

Use your Body

Breathe Deeply. Take six deep breaths. Slowly breathe through your nose and out through your mouth. Focus on the air passing through your nostrils. Or, close one nostril and breathe without making a noise. Do this for one minute.

Tense and Relax Your Muscles. Loosen your clothing and get comfortable. Tighten the muscles in your toes and hold for a count of 10. Relax, and enjoy the sensation of release from tension. Flex the muscles in your feet and hold for a count of 10. Relax. Move slowly up through your body, legs, abdomen, back, neck, and face contracting and relaxing muscles as you go.

Exercise and Stretch. Jog, bicycle, play basketball or racquetball, take a walk. Exercise will improve your mind. If there isn't enough time to exercise, stretch. You can sit in your chair or stand next to the table and stretch. Do it slowly. Breathe.

Visualize. Close your eyes and visit a pleasant place through your imagination. Visualize the scene in detail. Visualize yourself feeling calm and in control. Visualize yourself in a situation that brings success.

Stop thinking. Take a deep breath and try to clear your mind of disturbing thoughts.

Check Your Attitude

Don't Panic. The best way is to do one thing at a time. Trying to do everything at once only increases tension.

Be Optimistic. Look for the good in people and in situations. You'll find that the journey isn't as hard as you think.

Practice Positive Self-Talk.

Avoid extreme reactions. Why hate when a little dislike will do? Why generate anxiety when you can be nervous? Why rage when anger will do the job? Why be depressed when you can just be sad?

Don't sweat the small stuff. Try to prioritize a few truly important things and let the rest slide.

Be Good to Yourself

Don't overwork. All work and no play can make you tense, irritable and less efficient.

Sleep. Maintain your regular sleep schedule and stay with your normal body rhythms. If your regular schedule doesn't meet your new demands, slowly change your body's schedule to meet the new demands. Take short power naps. 10 – 15 minutes. New and stressful situations demand more of your body. Be good to it.

Eat well. Try not to eat greasy or acidic foods. Don't overeat.

Recognize your limitations. We all have limitations to what we can do. Recognizing where our limits are and respecting them will help you to feel good.

Remove yourself from the situation. Give yourself a break if only for a few moments daily.

Avoid self-medication or escape. Don't use alcohol or drugs to solve your problems. Don't rely on caffeine and sugar to keep you going. If you are taking care of yourself, you won't need these things.

Reward yourself. Think about your out of class life and focus on what you'll do this weekend or this evening.

Laugh. Stress can often come from taking yourself or your task too seriously. Ask yourself what is the worst possible thing that could happen if you made a mistake or missed the deadline.

Develop Strategies to Minimize Test Anxiety

Prepare Yourself.

- Participate in every class.
- Keep up with your reading and assignments.
- Find out what to expect on the exam. Determine what material will be covered, the question format, length of the exam and the points assigned to each question. It will help you to feel in control
- Create a study plan and divide the plan into small tasks. As you finish each task, you will experience increased sense of accomplishment, confidence, and control. Form a study group.
- Avoid cramming

Develop and Maintain a Positive Attitude

- See the test as an opportunity to learn, not as a win/lose situation.
- Understand that tests measure performance, not personal value.
- Find study partners who inspire you to do your best, and avoid those who are anxious or negative.
- Expect progress and success not failure.
- Practice relaxation.
- Practice positive self-talk. Tell yourself that you can do well and that it is normal to feel anxious before an exam.

The Day of the Test

1. Get to the classroom with enough time to relax. Practice breathing and visualization. Hurrying causes tension; fear of being late builds anxiety.
2. Develop a positive attitude because you have studied well. Believe it.
3. Make sure you can see a clock, plan your time and pace yourself
4. Choose your seat carefully. Sitting near friends can be disruptive.
5. Begin by filling in the answers you know.
6. Don't panic if others are busy writing and you are not.
7. Don't panic if you forget an answer—go on, it will come back to you.
8. Don't worry if others finish before you do.
9. Don't panic if you run out of time. Outline essay questions you didn't have time to complete. Maybe the instructor will give some points because they can see you knew the answer, but didn't have time to write the essay.