Avoiding the Black Hole of Despair - A Guide to Managing Exam Anxiety

Table of Contents: Introduction; What is Anxiety All About?; What do we know about exam anxiety?; Recognising exam anxiety; Stress and your body – The fight or flight response; What can I do to manage my anxiety?; Build good habits; Keep a balanced lifestyle; Relaxation; Watch what you're thinking; If unhelpful thoughts are automatic, how do I change them?; Unhelpful thinking styles; Knowing what you're doing; Studying in the lead-up to the exams; Improving your memory; The night before an exam; The day of the exam; During the exam; After the exam is over

Introduction
Anxiety as an emotion gets a bit of a bad press. But in the right circumstances, feeling anxious is what motivates us to do something about a threatening situation. Anxiety is what causes you to jump out of the way of a truck travelling too fast when you are about to cross the road. It helps you avoid fights with people much larger than you. People who do not experience healthy levels of anxiety often get injured. Way back in pre-history, anyone who did not feel anxiety probably did not survive for long.

This booklet is focused very much on handling the kind of anxiety connected with doing exams, but the techniques will work equally well with other types of anxiety.