

Year 8 Parent Notes

Thank you for helping your son/daughter complete the online Options process. If however, you need a little more time or support, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via y8options@oxtedschool.co.uk.

Your child can also ask their tutor to help them complete their form online during tutor time. If access to a computer is difficult in tutor time, your child is also welcome to go to the Humanities staffroom at break or lunch and complete their Options form with Miss Wheeler, should this help. If your child is still finding it difficult to make a decision, please do email Mrs McNamara or Miss Wheeler and we can arrange an Options interview with them to support them.

It is really important that the students have time to relax and rest over the Easter holiday so that they can be ready for the challenges of the next term. Your child may find that their interest wains slightly for subjects that they are not taking next year, however, we would remind students that all subjects involve the development of life skills as well as literacy and numerical skills that will enable them to succeed in other subjects at GCSE. Please do remind your child of this if you feel that their attention is starting to wander.

Please find attached some key pages from 'Help your Kids with Study Skills' by Carol Vorderman for your interest. This week, we have chosen pages on relaxation and motivation.

Please do try to help your child remember to complete any homework tasks over holiday and check that they have all the equipment that they need in their pencil cases.

Thank you for your support so far this year. It has been a pleasure to work with you and your child and we look forward to continuing to do so in the summer term.

Kind regards,

Mrs A McNamara
Assistant Headteacher – KS3
amcnamara@oxtedschool.co.uk

Miss D Wheeler
Year 8 Progress Leader
dwheeler@oxtedschool.co.uk

Relaxation, visualization, and positive thinking

ANXIETY CAN BE OVERCOME BY LEARNING HOW TO RELAX AND BY TRAINING THE BRAIN TO THINK POSITIVELY.

Students need to find the right balance between work and relaxation. Focusing on positive thoughts and visualizing goals reduces anxiety and gives motivation.

Motivation booster

It is normal to feel anxious occasionally, especially when worrying about exams and one's revision workload. Students can use that worry to kick themselves into action. They can make a start either by getting some work done or by exercising.



△ Feeling anxious?
After identifying anxiety, students should brainstorm ideas on how to tackle it.



△ In the beginning
List some activities that could use up the anxious energy, and then choose one.



△ To get to the goal
Take action, and keep the list of activities handy for next time.

SEE ALSO

◀ 32–33 Handling the pressure

◀ 34–35 Keeping well

◀ 196–199 Coping with exam stress

Chapter 7 resources 246–247 ▶

HINTS AND TIPS

Anxiety as excitement

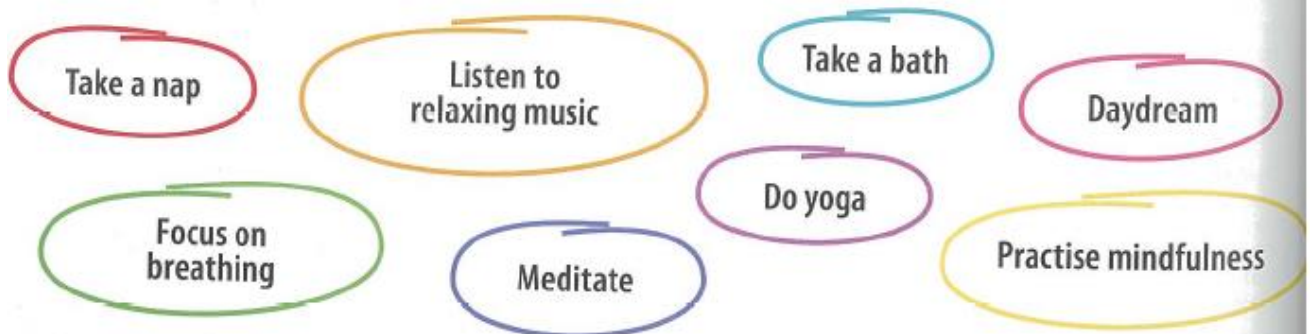
A more positive word for anxiety is "excitement". Using this positive, alternative word can change the perspective and turn the anxious feeling into an enjoyable experience. When people "feel" butterflies in their stomach or have tingly sensations, it means that the body is ready for action.

The importance of relaxation

Another way to deal with stress is to focus on relaxation. Studying requires a lot of effort. Students need to build in time to relax and restore their motivation. Relaxation has many benefits. It can lead to a lower blood pressure, a better immune system, improvements in memory and mood, an increase in motivation, and a better night's sleep. Regular relaxation keeps learners physically and mentally healthy.

▽ How to relax?

Relaxation means something different to everyone. Students should find out what works for them and use a combination of relaxation tools. Here are some suggestions.



Vision boards

The brain is a very powerful tool. For example, every great invention started as a vision in its creator's mind. Visualizations can have a great influence on learners' thoughts and feelings, too. Positive and goal-orientated thoughts make students feel good, and give them the incentive to get things done. This makes it more likely that they will achieve their goals. One way to do this is to create a "vision board" of important goals and dreams, to remind students of what they are working towards.

