

TEST ANXIETY

Anxiety is defined as a state of uneasiness and distress about future uncertainties; apprehension; worry.

Why do people have test anxiety? *Lack of preparedness is the number one cause. Other causes may be:*

- **Past Experiences** - Accepting the negative evaluation of a teacher or other authoritative figure who said that you could never master the subject matter.
- **Low self-esteem** - Lacking confidence in your own work.
- **No regular study schedule** - Relying heavily on cramming.
- **Poor study habits** - Never learning how to study.
- **Dislike of subject matter** - Thinking the topic is boring; not finding a reason to learn the material.
- **Worry** - Creating problems when there are none.

Fifteen Ways to Relieve Test Anxiety *Since anxiety can be learned, it can also be unlearned. Use the following study techniques to enable you to do better the next time you take a test:*

1. **Be prepared** - Review regularly and often.
2. **Use positive thinking** - Don't let the negativity of others affect you.
3. **Believe in yourself and your abilities** - Don't panic. Take your time. Tell yourself, "You can do it!"
4. **Establish a regular study schedule** - Study in one-hour blocks of fifty minutes of study followed by a ten-minute break. Study at the same time and in the same place.
5. **Learn and use good study skills** - Time management, test-taking strategies, memory aids, note taking, mind mapping, relaxation techniques, etc.
6. **Make the course material relevant** - Ask yourself, "How can I use this?" Your answer can provide the reason to study the material.
7. **Don't invent problems** - Worry is a waste of energy. Put your time into preparation. Start studying for your test the first day of class.
8. **Relax** - Learn a relaxation technique that works for you. Arrive early on test day.
9. **Do not discuss the test with your classmates immediately before taking the test.**
10. **Concentrate during the test** - Avoid distractions. For example if the room is usually cold, bring a sweater. Eat before the test if you are hungry.
11. **Read and follow the directions carefully** - Don't skip or rush through the instructions.
12. **Scan the test before you begin** - First answer a question that you feel confident about to get yourself going, to relax you, and to build confidence.
13. **Be an active test taker** - Work your way through the test. Don't expect the answers to jump out and grab you. Be the aggressor.
14. **Ignore others who leave the test site early.** - Don't make a race out of it. Being fast is not necessarily being right. Take all the time allowed. If you finish early, check your work.
15. **Accept a test grade for what it is** - Tests assess your understanding of the topic at that time. *They do not assess you.* Don't give up.