

Anxiety & Testing

I. What is Anxiety?

- ✓ A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.
- ✓ A desire to do something, typically accompanied by unease via thought and or feelings.

II. Facts about Anxiety.

- ✓ It's normal (everyone experiences it. Not just you)
- ✓ It's not dangerous. It's there to help protect us from "real" danger.
- ✓ It's temporary and will subside.
- ✓ It's common. One-in-ten adults suffer from anxiety issues.
- ✓ It can become a problem when our body reacts as if there is danger when there is no real danger. It's like having an overly sensitive smoke alarm system in your body that is not efficient.
- ✓ **The Good News:** The first step to managing your anxiety is to learn to understand and recognize it in yourself. Self-awareness is key to being able to master your thoughts and feelings.

III. Test Anxiety and Things to Keep in Mind.

- ✓ It is absolutely normal for one to feel a sense of anxiety when thinking or feeling judged, critiqued and or evaluated. Examples of such evaluation can include going on a date, a job interview, playing a sport and of course testing. People are all different and are prone to differing levels of anxiety, however, test anxiety comes from a learned behaviors and the key here is to understand that if it is learned, it can be unlearned or changed. Below are some tips for challenging your test anxiety.
- ✓ When challenging test anxiety you are not trying to eliminate anxiety. You are trying to get into the "zone" where a little anxiety helps boost your performance. For example, too much anxiety, you cannot perform, too little anxiety and you cannot get motivated to do your best.

IV. What Test Anxiety Is and Is Not.

- ✓ Simply put, Test Anxiety consists of anxious thoughts and or feelings that prevent you from successfully showing your instructor what you have learned in his/her class when testing. Test Anxiety is not the same as being anxious about a test because you are unprepared or do not understand the material that have been explained. Both the test anxious and unprepared student will feel a certain level of anxiety when testing, however, the fix for both situations is very different.
- ✓ For the unprepared student with anxiety the solutions includes improved study habits, tutoring, learning communities, time management, note taking, improved course selection, meeting with advisors, etc. For the test anxious student, coping skills such as relaxation techniques and cognitive strategies (i.e., challenging negative thought patterns), as well as by improved study, time management, test-taking skills, etc.

V. How to manage Test Anxiety

- ✓ You can optimize your learning and test-taking skills with preparation.
- ✓ Get yourself into the "zone".
- ✓ Train your body to relax so that you can focus your mind.

Preparation.

- ✓ PREVIEW readings before class.
- ✓ GO TO CLASS, GO TO CLASS, GO TO CLASS. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE! Get to Class.
- ✓ REVIEW notes as soon as possible after class. Unless lecture notes are reviewed, most people forget up to 80% of the lecture within 24 hours.
- ✓ Utilize your learning style. (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic/tactile.
- ✓ Manage your time in regards to school, work and personal life.
- ✓ Use the study labs in order to increase knowledge in subject areas where you need help.

Getting into the Physical “Zone”

- ✓ Adequate [Sleep \(Brown University Health Education\)](#)
- ✓ Proper Diet. Diet can also have a profound effect on your mood and sense of wellbeing studies show a link between poor diet and mental health diagnosis/issues.
- ✓ Avoiding caffeine, alcohol, & recreational drugs.
- ✓ Find an exercise that fits your lifestyle and promotes wellbeing.
- ✓ Use a regular RELAXATION strategy to release daily stress and tension. Such as deep breathing, Muscle Tension Relaxation, Sensory Deprivation Tank or what makes you feel relaxed.

Getting into the Mental/Cognitive “Zone”

- ✓ Our internal thoughts affect emotions and stress levels and the words we use to define our self, our lives and current state of being are extremely powerful and lasting.
- ✓ When you take a test, make sure your focus is on the task at hand. Attempt not FOCUS on yourself and your anxiety. Being prepared for test will help ease your test anxiety.
- ✓ Simple Meditation to ground your mind to the present will help focus your mind.
- ✓ Visual Imagery will aid you by seeing
- ✓ Peer Sharing. (All about being heard)
- ✓ Positive affirmation.