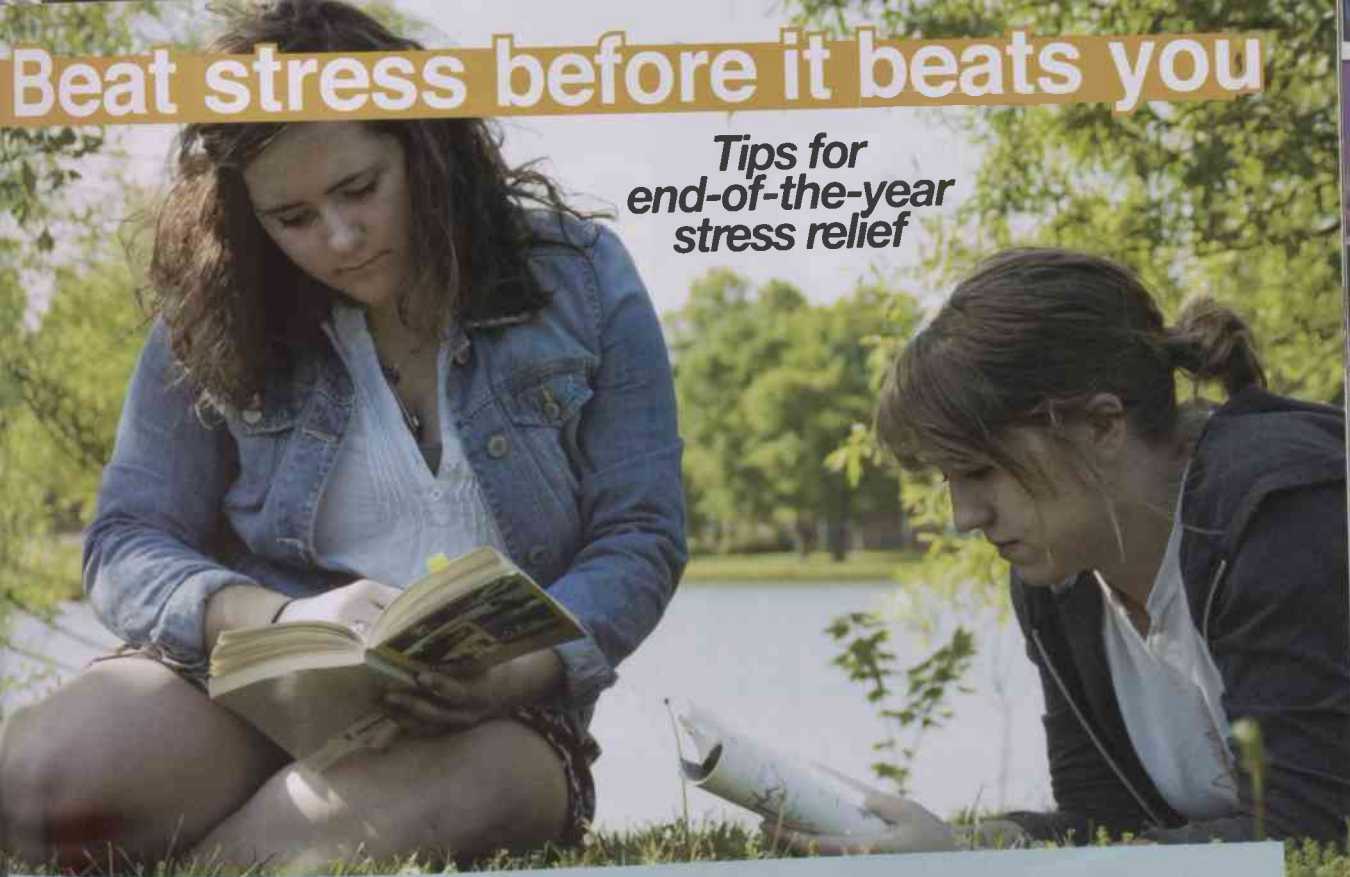


# Beat stress before it beats you

## Tips for end-of-the-year stress relief



It's that time of year — finals will soon be here, meaning that students will probably spend their last weeks of school studying and facing a heavy load of anxiety. Not taking an occasional de-stress break from studying can actually hinder your ability to stay focused. Fortunately, there are several ways to relieve stress without slacking off.

Photo by Claire Esparros

A few common methods many Elon students suggested include taking a walk or nap, going to the gym or watching television. There are also several specific places on campus where students like to go when they are in need of relaxation in a quiet place.

"I like to sit by the business fountain and listen to the water to relax," said freshman Kathleen McCarthy.

She said she also finds Lindner Hall's Inman Reading Room, commonly known as the "Hogwarts" room, to be a nice, quiet place to study. If you're looking for a peaceful place to relax or change your studying scene, try sitting on the benches surrounding Lake Mary Nell or on one of the grassy quads on campus. These places are calm enough to allow you to work, but also nice areas to simply sit and have time to yourself.

When you're ready for a study break and want something to do, go outside and enjoy the spring weather by playing volleyball or basketball on the courts by Sloan and HBB residence halls, especially because sunlight is a natural de-stressor for your body. If you've been studying late at night, do what sophomore Michele Guthrie — and probably many other Elon students — would suggest: "go for a 2 a.m. Cook-Out run."

Other stress-relieving activities students may not normally think of are baking, journaling, breathing exercises or playing with pets. Take 30 minutes and write about your day, borrow your friend's oven and bake cookies. Or try volunteering for an afternoon at a local animal shelter and allow your stress to drain while you do something you can't normally do at college — play with animals.

But the most important things to remember to do during finals are sleep, eat well (minus the occasional Cook-Out binge) and take breaks. There are plenty of ways to relax and have fun both on campus and in the Burlington area, such as going for a run, shopping or just sitting by a fountain for a little while. Giving your mind time to relax will ultimately improve your studying ability and overall exam performance.

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