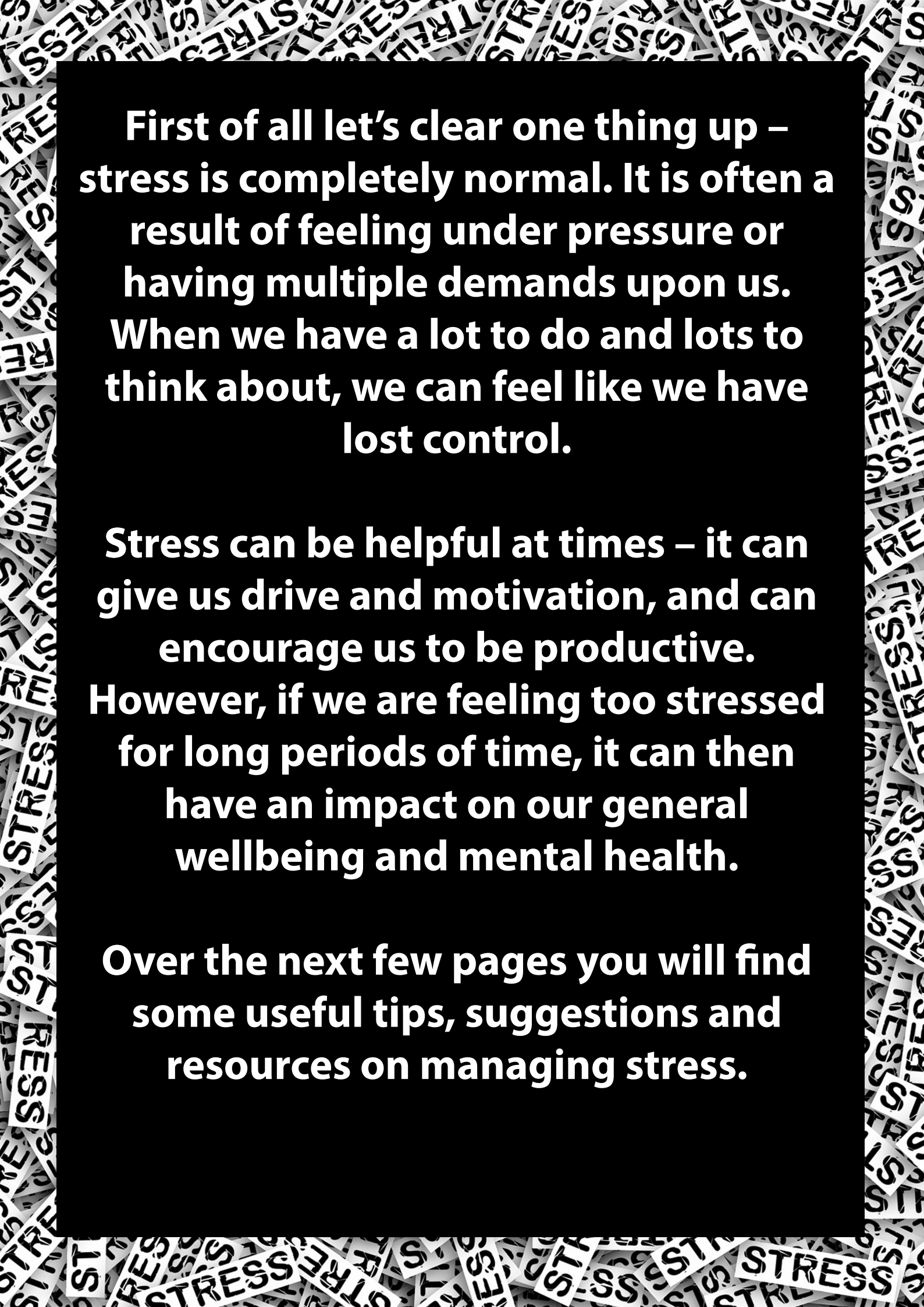


**Student
Wellbeing
Centre**

Managing Stress

Virtual self-help guide





First of all let's clear one thing up – stress is completely normal. It is often a result of feeling under pressure or having multiple demands upon us. When we have a lot to do and lots to think about, we can feel like we have lost control.

Stress can be helpful at times – it can give us drive and motivation, and can encourage us to be productive. However, if we are feeling too stressed for long periods of time, it can then have an impact on our general wellbeing and mental health.

Over the next few pages you will find some useful tips, suggestions and resources on managing stress.

What Causes Stress?

We all get stressed by different things and for different reasons. However, common causes of stress for the student population include:

Assignment deadlines – As deadlines approach, often students can begin to experience increased stress levels as they start to worry about the quality of their work, or getting it done on time.

Exam preparation - Yes, taking the exams themselves can be quite stressful, however the preparation for an exam is often what causes highest levels of worry, panic and stress.

Academic pressure – Studying at University is challenging at times and is made up of a lot of different elements (lectures, self-directed study, presentations etc.) which can increase feelings of academic pressure.

Expectations of yourself - Students often put great demands and pressure on themselves to perform to very high standards. They can often focus solely on areas of improvement and forget to acknowledge areas of success.

The need to impress others - It can sometimes feel like we need to succeed because that is what others want of us – our tutors, parents or friends etc. At times, this can be the case, but we can also use this as fuel for stress.

