

Coping with College Series
Music Can Help Reduce Stress

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This is a busy time of year! The year is about to come to end and many of us are swamped with papers, finals, and other last minute details. The weather is getting warmer and after a long winter, everyone is eager to experience the outdoors instead of staying inside. When stress levels are high, music can be used to reduce anxious feelings indoors or outdoors.

Music is something that is around us all the time: in the supermarkets, restaurants, doctors' offices, and parties. Research has shown that music can change a person's attitude and can change perceived levels of anxiety.

Anxiety is a feeling that every human being will feel at some time or another. However, people do react differently to stress because everyone's body is different. Some may need to take a few moments out of their busy schedule to relax and others may need to move and "work off the tension." Music can be a part of many different activities: activities that promote relaxation as well as ones that inspire movement.

Exercise is great way to reduce stress and also enjoy the warming weather. Music is a component that can make exercise feel more like recreation and less like work. Choosing music that motivates you will make it easier to start moving, walking, dancing, or any other type of exercise that you enjoy.

Other times, people may need to take a "time-out" from the busy events of the day. Music can be a great tool for creating a stress-free ambience. Taking the time to allow the body to relax and rejuvenate can be an important factor in surviving this end of the semester "crunch." Choose music that helps you feel comfortable, still, and positive. Listen to that particular song that creates restful feelings while relaxing in a peaceful place. Focus on deep breathing, think about relaxing all the tense muscle in your body, and contemplate the things that are good in your life. This process can provide a break for your body, brain, and emotions.

Music is a part of humanity and it can encourage positive feelings. Use this wonderful tool to help you make this busy time in your life a little more manageable.