EXAM STRESS

7 things to do the night before

You've done the work. Tonight's job is to protect tomorrow's brain. Pick 1 to try first. Do all 7 to feel the difference.

THE HOPEFULL INSTITUTE

1 STOP STUDYING AT 8PM

Cramming past 8pm steals more sleep than it gives you marks. Memory consolidation happens while you sleep, not while you reread. 30 minutes of self-quizzing, then close the book.

2 WALK FOR 20 MINUTES

A short walk lifts mood, drops stress, and sharpens memory. Students who walked before studying remembered 25% more words. 20 minutes outside. No earbuds. No phone.

3 PACK THE BAG TONIGHT

Morning decisions drain the brain you need for the exam. Pre-deciding tonight raises follow-through 2 to 3 times next day. Lay out the uniform. Pack pens, calculator, water, ID.

4 PHONE IN THE KITCHEN

Phones at the bedside delay sleep by 30 minutes. Blue light suppresses melatonin and pushes your sleep window later. Charge in the kitchen. Not the bed.



5 WARM SHOWER AT 8:30PM

A warm shower drops your core temperature and helps you fall asleep faster. A meta-analysis of 17 studies found it cuts sleep onset by 36%. 10 minutes at 8:30pm. Bed by 10.

6 3-MINUTE WORRY DUMP

Worry on the page, not in your head. A 2011 Science study showed this freed up working memory in anxious students. Set a 3-minute timer. Write 1 worry, then 1 thing you can do.

7 BED BY 10. BREATHE.

8 hours of sleep beats 1 more hour of notes. Slow breathing at 6 per minute lowers heart rate and dials down anxiety. 4 rounds of 4-7-8. In 4, hold 7, out 8. Lights out.