▽ What is a vision board?

A vision board is a collage of positive images, words, photos, and phrases that can motivate students. The board represents the outcome of what they are trying to achieve.

REAL WORLD

Pursue the dream



Walt Disney faced bankruptcy several times before he became a world-famous creator of movies, cartoons, and theme parks. Yet he had a dream, a vision that he never gave up on. One of his famous quotes is, "if you can dream it, you can do it". His story is a great example of what can be achieved through pursuing dreams with a positive attitude.

Write down
the goals

Add visuals
related to
the goals

Add positive and
motivational
statements

Put the vision
board up in
the room

Place the vision board
where it can be seen.

Imagining the moment of success
can help students to remain positive.

Put up a list of goals,
and read them daily.

▷ **Sample board**
Students should train
their brain to focus on
what they would like to
happen, not the worst-
case scenario. Looking
at a board such as this
one would help them
to visualize their goals.



Imagine the
best possible
outcome.

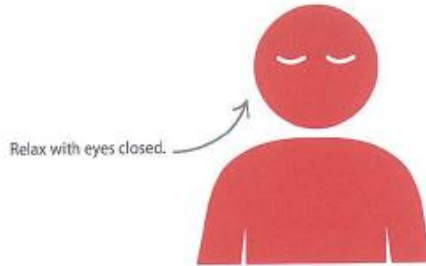
Add visuals to
get motivated.

Add positive and
motivational statements.



» Visualizations

The process of visualization is quite similar to daydreaming, the difference being that while visualizing, learners focus on a specific outcome or goal and imagine that it has already happened. Visualization starts while relaxing, with closed eyes, usually in a seated position. Students can try to imagine a goal being reached and feel the joy of success. Visualizing in this way helps students to create a positive mindset; it makes them smile, boosts their creativity, and relaxes them.











Relax with eyes closed.

Visualize the goals in mind.

◀ How to visualize

Students should think about success and create positive expectations. If there is more than one goal involved, they can use their vision board and go through each scenario, one at a time.

-  Use imagination or an existing vision board to create a clear idea of your goal.
-  Imagine that the goal is going to be achieved in the near future.
-  Imagine what will happen as a result.
-  Search for the inner feeling of success that accompanies a realized goal.
-  Visualize additional details, such as what you will be wearing.
-  Imagine what friends, family, and teachers will say when the goal is achieved.
-  Visualize each goal for around 5–10 minutes, at least twice a day.
-  Try visualizing first thing in the morning and just before going to bed.

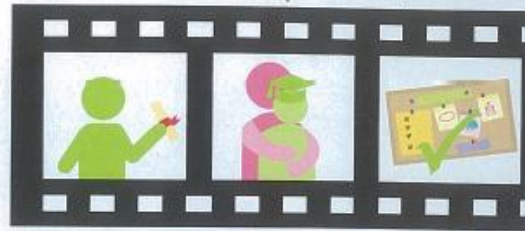
Mental movies

Mental movies take visualizations a step further by creating and playing back an "inner movie" of the outcome. As in visualization, mental movies can include the imagining of other people's reactions once that goal has been achieved (for example, a pat on the shoulder or parents saying, "Congratulations!"); students holding up a trophy, a grade A paper, or receiving a reward; and the celebration of the achievement. So, it is essentially a mental slide show with visual representations that students should "watch" in their mind on a daily basis.

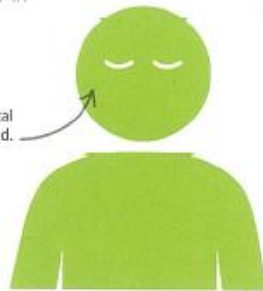
Receiving a certificate with great marks.

Parent congratulating the student on success.

Having all goals from the vision board realized.



"Play" the mental movie with eyes closed.



Practise daily

Whenever students have a few minutes to spare, they can relax and review their mental success movie. The more they do this, the better they will feel.

"Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve."

W. Clement Stone (1902–2002),
Businessman and author

Create inspiring playlists

Music is a powerful medium that, depending on the type of music, either enhances motivation or helps with relaxation. Most people have several favourite "feel good" songs that energize them, make them smile, or remind them of a happy moment. Learners could create different playlists for when they need extra motivation or want to chill out. They should choose songs with positive and inspiring lyrics.



Listening to one's favourite songs is a great way to relax and de-stress.

Motivational music

Music can help students to relax and feel good, and it can increase their levels of mental energy or motivation.

REAL WORLD

The "Happy" song

Pharrell Williams' song "Happy", from the film *Despicable Me 2* (2013), was a number one hit in more than 20 countries. It was the most successful song of 2014, worldwide. The song lyrics and music, combined with its video, in which people happily dance in the streets, created a positive and "feel good" effect.



