

Testing Anxiety

TESTING ANXIETY IS NOT CONSIDERED A DISABILITY

Unfortunately, Testing Anxiety is not considered a disability by the Americans with Disability Act; and the Educational Testing Services has said that “test anxiety alone is not a sufficient diagnosis to support request for accommodations. (Lovett & Nelson, 2017, pg 99).

Test Anxiety is defined as, “the emotional, physiological, & behavioral response surrounding the potential consequences of negative evaluation on an upcoming test or exam.”

VonDerEmbse, Barterian, & Seegool, 2013, pg 57)

TESTING ANXIETY MAY BE INDICATIVE OF ANOTHER ISSUE

Testing Anxiety may be a symptom of a learning disability. If you have had difficulty with a particular subject area (such as math), which has developed into a feeling of dread. You may have an underlying learning disability.

If your symptoms of testing anxiety are happening outside of school, you may be experiencing generalized anxiety disorder. Symptoms of Generalized Anxiety include, excessive, uncontrollable worry, fatigue, restlessness and always feeling tense or “on the edge.” If you are feeling these, it is important to see a counselor or doctor.

TIPS TO MANAGE YOUR TESTING ANXIETY

The [Mayo Clinic](#) has 8 Tips:

1. **Learn How to Study Efficiently** - There are techniques and strategies to help you study more efficiently. CSULB offers Academic Coaching through the Learning Center (See pg 2 Academic Coaching)
2. **Study early & in similar places** - Making time to study a little bit over a long period of time is more effective than cramming. Also finding a consistent place to study and using that same place to take the test may help recall.
3. **Establish a consistent pretest routine** - Create a routine to get you ready to take your online test. Routines help to reduce stress.
4. **Make sure you know what is on the test** - Make sure you know what material (chapters, articles, etc) will be covered and *HOW* you will be tested (essay, fill in the black, multiple choice, etc); this will allow you to target your studying.
5. **Learn Relaxation Technique** - There are breathing, muscle relaxation and mindfulness techniques that could be helpful in keep you calm during the test (See pg 2 Relaxation Techniques).
6. **Don't forget to eat and drink** - make sure to eat a healthy meal and drink healthy beverages.
7. **Get some exercise** - Exercise can alleviate tension; even a 10min walk can help.
8. **Get plenty of sleep** - Our bodies need sleep to be able to function properly; make sure you get a good night sleep before a big test.

What You Can Do

ACADEMIC COACHING

is a free service offered to currently enrolled CSULB students. Academic Coaching teaches students [active learning strategies](#) and [time management](#) so that students can study efficiently. To sign up, go to Beach Connect and schedule an appointment.



Carsley, D., & Heath, N. L. (2020). Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Coloring for University Students' Test Anxiety. *Journal of American College Health*, 68(5), 518-527.

Lovett, B., & Nelson, J. (2017) Test Anxiety and the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies* Vol 28 (2) p 99-108,

Sawchuck, C. (retrieved 2020/11/23)

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/generalized-anxiety-disorder/expert-answers/test-anxiety/faq-20058195>

Van Der Embse, N., Barterian, J., & Segol, N (2013). Test Anxiety Interventions for Children & Adolescents: A systematic Review of Treatment Studies from 2000-2010. *Psychology in the School* Vol 50(1) p57-71

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Behavioral interventions have been shown to help reduce test anxiety (Lovett & Nelson, 2017) by helping you to calm yourself down when anxious feeling begin. They are not a cure but a tool to use to help you to focus. Here are 3 examples of many.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation - *There are several [videos](#) on the internet that can help you to practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation. The basics of this technique are to find a quiet and comfortable place, you will then squeeze, as hard as you can, and release each major muscle group in your body; typically, you begin with your toes and work up your legs, through your torso up to your neck and down to your hands. These muscle contractions are timed with your breath: you squeeze each muscle on the inhale and relax on the exhale.*

Deep Breathing - *There also [videos](#) and apps dedicated to help you to breath deeper. A basic deep breathing technique is to breath in to the count of 5 and then exhale to the count of 5. You begin to slow your inhales and exhales as you extend the count to 6, then to 7 and try to get yourself up to 10 or beyond.*

Mindfulness - *There also video, websites and apps ([calm](#), [headspace](#)) dedicated to help with mindfulness. Mindful coloring has been shown to help reduce testing anxiety in University Students (Carsley & Heath, 2020). CSULB J has [mindfulness workshops](#) every week, you can sign up for them on Beach Sync.*

Guided Imagery - *This is a relaxation technique that involves using your imagination to calm yourself. [Guided Imagery](#) is used by CSULB's CAPS; here is a [video](#) to walk you through a guided imagery session.*