

### Test Anxiety and Study Habits

Working as a counselor over the last six years, anxiety has become part of our everyday normal; especially since COVID-19. We are reminded that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7) but that doesn't mean that anxiety just goes away. Here are some natural strategies that can help reduce test anxiety:

- 1) Learn how to study efficiently. Ask your teachers for study habits and note taking skills that can assist you for success. Starting in early years will set the stage for academic success through high school and beyond.
- 2) Study early and in smaller settings. Break the habit of cramming your study into a day prior to tests and quizzes. Begin reviewing the information daily so that when it comes to test day, you know the material.
- 3) Establish a consistent study routine. Learn what works for you and stick to it.
- 4) Talk to your teacher. Make sure you understand what information is being taught. Don't worry about asking questions in class; chances are others may have them as well.
- 5) Learn relaxation techniques. This will help to stay calm while testing. See below this list for common relaxation tips.
- 6) Don't forget to eat and drink. Your brain needs fuel to function
- 7) Exercise. Regular exercise helps reduce stress and anxiety while allowing our minds to focus.
- 8) Get sleep. Sleep directly is related to academic performance.

Prior to tests try one of the following to assist in relaxing your body and brain:

- Engage your five senses to calm yourself  
5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, 1 thing you taste
- Stretch your arms
- Take five long deep breaths through your nose and let out through your mouth
- Place both flat on the ground. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl your toes. Focus on your feet
- Clench your hands into fists then release the tension. Repeat 10 times
- Count backwards from 100
- Think of an object and 'draw' it in your mind. Spend 60 seconds giving it all the details you can think of
- Use positive affirmations
- Name things in a category. Example types of pop or candy
- Hum to yourself a song you like while tapping the beat quietly on your leg for 1 min.