

DEALING WITH EXAM STRESS

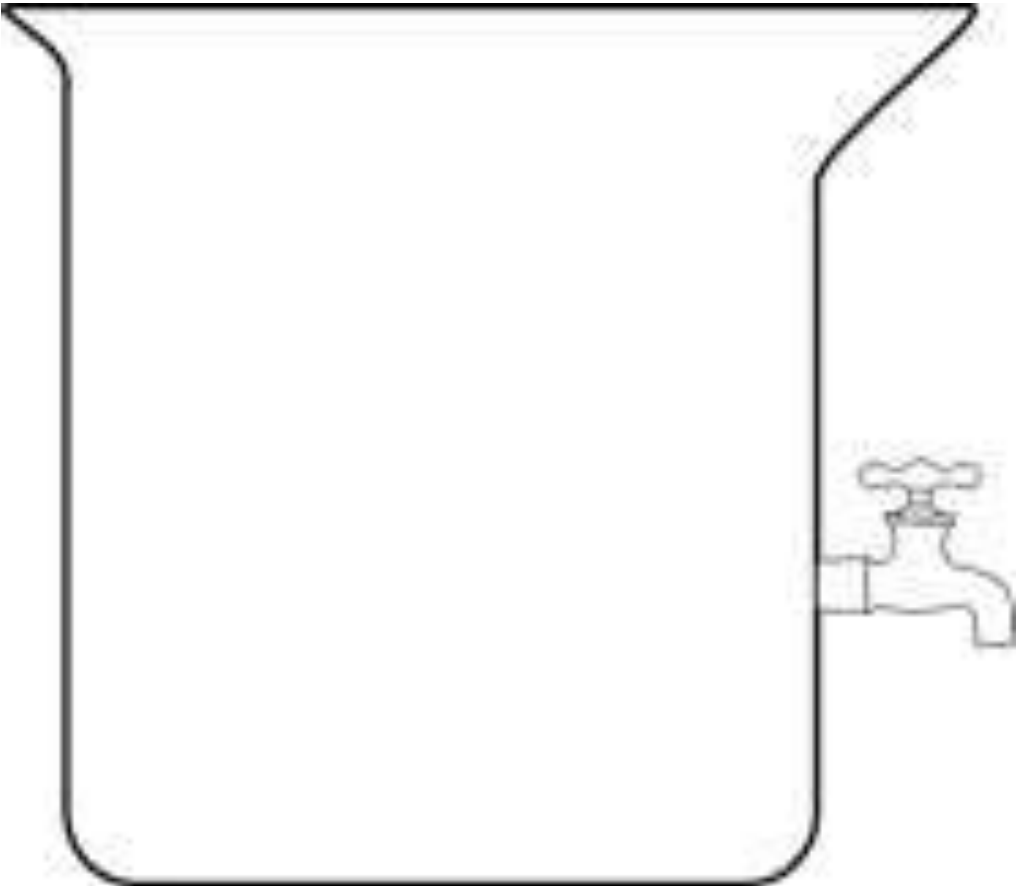


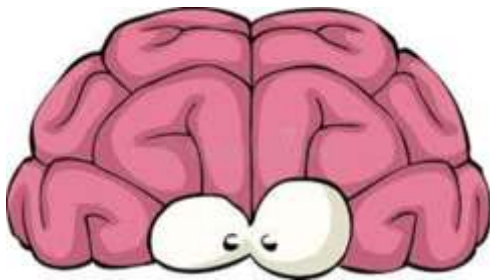
by

MY STRESS BEAKER

How full is it right now?

What is in it?





Stress is just a protective thought

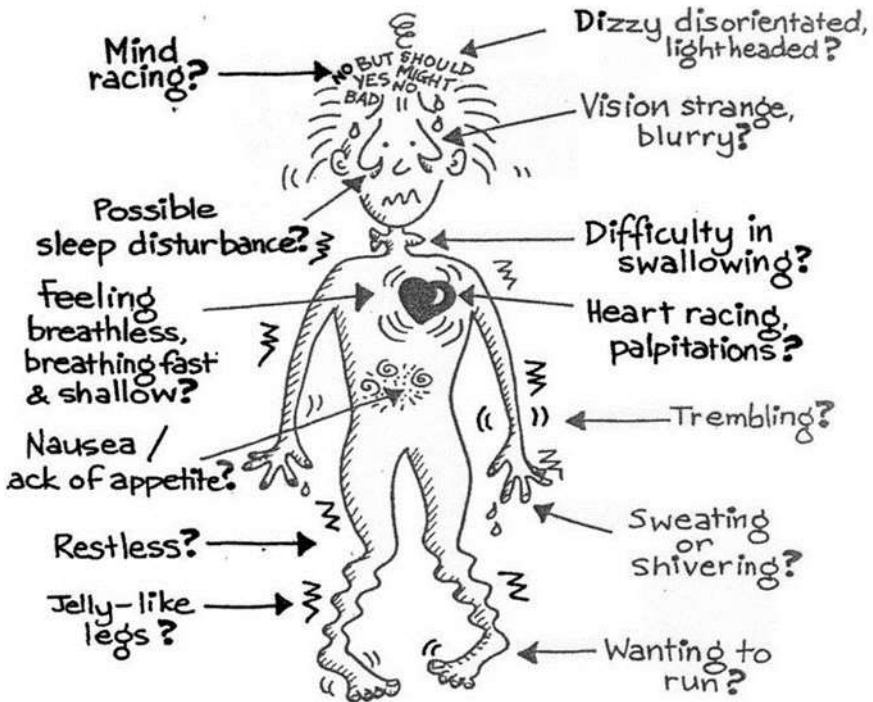
IT WON'T STOP ARRIVING....IT JUST NEEDS MANAGING



STRESS IN MY HEAD (UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS)

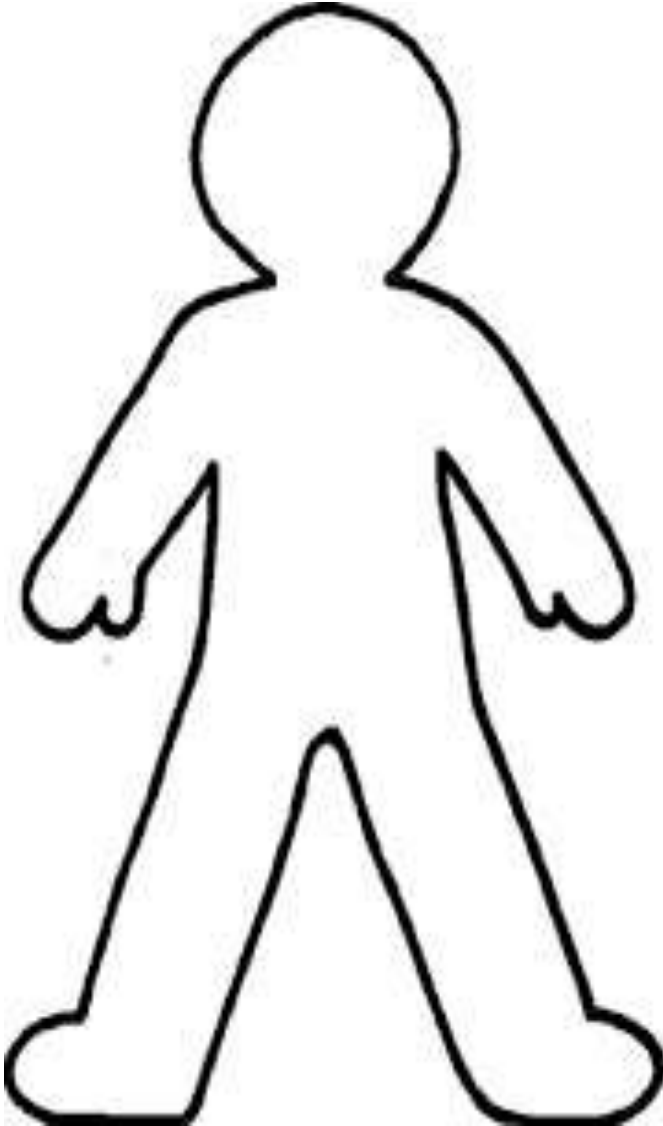
Thought	Attention? Y/N	Action? Reframe the thought? Change behaviour? Do nothing?
<i>Revision is pointless... I'm going to fail anyway</i>	<i>No. It will only bring on bad feelings and stop me doing what I need</i>	<i>Take a deep breath. Tell my amygdala that we can give it a go and start to do some revision. Take powerful action and gain control.</i>
I am so tired, I'm not sure I can do anything.		
This homework is so dull, I don't want to do it		
If I fail these exams, the rest of my life is ruined		
All my mates are having fun whilst I'm stuck here working		
It's too hard! I can't do it. I'm stupid.		
I can't be bothered to do it.		
This is important to me; I want to do well		
This is hard but I can do it if I keep at it		

