

Dealing with Test Anxiety

❖ **Don't Study at the Last Minute:**

- You need a good night's sleep before the test.
- What you learn at the last minute is not worth the stress!
- Begin studying at least a week before the test.

❖ **Right Before the Test:**

- Avoid classmates who stress you out!
- Read a magazine; listen to music or some other form of distraction.
- Tell yourself that you will do the best you can on the test!

❖ **Dealing with Thoughts**

- If your mind is racing with worries and fears, mentally yell "Stop!" This will focus your attention back to the present.
- If you are worried about an upcoming test, daydream! Think about something that makes you happy.
- Visualize yourself doing well on the test.
- When you feel that you are becoming stressed during the test, zoom out. Imagine where you will be in one week, one month, one year from today.

❖ **Dealing with Physical Sensations**

- Concentrate on your breathing. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Do this for a couple of minutes.
- If you feel a part of your body that is tense, use the tense-relax method: if it is your shoulders that are tense, tense them even more and then relax. This will help you to be aware of relaxation and will allow you to relax even more.
- Relax and imagine that you are in a peaceful, beautiful place. Use all of your senses. What do you hear, taste, see, smell?
- If none of the techniques work, get help! Depression and anxiety are common among students. Talk to a counselor or go to Health Services on campus.

These tips were excerpted from: Dave Ellis, Becoming a Master Student. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.