

1. School student **Ester Montoya** knows she has to improve her marks in her main subjects. She's trying hard, but it's not easy and sometimes she feels she's doing too much work, "I have to get away from it now and then," she says, "so recently I've joined a local youth theatre. It really helps because it takes my mind off everything, it's a kind of escape from reality. Also I'm meeting other people of my age and I'm hoping to make some friends there. Something I've been meaning to try, though, is work helping others, perhaps old people. A friend of mine does it, and she says it really makes a difference — both to them and to her."

2. For seventeen-year-old **Steve Ellison**, life is particularly busy right now. He's revising for some important exams but he still manages to find time for his favourite free-time activities, which include long-distance running. As well as doing plenty of exercise, he also tries to maintain a healthy diet. "I've told myself I must always eat a variety of healthy food, with lots of fruit and green vegetables, though if I'm out with my mates I may give in to temptation and have a and chips. I never drink coffee because it makes you talk and act nervously, and it keeps you awake at night, too, which is bad for your stress level."

3. First-year university student **Amelie Lefevre** believes that the best way to beat stress is to organise your life more sensibly. "My life used to be pretty chaotic, there always seemed to be so much to do, often jobs that other people should E. doing. So what eventually learned to do was to say no, politely, to extra work. That helped, as did making a list of priorities for each day, with somethings scheduled for today, others for tomorrow and some that could be postponed for longer. I also make rules for myself about the amount of sleep I need. There was a time when I was staying up until all hours, but I was exhausted the next day so I don't do that any more. I think I managemy time quite well now."

4. Student **Ndali Traore** likes to get up early so he has a relaxed start to the day. "I hate leaving jobs till the last minute, and I always try to do those I like least first, he says. When he has some free time, he goes to the cinema, or out with friends. If something's bothering me," he says, "I often find that just talking to them about it helps. Particularly if you can make a joke about it, because it always seems a lot less serious when you do that.' If he's on his own, he has a special way of dealing with stress: "I try to recall occasions when I was really relaxed, such as spending the day by a beautiful lake in the sunshine. That often works, he says.

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Which person likes to think back to times when they felt less stressed?

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