

Feeling good when under academic pressure

January 2020

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First things first, it is natural to feel the strain of preparing for and sitting national exams. Accept that much of your experience will be a healthy (natural) response to what you are going through at this stage of your life.

When you are feeling anxious and the state is becoming overwhelming, it's important to have a plan of what you can do to help yourself. With your plan made, you are more likely to take positive action even when your brain has gone foggy!

Many of these can be put into action - no matter where you are:

1. Inner Talk – you are to call on your inner cheerleader and ask them to be very clear and loud right now. Reminding you of your many strengths, positive qualities. Tell yourself how you are capable and you can handle this very situation. Repeat those words – they are important & true. You would talk to your best friend like this so treat yourself just as well!

2. Focus on your breath – slow it down and gently deepen the breath. One effective technique is 7-11. Breathe for 7 counts and out for 11. Work up to the numbers.

3. Self Soothing Strategies, if you are able to, you can comfort yourself through changing one or more of the following in the situation:

- **Sound** – have silence, put on some music that calms / boosts you
- **Tactile/Touch** – hug someone or put on a soft fabric top
- **Lighting** – dim the lights
- **Temperature** – cool yourself down (open window, think clothing)

For overall Wellbeing

- The F's to flourish!!
- Food, Fluid, Fresh air, Friends, Fun!
- Maintain & build healthy daily habits of looking after yourself. Remind yourself of what you enjoy – it's usually the simple things in life and make sure you are doing these regularly.

And finally, do know that.....

There is more to you than your grades

While the exam results are important for enabling you to move on to the next stage of your life, you are so much more than just exam results. Have faith in yourself and no matter what happens after results day you will be able to handle it.



**HELEN NEARY
COACHING**

gain clarity & confidence