

Independent Learning Newsletter Tips

How To Stay Positive As Exams Approach.

It can be difficult to stay positive or “be up” as exams approach. The more important the exam the more stress we can feel. Worse, if we don’t do anything to make us feel good, stress can lead to anxiety and depression. There are many reasons why students feel this stress and depressed mood as examination dates approach.

- Students receive distorted messages and perceptions about the importance of the exams, such as, “this can/will determine your future” etc.
- With the pressure and stress of exams students avoid doing the work necessary to be prepared and as a result feel more overwhelmed, hopeless, anxious etc. Students can feel they have no control of their situation.
- When we allow the pressure, stress and upset to build we can get into bad habits and let go of good habits. As a result students can feel more drained and exhausted and find it difficult or impossible to “climb out of the dark hole” they are in.

A holistic approach to boost wellbeing as exams approach.

The key to being positive and managing negative emotions such as anxiety and feeling down and depressed in any pressure situation including exams is to “fuel up”. It goes without saying that if we are exhausted, tired, stressed, depressed etc. it is very difficult if not impossible to deal with the pressure of exams. “Fuelling Up” is about boosting wellbeing factors in your life. You need to boost the wellbeing factors in your BODY, MIND and EMOTIONS.

Trying to “feel good” or be “positive” when your body is exhausted and depleted is **impossible!** This is something we all know yet many of us find it difficult to change.

Here are some things you can do to boost the energy in your BODY:

- **See a doctor**

Visit your doctor and get a check up. It’s important that any medical issues are ruled out because you may try some of the following tips without noticing any benefit while all along there may have been a medical issue that needed attention.

- **Get better sleep**

Feeling good all starts with getting the right amount and type of sleep. Start with a good night - time routine. Stop anything that stimulates you such as caffeine or TV or computer, iPad or phone screens etc. Try a warm drink such as chamomile tea and use essential oils such as lavender oil. Having a soothing bath or shower can also help along with gentle stretching of tight or tense muscles. If you still feel you are not getting a “good” sleep be sure to see your doctor.

- **Eat in Moderation**

Never skip a meal, especially breakfast. Breakfast replenishes your body and helps you start your day full of energy. Eat three main meals, and two to three snack meals a day. Eating five to six times in a day keeps your blood sugar levels balanced, giving you an overall sense of well-being needed for focusing on your tasks and responsibilities.

- **Exercise Regularly**

Regular exercise, at least three times per week for a minimum of 30 minute sessions, can virtually “soak up” stress chemicals in your body and help you to relax and even sleep better. Brisk walking, aerobic classes, swimming, bike riding, or jogging are great exercises to release stress buildup and relax your body and mind to either start or end your day right.

Here are some things you can do to THINK more positively:

- **Change your thinking and perceptions**

Write down your top 5 fears and worries. What’s the worst thing that can happen? Then ask yourself, “IS THAT TRUE”? Usually fears and worries are not based on reality but on imagined scenarios that have little to no evidence. If it’s something that can’t be changed bring acceptance to it. It is what it is for now!

- **Change your focus**

Have you noticed that what we worry about we make bigger and keep closer to us by the way we think and focus. Try this...make your fears and worries **SMALL** in size (5 cm in height) **DARK** in brightness and as far away as possible in **DISTANCE**. When we change the size, brightness and distance of the things that upset us in our minds it reduces the intensity of the emotion.

Here are some things you can do to FEEL more positive:

- **Acts of kindness**

Make a list of 5 acts of kindness you can do every day. Make them simple acts of kindness that are easy to do such as saying thank you etc. Do these 5 acts of kindness every day for 6 weeks. The research shows that people that do this and think of 3 good things in their life (as above) have a dramatic positive boost in their mood.

- **3 good things exercise**

Every day at the start and end of your day think of 3 good things that happened. Write them down. Then think about either **WHY** those good things happened or how it **MADE YOU FEEL** when those good things happened.

So learn more this year about how to improve your results and be more efficient and effective with your schoolwork by going to the links section in your portal and opening the ELES handbook:

