



# AIAM HOLISTIC PULSE



December 2023

## FALL QUARTER CALENDAR

Quarter Begins...Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>

Fall Add/Drop Deadline...Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>

Faculty Development Day\*....Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>

Thanksgiving Day\*..Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>

Quarter Ends.....Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>

\*aIAM Closed for Holiday

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## END OF THE QUARTER / END OF THE YEAR

It's December and that means finals are coming up! For some of you, this also means a farewell to AIAM and getting ready to sit for your boards. A huge congratulations to all who will be graduating at the

end of the quarter!!! And best of luck on all your board exams!

With all the pending exams, this issue will focus on study tips, stress management, time management, and self-care advice.

This is also the end of another year and a month filled with holidays and celebrations. For those who celebrate, happy holidays and have a happy new year! May you all enjoy a safe and happy month. Study hard, but also enjoy all that this month brings.

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*"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us." – Hal Borland*

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## STUDYING FOR BOARD EXAMS

Studying for your boards is more intensive than your quarterly midterms and finals. You have to study everything from the beginning, and let's face it – that's overwhelming to think about. These tips are from the New England Journal of Medicine (<https://knowledgeplus.nejm.org/about-us/board-review-study-tips/>).

1. **Start with topics you're most familiar with** – this helps to reinforce what you know and gauges your self-awareness.
2. **Move on to a less familiar topic** – choose one that is a large component of the board. Improving knowledge in an area that is a big portion of the exams can make a difference in your performance.

3. **Study for shorter periods of time** – People who study for shorter periods more frequently perform better on exams than those who study less frequently for larger blocks of time.
4. **Vary your study setting** – This helps to improve your neural connections.
5. **Have fun** – When you find a study aid that you like, you'll be more likely to use it.
6. **Focus on knowledge application** – Don't focus on random facts, but rather on how the knowledge is applied.
7. **Actively engage with the material** – Use a question bank, review the feedback (even if you got it correct – reinforce your knowledge).
8. **Don't compare your progress to others.**
9. **Find moral support** – Find someone who you can partner with and support each other.
10. **Challenge yourself with practice exams closer to exam time.**

## STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS

This may sound obvious, but breathing is important. Not just because we have to breathe to live but controlling your breath can help reduce stress. There are a variety of ways to breathe depending on what you wish to achieve. If you have taken a course with instructor Sherri DeRhodes the following breathing technique will be a familiar one to you.

For relaxing, the 4-7-8 technique is highly beneficial. Full details and video of Dr. Andrew Weil can be found here: [Video: Dr. Weil's Breathing Exercises: 4-7-8 Breath \(drweil.com\)](https://www.drweil.com/4-7-8-breath-exercise/)

If you are at home, sit in a comfortable position. If you are in class, sit up straight and place your feet flat on the floor. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth and keep it there through the entire exercise. You will be exhaling through your mouth around your tongue; try pursing your lips slightly if this seems awkward.

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
2. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
3. Hold your breath for a count of seven.
4. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight. This is one breath.
5. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.



Another useful tip for relaxation is from nursing instructor Kathleen Mierzejewski – aromatherapy or holiday scented candles. Scent can trigger responses, so scents that are soothing or relaxing for you may not be the same. For Ms. Mierzejewski, scents that remind her of her grandmother's house are her comfort scents. For myself, Campus Support Specialist Angela Falasca, soothing scents are seasonal. During autumn and winter, I prefer cinnamon, clove, or pine scents. In spring and summer, I love floral scents like gardenia, jasmine, rose, and lilac.

Despite the dropping temperatures, try to get outside. Go for a short walk, or just step outside your door and breathe in fresh air. The movement of walking can help with the stagnation of sitting, especially if you want to have a fresh brain for studying. Too cold or snowy/icy to go for a walk? Walk in place, dance around the house, pace your space. Just do some movement to get the blood flowing and reset your mind.

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Holiday fun often is squeezed in with academics, work, and family needs. Be sure you are sleeping enough, eating nutritious food, and managing your stress – these three important lifestyle factors can have great impact on your ability to learn, retain, and test well. Some tips on each are below.

