

EXAM STRESS TOP TIPS

Created by the Croydon trailblazer Mental Health Support Team

1. What is Stress?

Stress is our body's natural response to greater demands or pressure in our environment. We all experience stress in different ways and for different reasons.

Usually, we can cope with most day-to-day stressors (e.g. missing the bus), but if the demands around us become too high, or we don't feel like we can cope, we may then feel stressed.

2. Coping Strategies

Stress can often make us feel anxious, overwhelmed & tense. Using the following coping strategies can help you to feel calmer. It helps to practice these regularly at times when you aren't feeling stressed.

Calm & controlled breathing:

Breathe **IN** through your nose for 7 seconds



Breathe **OUT** through your mouth for 10 seconds



Grounding:

Where you are right now, think of/say/write down:

5 things you can see 👁️

4 things you can touch ✋

3 things you can hear 👂

2 things you can smell 👃

1 thing you can taste 👄

3. Positive Thinking

When feeling stressed and anxious we can get trapped in negative ways of thinking. When we focus on these thoughts, we tend to feel more and more stressed and anxious. Instead, practice using Positive Statements or Affirmations such as:

"My grades are not the only measure of success"

"Focus on today. Deal with problems as they arise"

"My best is good enough"

"I know more than I think!"

"I can get through this"

4. Self-Care & Practical Strategies

It's really important to look after yourself around exam time.

Doing some of these things can help make the stress a little bit easier to manage.



5. Helpful Websites

Kooth: www.kooth.com

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk search for "exam stress"

The Mix: www.themix.org.uk – search for "exam stress"

Mind: www.mind.org.uk – search for "exam stress"

NHS: www.nhs.uk – search for "student stress", "preparing for exams", "5 step to mental wellbeing"

NHS Every Mind Matters: www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

6. Further support

If you are worried about your mental health or need help, please talk to a trusted teacher or adult in school, or your parent or carer. You can also contact the following organisations below for urgent support:

Childline: **0800 1111** or www.childline.org.uk

SHOUT: text 'SHOUT' to **85258**

Papyrus HOPELINE UK: **0800 068 41 41**, or www.papyrus-uk.org/hopelineuk

Samaritans: **116 123**, or www.samaritans.org/ CAMHS crisis line: **0203 228 5980** (9am-11pm 7 days a week)

If you are concerned that you or someone else is in immediate danger or harm, please call Emergency services (999) or visit A&E