



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Síceolaíochta Oideachais
National Educational Psychological Service

Managing Thoughts and Feelings – A Guide for Students

It is normal to feel lots of different emotions at this time. We all respond to stress in different ways, and use different coping strategies.

It is really important that you look after yourself by staying active, getting enough sleep, eating healthily and limiting your use of technology.

It's natural to have lots of different thoughts and feelings at this time, here are some tips about how you can manage any that are bothering you.

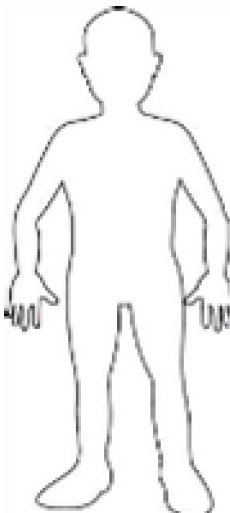


You might be thinking...

- I can't wait to be finished the exams
- I can't wait to be able to go out with my friends when I like
- I wonder what life without school will be like

You might be feeling...

- Nervous
- Stressed
- Angry
- Relieved
- Worried
- Excited
- Nothing



Your body might feel...

- Tense
- Like you have butterflies in your tummy
- Tired or unable to sleep
- That you have headaches

What to do if your thoughts, feelings or sensations in your body make you feel bad:

- **Notice your thoughts.**



Are you focusing on the negative and ignoring the good things in your life
For example, are you thinking, ‘The exams are going to be tough’, or “I don’t think I have studied enough”? If so try to challenge these unhelpful thoughts by saying:

➤ ‘Is that really true?’

When you challenge your unhelpful thoughts you can then replace them with more helpful, calming thoughts for example, “I have been studying for these exams for years”.

- **It’s good to talk!**

It really does help to talk. Choose somebody you trust and tell them how you are feeling. Talking about your feelings can make the feelings less strong.

- **Name it to Tame it**

Try to name your feelings and this will give them less power. Feelings come and go, you will not feel like this for ever. Remember, if you continue to be worried or your body feels bad you can talk to your G.P.

- **Notice your body.**

Are you tense anywhere in your body? Breathe into that area and imagine the area softening.

- **Ways to relax**

Practice calming strategies regularly such as breathing, visualisations, and mindfulness. See NEPS relaxation documents here and podcast [here](#).

- **Ways to help you take care of yourself**

Look at the self-care ideas on the next page and select ones that suit you.



50 Ways to Take a Break

Take a Bath

Listen to Music

Take a Nap

Go to a body of water

Watch the clouds

Light a candle

REST your legs up on a wall

Let out a sigh

Fly a Kite

Watch the stars

Write a Letter

Learn something NEW

Listen to a guided relaxation

Read a Book

sit in NATURE

Move twice as slowly

Take Deep Belly Breaths

MEDITATE

Notice your Body

Call a Friend

Meander around Town

WRITE in a journal

Buy some Flowers

Find a relaxing scent

Walk Outside

Go for a run

Take a bike ride

Create your own coffee break

View some ART

Eat a meal in SILENCE

Turn off all electronics

Go to a Park

Pet a furry creature

read or watch something FUNNY

Examine an everyday object with Fresh Eyes

Drive somewhere NEW

Go to a Farmer's Market

Forgive Someone

Engage in small acts of KINDNESS

COLOR with Crayons

Make some MUSIC

Climb a Tree

Let go of something

Put on some music and DANCE

Do some gentle stretches

Paint on a surface other than paper

Write a quick poem

Read poetry

Give Thanks

Karen Horneffer-Ginter www.karehg.com Art by Paulo Hansen www.chart-magic.com