

THIS WEBINAR WILL  
BEGIN IN A FEW MINUTES

# EXAM STRESS

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Student Central



# OVERVIEW

- Organisation Tips
- Exam stress
- Wellness toolbox
- Grounding Exercise
- Breathing Exercise

# WHAT IS STRESS?

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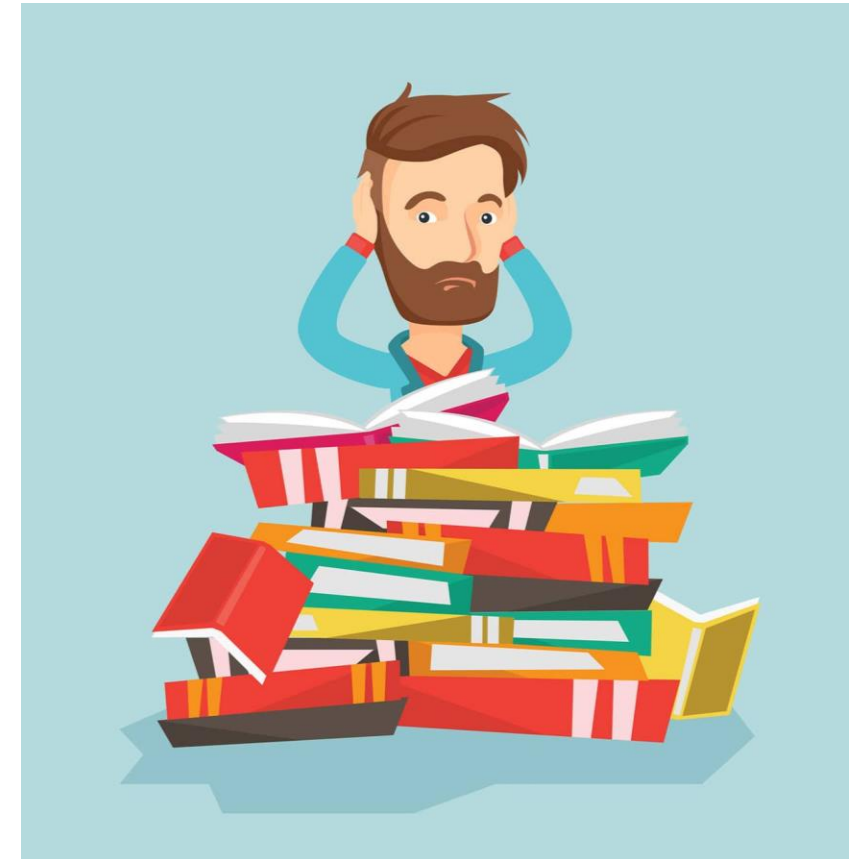
- Stress is a feeling of being under abnormal pressure.
- Stress affects us all in different ways.
- Stress is a natural reaction to many situations in life.
  - It causes our minds and bodies to speed up to prepare us to respond to an emergency.



# EXAM STRESS

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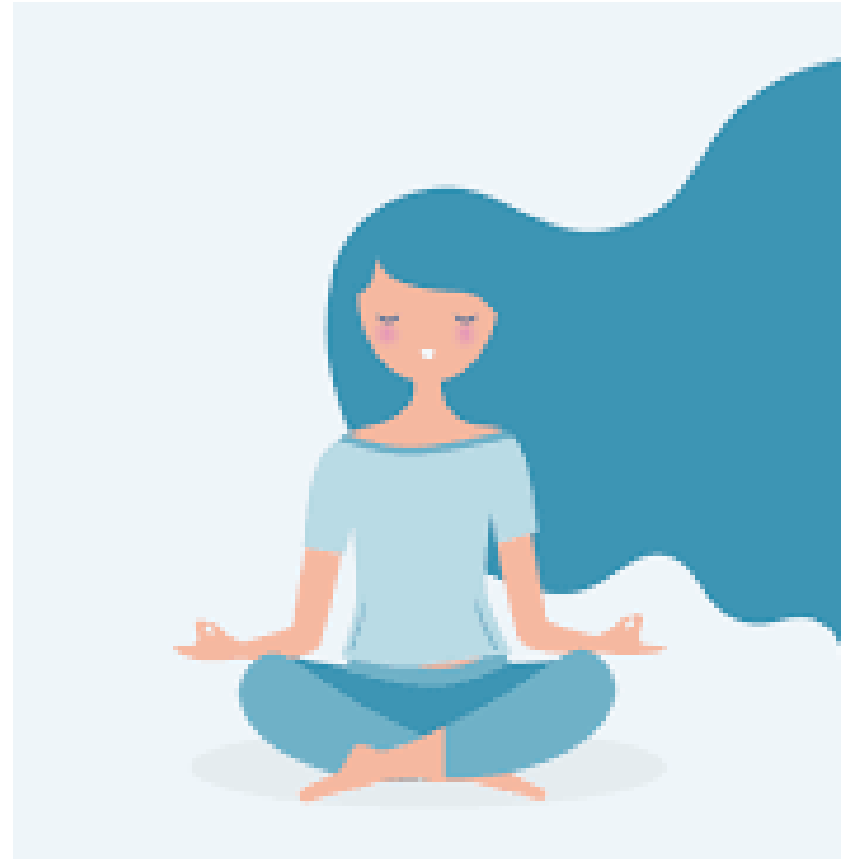
- Remember, test taking anxiety is normal
- Don't forget to mind yourself, especially Sleep, Eat, Exercise , Take regular breaks, Downtime
- Have the practical issues organised in advance (study plan, materials, time & length of exam etc.)
- Try to keep some perspective.



