

stem4

Support for Results Day Anxiety 2023



stem4 has
comprehensive
advice to support
you this results day

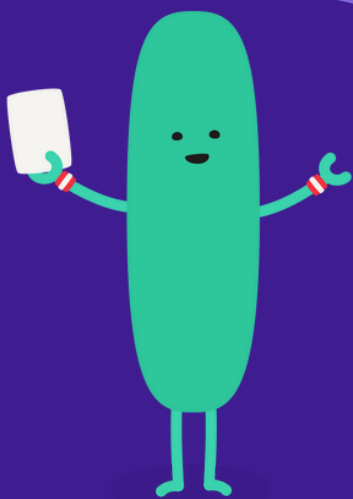


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Our results day tips are all provided by Dr. Richard Graham, an experienced Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist and Clinical Director at [stem4](https://www.stem4.org.uk).

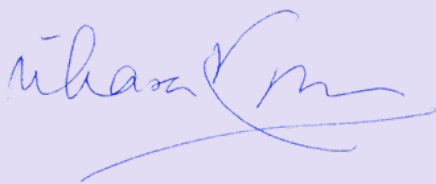
Statement from stem4 Founder and CEO, Dr. Nihara Krause MBE

When it comes to important moments in the education year, few carry that potential mixture of happiness and excitement or upset and anxiety as Exams Results Day. stem4 have annually provided young people with support on results day.

To provide this support, we started where we always do at stem4, by listening to what young people wanted help with. Blending our insights from young people, educational establishments, together with our new developments in social listening, we have created a series of blogs that cover everything from effective support for feelings of anxiety, to more complex issues such as how you tell people your results, and practical support on next steps. We hope the blogs help face the changes that inevitably arise post-results, be they joyous or disappointing, and provide young people with ideas and tips to be resilient for their futures.

Hold onto what you value in yourselves, remember you are not 'your result'. We wish all young people, their families and educational establishments, every success, and for those disappointed, we hope we can help you to find the best way to move forward, there are always alternative routes to getting to your goals and ambitions.

Regards,



Dr Nihara Krause
Founder and CEO at stem4

Why am I scared of exam results?

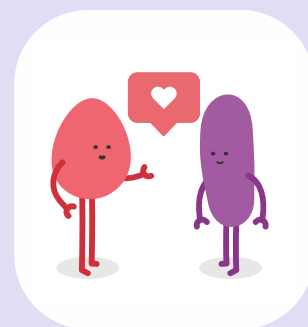
Firstly, everyone is scared of exam results, even if they hide it. Why?

- No matter how hard you've worked, you never know exactly what's going to be on the exam.
- Exams can have a big impact on your life.
- Results of big exams like GCSEs and A Levels are more public than other assessments.

All in all, it can be a lot of pressure for a young person. Although exams are not the only way of assessing how great you are, they have become a core part of education (though you can sometimes find courses which take a different approach).

Feeling scared isn't necessarily helpful, though. If you can change the way you look at exams, they can become less scary or intimidating and you can start to see them as something that helps you grow. For example, if you look at exams as an opportunity to learn about how you deal with pressure, like an audition, performance, or sporting event.

So what can you do to reframe how you think about exams?



7 tips to help with anxiety about results day

1

Hold on tight to what you value in yourself

No exam results can take that away from you and remember that you are not a 'result'.

2

Be honest with yourself about keeping up with your work

See exams as a way of tracking yourself; but get support if you are struggling.

3

Think about your goals and what is important to you

Do you need exams to get you to where you want to be? What else is necessary to achieve your goals?

4

Use stem4's free [Move Mood App](#) to help you achieve your goals

Move Mood uses the evidence-based treatment Behavioural Activation Therapy to help you improve your mood by encouraging you to increase your motivation to carry out a variety of tasks in order to help you to move forward, take control and feel positive.

5

Don't compare

What someone else gets may be good for them, but might not be right for you. Find your own path.

7 tips to help with anxiety about results day ⁶

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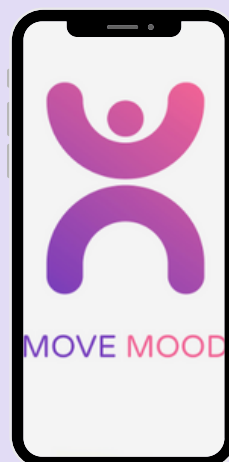
Talk with those you trust and are comfortable with

Tell those close to you about your hopes and fears. Try and start the discussion well before your exams or results day. This will help them know how to be there for you and support you on your journey.

