



Managing Stress in Our Daily Lives



When we face stress in our daily life, it can affect our ability to solve complex and challenging situations. Before a test or an exam, most people feel some level of stress. A little bit of stress before an exam or test can be a good thing. In fact, it can help to motivate us to work hard and focus on the task. However, too much stress can get in the way of our ability to study and perform on tests and exams. For this reason, it's important to not only learn strategies to manage stress around testing and exams, but also in our daily lives.

In this newsletter, we bring forward some suggestions of strategies that could be helpful in coping and reducing stress to a level that is manageable and positive. Just keep in mind that, when choosing new strategies to try, it's important to pick the ones that best match our lifestyle, personality and learning style.

Tips For Managing Stress



Sleep Well: a good sleep helps us remember what we've learned. It's important to be able to wind down before bed and provide the opportunity for our brain to recover.



Eating Properly: our body and brain need the nutrients from food in order to keep functioning to their full potential.



Exercise: physical activity can make us feel calm, fresh and energetic. Building exercise into our timetable can work magic!



Calm Breathing: practicing calm breathing daily can help prevent anxious feelings and helps us relax when we are feeling stressed.



Muscle Relaxation: by working to reduce muscle tension, we can change our experience of stress in our body. Neck, hands, stomach and feet are some areas that we can focus to help release tension and reduce pain created by stress.



Distraction: taking a break and do something else, and then return to the task. Some activities that could work as distraction are physical activity, art, puzzles, going outside, listening to music or play with a pet.



Visualization: this can help settle the mind by temporarily shifting focus away from worries and concerns (i.e. favorite place).



Noticing: taking time and noticing the good things happening around us, even if it is challenging or uncertain time. We could use grounding techniques, for example (google "grounding techniques" to find some ideas).



Changing Thoughts: we can't control everything that happens around us, but we can control our response to stressors. When we interpret events from a hopeful, positive stance, we are more likely to experience positive emotions.



Talk to Someone: if you find that you are still feeling overwhelmed and stressed, talk to someone you trust and reach for help with friends, family or a professional.



What happens when someone initially falls in love?

When Cupid's arrow strikes, a symphony of neurological fireworks ignites within the brain, orchestrating a cascade of emotions and sensations that define the euphoric whirlwind of falling in love. In this section, we explore what happens in our brain when we experience the feeling of falling in love and how it can lead to feelings of stress.

What happens when someone initially falls in love?

