

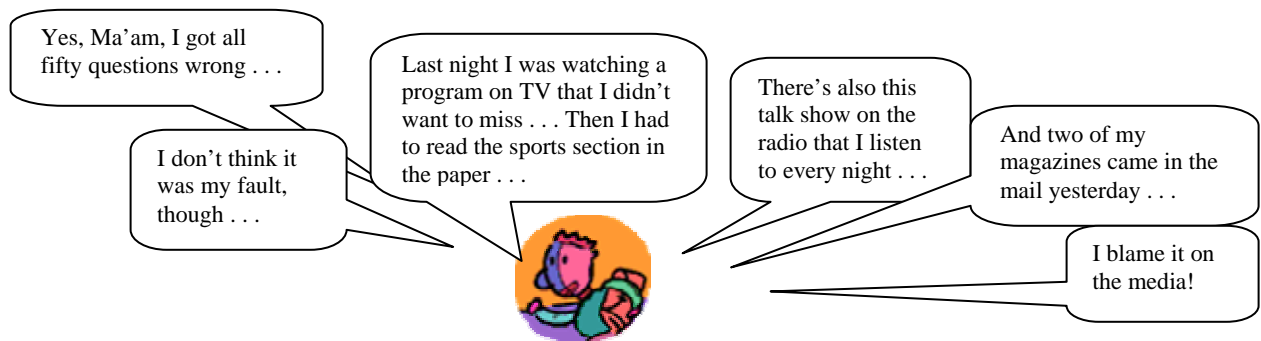
## CONTROLLING TEST ANXIETY

Do you sometimes flub questions when you know the answer? Freeze during tests? Have difficulty sleeping as exams approach? If so, you might be suffering from test anxiety.

A little tension before a test is good. That tingly, butterflies-in-the-stomach feeling you get from extra adrenaline can sharpen your awareness and keep you alert. Too much tension, however, can be damaging and prevent you from doing your best on exams.

The following suggestions are intended to help you ease test anxiety. If these suggestions do not help, the next step is to discuss the problem with a counselor.

1. **Be sure test anxiety is not an excuse.** Many students say they have test anxiety when actually they have not studied and reviewed carefully or thoroughly. If you are unprepared, you should have every reason to be anxious!



2. **Get used to test situations.** Become less disturbed by tests by putting yourself in test-like conditions.
  - a. Visit the classroom when it is empty and take a seat. Visualize yourself taking a test there.
  - b. Develop practice or review tests.
  - c. Take as many tests as possible, even though you dislike them.
3. **Control negative thinking.** Negative thinking predisposes you to failure. Instead, send yourself positive rather than negative messages. Say, "I have studied hard and I deserve to pass," or "I know I can do it!" Remember, being well prepared is one of the best ways to reduce test anxiety.
4. **Compose yourself before the test begins.** Before you begin the test, take 30 seconds or so to calm yourself. Take several deep breaths, close your eyes, and visualize yourself calmly working through the test. Remind yourself that you have prepared carefully and have every reason to do well.
5. **Answer easy questions first.** This will help you work calmly, and you will prove to yourself that you can handle the test.