7

Explore the 'Grit Box' section of the stem4's free [Clear Fear App](#)

The [Clear Fear app](#)'s 'Grit Box' can inspire you and help you to stay determined. Clear Fear is an app developed for teenage mental health charity stem4 by Dr. Nihara Krause, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, and uses the evidence-based treatment CBT to focus on learning to reduce the physical responses to threat by learning to breathe, relax and be mindful as well as changing thoughts and behaviours and releasing emotions.



<https://www.clearfear.co.uk>.

<https://www.movemood.co.uk>.



How can I stop worrying about Results Day?

When you're preparing for your exams, it can be comforting to know that you have some control over the situation, i.e., how much and how well you revise.

Afterwards, however, the relief of finishing an exam is almost always followed by exam results anxiety. The anticipation and not knowing can be a big source of worry for anyone waiting for results as it is, quite literally, a waiting game.

Thankfully, there are some things you can do to help and manage your exam results anxiety.

Tips to help with waiting-for-exam-results anxiety

1

Go easy on yourself

Remind yourself that it is completely normal to feel tense and anxious when you are waiting for something unknown. It can feel overwhelming, but it doesn't last forever.

2

Practise being more present

Try to focus on the present, the here and now, instead of thinking about the future and 'what ifs'. To bring yourself back to the present, try this simple activity: focus on 3 things you can see, 2 things you can hear, and 1 thing that you can smell or feel. Keep noticing each of these things and use this as a method to ground yourself.



Tips to help with waiting-for-exam-results anxiety

3

Foster positive thoughts

Don't just focus on the negative things that could happen, but think of the positive outcomes too. Balance your thoughts by writing down 3 positive things that could happen when you get your results.

4

'Take5' and breathe

Practice feeling in control of your anxiety by using powerful breathing exercises.



Scan the QR code to watch the [video](#).

5

Try the [Clear Fear app](#)

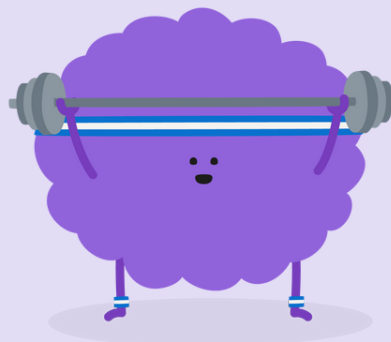
For more activities and information to support your anxiety, use [stem4's free Clear Fear app](#). You can boost your resilience with Clear Fear's 'Grit Box' and 'Clear Your Fear' with the many in-app tools and activities that help overcome your worries.

<https://www.clearfear.co.uk>.

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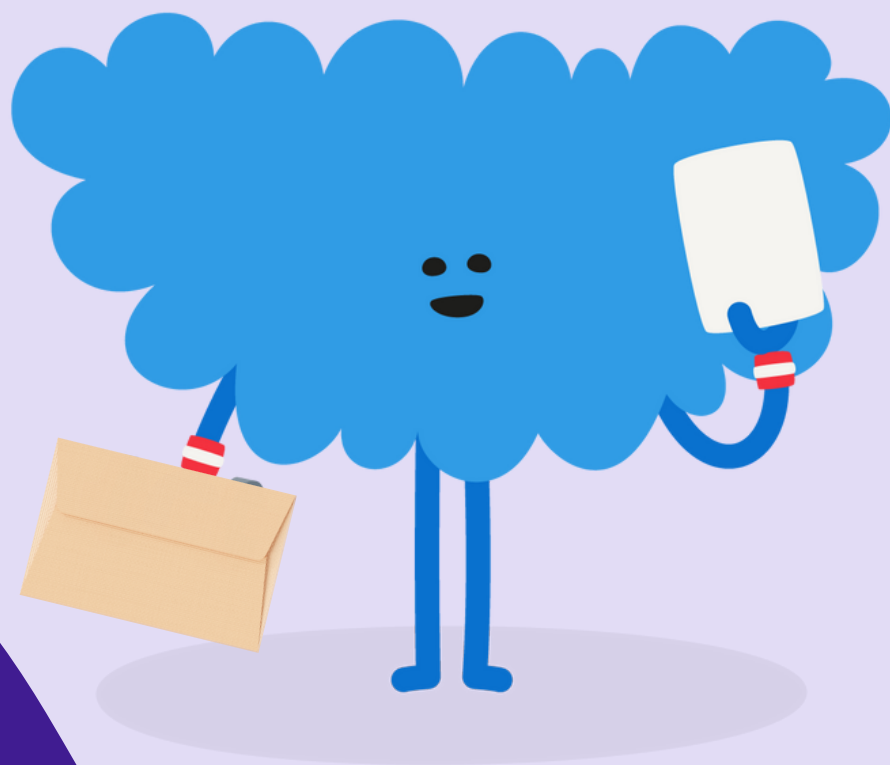
Do something enjoyable

