



Outspoken

Sponsored by: **Youth Link**

Got Stress?

By Farah Ahmed

It's that time of the year again: AP/SAT testing time. Woohoo! Well the celebration isn't all there right now. 'Tis the season to cram like crazy and make oneself antsy and antsy. Undoubtedly, this time of year is so much more stressful, worrying about remembering those obscure details for the US Government AP exam or freaking out over the new and improved SAT I.

But why do we go so overboard? Many won't admit to worrying too much, but the pressure from teachers, parents and most of all, ourselves keeps mounting and mounting until the day of the blessed event (i.e. test day(s)). Unfortunately, stressing is the worst thing you could possibly do. All that hard work and hours of studying may actually be unbeneficial to doing your best on the tests. Intrigued? Here are a few tips to make life a whole lot easier!

Let's begin identifying what stress is. Stress is the feeling of anxiety for an upcoming event. Sometimes stress can actually be good and help motivate a person to do better, but when stress is taken to the extreme, it becomes a problem. When someone is in a threatening situation – may it be physical, emotional or social – a part of the brain signals for change. Your heart rate increases and the stress hormones released into your blood stream will decrease the blood flow to your brain and digestive system, and increase to your muscles. Truth be told, stress is quite fine when you are in danger, but unfortunately cumbersome when you have to think or use your brain in any way.

"Stressing is the worst thing you could do."

In addition, according to the Archives of General Psychiatry from June 1999, scientists say that the stress hormones "can negatively affect a person's memory." In a study where scientists gave volunteers stress hormones or cortisol, they found "that memory and thinking ability declined with an increase of the hormone."

In short, more stress, the more memory loss and decreased brain activity; therefore, when stress initially leaves you, your academic test-taking brain returns to normal.



So why do we even stress ourselves out so much? Well, for success, no doubt about that. We want to get the best score we can in order to impress our parents, college admissions officers and

ourselves. But do we let the stress of these tests get out of proportion? Think about when you are calm; you can handle things in an efficient manner, but when you are in a hurry, chances are that things won't go as smoothly. So, again why are we like this? A factor might be parents who might be a little too assertive. It also could all be in your head. We tell ourselves things all the time. "Work harder." "You have to do well." We often have that internal dialogue open, but what do we say to ourselves?

In recent research, it has been determined that telling ourselves negative messages like, "I never do well on standardized tests. It's so unfair that I even have to take this stupid test. They're probably going to ask me all the stuff I don't know," will negatively affect our memory. Remember the phrase "mind over matter"? Well it turns out that it can be true. If we as students don't slack off (easy as it is), organize our time and evaluate our study needs in a timely and positive manner, then there is no reason to gain too much test anxiety. It would be horrible if you worked so hard and got so nervous that when you got to take the test, you blanked or were not able to use your entire brain and all that you learned. What we've learned from the psychiatric journal was that if we have too much stress from telling ourselves that this will be too hard or that we won't do well enough, then we truly won't do well enough: because we are not *allowing* ourselves to do the best we can.

Parents can sometimes be a little bit strict as well. But they do it because they love you, believe it or not! But that still doesn't give them the right to really get on your case and cause you even more anxiety. If that is the case, then talking to them is highly recommended.

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FUN & SAFE!

By Ian W. McIvor

Tips for a fun and safe summer

Sun

-Use sunscreen:

SPF (sun protection factor) 15 or greater is recommended. Reapply as needed.

Using sunscreen can help reduce the risk of skin cancer.

-Pull out the shades, a hat, and light clothing:

Wear sunglasses that absorb at least 90% of the UV rays.

During hot weather, avoid heavy clothing, sweatshirts and dark clothes; they tend to cause your body temperature to rise quickly.

-Drink lots of water:

Dehydration causes fatigue, headaches, dizziness, and nausea.

Bugs

-Use bug spray:

Mosquitoes can transfer diseases, such as malaria and the West Nile Virus. Use bug spray especially when camping and hiking in the woods to avoid getting bit.

Avoid wearing perfume and using scented soaps. Bugs tend to be drawn to those scents.

Swimming

-Learn to swim:

Before participating in any kind of water-based activity, learn to swim.

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No "Q" Allowed

By Edward Chang

A Day Without Things that Begin with the Letter "Q"

Time

5:55 am

Thoughts

Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep... Groggily, I role over and turn off my alarm clock. As I get up slowly, it dawns on me—today is the day that I will go without things that begin with the letter "Q". I moan inwardly, cursing my luck.

6:30 am

I hunger for something warm and mushy to eat for breakfast. I commend myself for recognizing that oatmeal would be the perfect thing to quench my odd hunger. I scavenge through my pantry, searching for oatmeal. I can only find **Quaker** Oatmeal. I realize that I can't eat it and settle for cereal, cursing my luck.

6:50 am

On my way driving to school, I begin to contemplate what things I must avoid in my day. I realize that I probably shouldn't ask **questions** during the day, cursing my luck.

9:20 am

I have a current events **quiz** in government. I think to myself whether or not I can convince my teacher to let me not take the quiz using this article as an excuse, but soon realize that any attempts would be fruitless, cursing my luck.

10:12 am

I pass one of my friends in the hall who is a **Quaker**. She waves to me as I walk by. I am at a loss of what to do—be polite or ignore her since I should be avoiding things that begin with the letter "Q". When I finally decide to be nice, she has already passed with a saddened look on her face when I did not respond. I make a mental note to apologize profusely to her the next day, cursing my luck.

11:00 am

In biology, someone brings up protein structure. The teacher then begins a tangent regarding the **quaternary** structure of proteins that I don't understand. I tune out the discussion since I decide I can ignore it on the basis that I should be avoiding things that begin with the letter "Q" and begin thinking about lunch. For some reason, I have a craving for a toasted sub from **Quiznos**, but realize that I cannot go, cursing my luck.