# EXAM STRESS

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- Talk to someone.
- Treat yourself.
- Try relaxation techniques.
- Remember, exams are time limited, there is an end in sight.
- Exams don't define you as a person.



# REMEMBER!

- Exam time can be an anxious, stressful and potentially overwhelming experience.
- Test taking anxiety is normal, and because anxiety is an emotion it will pass if you give it time.
- The more you fight it the longer it will last. As the phrase goes, "if you see a wave coming, grab a surfboard".



# ORGANISATION

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- Being organised can reduce stress.
- Have the practical issues organised in advance, not at the last minute
  - What's my timetable for the exam period – have I a printed copy?
  - Make a revision timetable. Timetable your revision with breaks at a frequency that works best for you.
  - Work when you naturally feel more alert, whether that's in the morning or evening, at home, or in the library.
  - What do I need for each exam? Pens, rulers, calculators, exam number?



# TO GET STARTED..

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- This might be your first time sitting an in-person exam. It's okay to feel nervous!
  - We will be running an exam stress webinar, please come along.
- The exams office will be in contact with you about where you will do your exams

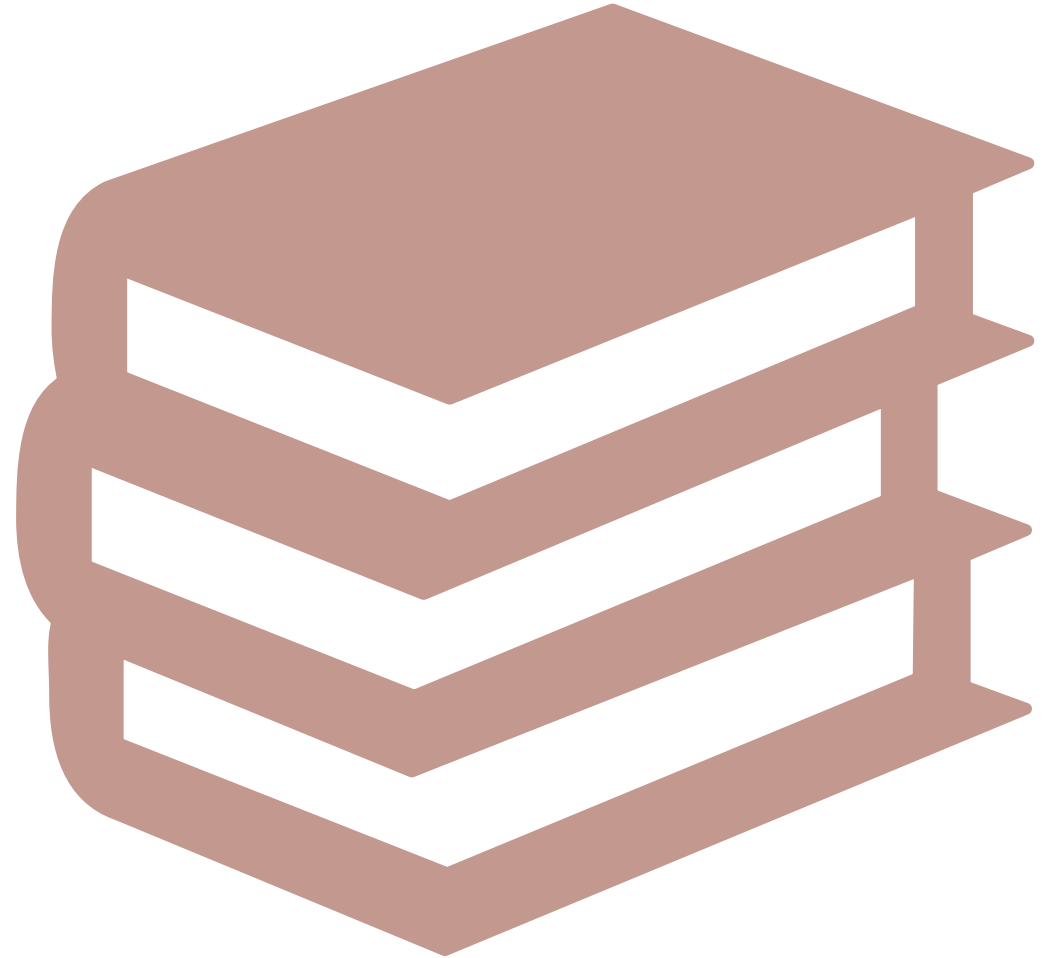
Keep an eye on your emails!!