Pick an activity that can boost your mood and keep you inspired. You deserve a great summer.



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GCSE Results Day 2023



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Tips for coping with GCSE Results Day 2023

Do you remember the start of year 7 when GCSEs seemed further away than the horizon? But you knew in the back of your mind that they were the 'big thing' you were working towards. Now, a few years down the line, you're finally doing your GCSEs and thinking about all the exciting things you can do next (including dropping some subjects!).

It can feel like a bit of an anti-climax when you do finally finish your GCSEs and, as we move into August, worries about GCSE results day will start to grow for many young people. If you're starting to feel a bit worried or scared about results day, here are some tips to help you.

1 Learn and practise a calming technique
stem4's Take5 Breathing Exercise is a simple exercise to help you manage anxiety, and all you need is your fingers. Watch the video [here](#) or scan the QR code.



2 Talk it out
Talk to someone (like your parents, friends, or teachers) about how you are feeling. This will help them know how they can support you on results day itself.



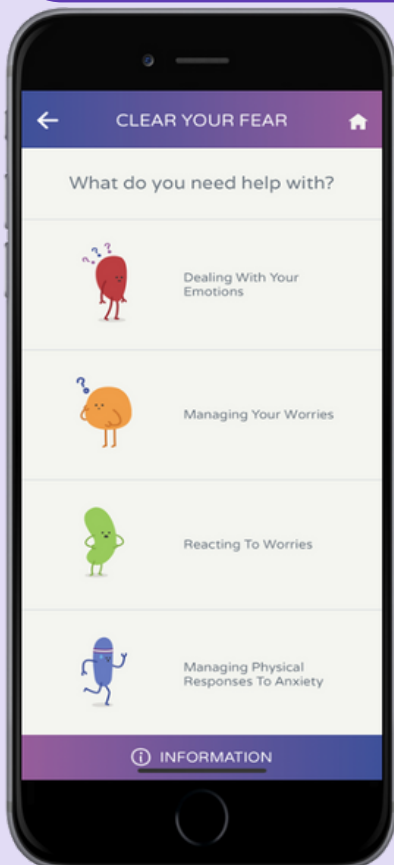
Tips for coping with GCSE Results Day 2023

3

Practise worry management

Try stem4's (free) clinically-developed app Clear Fear to manage and overcome your worries. You can personalise the app and track your progress to notice changes (and improvements!).

Clear Fear is an app developed for teenage mental health charity stem4 by Dr. Nihara Krause, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, and uses the evidence-based treatment CBT to focus on learning to reduce the physical responses to threat by learning to breathe, relax and be mindful as well as changing thoughts and behaviours and releasing emotions.



Visit <https://www.clearfear.co.uk>.



"Wow! I tried this out for a friend, and wow. It's nice! I recommend it to people who are struggling with anxiety. Or maybe you're just going through a rough bit. Whatever you need it for, this app is excellent!"

"This app is free and amazing to help with anxiety and panic attacks. Thank you sooo much to the creators of this for making this resource available to me it has already helped me tremendously in the short time I've had it."

"I honestly didn't think this app would be THIS helpful. It's good when you need to go through a bad moment of anxiety and you need some help. I have trouble sleeping and with palpitations but the breathing exercise calms me down and puts me to sleep so fast. The other activities are also a nice distraction. Keep up the good work!"

Didn't get the GCSE results you were hoping for?

