



# WOW Pack

## Dealing with pressure

This pack has been put together in response to the current situation to support students and staff during school closures. We will be producing packs multiple times per week on a variety of topics. These will also be released on our social media, see our accounts below!



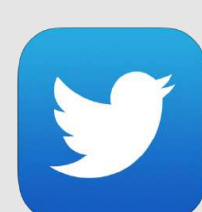
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# Think about it: Dealing with pressure

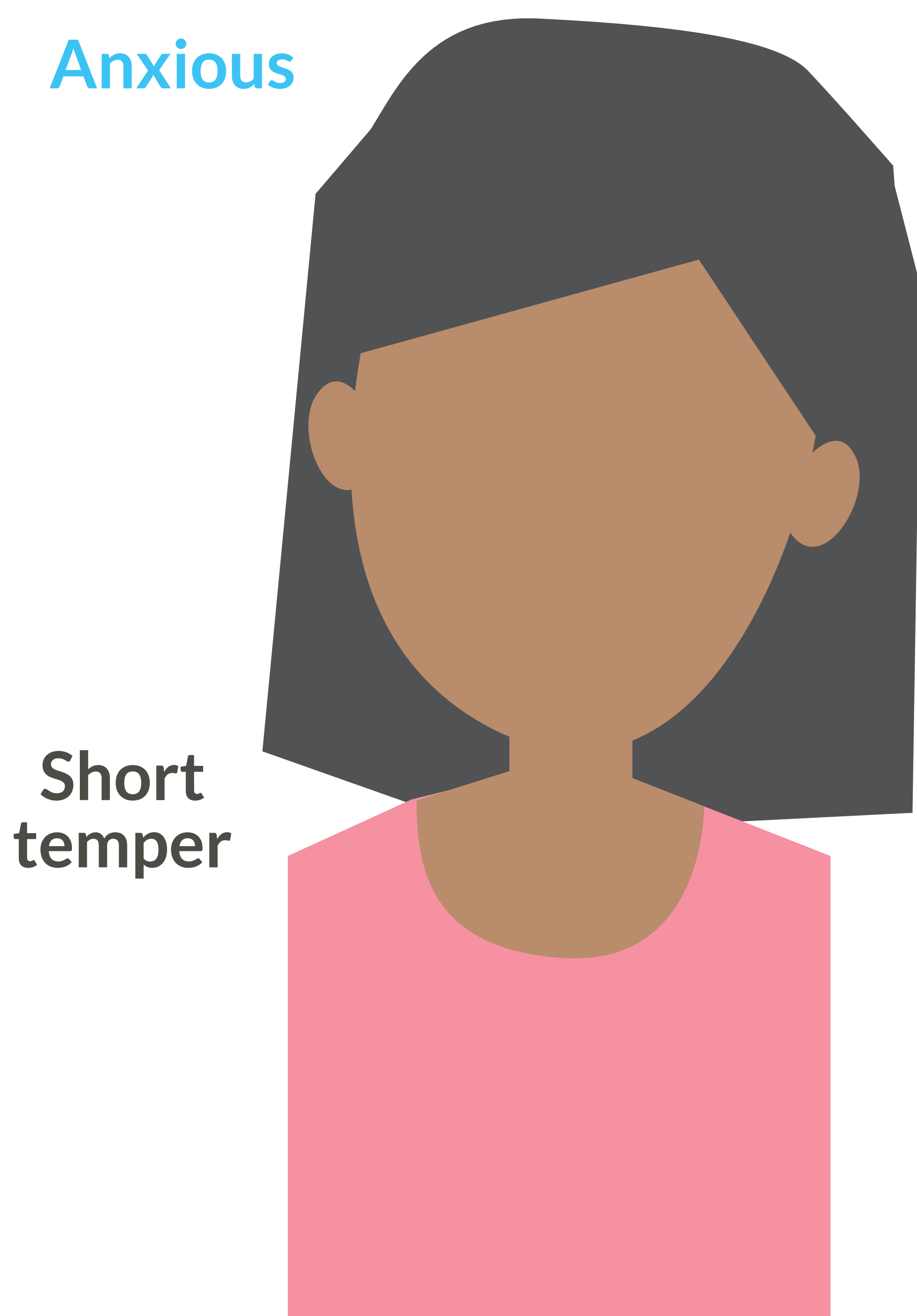


We all have to face situations or tasks which may cause us to feel stressed or under pressure.

