# **How to fight exam anxiety and emerge as winners: tips for students and parents**

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Ever been in a situation where you found yourself to be frozen just before an exam? Not able to remember anything that you had learned previously and feel everything has vanished from your memory? That’s troubling right when you are not able to focus on exam questions and prepare an answer due to interfering thoughts. Read for a few great tips to beat exam stress and anxiety and learn How Parents Can Help Children Cope with Exam Stress.

Need not worry, most students experience such situations right before an important exam, and it is only better to channelize that anxiety in improving performance rather than falling apart and failing to perform in the exam.

## **Types of exam anxiety:**

So how can we make this anxiety go away and let excellence make its way  
Let us first understand the types of anxiety when it comes to exams:

**Low anxiety:**

Students who experience Low Anxiety during the exam phase may feel a little nervous about an upcoming exam. They are still able to focus on their studies or the questions asked during the exam assessment.

Usually, low anxiety students don’t feel debilitated by the exam. They are also not struck with intrusive thoughts.

**High anxiety:**

High anxiety students show an immediate stress/anxiety reaction when exposed to the feared Exam/test or Evaluation situation. Such individuals attempt to avoid the situation by not showing up to the exam/test or may endure it but with extreme fear.

In some cases, high stress can lead to a sense of panic: “I just really can’t do this!”

## **How to overcome Exam anxiety:**

Here are simple strategies that are really effective in getting you to de-stress and face your exams with full confidence: –

### **1. Maintain a healthy lifestyle:**

* Regular exercise
* Healthy eating
* Plenty of sleep
* Avoid substances that increase anxiety – sugar, caffeine, alcohol, etc.

### **2. Use Relaxation Techniques:**

* Breathing exercises
* Meditation
* Visualizations
* Positive thinking

### **3. Study Effectively:**

* Prepare study timetable
* Learn memory enhancement techniques.
* Don’t wait for last moment: spread your studying over the whole term/year rather than “cramming” at the last minute
* Practice writing answers to mock questions under a time limit while sitting at a desk.
* Take ample breaks when studying at a long stretch.

### **4. Test Yourself:**

* Eliminate any kind of distraction when planning to sit down for writing a test.
* Time yourself when writing an answer
* Read all questions carefully and formulate answers in your head before pinning them down on the paper.
* Revise all the material learned, especially one day before the exam.
* Most importantly, get as much rest as possible before the exam.

### **5. Change negative thoughts and adjust your attitude:**

* Observe and regulate negative thinking patterns.
* Engage in positive self-talk (e.g. I am going to do excellent in my exam)
* Set realistic expectations from yourself
* Praise yourself as you write the exam (for example I know everything and am doing well so far).

## **How Parents Can Help Children Cope with Exam Stress and Anxiety :**

Here are some tips which parents can do to manage exam anxiety and stress -

### **1. Recognize the signs of stress:**

* If you ever come across these symptoms in your child, try to look into the matter immediately. Make your children understand that exams are not a big deal, and stressing about it is only going to make the situation worse.
* Teach them to take exams as a part of their learning process.

### **2. Help them make a study schedule:**

* Help your children with exam preparation.
* Encourage them to make a study schedule and prepare for the exams accordingly.
* When students are well prepared in advance, they do not need to stress out with last-minute studying and uncertainties regarding exam preparation.

### **3. Seek expert advice:**

Do not hesitate to seek professional help. Talk to a counsellor about your child’s problem. With proper guidance and support, children can easily get over exam fear and improve their concentration on studies.

### **4. Take time out for your children:**

* Exam stress often leads to depression in students, which is why it is necessary for parents to interact with their children regularly.
* Never force your children to meet unrealistic and high expectations.
* Be positive and reassuring; encourage them to do better every day.

### **5. Encourage your children to take breaks:**

* Taking breaks in between studies has proven to be very helpful. It helps improve concentration and retention power of the memory.
* Do not force students to sit with books all day long before the exam; it is a bad practice and can make your children fear studying even more.
* Ask them to take a 15-minute break every 2 hours.

### **6. Check their diet and sleep pattern:**

* A balanced diet is very necessary to beat exam stress. Fresh food, green leafy vegetables, pulses, and dairy products must be consumed regularly.
* Parents must ensure that children do not eat too much sugary food or energy drinks during exams.
* Also, students should get a good 8 hours of sleep daily to improve concentration.

### **7. Encourage children to exercise and meditate:**

* Parents must encourage children to meditate and exercise regularly.
* 30 minutes of exercise early in the morning can keep stress, anxiety, and fatigue away and give them ample energy to study well throughout the day.

### **8. Teach them how to accept failure and move on:**

* Students are often fearful of failing to meet their parent’s expectations. Teach children that every failure teaches a new lesson, and they should learn to accept failure and move on to do better in life.
* Focus on how much your children can learn rather than how much your children can score on the exam. Help children study in a calm environment and motivate them always.