Full and busy schedule – Whether it is academic, social or personal demands, studying at University can take up a lot of your time.

Poor sleep - Sleep is supposed to be the time where our body and brain 'recharge', therefore it is vital for stress management.

Poor eating habits - A healthy and well-balanced diet can make you feel physically well, have more energy and improve your concentration and memory. All of which are going to benefit your studies and your overall motivation.



Ways to Manage Stress

Open Up

Whether it's to your mates, family members, academics or even the Student Wellbeing Centre – 'A problem shared is a problem halved!'

Although the issues may not go away, talking out loud about them to someone can help you rationalise them a little more.

Manage your time

Use planners, diaries, timetables or even scrap pieces of paper to help you organise your time.

List everything you want to get done each day (including everyday tasks) and allocate time slots to them. You can print and use the hourly timetable found [HERE](#) as many times as you want. All that's left is to wake up and just follow it.

Rest breaks are vital

First of all, allocating yourself regular rest time will break your working time up into more manageable pieces.

Secondly, when you return to your studies, you will be in a better frame of mind to review your work.

Additionally, if you don't have regular breaks you are at risk of 'Brain Fog' (that awful stage where you are staring at the computer screen hoping words will magically appear).

Get some fresh air

Getting out of your room/library/working area for a short walk and some fresh air will do you more good than you realise. When you are feeling overwhelmed and stressed, these feelings can easily manifest and get worse if you're left to dwell on them – break this vicious cycle by going out for a walk. It gives you a chance to look at something different and breathe in some fresh air. On your return, you may find you are thinking slightly clearer.

Look after yourself

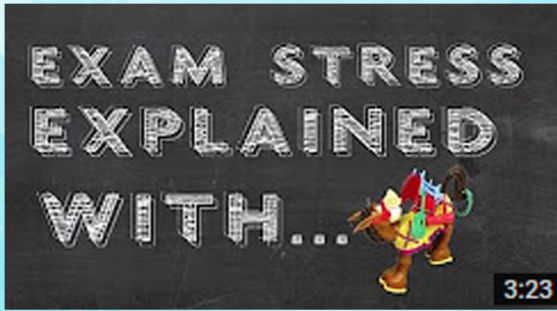
When we are feeling under pressure and have multiple things to do, looking after ourselves can 'go out of the window'. Getting enough sleep, eating properly and regularly, exercising, spending time with others and relaxing – these are just some of the fundamentals that keep us feeling well.

Don't have time? Well make time – it is absolutely vital that you continue to take care of yourself when feeling stressed, otherwise you are at risk of feeling both physically and mentally drained.

Seek advice

Remember that there is a whole heap of services within the University where you can get some advice. Whether it is financial issues, accommodation issues, academic issues or your wellbeing, there is a service to support you. Such services include the Student Support Centre, Advice Service, Accommodation Service, English Language Centre, the Learning Centre (Library), Personal Tutor/Academic Support and the Student Wellbeing Centre.

Useful Resources



In this video, exam stress is explained using the game Buckaroo. It explains some of the reasons why we get stressed and talks about what we need to do to deal with it effectively.



In this video, Evie talks through 7 steps she takes to manage her stress at University. She also emphasises the importance of looking after ourselves and our mental health.

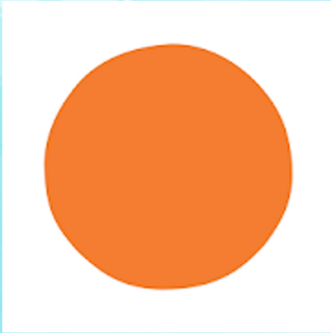
student minds

Click [HERE](#) for a useful guide on managing exam stress by Student Minds.

NHS choices

Click [HERE](#) to read the NHS Choices guide on 'Student stress: self-help tips'

Useful Apps



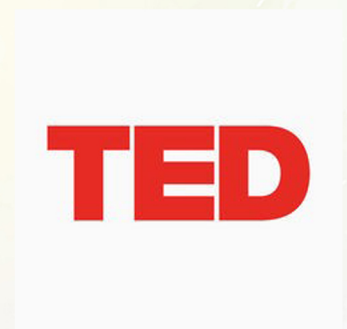
Headspace 5K (free) - Headspace is a comprehensive meditation app, with guided and unguided meditations to help you through all phases of your life. The free app offers ten sessions, however there is an optional in-app subscription which allows you to access many more hours of extra content. Available on iOS and Android.

Planner Pro Daily Calendar (Free) - Designed for those people who are looking for a full-featured app to manage daily life better. Add your daily events, sync with existing compatible calendars, pick your view from daily, weekly or monthly, and tick off your tasks once complete. Perfect to help you get into a routine. Available on iOS and Android.



CALM (free) - It should come as no surprise that Calm is designed to help you be calm. With stunning backgrounds that you can stare at for ages, and a range of meditations, Calm provides a space for you to get away from it all, without having to go anywhere. Optional in-app purchases available. Available on iOS and Android.

TED Conferences (free) - Explore more than 3,000 free videos and learn from the world's most remarkable people. Search by any mood or topic, from Tech and Science to the surprises of your own psychology. Available on iOS and Android.



Drop-in:

**Monday-Friday between 12-2pm
Thursday (term-time) between 5-7pm**

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