

# WHAT IS STRESS?

- **STRESS IS A NORMAL RESPONSE** when we feel threatened by something
- It can be a **real/ imagined** danger - your body will respond in the same way
- We are **not** all stressed by the same things & we do **not all respond** in the same way

## Things that often cause exam stress:

- Parental/School pressure
- peer pressure
- Comparing yourself to others
- Fear of what will happen if fail
- Fear of the unknown
- Fear of letting yourself down

When stressed, your body automatically releases hormones to save it from danger - known as **Fight, Flight, Freeze**

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# FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE

We are pre-programmed for survival! In the event of danger, our body will:

**FIGHT** – take on the danger

**FLIGHT** – run from the danger

**FREEZE** – play dead/ ignore and hope the danger goes away

Your brain immediately tells your body there is danger and releases 3 hormones:

## Adrenaline

increased reactions, surge of energy, tense muscles, heart racing, sweating, focuses attention

## Noradrenaline

increases focus, shifts blood flow to large muscles

## Cortisol

'stress hormone' stops non-essential body functions, stops 'thinking' clearly and rationing

When the stressful situation has passed, the body returns to normal and the hormones stop. However, if we experience stressful situations for **long** periods of time, then it can affect us in a negative way.

# SYMPTOMS OF STRESS



Difficulty sleeping/ waking  
Constantly tired  
Forgetful  
Unexplained aches & pains  
Poor appetite  
Loss of interest in activities  
Increased irritability  
Increased heart rate  
Migraines/ headaches  
Blurred vision  
Dizziness  
Difficulty focusing/ concentrating  
Negative/ low mood  
Feeling tense




# MANAGING STRESS

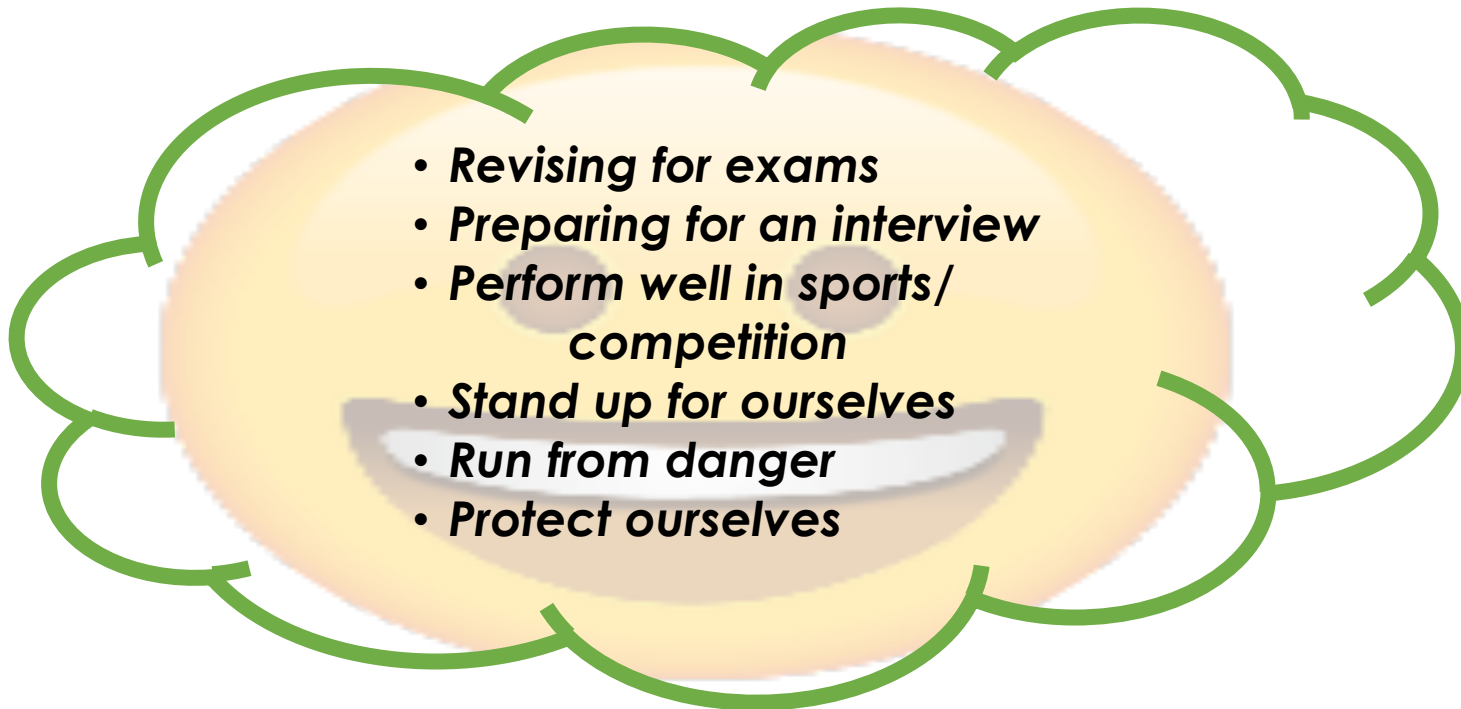
There are many ways to manage stress  
(these may not work for everyone)

- **BE ACTIVE** – exercise releases happy hormones
  - **GET ENOUGH SLEEP** - create a consistent bedtime routine 8-9 hours
  - **HAVE 'ME' TIME** – take part in things that you feel relaxing/ fun
  - **GO OUTSIDE** – fresh air and sunshine
  - **SET YOURSELF CHALLENGES** – achievable targets develop resilience
  - **BE POSITIVE/ GRATEFUL** – look for the good things that are happening
  - **ACCEPT THERE ARE THINGS YOU CANNOT CHANGE** – focus on things you can control
  - **EAT PROPERLY**
  - **WORK-LIFE BALANCE**
  - **CONNECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE** – don't isolate yourself
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# RELAXATION TECHNIQUES



Square breathing  
Belly breathing  
Progressive relaxation  
2 x Playlists – relaxing music, uplifting music  
Mindfulness  
Meditation  
Yoga  
Exercise, walking



- **Revising for exams**
- **Preparing for an interview**
- **Perform well in sports/  
competition**
- **Stand up for ourselves**
- **Run from danger**
- **Protect ourselves**



