

DON'T PANIC! FINDING EXAM TIME PEACE

Law school final exams are stressful. Your mind and body naturally react with anxiety and nervousness in anticipation of the exams. Convert that stress and anxiety into a helpful source of motivation and energy. Use that energy to get "psyched up" about finals. You will find yourself alert, attentive, and focused.

IN THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO THE EXAM:

Pace yourself. Do not cram. Design a realistic schedule and stick to it. Make sure you allow time for fun and relaxation so that you avoid burning out. List what courses you are studying for on what days. List the time you plan to study each day. Be realistic. You're not going to study 18 hours a day for an entire month before the exam. Try to study 3 to 4 hours a day one month before the exam and then 6 to 8 hours a day in the two weeks prior to the exam. Overlearn the material – that is the best way to eliminate exam anxiety.

Take the LawExams.com practice exams periodically.

As the exams approach decide which courses need the most attention. Identify your weak areas within each subject. Review these daily. Subjects in which you are stronger won't require as much time.

Have study sheets and flashcards with you at all times. Write out your own flashcards. Even if you simply copy the ones from LawExams.com the very act of writing will help commit the information to memory. When you have an extra 5 minutes, review the handy materials.

Stay in good physical shape. Regular moderate exercise will boost your energy, clear your mind and reduce any feelings of stress. Try a few minutes of general calisthenics each day. Eat healthily and regularly; your brain will benefit from the nutrients. Be mindful of excessive caffeine and sugar. Avoid non-prescription drugs and minimize your alcohol consumption. Get regular, restful sleep at night.

Maintain a positive attitude. Visualize success. Try out some yoga, tai chi or relaxation techniques. They will help to keep you feeling calm and balanced, improve your concentration levels and help you to sleep better.

Create self-motivating statements and say them to yourself several times each day. Try: "Studying really helps me master the material." "I learn more when I stick to my study schedule" and "I will be calm later if I study now."

IN THE DAYS LEADING UP TO THE EXAM:

Eat right, get enough sleep, and build in time for relaxation.

Believe in yourself. You wouldn't have been given a place in this law school if you didn't have the ability to succeed.

Keep things in perspective. The exams might seem like the most important thing in the world right now, but in the grander scheme they are really just a speck of your whole life.

Practice progressive muscle relaxation. Slowly tense and then relax each part of your body. Practice deep breathing. Try visualizing a favorite spot that you find soothing.

Talk to encouraging people to help your attitude. Think about your potential for success.

Stick to your study schedule. If you wear perfume or cologne, spray a little while studying, then wear that perfume or cologne while taking the test.

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Try to get a good night's sleep two days before the exam. The night before the exam you may be too nervous to sleep, that is perfectly normal.

ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM:

Eat before the exam.

Wear something comfortable.

Dress in layers.

Listen to classical music prior to the exam.

Bring water to drink.

Don't go to class too early.

Stay away from those with negative attitudes.

Do not discuss the finer points of law with others immediately prior to the exam.

Wear a watch.

Prepare yourself mentally.

Relax for the 1/2 hour before you take the exam.

Tell yourself you know this stuff.

WHEN TAKING THE EXAM:

Allow yourself to “warm-up.” Don’t panic if you don’t know a question. Go to the questions that you know, do not stress over ones you don’t know.

Relax yourself physically during the test. Breathe deeply and clear your mind of clutter. If you feel panic, put the test down, close your eyes and take several long, slow deep breaths.

AFTER THE EXAM:

Do not discuss the exam, your answers, or the answers of others.

Do not criticize yourself. Relax and congratulate yourself for your work.

Follow through on the reward you promised yourself.

When you get your grade evaluate your success in terms of your own grades not in terms of the grades your classmates obtain.