



High school survival 101

How to stay calm under extenuating circumstances

Physics

5-42

History

SAT

High school, in general, can take quite a toll on the human psyche from beginning to end. Many who set their goals on success lose their personalities and humanity to their academic performance. Losing yourself to the harsh environment can be all too easy, especially when it seems to be the popular trajectory.

Here are a few measures you can take to make sure you stay successful while staying true to your ideals:

Keep your friends close and do not be backhanded for grades. Do not lose your social life by blowing people off for homework or studying a hundred percent of the time. Staying at home to focus on homework is a smart choice a lot of the time but giving up the people who care about you for your grades is not worth it. It is a fact that cheating will be a temptation. At some point during your high school career, you will be offered answers to something you have been studying for. You will naturally want to take the individualistic path of accepting those answers without question. After all, this one test is the be-all, end-all of your life, right? When you are faced with that decision, think about the people you will be hurting if you accept.

Understand that there will be tough times and you will fail.... a lot. This is arguably the most important point to emphasize. At certain points in each six weeks, you will feel like

your grades are falling apart. This situation can be solved through hard work and studying, which is a pretty simple concept in itself. The hardest part to overcome is the anxiety of seeing yourself struggling and the spiral of giving up that you are so tempted to descend into. It can be all consuming, but it can be overcome with organization, studying and focus.

When you are stressed, make lists. Call it OCD or call it organization, writing down all my tasks is almost cathartic to me. If you have a lot to do, make a list and apportion your time. That way, you will have a guideline to use your time on. It will reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed.

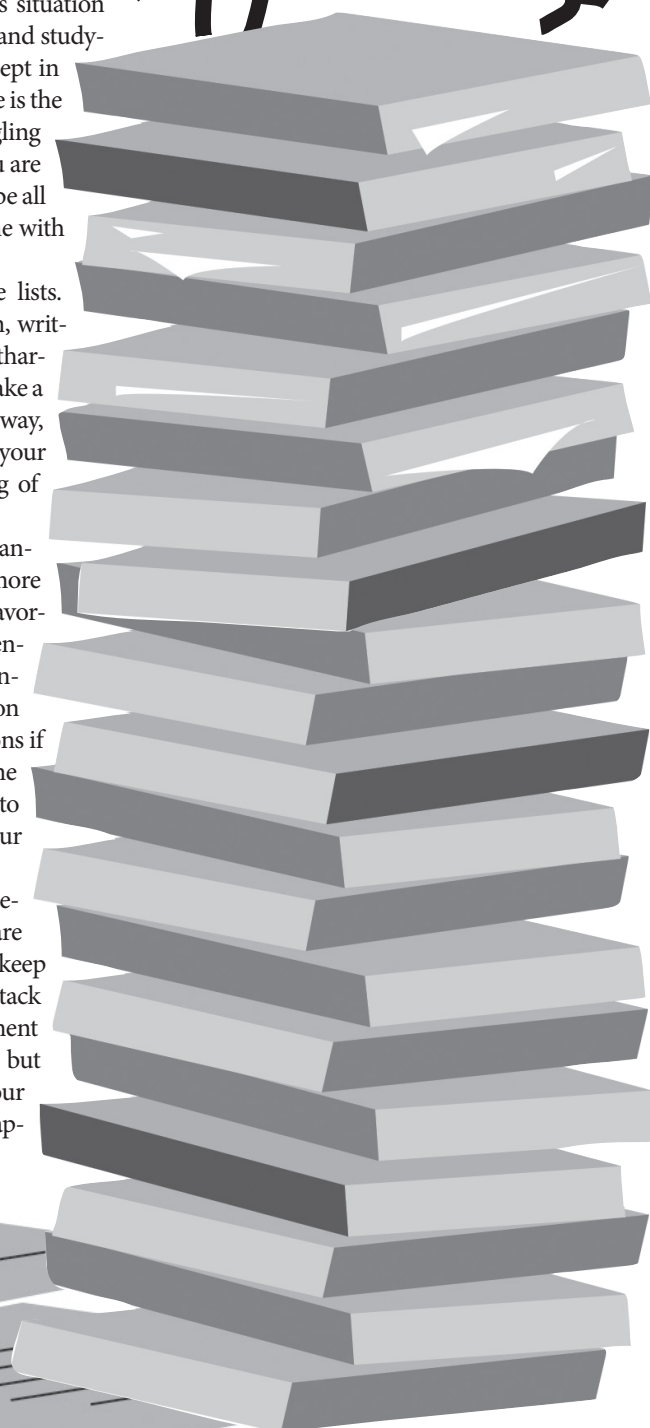
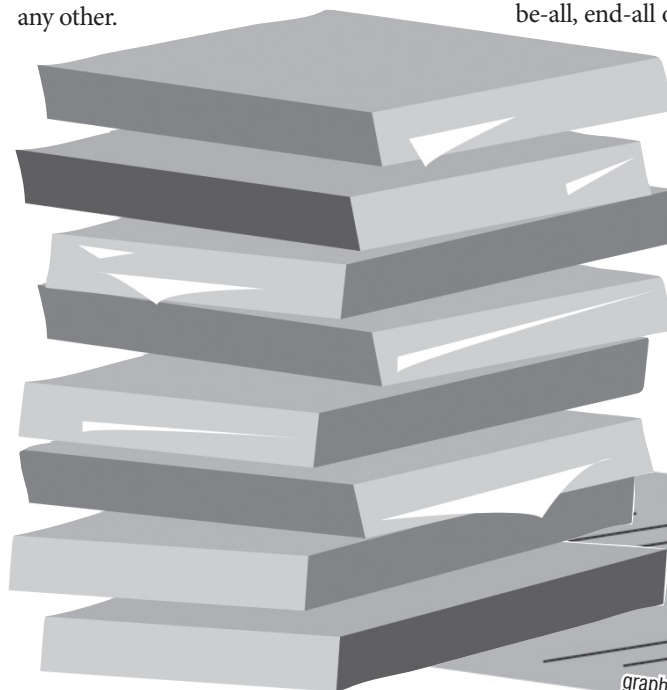
Use fear of failure to your advantage. There is no time when I am more frantic than when I have an unfavorable grade in the portal. Take the energy and emotion you feel and channel it into studying. Never focus on any one grade. Do some calculations if it makes you feel better, determine the minimum score you have to make on the next test to keep your grade up in the class.

Throughout school, do something career oriented that you are passionate about. Trust me, it will keep you loving life. The temptation to stack up on as many Advanced Placement courses as possible is tempting but being career driven can serve your mental stability and your college application process.



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With winter break on the horizon, it seems as if our minds are too occupied with visions of sugarplums to comprehend any type of workload that is thrust upon us. For me and a lot of others, this time of year comes with the least amount of motivation of any other.



graphic by **Austin Banzon**