



Test Anxiety is Real

- Before and/or during an exam, do you experience any of the following:
 - Racing heart, heart palpitations, headaches, profuse sweating, stomach upset, excessive thirst, leg and/or foot twitching, or other physical symptoms
- Do you dread exams to the point of procrastination and avoidance?
- Does your mind race or become fixated on the negative “what-if” scenarios of doing poorly on the exam?

Sources of Test Anxiety

- ***Pre-existing symptoms or conditions:*** For Individuals who typically experience symptoms of anxiety, depression, low-esteem, or self-doubt, taking an exam can feel overwhelming.
- ***Fear:*** If an individual ties academic success to self-worth or feels they will disappoint someone with a low score, the result is intense fear and worry.
- ***Control:*** The truth is we cannot control what will be asked of us on any test. Anticipation of the unknown (and that which we simply cannot control) leads to anxiety.

Preventing Anxiety versus Calming Anxiety

- **Prevention Strategies**
 1. ***Organization*** - prioritize homework assignments and study-time based on due dates; utilize a planner (Google planner is a good option.)
 2. ***Time-Management*** - designate specific times of each day to study and do homework; plan ahead/work ahead
 - Procrastination never leads to a good feeling. The stress of procrastination robs you of good neurotransmitters and produces large amounts negative neurotransmitters, such as cortisol.
 3. ***Note-taking*** - learn efficient note-taking; jot down key words, phrases, and page numbers to review and fill-in after class
 - Listen to the lecture rather than spending all of your class time writing down PowerPoint slides.

4. ***Studying without Distractions*** – Silence your phone. Turn off music, TV, etc. If you're a parent, wait until the kids are in bed.
 - Efficient multi-tasking is a myth.
 5. ***Use your resources!*** – Study guides, learning guides, Quizlet, reviews in the textbook, past assignments. If your professor provides a resource,
 6. ***Eat well, exercise, get plenty of sunshine, get plenty of sleep***
- **Calming Strategies**
 1. ***Chew Gum*** – Yes. Chew gum during your exam.
 2. ***Use noise-canceling headphones or earplugs if necessary (and when possible)***
- it will help with focus
 3. ***Breathe*** - Take a balloon with you and blow it up (and release) it a few times before walking into the classroom.
 - Once you're inside the classroom, utilize any number of breathing exercises (finger breathing, square breathing, belly breathing)
 4. ***Point & Flex your feet*** – This helps to burn off negative energy and increase blood flow.
 5. ***Ignore your classmates who race through it*** – Read and re-read the exam questions. Use your time.
 6. ***Eat a good breakfast and do something you love before class*** – music, books, exercise
 7. ***Arrive to class early*** – Look over your notes one last time. If you followed the prevention strategies, you should be prepared.