




Exam Season

Coping with exam stress when you're
living with an ED / in recovery



Exams can be a stressful time for anyone

If you are also navigating an eating disorder, or focusing on recovery, you might be worried about how the extra pressure will affect your mental health. Or, you might be feeling worried about how your ED might affect your ability to navigate exams.



Here are some tips from the SWEDA team for coping with the extra pressure exams can bring



1) Take care of your body and mind

Continue to prioritise your bedtime routine. If you're finding it hard to fall asleep, remember that time spent resting your body is better than no rest at all.

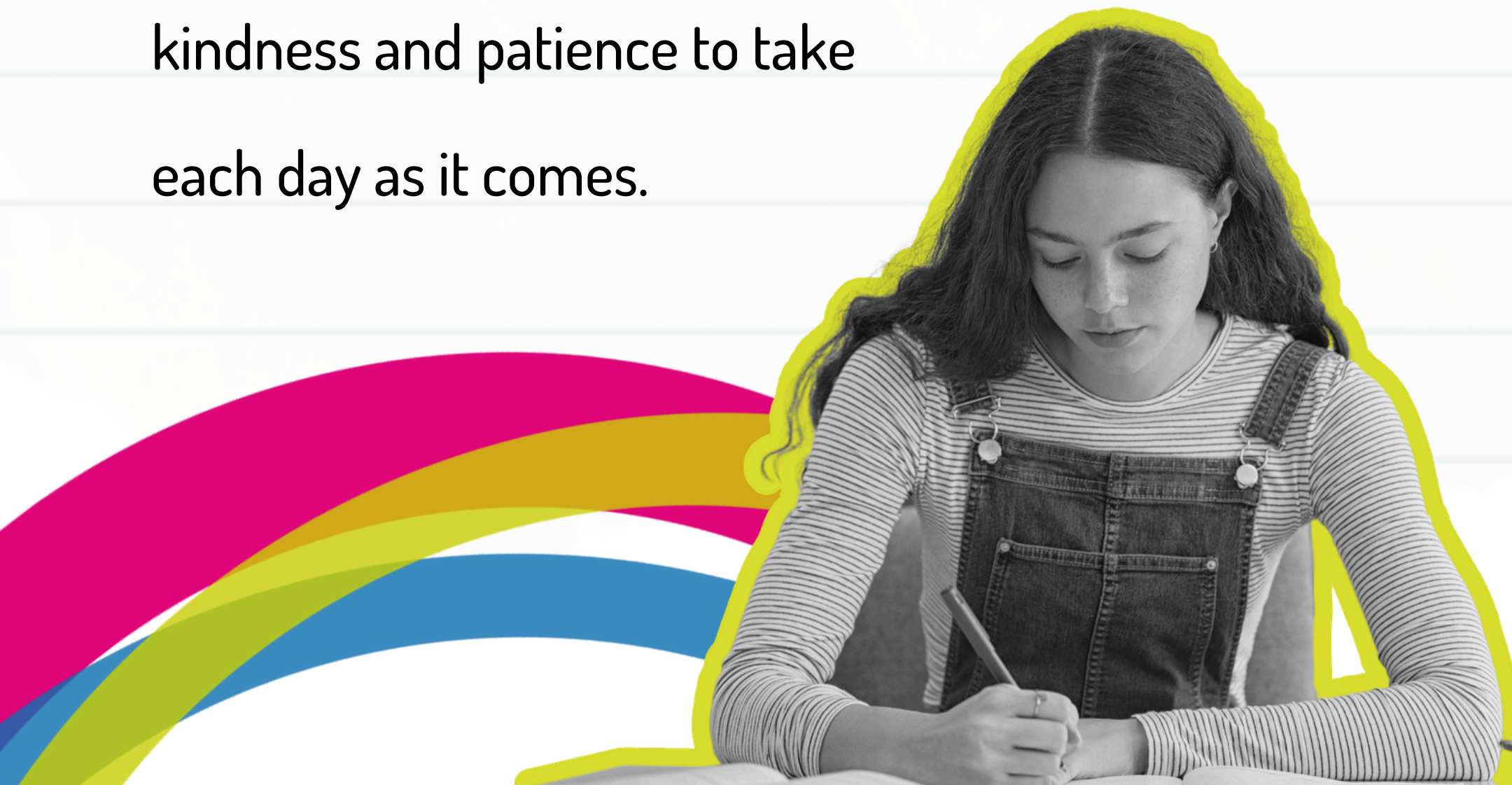
Eating well also needs to be a priority, not just an afterthought. Stick to your meal plan or recovery eating plan if you have one, or ensure you eat something every 2-3 hours.



2) Focus on the process

Focus on the here and now, rather than the grade at the end. How are you going to show up for yourself and be kind to yourself today?

If you have a hard day, try not to panic or give up - not every day will be like this. Give yourself the kindness and patience to take each day as it comes.



