



3 Simple Tricks to combat exam stress

1st Trick : To calm down and concentrate in 2 minutes

- ◆ Sit in a comfortable and almost upright position
- ◆ Slow down your breathing to **3 seconds inhale** thru the nose and **3 seconds exhale** thru the mouth for **the first minute** – first with eyes open & looking straight ahead and then with eyes half-closed or completely closed
- ◆ **In the second minute**, with eyes closed, replace the exhale with the quietly saying the word **R-e-e-e-L-a-a-a-X** very slowly
- ◆ You will normally be relaxed and calm after this simple exercise
- ◆ **If you want to start working, open your eyes and continue, at normal pace, inhale thru the nose and exhale thru the mouth while counting quietly each exhale from “1”, “2”, ... to “10”, and then again for another minute.**
- ◆ If you want to relax, keep your eyes closed or half-closed & continue to inhale thru the nose and exhale thru the mouth at normal pace
- ◆ If you want to sleep, keep your eyes closed, lay down and breath normally thru the nose



2nd Trick: To Change into a positive “I-want-to” mind-set

- ◆ Sit comfortably and Think of one thing you **enjoy doing** in the past or you **want to do** in the near future (e.g. to go to the beach in the summer)
- ◆ Notice how you feel while you were thinking
- ◆ Choose one task you **have to** or you **must** finish shortly. How do you feel when you talk to yourself, “I have to finish the task” ? (e.g. “ I have to do a one hour quiz tomorrow!”) Do you feel stressful? Most likely. If so, can you get back the “I want to” feeling just a moment ago. (“ I want to do the quiz tomorrow!?”). Most probably not.
- ◆ To lower or even remove the stressful feelings from “have to” tasks, all you need to do is to ask yourself “What do I want to do most as soon as I finished the task?!” (e.g. **“What do I want to do once I finish my quiz?”**)
- ◆ If you are creative on what you want to do after the quiz, thinking about it might even make the quiz “enjoyable”. Try it!

3rd Trick: Removing negative thoughts in a Flash

- ◆ How many times have you been distracted by negative thoughts or images when faced with a difficult task or something you cannot avoid? You cannot wait till you are in the mood? And you cannot concentrate?
- ◆ Here is a simple tool to help you remove the negative thought or image.
- ◆ **First** you must **be specific** about the thought (e.g. you had an argument with a good friend the day before and you felt misunderstood. So the negative thought could be the image of the argument, the anger of being misunderstood, the sorrow of being accused by a good friend, etc ... You might be distracted by all these. However, each of them has to be removed separately.) Pick the thought you want to act on, ... **then ask yourself: If I keep thinking of xxx, what good does it do?! If it does no good, why do I keep thinking of it?! And if I stop thinking of it, what else can I do?!** (Take a deep breathe immediately to prevent your answering the questions). The questions are for your unconscious mind. It will take some time to figure out if thinking of xxx had any good. If not, it will stop coming back to distract you. **Amazing! Try it.**



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- ◆ Of course, by now, you will have figured out this is in fact an ad to entice you to learn more about yourself, especially the times when you were weighed down by your negative thoughts.
- ◆ If you want to learn more or to adapt the skills to your own situation, or just to get a Chinese version, you need to arrange a personal consultation session at SAO.
- ◆ **The number to call is 2766 6800 and the person to call is John Chan.**