The Stress Demon

It has been found that some measure of tension/stress improves learning and memory. This makes sense: you are not likely to remember or learn something that you have not made any effort to take in. Therefore, don’t worry about being a little bit stressed, but be careful that your worry doesn’t become a habit or consume all of your energy.

Ways to Manage Stress

Take action. All demons lose their power when you face them square. Their power over you exists in your fear of them and in your running away. Therefore, when they creep up on you, turn around and roar. Like any bully, they will back down. In more concrete terms: if you have something to do, don’t give in to anxiety. Instead, get started. Just sit down and begin. Don’t think about how you’re going to do it, just do it. Start. Now. Within 10 minutes, your stress will begin to subside. Your focus will be on the task rather than worrying about the task. There is no secret to this. Pick up the book/paper/pen/computer disk that you need and start.

Get enough sleep. The role of sleep in good mental and physical health is being researched, and more and more it is being revealed that enough sleep, at an appropriate time, is critical for optimal functioning. During sleep our physical bodies are repaired and replenished and our mental and emotional well-being is restored. There is no substitute for sleep. You get the best sleep before midnight, and you will sleep best if you try to keep to a sleep schedule: retire and rise at the same time.

Exercise. In addition to supporting good general health, exercise is a proven stress-reducer. It can take different forms: strenuous housework or handiwork, working out at the gym or pool, playing sports, or playing with children or pets. Make exercise part of your routine, and you will find it easier to manage stress.

Maintain good health. You will be useless if you are sick all the time. The added stress of school will increase your susceptibility to germs that circulate. Also, being in contact with so many people will make it likely that you will come in contact with these germs. Therefore, eat well to keep your blood sugar in balance (go easy on the coffee - its benefits are short-lived), get enough rest and recreation, and exercise to keep yourself healthy and fit.