1

Find ways of distracting yourself to stop stressing over an exam result

If you don't get the grade(s) you thought you would, talk it through with your teachers to decide whether the results should be sent back to be checked. In the meantime, try and keep busy.

2

Remember that exam results are not a measure of your worth

What if you fail your GCSEs? Exams are a measure of your school work and ability to sit tests. They are not a statement about who you are. So, do your best to ditch negative thoughts about yourself. Each time you think something negative, try and replace it with a positive statement about yourself. Just because your results may be disappointing, it doesn't mean that you are too.

3

You will get many more chances to shine

GCSEs are just one part of a long journey to get to where you want to be. If you can learn from your mistakes, with hope and determination, you can still get there and achieve what you hope to.

4

Do what's right for you

Sometimes you end up doing better in a subject that you don't like that much, and not so well in a subject that you're interested in and want to continue with. You may then feel a pressure to stick with the subjects you are most successful in. Be sure to talk through your options with teachers and family to make sure you're making the best choice for yourself.

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A level results day 2023



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Tips for coping with A-Level Results Day 2023

For many people, A Levels represent a doorway to the next part of their lives. After GCSEs, the next two years are filled with UCAS, personal statements, interviews, offers, and sometimes rejections. It can be a very intense period in a young person's life.

It's not surprising then that many (if not all) young people suffer from waiting-for-exam-results anxiety. It's completely normal, but it can be overwhelming. So here is our guide to help you reduce that A Level results day anxiety, and start to think more clearly about those important next steps.



Tips to help with waiting for A-Level results anxiety

1

Ground yourself in the present

Focusing too much on a future that you can't control will only make you more anxious. So instead of fixating on 'what if?' questions about the future, try to focus on the present, the here and now. To bring yourself back into the present, focus on 3 things you can see, 2 things you can hear, and 1 thing that you can smell (or feel).

2

Learn and practise a calming technique

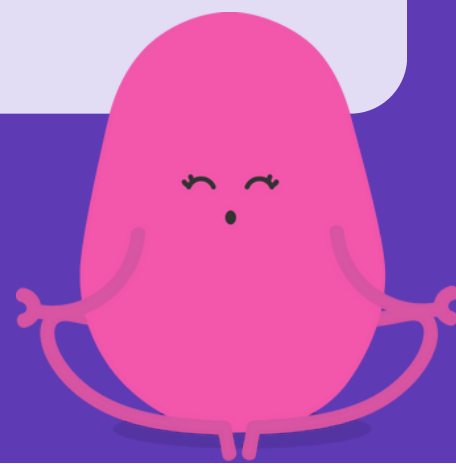
stem4's Take5 Breathing Exercise is a simple exercise to help you manage anxiety, and all you need is your fingers. Watch the video [here](#) or scan the QR code.

**3**

Practise worry management

Try stem4's (free) clinically-developed app [Clear Fear](#) to manage and overcome your worries. You can personalise the app and track your progress to notice changes (and improvements!).

Visit <https://www.clearfear.co.uk>.



Tips to help with waiting for A-Level results anxiety

4

Practise positive thinking

What if you fail your A-Levels? Getting disappointing grades is very common, and you will not be alone. Exams are a measure of your school work and ability to sit tests, they are not a statement about who you are. So, make an effort to ditch negative thoughts about yourself. Each time you think something negative, try and replace it with a positive statement about yourself. If your results are disappointing, it doesn't mean you are too.

5

Research your options before results days

Whether your A-Level results end up being better or worse than expected, or even just right for your firm offer, it's still a good idea to know your options before results day itself. Have a look at the [UCAS](https://www.ucas.com) website to learn about clearing and what your options might look like. This will help alleviate any extra stress on the day in case it doesn't go as planned.

6

Know that your results don't define you

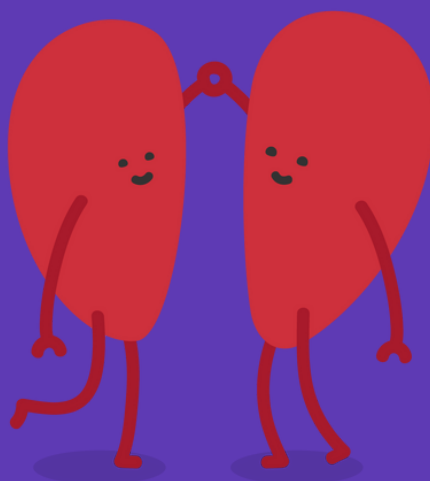
Whatever your results, there will always be new opportunities for you to move forward in your life. Often, something unexpected will help you make better decisions and may even lead you down a better path (that you might not have otherwise considered!).

