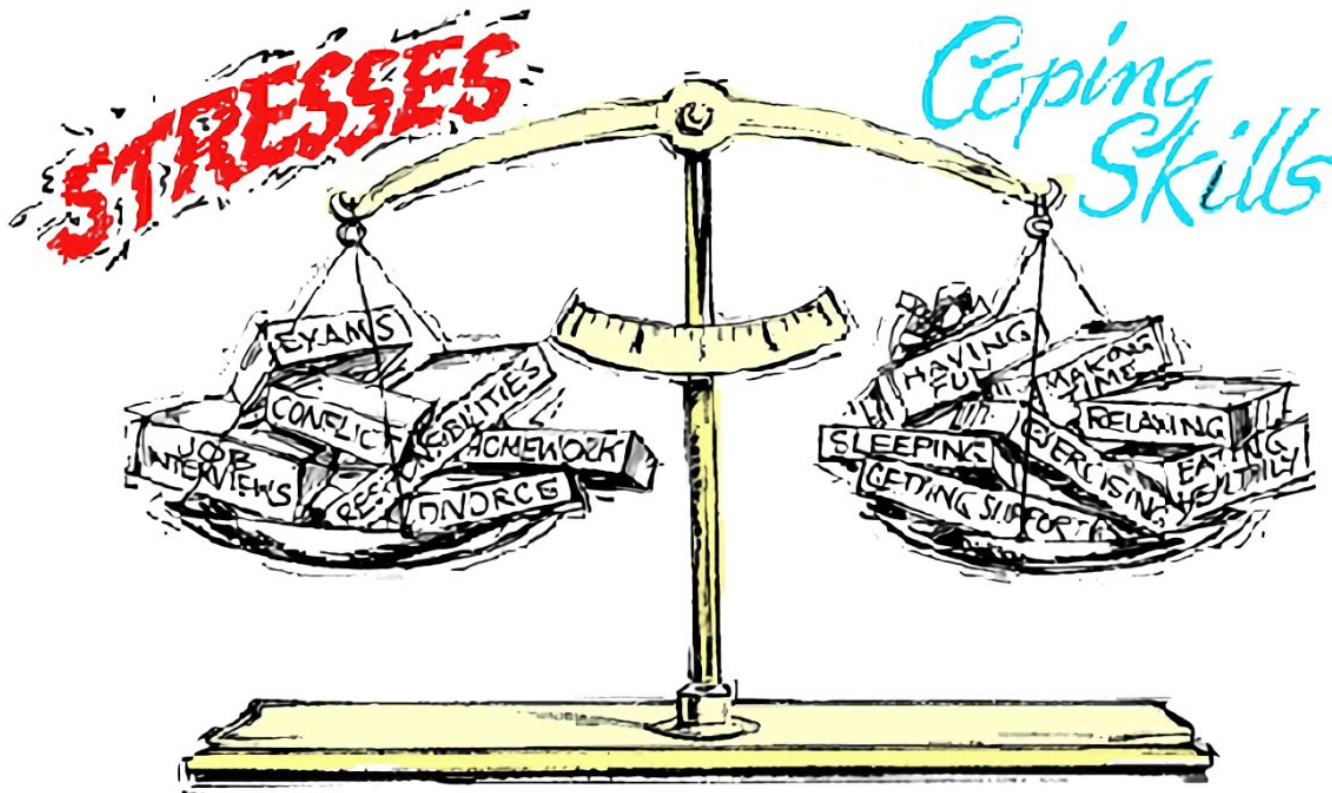
Session 8: 1:15pm (Pre-Session Questionnaire)