- Similar style to State exams- you just have to turn up on time.
- Do not forget your student card!!!
- Make sure you have the right time and venue for your exam.

# WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

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- It's up to student to check out what the layout of your exams will be like.
- You should:
  - Look through Moodle,
  - Your module handbook
  - Attending the last few lectures and listening to the lecture. They may give you some info on the exams.
  - Check past exam papers and see if there are patterns.



# Stress vs. Anxiety

## Stress



### cause / origin

short term and in response to a recognized threat



### symptoms

faster heartbeat  
faster breathing  
diarrhea or constipation  
anxious thoughts  
moodiness, irritability, or anger  
general unhappiness  
a feeling of being overwhelmed  
loneliness  
nausea

## Anxiety



can linger and may not have an identifiable trigger



faster heartbeat  
faster breathing  
diarrhea or constipation  
a feeling of unease or dread  
sweating  
nervousness  
tenseness  
restlessness

SIMILARITIES/DIFFERENCES

# BUILDING YOUR WELLNESS TOOLBOX

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- Get outdoors
- Call a friend
- Write in a journal - write your thoughts down (brain dump)
- Less caffeine
- Music
- Watch a funny show/movie
- Read



# WELL-BEING AND ROUTINE

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EXERCISE REGULARLY, ESPECIALLY  
WALKING



KEEP REGULAR SLEEP ROUTINES



MAINTAIN A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET



PRACTICE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES SUCH  
AS BREATHING EXERCISES

# DON'T FORGET TO MIND YOURSELF

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## Sleep

You should be aiming for 8–10 hours per night. Try to wind down before going to sleep.

## Eat

Make sure to eat regularly. Eat regular meals and eat well: this will help your ability to think, concentrate and last the distance.

## Exercise

Regular exercise will help to relieve some of the stress build-up and improve your mood. Build it into your plan: walk the dog, go for a swim or cycle or anything that gets you active.

## Take regular breaks.

Try to recognise when you're getting too stressed. It's a sign that you need to take a break, to do something else for a short time

## Downtime

Make time for some fun, it's not only allowed, it's recommended. Schedule things you enjoy doing at weekends or during breaks between exams

# POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

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Try to say two positive things to yourself everyday

Examples:

- *I'm doing my best everyday*
- *I'm kind to others*



# STOPP

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## Stop & Step back

Don't act immediately.  
Pause



## Take a breath

Notice your breath as you  
breathe in and out



## Observe

What am I thinking/feeling?  
Is it fact/opinion?



## Pull back

Gain some perspective  
What would you say to your  
friend who is feeling this  
way?