### Sleep:

Do your best to sleep 7-8 hours per night. If you have trouble falling asleep, be sure you are staying off cell phones, iPads, tablets, and computers at least a half hour before sleeping – the ‘blue’ spectrum of light from these digital devices can trick your brain into thinking it’s not time to sleep and disrupt natural rhythms. Chamomile tea is a natural relaxant, also.

### Food:

As a busy student, it can be easy to grab high sugar, high fat food that is low in nutrition and high in a quick energy fix. The problem is the inevitable crash that comes within only a short time after the boost, and this can create a vicious cycle. Fresh fruits and vegetables help with quick energy, also, and these healthy choices also help keep your immune system strong. Protein such as nuts, seeds, beans, eggs, fish, and lean meats provide longer lasting energy by helping stabilize your blood sugar since they take longer to metabolize. And healthy fats such as those found in avocados, coconut oil, and fish also provide longer lasting energy for the same reason and are good ‘brain’ foods – the omega-3 fatty acids are heart and brain healthy.

### Stress Busters:

Stress is a part of living. Even joyful events can be stressful such as weddings, new jobs, and new babies! The key is to manage stress.

- Exercise is one way to release stress. Even a brief, brisk walk has a very quick effect in reducing stress, as well as lifting your spirit.
- Conscious breathing is another great way to quickly shift your mind and body. Try this: Close your eyes and take a deep breath, counting to 8 as you inhale, hold the breath for the count of 4, then exhale to the count of 8. Do this three times, then open your eyes and return refreshed and alert to the world once more. This simple “breathing break” changes your physiology quickly, and you will feel the difference.
- Recall a happy memory. We all can think of some event or person that puts a smile on our faces. This, too, creates a real physiological change in the brain and body. Too often we are focused on things that are negative or worrisome, and so our brain and bodies naturally are affected by those thoughts, too. We have to remember to remember pleasant things, too!
- Smile, even when you don’t feel like it (maybe especially when you don’t feel like it!), and look up. These two physical actions also affect neurotransmitters that can shift our mood and attitudes to a more positive feeling. Frowning and casting our eyes down, slumping our shoulders – these all trigger physiological changes too, just in the opposite direction.

Take care of you – you are the only You you’ve got! Taking care of you will also help you as a student. Live well!



## AIAM STUDENT SUCCESS RESOURCES

We want the same thing you want – for you to succeed here at aIAM, pass your boards, and get started on your new career. Take advantage of everything aIAM has to offer!

1. **Tutoring** – some classes are harder than others. Sometimes the way something is explained in class doesn't quite click and you need some additional assistance. Sometimes the homework readings just don't make sense. Whatever your struggle may be, tutoring is offered to help you get that extra assistance. The trick is *you have to ask for the help*. Our faculty is more than happy to work with you to help you understand, but they're not mind-readers so you have to reach out to let them know you require some additional assistance. To get started with tutoring, email your instructor first.
2. **Library resources** – aIAM has a library with digital resources. In Populi, click the word "Library" at the top of the page in the black bar. Under "Links" you'll find databases you can search for articles, or you can search the catalog and place a book on hold. See below for more [library information](#).
3. **Academic Dean Advising** – The Academic Dean is available to assist when life has thrown some curve balls your way and it's causing you to struggle with your classes. Schedule an appointment with her (Dr. Hiatt, [ehiatt@aiam.edu](mailto:ehiatt@aiam.edu)) so she can discuss your options with you.
4. **Nursing Students** – Test taking strategies are offered throughout the week every quarter and are open to all students (and graduates!) See the Populi home page for the schedule and zoom links.
5. **Additional help** – The Assistant Director of Education/Student Services has office hours by zoom and in-person where you can ask questions and get guidance on academics, test anxiety, study skills, note taking, and more. If you have a learning disability or other disability and require accommodation(s), you can also reach out to Ms. Fischer for assistance. Email Melissa Fischer at [mfischer@aiam.edu](mailto:mfischer@aiam.edu) to connect.
6. **AIAM Student YouTube Channel** – There are a variety of videos on the Student YouTube Channel, and among the most popular are the Stress Busters series! These short videos give students important information about ways to manage stress, study effectively, stay calm during tests, and more. There are also videos about populi, and the Playlists section includes information on Evolve, board exams, Populi, and NCLEX prep. There is a link to the channel on every course page under "Links," or head to <https://www.youtube.com/c/AIAMStudents>. It is a work in progress, but if you have an idea for a video that you think would be beneficial for students, email the Campus Support Specialist, Angela Falasca at [afalasca@aiam.edu](mailto:afalasca@aiam.edu).
7. **Time Management** – One of the most important factors determining your success is your ability to effectively plan and manage your time. If you need help with this, please reach out to Ms. Fischer at [mfischer@aiam.edu](mailto:mfischer@aiam.edu).
8. **Great Start Classes** – First quarter students are automatically enrolled in a self-paced Great Start class, accessible under "My Courses". Each lesson has important information about school policies and other knowledge you'll need for success.

