

(Meera Ravi is a psychologist with many years of experience in dealing with students' queries about handling studies. If you have problems managing your studies, write in to her at bragedi@indiatimes.com. Do not forget to mention HELP DESK in the subject line. Or send your questions to Help Desk, Education Times, The Times of India, 40/1, S&B Towers, MG Road, Bangalore 560001).

Meera Ravi



HELP DESK

PRESSURE FROM PARENTS

I am Vinay, studying in II PUC. I know this is a crucial year for me and I am working hard. But I feel a lot of pressure from my parents to do well. I feel I cannot cope with it. But I do not want to let my parents down. Please, how can I tell my parents about this?

Dear Vinay

At the outset, let me tell you that you are not alone. We are in a generation where success in examination is seen as a passport to a successful life. I appreciate your acknowledgement of your hard work. Are your parents aware of your pressure? Perhaps its time to bridge the gap by having a heart to heart chat with them. If you think you can talk to them, then go ahead and let them know your concerns. Make sure you stay calm and do not over-react or interrupt. Be open and objective.

In case you are not comfortable talking to them, then learn to deal with the stress. Keep a journal. Getting stress out of your system is a positive way to cope with pressure. Bottling it up will eventually have a negative consequence. Consciously, do something nice for yourself. Make time for leisure activities that you like. Spend time with people you enjoy being with. It helps to relieve stress. Talk

ing to someone trustworthy about your feelings may also help.

LOSING CONFIDENCE

I am studying in class 10. I am an average student. But I feel very bad when the teachers point out to good students and tell me I must do as well as them. I have lost confidence in myself. Please advise me about this situation. How can I feel confident again? Sudhindra

Dear Sudhindra,

Considering the fact that everyone is born with unique talents and strengths, I understand your hurt when being compared to other students. The key lies in building inner resources strong enough to withstand any outside blow.

- Foster competence by performing one task everyday that makes you feel you've accomplished something.
- Look at yourself in the mirror and list all of the positive qualities that you have. Doing this every day can help you build a better self-image. When you're feeling down, going through the list may boost your spirits up.
- Stop negative self talk, regardless of what others may say. Catch yourself when you have a thought like, 'I am not good'; replace it with 'I am doing my best.'
- Everyone is good at something, so discover the things at which you excel and give positive affirmations to yourself based on that; for example, 'I comprehend very fast,' or, 'I am good at sports.' Be focussed and determined in carrying it through.

SLOW AT STUDIES

My name is Vaibhav. I am studying in class 12. My problem is that I study very slowly. So I think this is affecting my scores. Even though I study for a long time, I am able to complete very little of the syllabus. So, I don't get time to revise and hence, forget whatever I have studied in the exam. Last week, I took four hours to complete just two pages. I am also slow in practising Maths. Could you please help me?

Dear Vaibhav

Pay attention to your attention. Are you focussing when you are studying? Have a realistic and achievable goal before you start each study session. Make up your mind that a) when you are studying, you will not let anything distract your mind b) you will get up only after achieving your goal.

Make a self-study notebook for each subject. Use two different colour pens. With each paragraph/page you read from the book, make questions, as if you are going to create a tough question paper in that subject. This will force you to concentrate on the subjects. Note down the questions in one colour and answers in a different colour. Write the answers in your own words. The tougher the questions you have made, the better you have concentrated and the longer you are going to remember what you have learnt. Making a time table for studying helps because then you can divide your time as per your priority subject (including time for revision). Before the exam, revise from the self-study notebook.