How can I tell people my Exam Results?

One of the challenges of results day is thinking about how you are going to share your exam results with parents, family, friends, the list goes on.

Oftentimes, getting great results will feel easier, but if you have friends with disappointing results, it can feel a bit complicated. On the other hand, if you are disappointed with your results, it may be difficult seeing friends getting good results.

But, with a little planning, you can make results day more manageable for yourself.



stem4's top 5 tips for sharing exam results

1

Be mindful of how you speak to yourself

Find a comfortable and balanced way of thinking about your results to try and avoid hating yourself if you are disappointed—this will also help you share your news. Exams involve so many different factors, including some luck (like if the right questions came up for you!). So, it's good to understand what worked and what didn't, without letting extreme feelings take over. If anxiety does get the better of you, resources like stem4's free [Clear Fear app](#) can help you perform better next time.

2

Remember that people love you as you are

It's all too easy to think that your parents and friends want you to be some perfect version of yourself, and one that gets amazing results. But they've known you for a long time, and know how hard exams are. Even if you get disappointing results, remember that they will still love the person you are.

3

Share your hopes and fears with someone else

It takes courage to tell someone before results day what you're hoping for and what you are worried about. But if you can open up to someone, they will be there, able to support you, when you do get your results—they'll be able to share both excitement and disappointment with you on the day.

stem4's top 5 tips for sharing exam results

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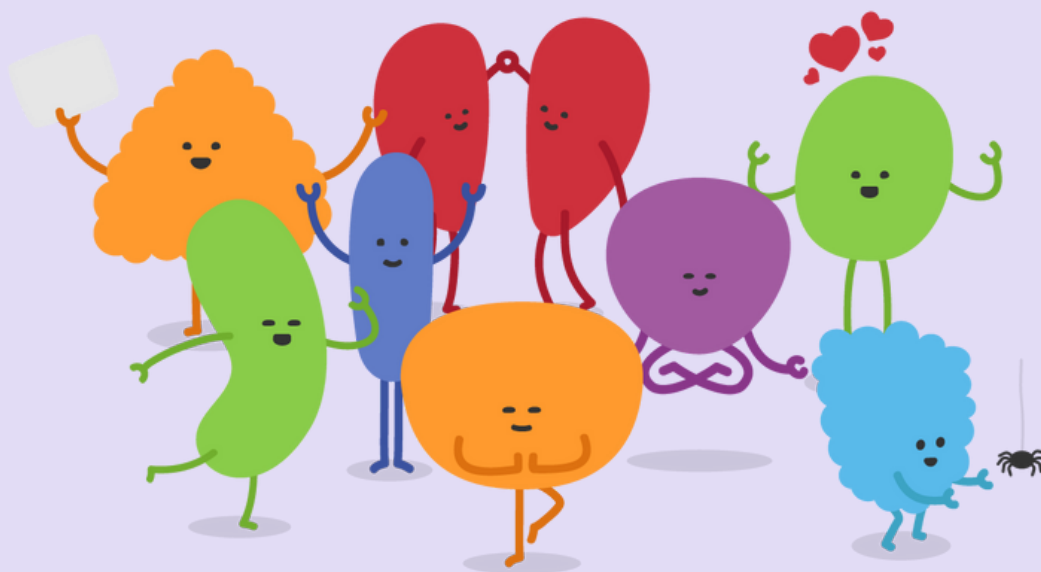
Decide in advance how you will share your results

It is easy to broadcast news on social media, but you can't know what impact it might have on your friends. So think about what might be the best way of sharing—whether that's in person, via a messaging app, or in a family chat—so you can get and give support.