3) Use positive self-talk

Imagine talking to yourself as you would to a dear friend, if they were feeling stressed. Here are some examples:

“I am proud of how hard I am trying.”

“My self-worth doesn’t come from a number.”

“I’m working on something I’d like to achieve, I’m setting goals for myself and I’m motivating myself to try. That’s what matters.”



4) Going into exams

If you're feeling anxious as you enter an exam, here are some grounding techniques to try:

Breathing exercises - such as counting inhales and exhales, noticing what each breath feels like, or imagining your breath bringing oxygen to each part of your body.

Visualisation - imagine a place you have been before that helps you feel calm, or imagine a person or pet is by your side supporting you

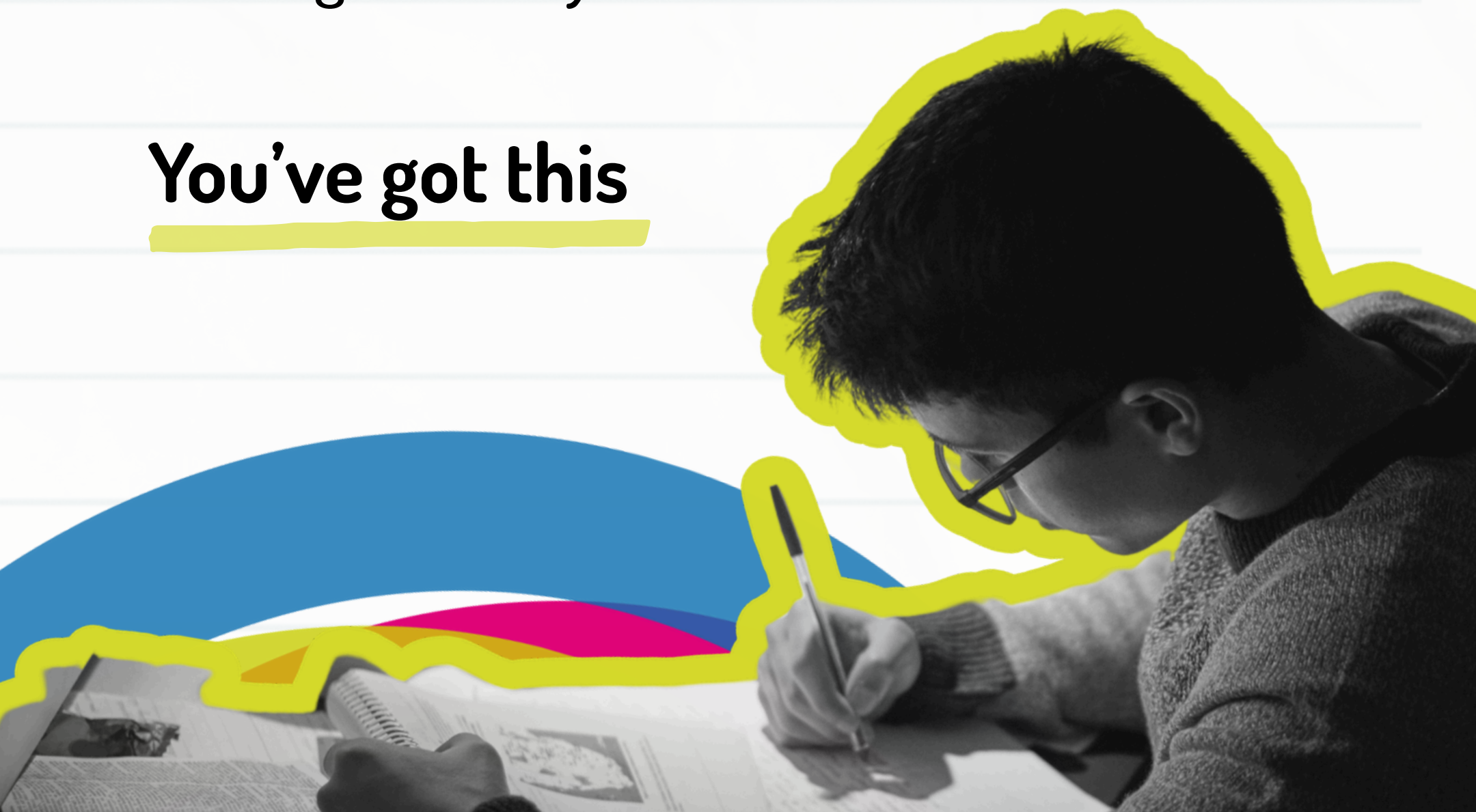
Bring in an 'anxiety anchor' like a necklace or ring, a fidget toy, or even a leaf, stone or flower you have found on your way to the exam



If you're struggling, remember to reach out to friends, family, or a teacher - don't suffer in silence or let anxiety get worse.

Take it day by day. Make time for rest and fun. Remind yourself of the effort you're making each day.

You've got this





GOOD LUCK

to everybody starting exams soon