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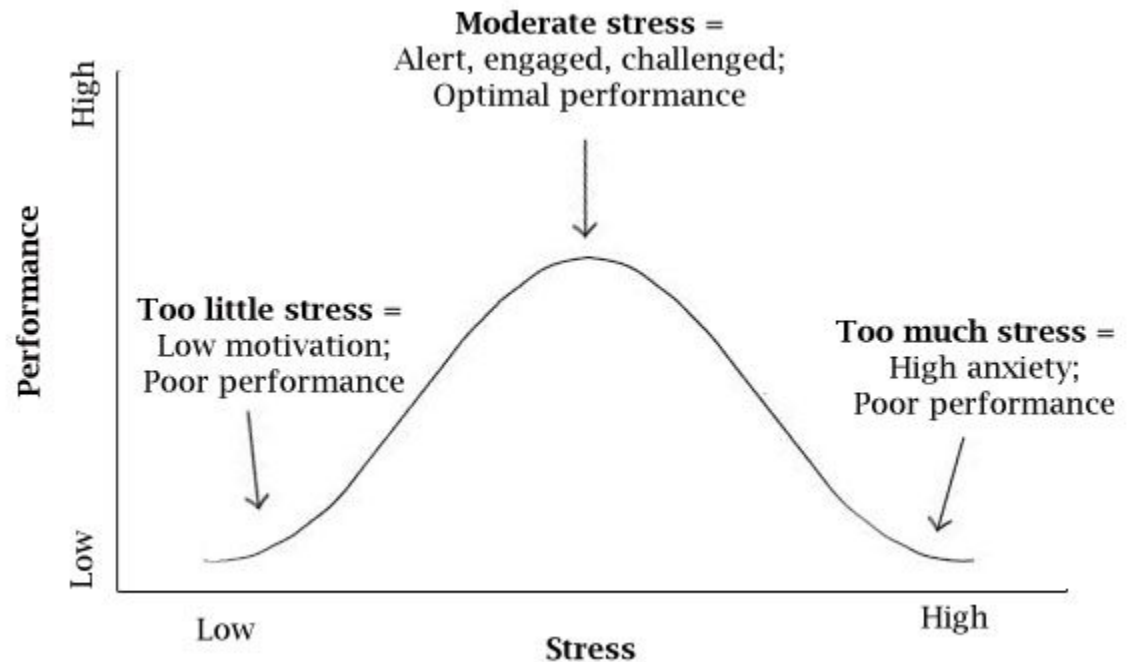
Part 1: What is stress?

Balance



Stress Curve

- Anxiety can be useful and is normal
- Motivator
- Warning sign
- Not dangerous



Part 2: What can we do to improve coping?



Stress is normal

Think of a time you felt stressed but got through it

- What did you do?
- What skills/ techniques did you use?
- How did you cope?

Your Stress Bucket

Demands, pressures, stresses and worries



Maximum stress level

Normal stress level

Relaxed stress level

Your
stress
bucket



Coping abilities/
stress release

Worrying about the future?



1. Problem Solving

1. Identify the problem
2. Think of all the possible solutions
3. Write down the pros and cons for each solution
4. Choose one to try out
5. Review how it went. If the problem is not solved, try another solution.

Identify one problem		
List all possible solutions		
Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages



“I don’t understand the work set”

Solutions	Positives	Negatives	Rating
Put my hand up and ask the teacher for help	The teacher will be able to help me	I don’t want to put my hand up – I’ll feel embarrassed	8/10
Ask my friend next to me for the answer	I don’t have to put my hand up	My friend might not know either	6/10
Copy my friend’s answer	I don’t have to put my hand up	I won’t understand the concept if it comes up in the exam – it hasn’t helped my learning	2/10
Don’t do anything	I don’t have to show people I don’t understand – less embarrassing	I won’t understand the question and I will not know for the exam	1/10



2. Break down tasks into small chunks



Using tools like revision timetables, reduce feelings of overwhelm by breaking down revision into small chunks