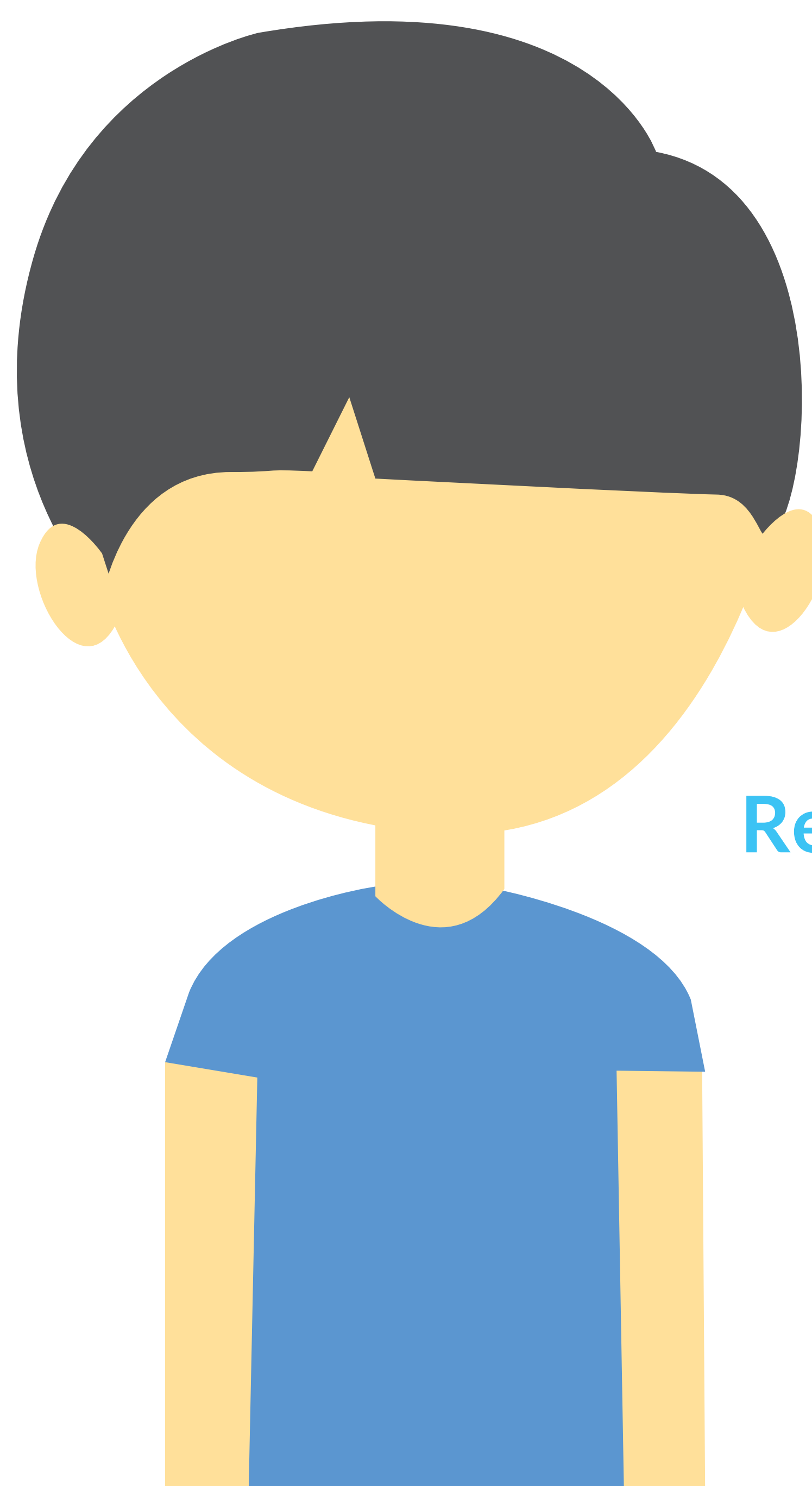
Uninterested

Worried

Anxious



Short  
temper



Restless

Irritable

Lonely

Over-stimulated

When you think about school, exams, your friends, how many of these things do you feel?



