

OPINION

Stress relievers for finals

BY REBECCA BEASLEY

AS THE SEMESTER comes to an end, the sun sets earlier, and finals loom over students, stress is no unfamiliar thing. It never hurts to have a couple strategies to help manage inevitable stress. Time management skills go along with many of these, so consider making a daily schedule to help you stay organized and stress-free.

First on the list is this: make time for friends/family. Even if you are just spending time in silence as you study, having company is a mood-booster. Of course, with a possible second lockdown, wearing masks or hanging out via zoom is a good idea.

Secondly, sleep! Our bodies are busy while we sleep as they heal and repair. While it may feel like you should sacrifice a little sleep for some studying or recreation time, it is more beneficial to just sleep. Twenty minute naps and eight hour slumbers are ideal. Use caffeine to get you through the day, but do not use it as a sleep substitute. Take care of yourself!

Along those lines, taking care of yourself is a good way to avoid stress. Exercise helps you sleep better, and it releases endorphins (one of the “happy hormones,” the E in DOSE). If exercise is not your thing, consider simple breathing techniques or stretching. Yoga or meditation can be another substitute.

A fourth stress reliever is to “unplug.” Try to avoid scrolling endlessly on social media. While it feels good to distract yourself, it is not a good stress reliever. Try connecting with a friend, calling a parent, going for a walk, or even watching an episode of a show. If all you’re looking for is a distraction, try making a list of things you’ll treat yourself to after finals. What holiday traditions do you look forward to? List out everything you’re excited to do after finals.

Listening to music is good to help focus while studying, and it can also provide a good break from studying. Whatever music it is that you love--try it! I listen to music from video games while I study and take a break with all the feel-good songs from my childhood.

When was the last time you had something to eat? Do you have water, or some sort of hydrating drink? (No, coffee does not count. Neither does that energy drink you have.) Take a break from studying and eat. A proper meal is ideal, but take snack breaks if that is all you can do. My favorite finals snack is dark chocolate. Remember, taking occasional breaks will help you study better!

Another stress reliever is to think positively. Cheesy, right? Even if it is sarcastic, a positively-worded thought is better than you telling yourself how many ways this can go wrong. It’s good and healthy to have goals, but don’t let the feeling of impending doom drag you down.

Finals cause a lot of stress, but being prepared and taking care of yourself will help reduce stress and even help you succeed. Remember to connect with loved ones, get sleep, go for a walk, eat, and stay hydrated. Just around the corner is winter break!

The Newest Pointless Innovation in Social Media: Fleets

BY RYAN SKILLE

ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH, 2020, the popular social media app Twitter rolled out a new feature by the name of “Fleets.” This new feature allows Twitter users to post a picture, Tweet, or text to a temporary story that will be deleted after 24 hours, in contrast to a regular Tweet which will stay on a user’s profile forever unless they decide to delete it. According to Twitter’s blog post on the day of the release, they came up with the term “Fleets” because the impermanent nature of them means they are “fleeting” thoughts. Twitter also specified that they had been receiving a lot of information regarding users feeling uncomfortable about Tweeting because it seemed “so public, so permanent, and like there’s so much pressure to rack up Retweets and Likes”. Twitter also stated that as of yet, there will most likely not be any indicator if another individual screenshots your Fleet, meaning that anything you Fleet can still be saved by someone else and permanently Tweeted out later to make fun of you. If only Twitter had realized that there has already been a feature that has existed since the app was created and that allows users to feel more comfortable about the permanency of Tweets: uninstalling the app.

Regardless of how many people actually asked for the new update, the responses have been largely critical. @ANNVYSHINSKY says, “If you send a ‘fleet’ you’re dead to me”, to which @underthenettle replied with, “Elizabeth I to Philip II of Spain.” @KassieMcClung on Twitter states, “Fleets is a very fun and necessary addition to Twitter. All social media platforms are not seemingly blending together,” referencing the fact that practically every single social media app similarly developed a story-like feature after Snapchat introduced the idea back in 2013. Many Twitter users are also comparing the name of the feature to the top-selling brand of enema: Fleet. For those of you that don’t know, an enema acts like a laxative that is used to treat constipation and clean the lower bowel.

If Twitter’s new Fleets feature worked properly, that would be one thing. However, due to a bug discovered very quickly after Fleets were announced, users were able to use an app that’s designed to interact with Twitter’s back-end systems via its developer programming interface not only to view and download Fleets without notifying the individual who posted them, but also archive the URLs so that the Fleets were accessible long after the 24-hour viewing period had expired. When questioned about the bug, a Twitter spokesperson told TechCrunch, “We’re aware of a bug accessible through a technical workaround where some Fleets media URLs may be accessible after 24 hours. We are working on a fix that should be rolled out shortly.” However, at the time of writing this article, no fix has been released yet.

In a world in which social media rules every aspect of our daily lives, something like a story feature on a single app seems small and trivial. However, there are many Twitter users that have hundreds, thousands, and even millions of followers, and what they say or post could have a large influence on their audience. Always remember to be respectful, kind, and open-minded in any conversations you engage in.

New Year, New Me?

BY KALYNA XIONG

THIS YEAR, I WILL save more money.” “I will be healthier.” “I will learn something new.” Do any of these sound familiar? Everytime the year ends, many of us come up with goals for the upcoming new year to break out of our old, bad habits. Self-improvement is a great thing. We should always find ways to better ourselves. However, do we even need to have these goals for the new year?

We create many goals for ourselves to achieve when a new year comes around; we see January as a fresh slate. There are those who dream big and have ambitious goals, whereas others have goals that are more toned-down and easy to achieve. Don’t get me wrong, both kinds of goals are great. Are all of them attainable? Maybe, again, it would depend on what they are and how the upcoming year goes. Having small, easy goals definitely help check off someone’s list of resolutions. By the time December rolls around, one could say they’ve improved some sort of aspect in their life. Tougher goals are a bit difficult to reach and they need extra effort to be achieved. As a result, the end goal may not happen when winter starts to come around.

Like many others, I’m a participant in New Year’s resolutions. It is something I have done growing up. Each year, I have a list of goals to reach. After writing out my list, I have a burst of energy as I am ready to complete them. I am also one of those people who start strong, but then my motivation slowly dies out within the next couple of months. When I fail to reach my goal, what do I tell myself? “There’s always next year.”

Do I mean those words? Of course I do. When a new year comes around again, I keep the same goals I have failed to achieve and then add in more goals. However, the majority of my goals are always put to a pause halfway through and then I wait it out again for another year. The cycle is never-ending. I’m positive I’m not the only person who does this. The majority of the other people who create a New Year’s goal are on the same boat; there is only a sliver of people who can actually do it, and I applaud them for it.

New Year’s goals are definitely fun to make, and it is amusing to see how much we improve our lives over the years. Many of them can be achieved, but not all of them. Reaching our goals really depends on how realistic they are and how motivated we can be to complete them.