

# SOLBRIDGE COUNSELLING SERVICES

## DEALING WITH EXAM STRESS AND JITTERS



### *What is exam stress?*

Exam stress occurs when you feel an increased sense of panic or anxiety in the days, weeks or months before, during or after an assessment or test of some sort.

### *What are the effects of exam stress?*

While you are feeling stressed, your brain is not in its best state to accumulate information. This can lead to a vicious cycle – the more you stress, the less work you do, the more you panic about stressing and not working and the greater the feeling of panic becomes, resulting in even less work being done – and so it goes on. Experiencing panic or stress during an exam can make you forget the information you learned. This is less likely to happen if you have put in the hours and prepared well, although sometimes over-preparing can also lead to problems. When under stress, people can find that they are able to go the extra mile and pull from the backs of their minds answers to questions they did not realise they had ever learnt. So, exam stress can be helpful – but only if you turn all your stress into positive energy.

# SYMPTOMS

Exam stress can manifest itself in different ways depending on the individual and the type of exam they are preparing for.

**The most common symptoms include:**

- A feeling of despair, anxiety or worry.
- A feeling that you will never be able to get through enough work or preparation before the exam.
- An inability to concentrate or to think clearly.
- An inability to sleep because your mind is racing.
- An inability to relax because you feel guilty that you are not working.
- Migraines or headaches
- Prolonged tiredness
- Increased heart rate or a feeling of panic, perhaps even leading to a panic attack.



# COPING STRATEGIES



Do not procrastinate - Use the time you know you are most productive. Make a plan and space out prep time. It is important to start well in advance. Make sure to sleep well and enough. Get all distractions out of your study space, and encourage yourself to focus.



Eat brain-fuel foods and take a walk regularly. Join a study group, and or make contact with your social support network. Mediate and listen to music. Reach out for professional help, when you feel you need to.



*For more information please visit the counselling services on campus.*

[www.solbridgecounsellingservices.org](http://www.solbridgecounsellingservices.org)  
0426308896



**SOLBRIDGE COUNSELLING SERVICES**

WORKING TOWARDS THRIVING BUSINESS  
INDIVIDUALS