# Dealing with pressure

When it comes to dealing with pressure and stress, I think it's all about how I respond to it. With a positive mindset, pressured situations can be opportunities to learn, shine and develop.

We can use difficult situations as motivation to succeed. I use something called 'cognitive restructuring' to help me re-frame my negative thinking into something more positive and constructive. I stop, I breathe, I reflect on what is causing me to feel under pressure and the thoughts about myself which are making me feel that way, I consider whether these feelings are true or whether it is all in my mind, and I look at the situation again.

Using this, I often find my stress is reduced and I am prepared to tackle the situation!



## What happens when we experience pressure?

When we feel stressed, worried or judged by others, our body releases a stress chemical called Cortisol. Having cortisol in our systems makes us less productive and less creative, and once it leaves our body it causes us to have a crash-like feeling. We need a small amount of cortisol for drive but too much for too long cause us to become overloaded.

## True or False?

### 1. All stress is bad

**False!** Our body reacts to stress in order to protect it from dangerous situations. A small amount of stress can increase our performance.

### 2. There is nothing you can do about stress, it happens and you endure it

**False!** There are many ways to learn to cope with and manage stress. Basic lifestyle changes including getting enough sleep, eating well and regular exercise can reduce stress and increase your ability to deal with stress.

### 3. No one else has as much stress as I do, that's why I'm overloaded

**False!** Everyone experiences stress, some do experience more stress than others, but it is your ability to manage and cope with stress that determines whether you control it, not the amount of stress.

### 4. Nothing bad can happen to me from too much stress

**False!** Too much stress can negatively effect concentration, problem solving, personal interactions, and school performance. It can also lead to physical and mental health problems including headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, depression and aggression.

## What causes pressure?

Peer pressure

Academic achievements

The future

Family

# Watch this

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqgmozFr\\_GM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqgmozFr_GM)





# Dealing with pressure Top Tips



## Sleep

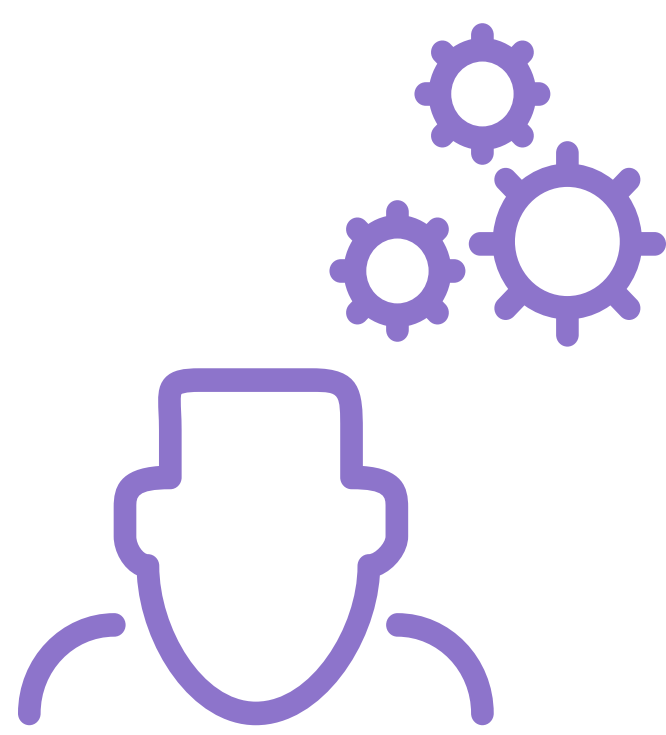
Young people are notorious for not getting enough sleep, and then sleeping through the day on weekends and holidays!

When your day is used up going to school, it is tempting to stay up all night playing on video games, binge-watching tv or messaging friends. However not getting enough sleep makes you less productive and more likely to over react and cause yourself to feel more under pressure.

## Exercise

One of the best stress-relievers is exercise. It helps you blow off steam and makes you feel more energised to tackle those difficult things head on.

Now is the perfect time to get yourself into an exercise routine, whether that's going for a 30 minute walk everyday, maybe even a run, a YouTube yoga session, everyone has the time now to fit exercise into their daily schedule.



