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### Nonconventional ways to avoid lapses of sanity

Posted by [rufsarah](#) on November 2, 2012 in [Life and Religion](#)

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by *Raquel Levy, Lifestyle Editor*

Between Sunday and Monday this week, I spent almost \$300, traveled 1,546 miles to four different cities, missed two classes, two quizzes and five hours of work just to sign and initial one piece of paper.

Okay, a car loan is kind of important. But maintaining my car came at the expense of stressing about the two books I had to read almost in their entirety, the essay I had to rework and the five articles I had to write. Added to the stress was that each of these things had to be done between the rows of a car or an airplane.

If you know me at all, you're probably thinking, "That's what you get for procrastinating, Raquel." I know my reputation precedes me, but it feels like I have not stopped working or writing or running around in weeks.

Let's be real for a second. Articles on how to manage stress all say the same things: time management, do not do tomorrow what you can do today, wake up early, exercise. All good things. But what happens when stress is not just ripping your air out in frustration anymore because there's too much to do and too little time? What happens if you've been stressed for weeks, even after the big test?

The stresses of a college student go beyond tests and papers and projects. Most of us work, some of us have more than one job, some of us are graduating and have no idea what we're going to do after graduation.



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Others are still deciding on a major, one of the most important decisions we'll ever make. Some of us have financial troubles, relationship troubles, family troubles.

Stress can become too much to deal with and suddenly we're dragging our feet around, forcing ourselves to half-heartedly do our assignments when all we really wanna do is lie on the floor, take a nap and make the world go away.

Not all of our problems can be solved by "buckling down and getting to it," and not everything will be magically better if we "stop procrastinating" but here are three things I've realized can help with the stress.

**1. Do something that will make you feel like yourself.** This is probably not going to be anything productive. This will probably be a waste of time. But it's probably the most important thing you need to do. For weeks of dragging my feet around, I kept telling myself "I need a break." I got small breaks, but they were never enough. It took staying up until 3am helping my housemate and two walks in the rain to finally make me feel refreshed and ready to take on my stress.

**2. Talk/complain to someone.** Such a simple concept, but not always easy to do. We don't want to bother anyone, we don't want to give up our "strong" image, and it is hard finding someone to actually listen.

But the more we bottle things up, the more we have to carry. You reserve the right to whine, be a baby, slump on a chair, lie down on the floor, hit your head on the wall or whatever works for you. Find a person who you think will let you complain to no end. And if that person tells you to stop complaining and do something about it, get up, dust yourself off and find another person to complain to (my email is rlevy@southern.edu if anyone needs it). Then, you can get on with your massive to-do list.

**3. Look on the bright side.** Same as the last one: easy concept, but oh so hard to do. But this is what's going to get you through the stress and on to happier times. Even though I was angry that I had to spend so much money and get behind on my work to go home, I tried to focus on my excitement to see my baby cousin whom I'd been missing.

If you can find an immediate bright side, focus on that. If you can't, just remember it probably won't matter in five years. This, too, shall pass.

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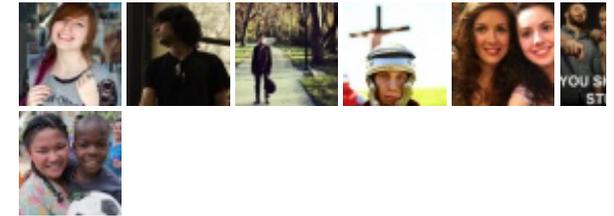
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