

During the EXAM

- Think positively: maintain a positive dialogue with yourself:
 - “I can do OK in this exam.”
 - “I feel calm and positive.”
- Do not compare yourself to your other classmates, especially in the exam setting.
- Do not think about your parents, or what they might say about your performance.
- Don’t talk to your friends about the exam material right before the exam.
- If you can, sit in a location in the exam room where you will be distracted as little as possible.
- Practice the relaxation exercise.
- Read the questions and the instructions slowly and carefully.
- Repeat the relaxation exercise and stretch at intervals when you feel anxious or panicked, take a few minutes to CALM DOWN.
- Focus only on the exam, not on what other students are doing.
- If you find the exam more difficult than anticipated, “focus and just do your best” at that point. It might be enough to get you through even with a reasonable grade!

GOOD LUCK!

If you wish further information or advice, please call or drop in to see us at EMU-PDRAM.

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COPING WITH EXAM ANXIETY

Can't concentrate?



Can't study?

Forgotten everything?



Panicked?

Anxious?

What is exam anxiety?
How does it affect you?
What can you do about it?

What is Exam Anxiety?

- Exam anxiety is an intense form of anxiety which obstructs effective learning.
- Anxiety itself can be a necessary and helpful emotion as it supplies us with our motivation. Without it we might not feel that urge to “get things done”.
- When anxiety becomes ‘uncontrollable’ such as the anxious feelings become so uncomfortable that interrupt your everyday activities, make you avoid people or feel terrified and immobilized by these feelings, then anxiety is no longer helpful.



Suggestion 1: Preparation How does it affect you?

You become very nervous about preparing for or taking an exam. You have difficulty in planning your study, thinking straight, concentrating or recalling what you have studied.

- You may not relax.
- You may experience physical distress symptoms such as headaches, or nausea or muscular tension.
- You may feel too hot or too cold.
- You may experience an increased heart-rate and a pounding sensation in your chest.
- You may become more emotional e.g. wanting to cry or to laugh too much.
- You may feel angry or helpless.



What can you do about it? Here are some suggestions...

Plan your study strategy by organising your time and taking responsibility and using self-discipline to stick closely to your study schedule.

- When it is time to study-study; don't delay, alter your schedule or make excuses to avoid studying.
- Maintain a reasonably regular schedule for revision of studies, for eating, sleeping and relaxing.
- Start your study schedule at least two weeks before your exams begins.
- Be realistic about the demands you place on yourself.
- Don't attempt to study 24 hours a day, as your efficiency and capacity to retain material will rapidly decrease.
- Include recreation time and study breaks in your schedule.
- Enjoy your free time; avoid over-thinking about your exams and your studies.
- Arrange the study area in a way that is attractive and encourages your studying e.g. fresh air, tidiness, fresh flowers, low relaxing music, and a comfortable temperature.

Suggestion 2: Self Care

- Avoid excessive consumption of alcohol and other drugs including caffeine.
- Get enough sleep.
- Eat nutritious meals – small and often.
- Drink lots of fluids.
- On the exam days, allow yourself enough time to wash dress and have breakfast quietly and without rushing.
- Make sure you have prepared your exam supplies (pen, pencil, rubber etc.)
- Early arrive where the exam will take place.
- Avoid mixing with other anxious students- anxiety is contagious.

Suggestion 3: Relaxation

- Ask yourself: “What is the worst that can happen?”
- Confronting your anxiety or worst fear can be very supportive.

Learn this relaxation technique:

Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose and feel your stomach (not chest) extend. Hold for a few seconds then force the air out hard through your mouth thinking “I am relaxed” repeat 2 or 3 times. Practice this 2-3 times a day. For further relaxation techniques, join in the groups offered by EMU-PDRAM.