## Breathe

When we're experiencing stress or feel under pressure, our brain often doesn't work properly because we're tensing and not breathing deeply enough causing a lack of oxygen. This doesn't help with us feeling ready to deal with the situation!

Practising breathing exercises helps our bodies know what to do when we start to panic. Follow this exercise from mentor Alex <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcFWClf5VT0>

## Music

Music has the ability to calm you down, or pump you up dependant on need! Classical music, or slower melodies can help us relax, and upbeat, louder tracks can help us feel ready to go and wake us up!

Watch this podcast from TFTF mentors on the magic of music [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pamIEN7\\_Dhs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pamIEN7_Dhs)



## Organisation

Being disorganised with our school work or environment can contribute to the pressure we feel.

Keep where you're working tidy and free of clutter, plan your day and prioritise your tasks. Knowing what you need to accomplish each day with help you feel in control and equipped to do it.

## Confidence

Believe in yourself and your abilities! You CAN do it, perhaps not first time but you will get there! Feeling like you can do something, helps release the pressure and stress you've associated with it.

If you think you can't do it at the moment, what do you need to do and work on in order to succeed?



# 5 Ways of dealing with pressure



1

## Identify your triggers

Working out what causes you stress can help you find solutions to the problem before it exists! And even if you can't fix it, being prepared helps.

Take some time to think about what events and feelings have been making you feel stressed. These could be one-off events, events that are on-going or things that keep coming up. You might be surprised at how long the list is!

## Organise your time

Planning how you're going to use your time can help you feel more in control of tasks, and therefore more equipped to handle the pressure.

Make a to do list in order of priority, and don't put off the harder tasks! Pressure gets bigger the longer it lasts, so nip it in the bud and get the job done.

2

3

## Accept the things you can't change

How often do you find yourself stressing about things you have no control over? We spend too much time worrying about things we can't change, instead we need to accept it and focus our time and energy more productively.

You can't do anything about having to do exams, but you can put your time and energy into working towards them and reducing the amount of pressure you feel about them.

## Take breaks

When in a situation you find overwhelming, or you're finding yourself feel increasingly stressed, make sure you're giving yourself time off, to let the pressure level reduce back down again.

Take 5 minutes to go and sit in the garden, or go for a walk. Perhaps do another task which you find easier so you can completely switch off.

4

5

## Ask for help

Don't struggle alone, tell someone you're finding things difficult and let them help you put your situation into context. They may have solutions you haven't thought about before, or they might know the right people to talk to.

Take a look at our signposting page to see some organisations who you can speak to anonymously if you don't want to speak to your family or someone at school.



# Take on the challenge!



## Progressive muscle relaxation

is a deep relaxation technique that has been effectively used to control stress and anxiety.

Have a go and let us know how you found it on our social media!

**Forehead.** Squeeze the muscles in your forehead, holding for 15 seconds. Feel the muscles becoming tighter and tenser. Then, slowly release the tension in your forehead while counting for 30 seconds. Notice the difference in how your muscles feel and the sensation of relaxation. Continue to release the tension until your forehead feels completely relaxed. Continue breathing slowly and evenly.

**Jaw.** Tense the muscles in your jaw, holding for 15 seconds. Then release the tension slowly while counting for 30 seconds. Notice the feeling of relaxation and continue to breathe slowly and evenly.

**Neck and shoulders.** Increase tension in your neck and shoulders by raising your shoulders up toward your ears and hold for 15 seconds. Slowly release the tension as you count for 30 seconds. Notice the tension melting away.

**Arms and hands.** Slowly draw both hands into fists. Pull your fists into your chest and hold for 15 seconds, squeezing as tight as you can. Then slowly release while you count for 30 seconds. Notice the feeling of relaxation.

**Legs.** Slowly increase the tension in your quadriceps and calves over 15 seconds. Squeeze the muscles as hard as you can. Then gently release the tension over 30 seconds. Notice the tension melting away and the feeling of relaxation that is left.

**Feet.** Slowly increase the tension in your feet and toes. Tighten the muscles as much as you can. Then slowly release the tension while you count for 30 seconds. Notice all the tension melting away. Continue breathing slowly and evenly.

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# Where else to look...



Click on the icons below!

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