The Day Before Your Exam

Approach the exam with confidence (view the exam as an opportunity to show how much you’ve studied and to receive a reward for the work you’ve done)

Be prepared (use a check list to review material and organize what you will need for the test tomorrow)

Give yourself enough time that morning (attend to things you need to do before the exam and try to get to the exam site a little early)

Avoid thinking you need to cram just before the test

Try to achieve a relaxed state of concentration

Avoid speaking with people who express negativity or who will distract your preparation

Get a good night’s sleep the night before the exam

Do not take the exam on an empty stomach (have an energizing snack, i.e. fresh fruits and vegetables, and try to stay away from heavy/processed foods)

Take a small snack with you (eat a healthy snack during a break to replenish energy and help take your mind off of your anxiety)

The Week Before

• Map out a routine
• Get 7-8 hours of sleep a night
• Review practice questions
• Simulate exam to help better manage test anxiety

General Skills

♦ Engage in regular physical exercise and maintain a balanced diet
♦ Use good study habits and strategies
♦ Manage your time effectively
♦ Organize material to be studied and learned
♦ Use a step by step approach to build a strategy and not get overwhelmed
♦ Manage outside pressures (success/failure consequences, peer pressure, competitiveness, etc.)
♦ Reviewing your past performance on tests to improve and learn from experience
♦ Prepare by taking practice exams

Skills to Use during the Exam

⇒ Be on time
⇒ Go to bathroom prior
⇒ Do not drink too much coffee
⇒ Pick a “good” seat
⇒ Stay relaxed; you are in control (take slow, deep breaths and use relaxation techniques)
⇒ Change positions to help you relax
⇒ Focus on present, not past or future
⇒ Prepare for some anxiety (anxiety is a reminder that you want to do your best and it can provide energy and motivation)
⇒ Realize that anxiety can be a “habit” (it takes practice to use it as a tool to succeed)
⇒ Focus on questions, not fears (pause and think about the next step and keep on task, step by step)
⇒ Use positive self-talk (use positive reinforcement for yourself: acknowledge that you have done, and are doing, your best)
⇒ Challenge negative thoughts
⇒ Take breaks if possible
⇒ Budget your test taking time
⇒ Do easiest questions first to “tickle your memory”
⇒ Read directions and entire questions carefully (e.g. twice, aloud, silently)

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Skills to Use during the Exam (continued)

⇒ Identify and mark clues (i.e. qualifiers and absolutes)
⇒ Approach each question as a separate test
⇒ Make an educated guess and go with first answer
⇒ Organize your ideas.
⇒ 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 other students start finishing their test (there’s no reward for finishing first)
⇒ Proofread at the end

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