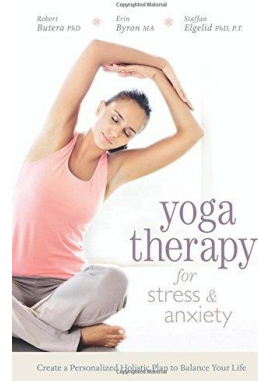
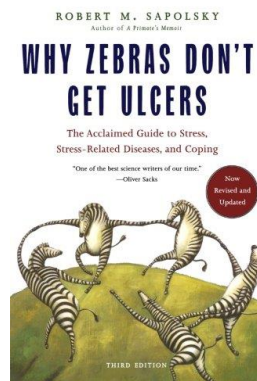
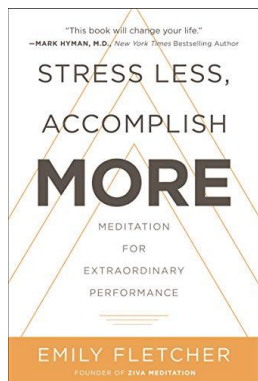
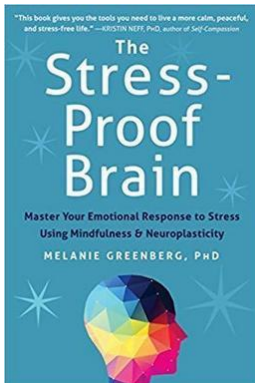


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## LIBRARY



## Library Spotlight: Managing Stress



**The Stress-Proof Brain: Master our Emotional Response to Stress Using Mindfulness & Neuroplasticity/ Melanie Greenberg**

**Stress Less, Accomplish More: Meditation for Extraordinary Performance/ Emily Fletcher**

**Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: The Acclaimed Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping/ Robert Sapolsky**

**Yoga Therapy for Stress & Anxiety/ Robert Butera, Erin Byron, & Staffan Elgelid**

You can request a library book by clicking “Place a hold” under the book in Populi’s library tab, just search by keywords or by emailing [mfischer@aiam.edu](mailto:mfischer@aiam.edu) with your request. You will be notified when the book is available for pickup from the lobby area (same day service Tuesday through Friday). Databases, journals, nursing ebooks, and more are available at

<https://aiam.populiweb.com/router/library/links/index>

Is there a book you would like to recommend for the AIAM Library? Email recommendations to Melissa Fischer at [mfischer@aiam.edu](mailto:mfischer@aiam.edu)

**Questions about library resources? Email Ms. Fischer at [mfischer@aiam.edu](mailto:mfischer@aiam.edu)**

# AIAM IMPORTANT DATES AND OTHER INFO

### AIAM IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Masks are no longer required in administrative areas and classrooms; however, they are strongly recommended. Please be respectful of each other. If someone is masked, please ask if they would feel more comfortable with you being masked also.
- In the Clinic, it is up to the client and the clinician if they are masked. Mindbody indicated if a clinician (Massage, Acupuncture, and Reflexology) requires masks or not in their treatment room and all of their clients will be required to wear a mask. If one wants to be masked and wants the other to be masked, they will both be masked. It will be up to the masked person if they are both masked or not.
  - Check your AIAM email regularly for important communications from faculty and administration.
  - When coming on campus, DO NOT park in front of any space with a sign. You will be towed.
- Students are responsible for communicating directly with the manufacturer on all warranty-related issues for the laptop computer. If the laptop computer is purchased through AIAM, students are responsible to replace the item(s) at full cost if lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair or outside of the warranty.