

## **Test preparation to reduce anxiety:**

- Approach the exam with confidence:
  - Use whatever strategies you can to personalize success: visualization, logic, talking to your self, practice, team work, journaling, etc.
  - View the exam as an opportunity to show how much you've studied and to receive a reward for the studying you've done
- Be prepared!
  - Learn your material thoroughly and organize what materials you will need for the test. Use a checklist
- Choose a comfortable location for taking the test with good lighting and minimal distractions
- Allow yourself plenty of time, especially to do things you need to do before the test and still get there a little early
- Avoid thinking you need to cram just before
- Strive for a relaxed state of concentration
- Avoid speaking with any fellow students who have not prepared, who express negativity, who will distract your preparation
- A program of exercise is said to sharpen the mind
- Get a good night's sleep the night before the exam
- Don't go to the exam with an empty stomach:
  - Fresh fruits and vegetables are often recommended to reduce stress.
  - Stressful foods can include processed foods, artificial sweeteners, carbonated soft drinks, chocolate, eggs, fried foods, junk foods, pork, red meat, sugar, white flour products, chips and similar snack foods, foods containing preservatives or heavy spices
- Take a small snack, or some other nourishment to help take your mind off of your anxiety. Avoid high sugar content (candy) which may aggravate your condition

## **During the test:**

- Read the directions carefully
- Budget your test taking time
- Change positions to help you relax
- If you go blank, skip the question and go on
- If you're taking an essay test and you go blank on the whole test, pick a question and start writing. It may trigger the answer in your mind
- Don't panic when students start handing in their papers. There's no reward for being the first done

## **If you find yourself tensing and getting anxious during the test**

- Relax; you are in control. Take slow, deep breaths
- Don't think about the fear
  - Pause: think about the next step and keep on task, step by step
- Use positive reinforcement for yourself:
  - Acknowledge that you have done, and are doing, your best
- Expect *some* anxiety. It's a reminder that you want to do your best and can provide energy. Just keep it manageable
- Realize that anxiety can be a "habit" and that it takes practice to use it as a tool to succeed

## **After the test, review how you did**

- List what worked, and hold onto these strategies
  - It does not matter how small the items are: they are building blocks to success
- List what did not work for improvement
- Celebrate that you are on the road to overcoming this obstacle

**Check out SASS and other resources on campus for assistance!**