## Practice what works

Practice what is most  
helpful

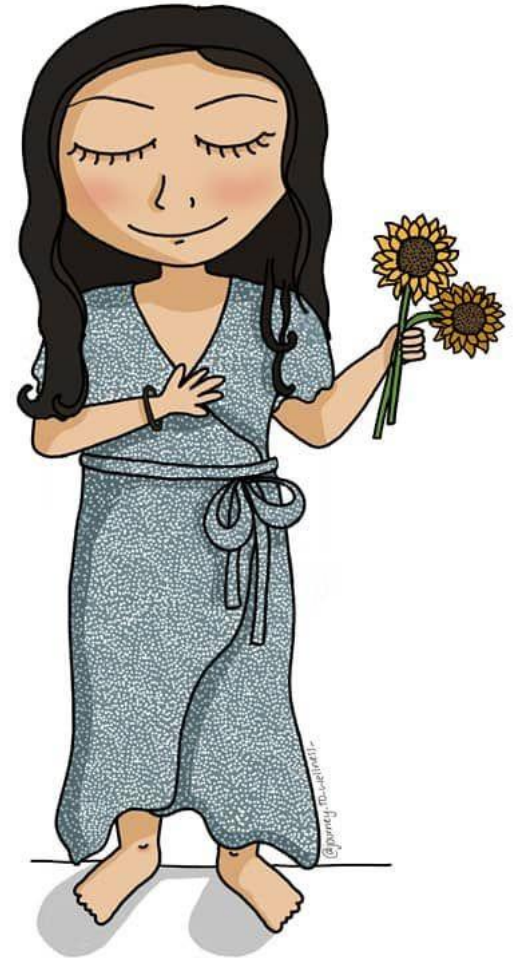


# GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

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## GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

- 5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE
- 4 THINGS YOU CAN FEEL
- 3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR
- 2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL
- 1 GOOD THING ABOUT YOURSELF



## HOT CHOCOLATE BREATH

# BREATHING EXERCISES

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1. HOLD YOUR HANDS OUT IN FRONT OF YOU, AS IF YOU WERE HOLDING A MUG OF HOT CHOCOLATE.
2. BREATHE IN SLOWLY, IMAGINING YOU ARE INHALING THAT WARM COCO SMELL, THROUGH YOUR NOSE.
3. GENTLY EXHALE THROUGH YOUR MOUTH, LIKE YOU WERE TRYING TO COOL DOWN THE HOT CHOCOLATE BEFORE YOU TAKE A SIP.

○ REPEAT - NOTICE AS YOU FEEL MORE CALM. YOU MAY EVEN NOTICE YOUR HANDS FEELING WARM.

Deep breathing  
using your hand.



# DEEP BREATHING

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- Breathing exercises take only a few seconds, no matter where you are.
- It is particularly helpful at stressful times, and also practise it at regular intervals throughout the day.
- When learning the technique it is a good idea to try it when you are feeling calm.

# SUPPORTS FOR YOU!

- **If you feel anxious all the time, for several weeks or if it feels like your anxiety is taking over your life, then it's a good idea to ask for help. Your GP should be your first point of contact. If in distress or out of office hours you can contact the A&E dept. of your local hospital.**
- Helpful Contacts;
- Counselling service: 01 7083554 or text MU to 50808
- Samaritans Ireland; FreePhone: 116 123  
jo@samaritans.org www.samaritans.org
- Your Mental Health www.yourmentalhealth.ie
- Social Anxiety Ireland 01 803 2919  
www.socialanxietyireland.com
- Mental Help www.mentalhelp.ie

# Useful Apps



# REMEMBER!!

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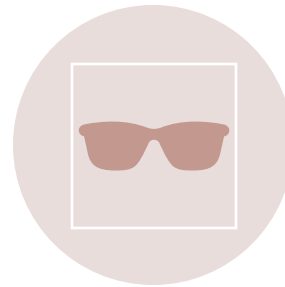
Try to keep some perspective. Ask yourself the question: "in 10 years time are you likely to remember what grades you got in the exams?". It's unlikely



Try not to despair. This increases anxiety which can impact on exam performance. It's more helpful to focus on what you can do as opposed to what you can't do/didn't do.



Remember, exams don't define you as a person. We're all more interesting and important than a grade on an exam.



Remember, exams are time limited, there is an end in sight, there's a long, hopefully busy and enjoyable summer break ahead.

# FINALLY!

## Treat yourself.

Use treats to motivate yourself and build these into your revision timetable, for example allow yourself time to watch an episode of your favourite TV programme after a few hours hard work or plan something nice for when your exams are over.

ANY QUESTIONS?

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GOOD LUCK!

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