Tips to Overcome Anxiety
When Preparing for an NBRC Exam

We've all experienced stress at one time or another. Especially before important events or milestones. A little stress is normal and can help you perform better. However, when anxiety begins to consume you, it becomes an issue. A lot of people develop test anxiety leading up to a big exam. Feelings of worry and self-doubt can start to creep in which may cause so much anxiety you're unable to successfully perform. If you're experiencing test anxiety, below are a few valuable tips to calm your nerves.

1. **Learn how to study effectively.** Check with your school to see if they offer classes or resources on skills and methods to effective studying. Efficient studying can make you feel more confident leading up to test day.

2. **Study weeks before your exam and in similar places.** Cramming the day before, or day of your test, is never an effective strategy. Study in small amounts over time leading up to your exam. Research also tells us to study in the same, or similar, space to the one you'll be testing in. It helps you recall the information you need to successfully pass your exam.

3. **Develop a consistent pretest routine.** Figure out what works best for you and continue following that routine every time you prepare to test. Your routine can relieve stress and ensures you're better prepared.

4. **Reach out to your teacher.** They can go over testing and study materials with you to prepare. Let your teacher know about your anxieties. They may have useful tips for you. It's also very important to disclose any learning disabilities you have, for example attention deficit disorder (ADD) or dyslexia. Your teacher can accommodate you to ensure you're set up for success on test day.

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5. **Learn relaxation techniques and exercise.** Relaxation techniques are very effective at calming nerves. And when you're calm, you feel more confident. Deep breathing, meditation, yoga, etc. are all easy practices you can do before testing. Exercise has its obvious benefits, but it also helps relieve any tension you're feeling about taking your exam.
6. **Be sure to eat and drink on test day.** Fuel your brain and body with good food and plenty of fluids leading up to and on test day! Avoid sugary food and drinks as it can cause your blood sugar level to quickly drop. And don't go overboard with caffeinated beverages. Extra caffeine can cause you to feel more anxious and fidgety.
7. **Get plenty of sleep.** Sleep is crucial leading up to testing day as it's directly related to academic performance and success. A lack of sleep can cause grogginess, forgetfulness and elevated stress levels.
8. **Talk to a professional counselor, if needed.** A professional counselor can help you navigate your anxiety and provide you with valuable stress management tools. Ask your school or employer if they offer free counseling services.

If you know you suffer from test anxiety, it's important you start studying ahead of time, practice relaxation exercises and do your best to follow a routine that works for you. Using the tips mentioned above, along with any other effective practices you've found to work, you're more than likely to be well prepared, confident and successful when you take your exam!