**Test Anxiety is Real**

- Before and/or during an exam, do you experience any of the following:
  - Racing heart, heart palpitations, headaches, profuse sweating, stomach upset, excessive thirst, leg and/or foot twitching, or other physical symptoms
- Do you dread exams to the point of procrastination and avoidance?
- Does your mind race or become fixated on the negative “what-if” scenarios of doing poorly on the exam?

**Sources of Test Anxiety**

- **Pre-existing symptoms or conditions:** For Individuals who typically experience symptoms of anxiety, depression, low-esteem, or self-doubt, taking an exam can feel overwhelming.
- **Fear:** If an individual ties academic success to self-worth or feels they will disappoint someone with a low score, the result is intense fear and worry.
- **Control:** The truth is we cannot control what will be asked of us on any test. Anticipation of the unknown (and that which we simply cannot control) leads to anxiety.

**Preventing Anxiety versus Calming Anxiety**

- **Prevention Strategies**
  1. **Organization** - prioritize homework assignments and study-time based on due dates; utilize a planner (Google planner is a good option.)
  2. **Time-Management** - designate specific times of each day to study and do homework; plan ahead/work ahead
    - Procrastination never leads to a good feeling. The stress of procrastination robs you of good neurotransmitters and produces large amounts negative neurotransmitters, such as cortisol.
  3. **Note-taking** - learn efficient note-taking; jot down key words, phrases, and page numbers to review and fill-in after class
    - Listen to the lecture rather than spending all of your class time writing down PowerPoint slides.
4. **Studying without Distractions** – Silence your phone. Turn off music, TV, etc. If you’re a parent, wait until the kids are in bed.
   - Efficient multi-tasking is a myth.

5. **Use your resources!** – Study guides, learning guides, Quizlet, reviews in the textbook, past assignments. If your professor provides a resource,

6. **Eat well, exercise, get plenty of sunshine, get plenty of sleep**

• **Calming Strategies**
  1. **Chew Gum** – Yes. Chew gum during your exam.
  2. **Use noise-canceling headphones or earplugs if necessary (and when possible)**
     - it will help with focus
  3. **Breathe** - Take a balloon with you and blow it up (and release) it a few times before walking into the classroom.
     - Once you’re inside the classroom, utilize any number of breathing exercises (finger breathing, square breathing, belly breathing)
  4. **Point & Flex your feet** – This helps to burn off negative energy and increase blood flow.
  5. **Ignore your classmates who race through it** – Read and re-read the exam questions. Use your time.
  6. **Eat a good breakfast and do something you love before class** – music, books, exercise
  7. **Arrive to class early** – Look over your notes one last time. If you followed the prevention strategies, you should be prepared.