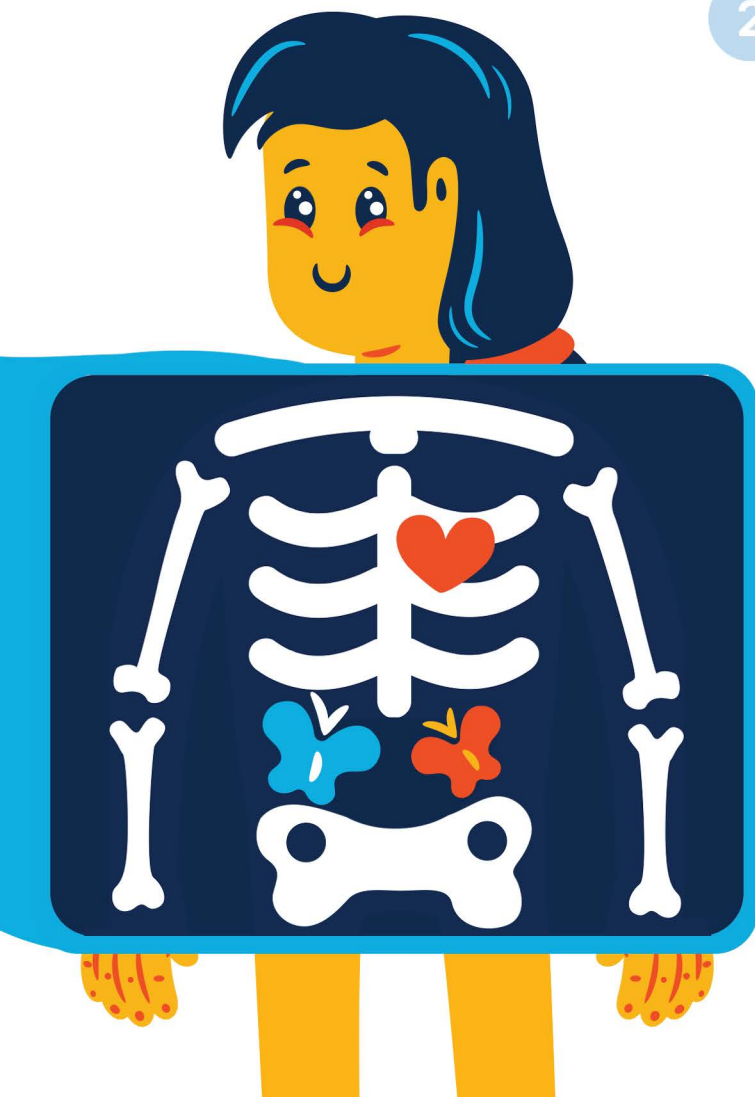
1

Specific areas of the brain are activated when you fall in love, in particular the limbic system and the reward centres. The limbic system has key roles in emotion and memory. This causes a positive mood and explains why the memories associated with new love are so strong.



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There is also an increase in dopamine and noradrenaline. Dopamine stimulates the reward pathways and increases motivation and obsessive thoughts and behaviours to pursue the love interest. Noradrenaline causes the feelings of euphoria, and the physiological responses of a faster heart rate, butterflies in the stomach and increased energy.



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At the same time, other brain areas are deactivated. Reduced activity in the frontal cortex reduces negative emotions and judgements. This explains why initially people may be blind to faults in the person they are in love with.



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But while you might be feeling less judgement, there is also increased cortisol, stress and feelings of insecurity in the early phase of falling in love.



* Check out the tip sheet on Pg. 2 for ideas on how to manage stress.

Love ON THE BRAIN



While love is often portrayed as a euphoric experience, it also comes with a range of emotions, uncertainties, and challenges that can cause stress. Remember when dealing with complex emotions, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and spiral into an anxious state of mind. By consistently employing healthy coping strategies to effectively reduce and manage stress, you can maintain a steady course towards your goals and well-being.

* Check out the tip sheet on Pg. 2 for ideas on how to manage stress.

So you thought you loved someone with all your heart? Well, think again...you've actually got...

Love on the brain!

Four areas of the brain get extra active when you fall madly in love. Two other areas are hardly active at all.

Love deactivates your **right pre-frontal cortex**, which is linked to depression

Your **anterior cingulate** works overtime any time you're euphoric

The **medial insula** is heavily involved in your emotions and gut feelings. It is at the side of your brain.

Your **caudate nucleus** focuses your mind on a new lover

Your **posterior cingulate gyrus** – linked to feeling sad – pretty much switches off

The **putamen** – an emotional hotspot

Where Can I Find More Information?

Explore our Mental Health and Well-Being page for valuable resources and support available at school and in the community.



Mental Health Resources

If you're struggling with your mental health there are resources available that can help you!

- One Stop Talk <https://onestoptalk.ca/>
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>
- Crisis help Sudbury <http://crisishelp.ca/>
- Reseau ACCESS Network <https://reseauaccessnetwork.com/>
- N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre <http://www.nfcsudbury.org/home.htm>
- Public Health Sudbury & Districts <https://www.phsd.ca/>
- School Mental Health Ontario <https://smho-smso.ca/>
- Youth Wellness Hub- Sudbury <https://ywhsudbury.ca/>
- Canadian Mental Health Association <https://sm.cmha.ca/>
- LGBTQ Healthline <https://www.youthline.ca/>
- National Eating Disorder Information Centre <https://nedic.ca/>
- Body Brave <https://www.bodybrave.ca/>
- Dare to Be Aware D.A.R.E. <https://www.daretobeaware.ca/>
- Children's Mental Health Ontario <https://cmho.org/>
- Jack.org <https://jack.org/Home>