STRESS IN MY BODY



ADRENALINE AND CORTISOL ARE GREAT SHORT-TERM. BUT DAMAGING LONG-TERM

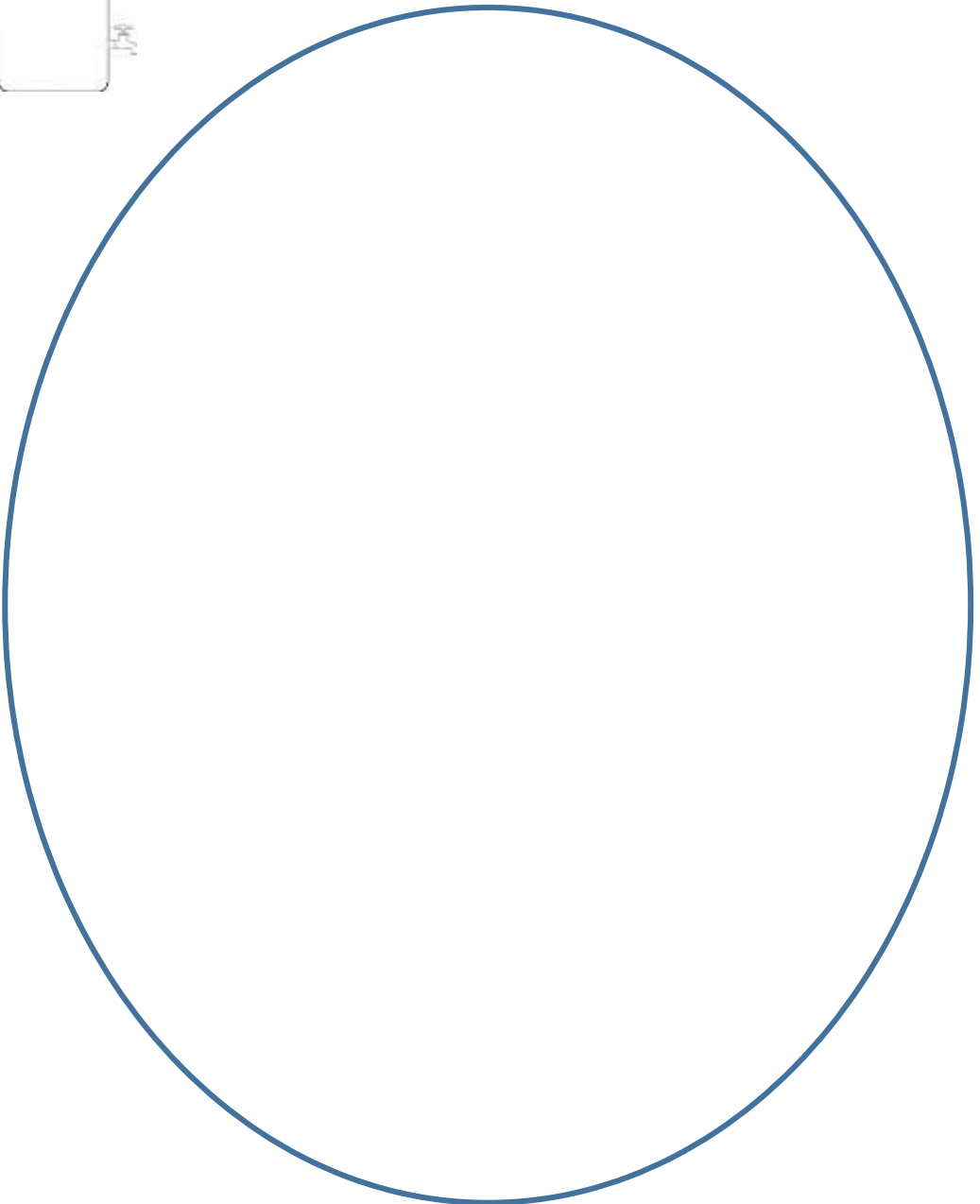
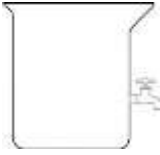
HOW DOES MY BODY RESPOND TO STRESS?



HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY SLEEP?

- Create a relaxing routine so your mind knows it's bedtime - free from screens, sugar and caffeine. Take a bath, drink milk/cherry juice.
- **Keep** to the routine, i.e. avoid lengthy lie-ins on weekends or sneaking in a last minute phone peek
- Your bed is for sleeping – not for revision
- Give your head some space close to bed time so that it can 'wind down'
- Avoid screens close to bedtime – they mess with your drowsy chemicals and may trigger difficult emotions (e.g. seeing a social media post/message)
- Try to exercise in the day to naturally tire you out
- Allow enough time after dinner so your body won't be busy digesting food
- Have a book by your bed to write down any thoughts 'buzzing' around your head. They don't need your attention right now.
- Use Mindfulness apps or mp3s or white noise to help calm your thoughts

HELPFUL WAYS I CAN MANAGE MY STRESS



IDEAS OF WAYS TO MANAGE EXAM STRESS

Engage your PFC brain, e.g

- Start revising!
- Recite the alphabet backwards
- $100-7 = \dots$ (and keep taking away 7)
- Remember what is important to you in the long term – what do you need to do now to help future you?
- Picture yourself completing the task and take the time to experience how good that feels.
- Picture how the future may look if you **didn't** do this?
- Visualise yourself using your PFC (light it up, rub it, connect to it)

Challenge your amygdala, e.g

- Start revising!
- Have a chat with yourself and point out what is just a feeling and what is factually correct or necessary

Soothe your amygdala, e.g

- Start revising!
- Chat to a trusted other
- Have a bath/shower
- Make a hot drink and get cosy
- Get a hug (can be from yourself)
- Chat to your amygdala – tell it 'we're OK...we're safe'
- Breathing and Mindfulness practice
- Put on some soothing music
- Yoga
- Read
- Exercise it away (13 minutes plus)

Distract your amygdala, e.g

- Get on with what you need to do!
- Watch TV / Netflix / YouTube
- Listen to music
- Do some exercise (ride a bike/star jumps/classes/gym)
- Read a book
- Do some homework
- Chat to a mate/family
- Cook
- Do housework
- Play video games
- Paint, draw or get creative
- Play a boardgame
- Do your hair/nails/make-up, etc
- Mindfulness exercises

Be careful! Make sure these activities are for calming your stress NOT for avoiding or putting off difficult tasks!!

MINDFULNESS

It's when I choose to be in the present moment, on purpose.

When my mind is in the same place as my body.

It allows me a break from both my AMYGDALA and my PFC – it's neither a place of thinking nor feeling..... just being.

It stops my thoughts from time travelling.

It soothes the noises in my head.

It calms my tricky feeling

It reduces nasty chemicals

It helps me to start again or approach a tricky task.



MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

APPS

HEADSPACE

SAM

WELZEN

STOP, BREATHE & THINK

CALM BUDHIFY

THE MINDFULNESS APP

SMILING MIND

WEBSITES

<http://franticworld.com/>

<http://www.freemindfulness.org>

<http://www.pocketmindfulness.com>

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

<http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22> <http://goamra.org>

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 mealtimes



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

