

## MINDFULNESS & STRESS



Whether you are prepping for an exam or a big work deadline/project the basics of being healthy & happy to nail your goals are the same. There's no denying it - life can be stressful. I've had to begin practicing mindfulness to help me deal with the day to day stresses I encounter. Here are my 5 strategies for those looking to start looking after your body & mind:

## **Feed the brain's needs**

- The energy demands of studying or prepping for a big work project are huge, with the brain alone consuming 20% of the energy we need every day.
- Remember to include a source of quality protein (eggs, nuts and seeds, fish, chicken), slow-releasing carbohydrates (oats, wholegrain rice), healthy fats (avocados, olive oil, nuts and seeds) and lots of fruit and vegetables at meal times. Keeping healthy snacks nearby.
- My favourite healthy snack options are oatcakes, nut butter and banana or fruit and nut based bars.

## **Quench the Thirst**

- You should be aiming for 1.5 - 2 litres of water per day. If you struggle with water add a squeeze of lemon or lime too it or a small amount of cordial.
- Keep a water bottle with you and put a reminder in your phone to drink regularly. Try to keep coffee, tea, fizzy drinks to a minimum. I know that can be hard!

## **Move Your Body**

- When it comes to effective studying/preparing taking short breaks is key and can help to relieve stress, clear your mind and lift your mood.
- Even 15 minutes of getting up and moving will make you feel better. Leave the phone down and walk/jog for 15 minutes, you'll be amazed at how much better you feel after it. Exercise releases endorphins helping you to think clearly and learn more.

## **Snooze for Success**

- A good night's sleep is important to enable you to study/performance effectively, concentrate properly and maintain peak energy levels.
- Try to go to bed at a reasonable hour, even when you are on a tight deadline.
- Leave the phone downstairs. It will be way easier to go to sleep without the temptation of browsing social media.

## **Stress is part of life**

- Stress is a natural survival response that can enhance performance at optimal levels. Stress is a part of life and managing it is key.

- Try and keep things in perspective. Exams or work goals are important but they are not the be all and end all. Take a deep breath and do your best with good strategies. That is all you can ask from yourself.