

How I dealt with stress

1

For months I'd been unable to relax and I felt awful. I worried about things, I wasn't sleeping well and I couldn't concentrate on my school exams revision. Then my best friend told me that everyone thought I was always in a bad mood. (1) C

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I began by making some simple changes to my routine. Each morning when I woke up, I thought about things I was looking forward to, so that I started the day in a more positive mood. I kept doing that until it became a habit. I also knew I should do more exercise, but to tell the truth I don't enjoy doing sports.

(2) That really helped me to relax, particularly when I learnt to concentrate on enjoying the experience rather than let negative thoughts go through my mind.

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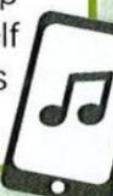
I changed the way I study, too. I used to put off working as long as I could until finally I had to study for hours non-stop, often until late in the evening when I was getting really tired. Nowadays I try to do my homework straight after school and every 40 minutes or so, I take a break, usually for no more than ten minutes.

(3)



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I've also discovered some great anti-stress apps for my phone, such as Mindshift, Live Happy and Smiling Mind. Some of these are designed for teenagers, with yoga and breathing exercises to help you relax, a 'book of happy memories' that you create for yourself to look at when you're feeling down, and relaxing sounds such as the ocean. (4) Some of these apps are free.



5

Last month I read an article which said people with a good sense of humour are usually happier and more relaxed.

(5) So watching cartoons or your favourite comedy series really can help you relax – and even make it easier to do your homework!

You are going to read an article about dealing with stress. Five sentences have been removed from the article. For each question, choose the correct answer. There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

- A** One I particularly like has a 'quick tips' section you can use in stressful situations.
- B** It was so funny that I felt more cheerful straight away.
- C** That made me realise I couldn't go on feeling so stressed.
- D** I knew I had to finish that first.
- E** It recommended that everyone should laugh more often every day.
- F** So I took up dancing instead.
- G** People who do this often seem to be more miserable than everyone else.
- H** If it's longer, I find it hard to get back into what I was concentrating on.