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Managing Stress During Finals By Maddie Osgood



Planning is crucial to creating an effective study plan. Source: <https://possibility-cp.com/4-tips-to-simplify-strategic-planning-for-your-board/>

As the end of the semester approaches, stress can be at an all-time high for students. Managing final projects, papers and exams can be difficult. As the assignments accumulate, stress can start to build up too. It is important to keep your mental health in check while also making school a priority. Here are four ways to help manage stress during finals that can be incorporated into your everyday routine.

Unplug from Social Media

Social media can make it difficult to focus on any task for a long period of time, especially schoolwork. It can also provoke unnecessary stress. The constant stream of news can create anxiety, even if you are unaware of its direct impact. Keeping your phone out of reach while studying is the easiest way to unplug from social media.

Exercise

Exercise is crucial for maintaining mental health. Stress can provoke the “fight or flight” feeling, that causes adrenaline to be released throughout the body. The only way to effectively release this feeling is to get active. Schedule a thirty-minute walk outdoors or put on your favorite song and dance around your study space to fulfill your exercise requirement for the day.

Talk to Friends

Finals week can cause you to isolate yourself from friends in order to accomplish extra studying. While this may seem beneficial, it can add to that stressful feeling. Try to interact with someone who makes you feel happy at least once a day. This can help you decompress and engage in thoughtful conversation.

Create a Schedule

If you don’t use a planner, this is the perfect time to start. The last two weeks of the semester are hectic, as most finals are scheduled within this period. Plan out your week. Label your calendar with due dates and exam times. Create an hourly schedule to plan when to get your studying and homework done. Make sure to set aside enough time or even more time than you anticipate — you’ll feel even more accomplished if you finish an assignment earlier than expected. Taking the time to plan and create your schedule will help with de-stressing.



Work hard and ace your finals! Source: <http://blogs.und.edu/cfl/2017/05/good-luck-on-finals/>

How to Celebrate the Holidays during COVID by Elizabeth Scinta

2020 is finally coming to an end, but not before the holiday season commences! This holiday season has already been very different than most of us are used to, but different doesn't have to mean bad. We might not get to have holiday parties with our friends or family, but there are other ways to celebrate the holidays in a safe way. Keep reading for three ideas on how to celebrate the holidays safely!

Zoom Party

I know we're all tired of Zoom at this point, but it's so useful for getting together with friends and family during the holidays. Schedule a Zoom "party" with friends and play games, watch a movie or just catch up with each other! With family, consider going around and saying what you're thankful for, what 2020 has taught you or what you're looking forward to in 2021. It doesn't have to be a huge ordeal if you don't want it to be. Make it a 30-minute Zoom and get some good holiday cheer in!



*Photo by Chris Montgomery on Unsplash
It might look different than normal, but Zoom is a great way to keep in touch with friends and family!*

Virtual Gift Giving

Gift-giving this year is also a whole new ballpark as we have to figure out what the safest way is to give someone a gift. My recommendation: make it virtual! This can come in many different forms. Purchase a virtual gift card that will be delivered straight to the person's email, purchase an item off a website and deliver it straight to the recipient's house, or do something more personal like a handwritten card or picture frame to show them that, even during this difficult time, there are still people out there thinking about them.

Quality Family Time

Cherish this extra time you have with your family and make the most of it. Consider a holiday movie night complete with popcorn, hot chocolate and holiday pajamas! Make a homemade dinner with a holiday theme to show them how

thankful you are for all that they do. Zoom in with relatives that you usually celebrate with so it feels a little more normal.



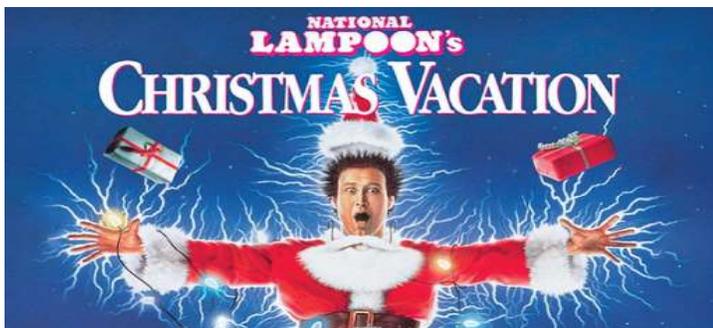
*Photo by Food Photographer | Jennifer Pallian on Unsplash
Check out this decadent hot chocolate as inspiration for your own!*

Whatever you decide to do this holiday season, remember that Pinterest and TikTok are your best friends when coming up with fun festive things to do!

Best Holiday Movies by Molly Welby

As the holiday season is in full force, it can be hard to get in the spirit while juggling final papers and exams. One thing I find I can multitask very well is doing homework and watching Christmas movies in the background. Hearing the all too familiar Christmas soundtracks and seeing Will Ferrell, Chevy Chase or Jim Carrey can put you in the holiday mood and push you through the last bit of studying or writing you have to do. Whether you're a dedicated Hallmark fan, a sucker for satire or you like to stick to the classics, there's a movie to satisfy your Christmas craving.

Personally, what gets me in the holiday spirit is having a chuckle or too, so I reach for Home Alone or National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation. Laughing at the misery of the burglars as they're outsmarted by 8-year-old Kevin McAllister is always a highlight of the winter season. Although both these movies include endless shenanigans that come with the rush of preparing for family to arrive or return, there's always the underlying theme that the holidays bring us all together no matter the distance or our differences.



If Clark Griswold can't get you in the holiday spirit, I'm not sure who can. Source: <https://www.reillyartscenter.com/events/national-lampoons-christmas-vacation/>

I know you hopeless romantics are looking for a movie or too to make you believe that Santa is putting your one-true-love under the tree this year. Whether it's Hallmark or Netflix's annual vomit of cheesy Christmas movies, there's one for everyone. Love Actually is both a romance and a drama and tells the story of nine love stories through the holidays in France and ends up finding what Christmas is all about- keeping those we love close.

If you're a sucker for the classics there's no shortage of movies that have survived the test of time. A Christmas Story, released in 1983, tells the tale of Ralphie, a mischievous boy who wants one thing from Santa- A Red Ryder BB Gun. Even though his mother insists that he'll "shoot his eye out" he persists and well, you'll have to watch to find out.



A Christmas Story has become a staple in many households around the holidays. <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/11/how-a-christmas-story-became-an-american-tradition>

Hopefully, despite the global pandemic we are living through, you'll still get in the Christmas spirit or celebrate whatever holiday you choose to celebrate by turning on a movie that brings you joy and brings what family you may have together.

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