Fighting feelings of stress during exams

It's important for VCE students to properly manage their stress during exams. (iStock)

As VCE students would be well aware, exams are a time of stress, uncertainty and hard work. It is important to balance this stress with relief, uncertainty with predictability and hard work with relaxation.

Studies show that small, regular breaks between study sessions can improve mood and productivity. As you approach your exam period, remember that it is not maintainable to be constantly anxious.

You should have time to destress and think about something other than exams and study for a while.

Here are some ways to combat feelings of stress during exam time:

Positive self-talk: using negative language with yourself is neither beneficial nor deserved. Make an effort to recognise how much work you're putting in and allow yourself to see how well you're doing. You have worked hard to get this far, and a few weeks of study and exams won't undo all of it. Try to think of five things that you're proud of yourself for doing either in or outside of your school life and reiterate that you're capable of what you want to achieve. Visualise yourself doing well in your exams and receiving positive news when results are released.

Use some tangible grounding tools: have a cup of tea, play with your pet or scribble in an adult colouring book. It's okay to forget about exams for a while. In fact, it's beneficial to spend some time after you study to allow the information to consolidate in your brain, so pick up a book or make yourself a snack and keep your mind occupied for a moment.

Move your body: get the blood flowing! Whether you put on your favorite dance playlist and boogie around your room for a while, do some yoga or go for a stroll with a friend, getting active will refresh not only your body but your mind as well. It will also assist in creating and releasing endorphins to improve your mood and relieve feelings of stress.

It's likely that you've heard it plenty of times, but VCE exams are not the be-all and end-all of life. Despite the outcome you receive on ATAR day, there are always a variety of ways for you to get into your desired career. Life will go on after high school and it is there to be lived, so make sure you make the most of it. Best of luck to all VCE students!