

# Test Anxiety Solutions

**Test anxiety** is excessive stress that negatively effects thinking skills and test performance. It may cause physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms that may occur before or during a test. <sup>1</sup>

Common sources of test anxiety and solutions:

<u>Source</u>	<u>Solution</u>
<b>Underpreparedness:</b> An awareness that you have not put enough time or effort into studying or assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Time management skills</li><li>•Study skills</li><li>•Learn to make the most of your memory</li></ul>
<b>Past Experiences:</b> Holding on to negative past experiences may result in low confidence, low self-esteem, or low self-efficacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Use affirmations and positive self talk</li><li>•Work with a tutor or study group to check your understanding of material and get positive feedback</li></ul>
<b>Fear of Failure:</b> Feeling afraid of disappointing others, fearing low grades, not living up to one's own expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Review the syllabus to understand how grades are calculated</li><li>•Create a plan of action</li><li>•Increase performance in other graded areas such as completion of homework, participation, attendance, or extra credit projects</li></ul>
<b>Poor Test Taking Skills:</b> Limited experience with or understanding of test questions, formats, test-taking strategies, or how to use test taking time wisely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Learn test taking strategies.</li><li>•Learn to anticipate test questions. Write them out and answer them.</li><li>•Simulate the test taking environment</li></ul>

## **Other tips<sup>2</sup>:**

- Relax! Focus on taking slow, deep breaths and count them as you do. Five to ten is a good goal.
- Know that you have done your best and will do your best.
- Do not focus on the fear, just the task at hand.
- Get plenty of sleep the night before the test.
- Eat a good meal the day of the test.
- Avoid talking to students who are not prepared for the test or expressing negativity.
- After the test, reflect upon which strategies worked and which didn't. Keep those that did and think about how to change those that didn't. Relax!

<sup>1</sup> Wong, Linda. *Essential Study Skills*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. Print.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.studygs.net/tstprp8.htm>