You can give yourself rewards/breaks after completing each task



This increases your sense of achievement

3. Self care

- looking after our bodies and brains

1. Get enough sleep (8-10 hours)



2. Eat well - not too much sugar or caffeine-
affects concentration and sleep



3. Drink plenty of water

4. Exercise - great way to release stress and
reinvigorate your body and mind



5. Talk to someone about how you are feeling

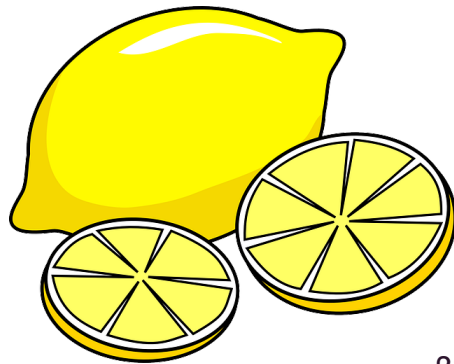


4. Relaxation and grounding exercises

5 4 3 2 1 Grounding Exercise



Progressive Muscle Relaxation



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What young people say

14 ways to beat exam stress -

Mind

1. "If you struggle with motivation, start in good time by doing SOMETHING. It doesn't matter how small, just something that helps with the upcoming exams early on."
2. "Make sure you make a timetable to organise what revision or essay work you're going to tackle each day. It really helps you set out what you need to do in small chunks."
3. "Looking over some past exam questions or even answering some in exam conditions can help calm your nerves."
4. "Use apps to block social media websites temporarily so you don't get distracted." (Like [SelfControl](#), [Cold Turkey](#) or others)

5. “Use Post-it notes to help break ideas down into bite-sized chunks and highlight key points you wish to remember.”
6. “Draw mindmaps to see the big picture.” (You can use online tools)
7. “Put a sweet in random pages – then you’ll have a surprise treat every now and then!”
8. “Grab a good pair of headphones and play some instrumental music. Lyrics make it harder but instrumental music settles in the background and helps you sharpen your focus.”
9. “To make my day more manageable, I would break down each hour in to 40 minutes of solid revision followed by 20 minutes of tea making/Beyoncé blasting/wandering in the fresh air, so that I never felt too chained to my laptop on any given day.”

10. “Remember that you’re not a machine. You deserve time off! Make sure you factor in time to watch a film, go out for a drink with friends or grab a coffee. The most productive brains are those that rest properly too!”

11. “Break up your revision with some exercise! Whether it’s a brisk walk or a session in the gym, not only will it let your mind relax for an hour, you’ll also get a burst of energy.”

12. “Go to bed early and drink lots of water.”

13. “Focus on you and don’t worry about anyone else. Remember your best is good enough!”

14. “Keep everything in perspective – in 5 year’s time this will not be a concern and regardless of the outcome, things will be ok anyway.”

Further support

- Study skills and revision advice from other young people available at BBC bitesize

[Revision: Top revision tips - BBC Bitesize](#)

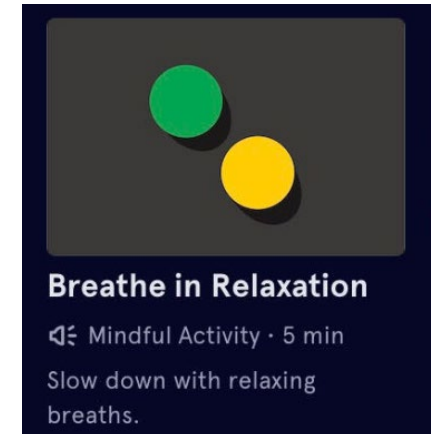
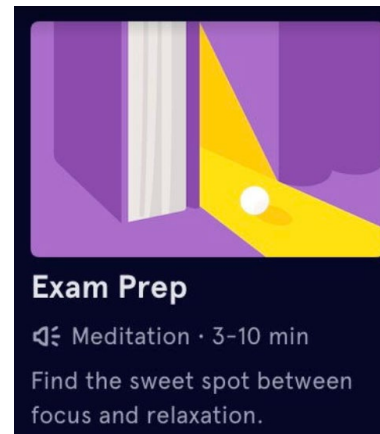
Helpful Apps



Live chat function for difficult times seeking well-being support



Includes relaxation, sleep, and mindfulness exercises as well as music playlists for studying



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STEPS

Strategies for Tackling Exam Pressure and Stress

Are you in Years 10, 11, 12 or 13? Do you feel stressed or worried about upcoming exams? STEPS is a six-session group for young people experiencing test anxiety in the lead up to exams.

The sessions focus on understanding why you may find exams stressful, how you can stay focussed and calm during exams, and learning effective revision strategies.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS GROUP, PLEASE CONTACT:

Student Support Manager

Disclaimer

The purpose of this workshop is to share information about local resources/support. The Emotional Wellbeing Teams/Emotional Support Teams cannot comment on the suitability/quality of these resources and whether it would meet the needs of your family.

If there are additional sources of support that you would recommend, that are not listed here, please email us at:

ewtandestenquiries@nelft.nhs.uk

We would love to hear about them.