3:30 pm

Driving home from school, I realize that I needed peanut butter and cereal. While I normally would go to the **QFC** on the way, I realize that I can't. I go out of my way to a different grocery store, cursing my luck.

4:15 pm

I get home and am about to turn on my computer. I look at the keyboard and realize it is called a **QWERTY** keyboard. I convince myself that I should still be able to use the keyboard since if I didn't, I would go insane, cursing my luck.

6:00 pm

I begin craving **quiche**. I don't understand why since I rarely eat **quiche**, but I suspect that it has to do with the desire to oppose authority. Like the forbidden fruit, I start obsessing. I settle for curry chicken and rice, cursing my luck.



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Huge Thanks to our Editor, Kali!

Comments from our staff:

"Thank you for being such a wonderful editor!"
 "You helped our writing improve!"
 "Thanks for all the emails to remind me of deadlines!"

"You ROCK!"



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So, what else can you do to beat test stress, from the point of view of a student and fellow test taker?

I recommend loving your knowledge. If a negative thought comes to mind, pop it out quickly with a positive rebuttal thought.

Always eat breakfast because tests are in the morning and food is the brain's energy to process information and have it available in its time of need.

When it gets to the test, take deep breathes and think positive thoughts. Read over the questions and directions thoroughly. Tests will never go away, but the associated anxiety can be controlled by positive thinking and organization.

Always remember, one test will never judge your future success in life.



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日本の典型的な日

"A Typical Day in Japan"

By Al O'Neal

Learning from others...

Interview Questions Of Azusa Kano

Azusa Kano is a senior in high school and is 17 years old. She lives in Kobe, Japan with her parents and her younger sister.

She was my host sister when I went on exchange to Japan. Her English is considered to be very good by Japanese standards.

- 1. **What type of subjects do you study in school?**
Japanese, Classical Japanese, English, Music and so on.
- 2. **How do you get to school? (What sort of transportation do you use?)**
By train.
- 3. **How many days do people normally go to work?**
5 days of a week.

"It's not common for both parents to work outside the home."

- 4. **Do both your parents work? Is it common for both parents to work outside the home?**
Yes. I think it's not common for both parents to work outside the home.
- 5. **What do you do in your spare time?**
I listen to my favorite music.
- 6. **What is a popular trend among Japanese youth?**
I think it is iPod.
- 7. **What are some popular Japanese artists? American artists?**
Japanese artists: Ayumi Hamasaki, BoA, Ketsumeishi, Crystal Kay
American artists: Avril Lavigne, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Usher
- 8. **Do you believe American culture has an important role in defining Japanese pop culture?**
Yes.
- 9. **Where do you like to hang out with your friends?**
Kobe and Osaka.
- 10. **Do you spend a great deal of time watching television? About how many hours do you spend a day?**
I used to watch television about 7 hours a day.
- 11. **Do you believe there is great discrimination towards women in Japan? Is it better or worse, in your opinion, than America?**
Yes. I think it's worse than America.
- 12. **Do you plan to work outside the home?**
Yes.
- 13. **How do Japanese people view Americans?**
Japanese people's view of Americans is that their opinions are always clear.
- 14. **Do you have any advice for American teenagers?**
No.



Summer Reading

Staff Favorites

Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
Author: Douglas Adams
Genre: Science Fiction

Ender's Game
Author: Orson Scott Card
Genre: Science Fiction

Harry Potter Series
Author: J.K. Rowling
Genre: Fantasy

The Great Gatsby
Author: F. Scott Fitzgerald
Genre: Drama

To Kill a Mockingbird
Author: Harper Lee
Genre: Coming of age/Drama

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead
Author: Tom Stoppard
Genre: Drama (Comedy)

Sacred Hunger
Author: Barry Unsworth
Genre: Drama

Macbeth
Author: Shakespeare
Genre: Tragedy/Play

The Picture of Dorian Gray
Author: Oscar Wilde
Genre: Classics

A Prisoner and Yet
Author: Corrie Ten Boom
Genre: Historical



Tips for a Fun & Safe Summer
Continued from page 2

Tips to ensure the wellbeing of your furry and feathered friends.



Pets

- Give your pet lots of fresh water.
- Do NOT leave your pet in a hot car.
- Walk your pet in the early morning or early evening, NOT in the heat of the day (10:00 to 4:00) -- remember they still have on a fur coat!
- Try to find them shade to rest in.

Youth Link Corner

FREE Journalism Training

MAY 16th

Meet with staff from the King County Journal!

Get tips on how to do a catchy headline!

Eat free food!

Hosted by:

City of Bellevue's Outspoken
Teen Newspaper Staff

Join us on Mon., May 16,
Blakemore House
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Bellevue 98004

4:00 - 5:00 PM

Questions? Call 425.452.5254



Community Leadership Awards

MAY 25th

Attention, Teens!

**You are invited to
Bellevue Youth Link's
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Wed., May 25, 2005
7-8 p.m.

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11100 NE 6th Street
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RSVP by May 23 to
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*Where Youth and Adults Partner
Together to Build and Celebrate
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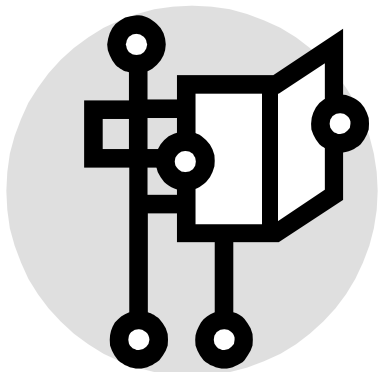
**Create a Team!
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