

TAKE CONTROL OF TEST ANXIETY

Prevent test anxiety with more than just studying

Instructions:

Below are lists of things you can do before, during, and after tests to help manage anxiety. Review the lists and then answer the reflection question that follows.

Preparing for the test:

1. Attend class regularly and complete all assignments
2. Use good study habits and develop good test-taking skills
3. Put things in perspective. One test does not determine your talents and abilities as a successful student or define you as a person
4. Maintain a positive attitude
5. Don't forget the basics: Healthy eating, Exercise, Sleep, Do things you enjoy
6. Learn and practice relaxation techniques. Belly breathing, imagery, muscle relaxation
7. Use imagery to boost your confidence
8. Night before the test: Get a good night's sleep. Get into a pre-test frame of mind that works for you. Have all class/test materials packed and ready to go

The day of the test:

1. Eat a good breakfast. Avoid coffee if you are prone to 'caffeine jitters'
2. Try to do something relaxing the hour before the test
3. Arrive *prepared* and *positive*. Don't come too early or too late. Avoid talking to other students who add anxiety. Pick a seat that is best for you – preferably with few distractions.
4. Personal Pep Talk!
5. Calm yourself

During the test:

1. Put into practice helpful test taking strategies
2. Expect some anxiety
3. Practice calming techniques throughout the exam. Breathe. Stretch. Tense/relax muscles
4. Use thought stopping and positive self-talk if you find yourself worrying
5. Focus on the immediate situation
6. Don't panic when others start handing in their test

After the test:

1. Reward yourself!
2. Communicate with your instructor
3. Decide if you need additional academic skills
4. Learn from the experience

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Reflection Questions:

1. Under what specific circumstances do you experience the worst test anxiety?

2. What happens in each of these areas when you experience test anxiety?

- Physical symptoms: _____
- Thoughts: _____
- Emotions/feelings: _____

3. How do you currently cope with your test anxiety?

4. Given what you have read here, what are three strategies you are willing to practice and apply regularly to help manage your test anxiety?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____