

## **Panic! At the University**

Tips to survive one of the more stressful months

*By Cynthia Bezinque*

Breathe in. Breathe out.

Smell that mud? See that clump of leftover leaves from the fall? Yup, it's springtime again and that means it's almost time for midterms. And finals. And some students have to worry about finding professional jobs. The rest of the student population can focus on more important things, like basketball or the looming group project that no one has texted about in two weeks and the first draft is due this upcoming weekend and it still needs a powerpoint and—

[panic meme here]

Breathe in. Breathe out.

If you find you need a moment to collect yourself, try focusing on your breathing. Did you know that when you get really stressed or anxious that you stop breathing? Not completely stop, but there is a kind of weight in your chest that makes it hard to calm down and breathe. Pause and think about it! Reflect back on that one yoga lesson you never paid attention to and focus your breathing. Deep breath in through your nose and back out your nose. Or mouth. Whichever one you prefer. Way back in Chorale, we were taught that you didn't want to breathe in through just your lungs; you needed to pull the air down into the core of your body, really fill your diaphragm, then let it out *very* slowly through your mouth.

To get through this dreary month, you may have to pull a couple all-nighters—but it's all to prepare you for finals week. So, what do college students do to make up for about seven hours of lost sleep a night? Nap!

[nap meme here]

As a freshman, I had a seminar course that talked about the "perfect" amount of time for a nap: 27 minutes. After that mind-blowing lecture, I proceeded back to my dorm, climbed into bed, set a timer and took a nap. 27 minutes later, I got up and went about doing my homework. Or I pressed snooze and kept sleeping for another 15 minutes, I don't really remember. But! I did try it for a couple of weeks and it would work sometimes, while other times my soul would be so crushed from calc I that I curled into a ball and didn't emerge until three hours later. Try finding that sweet spot of minutes, or hours, to get back lost sleep. It will *definitely* help.

So remember, keep breathing and make sure to get those naps in!

*Cynthia Bezinque is a senior studying professional writing with a minor in documentary production. When she isn't working on video production, she loves to sew, make stained glass projects and read. Board game nights are a thing in her family.*