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Sent: Monday, February 17, 2020 10:57 AM
To: LCOM Class Of 2022
Subject: a little anxiety management

Hello M2s,

I hope you are all doing well and taking good care of yourselves during your Step 1 study time. I thought this might be a good time to note a few really simple, quick, anxiety-management tools.

- Breathing exercises, like these -- <https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/uz2255> -- have been consistently demonstrated to be helpful in stress management.
- And here's a great set of simple, short, mindfulness exercises: <https://www.pocketmindfulness.com/6-mindfulness-exercises-you-can-try-today/>.
- And I remain a fan of cognitive reframing around negative, or catastrophizing Step 1 thoughts. That strategy boils down to this:
 - Notice, with acceptance and curiosity, thoughts that are fretful or distracting from being in the present with your studying, or your restoration time. Gently bring your attention back to the present moment.
 - Challenge those thoughts rationally. Don't let your thoughts push you around. Ask yourself, are these thoughts helpful, or inspiring? Does it make sense to try to over-control the future through a single, hard-to-control, exam?
 - Note that humans often have trouble predicting what will make them happy in the future. Note that we tend to over-focus on singular outcomes and neglect other, hard-to-foresee factors.
 - Much of our happiness is a function of the quality of our connections. And this is not on the exam!
 - Use these ideas to move away from fretting and gently direct your attention back to what you are doing right now – either learning or remembering some cool factoid, or attempting to take time for something else.

Glad to talk through any of this, in person or remotely. My drop-in times are [here](#). Email me if you want to meet and none of those times works for you. Dr. Moynihan's are [here](#) in case you're wanting to check in about some learning strategies or the like.

Happy winter!
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