5

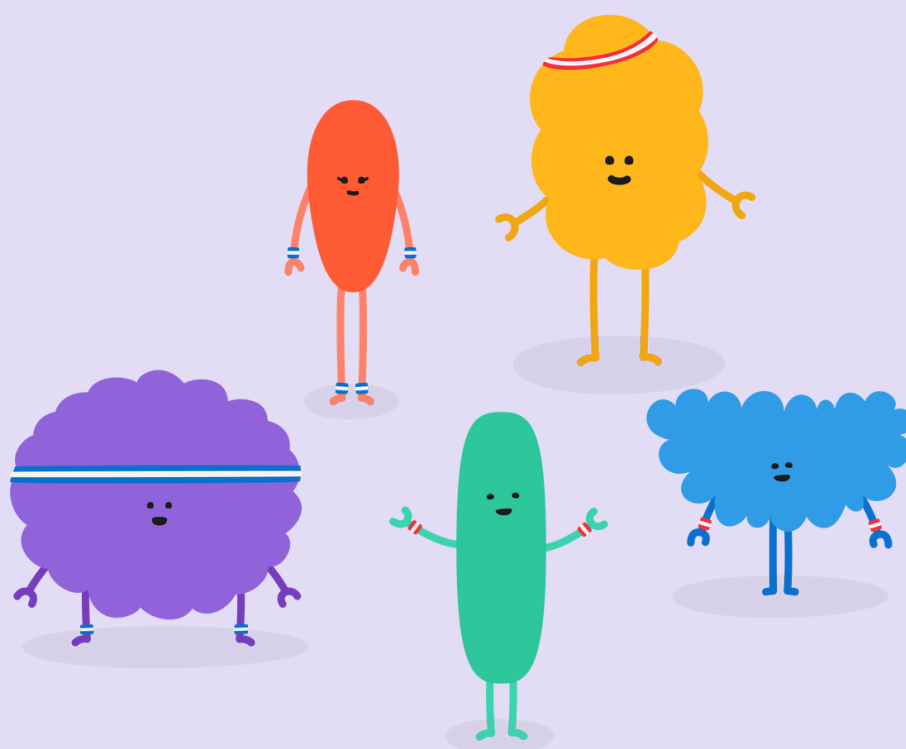
Whatever happens, celebrate

No matter what your results, you have taken major exams. That is an amazing achievement and, whatever your results, you deserve a celebration for doing your best through these difficult times. Go and enjoy the rest of the summer holidays!



How do I support a friend who got better or worse results than I did?

Results day is a personal experience for everyone—whether you did better, worse, or as you'd expected. Your situation may end up being very different from your friends, so planning how you will talk to friends about each other's results can make an intense day a little easier.



How Do I Support a Friend Who Got Better or Worse Results Than I Did?

1

It's okay to keep your results to yourself

If you are not happy sharing your results with your friends, you shouldn't feel bad about keeping them to yourself. Give vague responses that your results were better than / not as good as expected, and let your friends know if you need some time.

2

Give yourself space

Delay talking to potentially insensitive friends until you feel you can provide a rehearsed response.

3

Avoid the 'humblebrag'

Don't have false modesty if you've done really well. Saying 'I don't know how I got all 9's when I didn't put in much effort' or 'I only did well because the exams were easy' will only put down those who haven't done well and make them feel worse.

How Do I Support a Friend Who Got Better or Worse Results Than I Did?

4

Be mindful on social media

Think about the impact posting your results on social media might have on your friends who had a bad exam, and think carefully about the comments you make. As well, try not to let anger or jealousy spoil a friendship if your friends have done better than you. You might find it easier to take a step back from social media on results day.

5

Be there for an upset friend

If a friend hasn't done so well, give them time to talk about how they feel, and listen. Try not to offer reassuring comments that neither of you quite believe, such as 'It's only an exam.' Instead, ask if you can help with next steps. Brainstorm with them but don't necessarily give advice.

6

Think about the person behind the results

Whatever their results, stay connected with your friend(s) and don't fall into gossiping about who got what results. A lot can change very quickly after results day, so make an effort to keep in touch with your friends—they may need a friend, and so will you.

Understanding My Exam Results: How Important Are Exams?

For good or for bad, exams are a core part of the education system. But, as a way of measuring what you've learnt or how hard you've worked? They don't suit everyone.

Nevertheless, they can be an opportunity to learn how to be more resilient, how to face challenges, and may even help us feel we have earned our next steps.

