

## **THE WAY FORWARD TO A STRESS-FREE BOARD EXAMINATIONS**

Exams can be a daunting task and it's okay to feel uneasy when you're about to write your Board Exams. Stress is your body's natural response to pressure. It can help you focus and get things done, but sometimes it can all get a bit too much. Exam stress can make one feel lonely and become a heavy load to carry, but you don't have to tackle it alone. Lots of young people find exams difficult and it's okay to need support. Don't hold it all in – try talking to someone about what's on your mind. If someone knows you feel stressed, they can have your back, encourage you and listen when you need them to. It could be a friend, family member, carer, community/faith leader, teacher, or anyone else you trust. You don't have to go through this alone.

Exam stress can affect anyone and it can show up in lots of ways, like:

- feeling anxious or down
- getting irritable and angry
- struggling to sleep
- changes in your eating habits
- having bad thoughts about yourself
- worrying about the future
- losing interest in stuff you usually like
- finding it hard to concentrate
- feeling unwell – like headaches, feeling sick or tired

### ***UNDER PRESSURE?***

The pressure to do well can really get on top of you and only add to the existing stress of exams. It could be from your school, your family, your friends, or yourself. Even if the people around you aren't putting pressure on you, you might still want to make them proud. But remember, no matter what your results are, your mental health is important too.

Whether you feel stressed right before your exams, or it builds up over time, here are some things you can do to ease the pressure and cope with exams better:

**1. *Be kind to yourself:*** Reflect on all the things you've already achieved, in or outside of studying. Write a list of what you rate about yourself, and what others like about you too.

**2. *Talk about feeling under pressure:*** If people around you – like your school or family – are putting pressure on you, be real with them about what you think you can handle. Make it clear if your expectations are different from theirs. And if you need to, have a word with a teacher you trust about the stress you're under at home.

**3. *Don't compare yourself to others:*** Try not to stress about how others are prepping for exams. Focus on what you can do. You might feel like other people are smashing it, revising more than you, or just not stressing out as much. But we're all different and that's okay. Remember, your friends are coping with exam stress too.

**4. Practise time management:** One of the most effective ways to manage exam stress is by creating a structured study schedule. Breaking down revision into manageable chunks over several weeks or months will help you avoid last-minute cramming, significantly reducing your stress levels.

**5. Cover Your Syllabus on Time:** Start your preparation by following class lessons properly and covering the complete syllabus in a systematic manner. Find out the complete chapter-wise marking scheme for all subjects and prepare accordingly. **Ref:** MBOSE Notification No.264 and sample question papers uploaded on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024 in the MBOSE website.

**6. Practice:** Practice helps us get better and be more confident. The benefits of deliberate practice include enhanced long-term memory retention and automaticity of skills. Practice the sample MCQs, short answers and long answer given in *the CM Impact book* that can be downloaded from the MBOSE website, along with those given by your subject teacher in school. Discuss with friends and family to gain more insight into the topic. Remember: Practice makes perfect!

**7. Limit social media and screen time:** Though it may seem like a good way to unwind, excessive social media use during exams can increase stress levels. Constant comparison to others' academic progress or seeing online distractions can contribute to feelings of inadequacy or guilt. Limiting screen time and focusing on personal progress rather than external distractions can help you maintain your mental balance.

So, keeping the above points in mind - **Go, give your best shot!**