OVERCOMING TEST ANXIETY

Do you panic or blank out on tests? Here are some strategies to stay calm and avoid test anxiety.

1. Visit your professor before an exam; ask questions, review material, understand what will be on the test.

2. Know the format of the test in advance including the number of questions and whether it is multiple choice, short answer, or essay. You should not be surprised by the appearance of the test.

3. Think of the test as an opportunity to display what you have learned.

4. Think about what will be on the test. Are you supposed to memorize terms and facts, or will you be asked to think critically and find relationships? Prepare sample questions, if possible.

5. Be deliberate in your studying.

6. Don’t expect to work out difficult problems on a test if you have not practiced in advance. Do the homework and review before the test.

7. Sleep, eat, and exercise. Being rested and in good health will help you relax and think clearly. All-nighters never help anyone!

8. Practice relaxation exercises. Sometimes focusing on your breathing will help — inhaling positive affirmations and exhaling negative thoughts. Visualize yourself succeeding. Use YouTube videos and the app store for ideas.

9. During the exam, continue relaxation exercises. Focus on keeping your neck and shoulders relaxed.

10. Read the questions carefully, make sure you know what you are being asked to do and request clarification if necessary. Answer the easy questions first, and once you’ve built up some confidence, move onto the harder ones.

11. Don’t spend too much time on one question. Find out how much each section is worth and devote your time accordingly.

12. If you can use a calculator, learn how it works in advance, including helpful shortcuts. Make sure that it has plenty of battery power.

13. Likewise, if it is an open book test, label the text in advance and mark important pages with post-it notes. This will save time during the test.

14. Concentrate on being alert and attuned to your task.

15. Don’t be flustered by students who leave early. They are either brilliant or did not put enough effort into the test (usually the latter).

16. Be positive: IF YOU THINK YOU CAN, YOU WILL!