Combating Test Anxiety

By: Kayla Fratianno, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

There are many different ways to handle and control test anxiety. It is imperative that students approach the exam with self-confidence; this may help a student maintain a positive attitude and mindset. Learning how to study for an exam can be beneficial as well, some students like to cram and others prefer studying for long periods of time. Identifying which kind of study method to use can constructively set a student up for success. Self-care should also be taken into consideration. This can mentally and physically prepare students to achieve their goals!

In order to maintain a positive attitude and outlook before and during the exam, it is important to cultivate a healthy state of mind. This can ensure a strong sense of self-confidence. Always keep in mind that a student’s self-worth and attitude should never be affected by a test grade. Test grades do not define who we are.

Being prepared for an exam can also reduce test anxiety. It is extremely important to familiarize ourselves with the material thoroughly in order to establish an in-depth understanding of the subject at hand. Preparing for an exam can include studying key concepts, diagrams, definitions, and meanings prior to exam time. Coming to class with a scantron, test booklet, pen, pencil, and completed study guide can help ease the mind.

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It is also useful to remember how much impact self-care can have on the results of an exam. Self-care includes getting a full night’s rest, eating a hearty breakfast, performing breathing exercises, and working out in any type of way such as cardio, yoga, and weight training. Embracing a healthy lifestyle will help the body perform at its best. If test anxiety still proceeds, it can be beneficial to see a counselor at the Student Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and/or an Academic Success Coach at the Academic Success Center for professional personalized assistance.

Dress for Success and Expect Success

By: Kelly Lutzker, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Dressing professionally is very important. The first thing people notice is your appearance. As shallow as it is, the first impression a person will have of you is based entirely on how you appear on the outside. The way you are dressed will influence how people will respond to you as a person. Putting effort into being aesthetically pleasing will allow you to reap the rewards behind the doors that will open to you. Therefore, it is very important for you to dress your best. In order to present yourself properly, all you need to do is ask yourself some important questions.

Are the clothes you are wearing neat, clean, and properly fitted to make you appear to be someone who cares about themselves and everything around them? Wearing clothes that look nice presents a positive image. Pants should not create a muffin top. Skirts should be knee length or longer. Color is a very nice touch as long as it’s not over-the-top bold. Wear minimal yet matching jewelry. Shoes should be professional. Do not wear old, wrinkly, holey clothing. They are appropriate for sleeping and doing chores but not for attempting to climb the corporate ladder.

Are your clothes appropriate for the situation that requires you to look your very best? Matching your outfit to the occasion is very important. Wearing an old t-shirt and jeans is not going to work at a fancy dinner party or company banquet. You do not have to shell out hundreds of dollars in order to look good though. Never underestimate the power of the bargain bin and a decent pair of shoes.

Are you comfortable in these clothes? Discomfort is something that shows even when you do not think it does and does not allow you to work at your full potential. You will have a difficult time doing anything if you do not find comfort in the clothes you are wearing. Also, make sure that you are able to express yourself through your clothes. Wear things you like to wear (as long as they are appropriate).

Do you look good in these clothes? If you think you look good, it will raise your confidence and allow you to shine.

Holiday Survival Skills

By: Brendon Herzig Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

STAY CALM! Don’t let stress overcome your holiday season. With major holidays right around the corner and study week falling soon after, it is time to put your thinking cap on. Students are going to find themselves more stressed then ever during this time. It is good to get yourself motivated and begin your study process ahead of time.

Tip number one for surviving holiday stress: plan accordingly. Sit down with an Academic Success Coach; they
are here to help. Study before the holiday so that you can relax and enjoy your time off during the holiday. Don’t completely forget about school because you are making a break for the holiday. It is good to have time off to let your brain relax, but you don’t want to completely forget about school. Hopefully, you allocated time beforehand. If you completely forgot about your school work, you will come back a wreck trying to get everything under control. That is why you need to plan accordingly, prior to the holiday.

Tip number two: Be positive. You must stay positive. It is no use to stress yourself even more when things are out of your control. If there is something beyond your control, find a way to distract yourself. By being distracted you allow for stress to be lifted off as you no longer think about the matter causing stress. Stressing about something that you cannot fix directly is not the answer. You need to think positive and remember that everything is going to work out. Trust that what you have planned will work and that this is your time to get ahead of schedule. So, be positive that you have planned well.