So, whether you've done better than expected, or find yourself feeling like you've failed, having a healthy relationship towards your exams and results can help you move forward.



How to relate to your exam results



Focus on your hopes and dreams

Whatever the results are, try to work out (as much as you can) what you want to achieve and in what area(s). If you get good grades in subjects you don't like much, it can take you down the wrong path. Low grades in your favourite subjects can also make it seem like you can't succeed in that area, but with work and determination, you can still get there.

Try out the Grit Box in stem4's free [Clear Fear app](#) to find inspiration and support. Or try stem4's free [Move Mood app](#) to help you set goals that will help you get to where you want to be.



Exams are just a snapshot

When you take photos on your phone, not every picture turns out great, as so many things contribute to the final result. Similarly, exams capture just one moment in time and are not a full representation of you and your talents; on another day you may have achieved something quite different.

How to relate to your exam results

3

Clear your fear

If anxiety affected your exam performance, the good news is that there is a lot you can do to help improve your situation. For example, stem4's free Clear Fear app is full of tips and activities that can help you manage and reduce your anxiety. The app is based on what psychologists do to support young people who suffer from anxiety.

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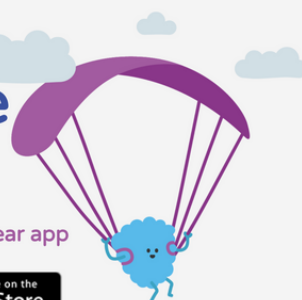
Different paths

It can often feel like there is only one path to get to where you want to, but there are often alternative routes, such as through work or apprenticeships. These can give you experience that will be very desirable in the future. Universities are often seen as brands to attach to your profile, but the reality is that it is not where you get to, but what you do when you are there.



Want to
overcome
anxiety?

Download the free Clear Fear app



How to relate to your exam results

5

Create a plan

Planning helps us achieve goals and become more resilient. Whatever your results, try to plan next steps with the support of adults you trust or good friends. You can use stem4's free [Move Mood app](#) to help you set, manage, and reach your goals.

[Move Mood](#) is an app developed for teenage mental health charity [stem4](#) by Consultant Clinical Psychologist Dr. Nihara Krause, and uses the evidence-based treatment Behavioural Activation Therapy to help you improve your mood by encouraging you to increase your motivation to carry out a variety of tasks in order to help you to move forward, take control and feel positive.

6

Beware of 'the house of mirrors' effect

You know yourself, and your individual talents and abilities, better than anyone else. Exam results can be like those mirrors that reflect back a distorted version of you. So check with yourself if your results feel like a true reflection of you. But also be open to new abilities that you may have developed, such as doing well in an area you weren't sure of before.

What can I do if my Exam Results were different to what I expected?

At stem4, we know that managing your anxiety when waiting for something as significant as your exam results can be a full-time job. But it's also helpful to get great information and advice on what your options might be, no matter if you've done better or worse than expected.

Sometimes, you just need information and practical advice...

We recommend [The Student Room for 2023 Results Day](#) post for more resources.

- [Guide to A-Level results day](#)
- [Information about getting grades reviewed](#)
- [When is GCSE results day \(and what to expect\)](#)
- [University contact details for UCAS Clearing 2023](#)

Check out these resources before results day, so that you're ready to take the next steps that are right for you, especially if you later end up dealing with something unexpected...

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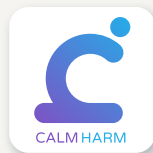
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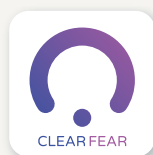
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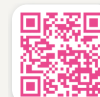
stem4's mental health apps



A free app to help teenagers resist or manage the urge to self-harm
www.calmharm.co.uk • @calmharmapp



A free app to help children and young people manage the symptoms of anxiety
www.clearfear.co.uk • @clearfearapp



A free app to help teenagers manage low mood and depression
www.movemood.co.uk • @appmovemood



A free app to help families and friends provide mental health support
www.combinedminds.co.uk • @combmindsapp



A free app to help young people manage negative body image, poor self-worth,
 and related early-stage eating difficulties or disorders
www.worthwarrior.co.uk • @worthwarriorapp

stem4's award-winning apps are available to download from the App Store and Google Play.



stem4
 supporting teenage mental health

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