Tip number three: Take a breather. It can help to distract you and stay positive during these times. Breathing allows you to eliminate stress. Taking a breath can take your mind off everything as you are thinking about the now and living in the moment. It helps to keep you positive as you leave the thoughts you were engaged in feeling better about yourself. Following these survival tips will help you to lead a stress free holiday season. Remember, all you have to do is STAY CALM!

“"If at First You Don’t Succeed. . .”
The Importance of Perseverance

By: Victoria Mitchell, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

There are many quotes that refer to perseverance, but perhaps the most notable and recognized among them all is a quote that reads "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Many people do not know where this quote originated from and they may be surprised to find out that its roots can be traced back to a song written by T.H. Palmer in the mid-1800s. The main point of Palmer's song is that perseverance is the key to success. Students often struggle with the transition from high school to college but it takes perseverance to make it through this transition. Also, students must study hard and choose their school work over their friends in order to make it through a difficult class. College is a place where students figure out what is most important to them. Sometimes the struggle is more than students bargained for and they just want to give up but it is important to know that giving up is not the answer.

There are many resources offered to students so that they can thrive in class. These resources include tutoring, the Writing Center, and Academic Success Coaching, just to name a few. As long as students are willing to push forth during those difficult study sessions and find help when they need it, they are sure to make it through their college experience. Sacrifices are often necessary but the end result is worth it. After students have made it through a difficult class they feel better about themselves and about what they are doing here at college. Perseverance is not easy but it sure pays off in the end. Students not only are proud of themselves, but they are more confident in their ability to persevere. They know that the next time they encounter a difficult class they have the ability to make it through.
Tips for Group Work

Often in college students will have to work in a group and many times the groups will be chosen by the professor. This means that students are forced to work with people that they do not know. It can be difficult to work with new people so, listed below are some tips for group work.

1. Meet group members properly: Make sure that everyone knows each other's names and can pronounce them correctly.

2. Exchange contact information: When working in groups it is important that everyone is able to get a hold of one another for questions, comments, and concerns.

3. Learn a little about each member in the group: It is easier to work with others when there are things that everyone has in common.

4. Be courteous: Let everyone have a chance to talk and exchange ideas without being ridiculed.

5. Establish ground rules: It is important to make sure everyone in the group has the same shared goal. This way there will not be any confusion or conflict when it comes to structuring the project, task, paper, or speech. By assigning roles, everyone has an understanding of what other group members are accomplishing in order to ensure everyone puts in the same amount of effort.

6. Be flexible and understanding: When working with a group of peers, it is beneficial to be polite, professional, and sympathetic towards others. This way everyone is able to work with one another efficiently without any ill feelings or friction.

7. Maintain a positive attitude: If a member is able to improve the mood of the group as a whole to create a comfortable environment for fellow members, the group may be able to come together and accomplish goals; as well as openly critique and perfect the assignment. Be fun, appreciative, and kind!

8. Commitment and collaboration: The group collectively should be able to complete all roles assigned to them in order to produce the best piece of work possible. It can be helpful if each member participates and completes the projects assigned to them in the presence of other members for service, structure, and a basis of support.

9. Planning: Be sure all members of the group are included in the means of communication. If a member of the group is absent, be sure not to exclude them. If the group has decided to meet, try to be flexible as many people have varying schedules. If meeting in a group is a complication it may help to find a way the group can work online. It may be beneficial to start a communication line whether it is an email or group text.

10. Identify skills: Knowing the groups strengths and weaknesses can be very beneficial to the effectiveness of the group. Finding someone who can take on the responsibility of guiding the process to completion ensures the group runs swimmingly.

11. Conflict management: Groups often have difficulty in acknowledging conflict. It is beneficial to use conflict within the group to its advantage, as a deeper understanding to a problem may help to resolve the issue and the result will be efficient group work.

By using these helpful tips students will improve their skills for working in groups. These tips may even help students with their everyday interactions with classmates. Working well with others is a key component to careers after college so if they can be perfected now students are ahead of the game.

*All photos used are original or can be found at unlv.edu unless otherwise noted.*