Exam Time Looms – get ready with Mind Moves®

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The words “test” or “exam” are enough to trigger a need to RUN as the result of an intense fear of failure. Fear of failure can either be positive - motivating you to do well, or negative -limiting performance when the fear is so intense that it paralyses and locks you into a failure spiral.

Negative fear of failure is a survival brain function. This part of the brain does not think logically before responding. Without rational thinking to activate logical analysis, reasoning and creative problem solving, and emotions to unlock memory and motivation, you can neither concentrate on reading the test questions nor answer them well. You may only catch a word here and there, assume what has been asked and write down any answer that comes to mind.

In contrast to a negative fear of failure, a positive fear of failure enables you to be alert, to focus, concentrate and read carefully and with comprehension. Now you can approach the test or exam as a challenge to combine all your knowledge, creativity and passion to succeed!

A person with a negative fear of failure needs to:
- move out of survival mode and closer to learning success
- feel safe and in control of his thinking and emotions, in order to access the rational layer of the brain to prevent him from making silly mistakes and underachieving
- be prepared and get ready
- warm up the brain for success

STEP 1: GET READY EVERYDAY

Take the necessary books to school every day.
Write down the homework after each period.

1. Make sure that you understand your work every day because each day’s work follows that of the previous day
2. Complete the most difficult work first
3. Check your attitude. Remember that you are preparing for YOUR own future. Your success depends on your OWN efforts
4. CONCENTRATE: Avoid things that divert your attention, e.g. radio, TV, Facebook, mms, etc.
5. Complete each day’s homework
6. Do revision daily and weekly
7. Stay at home during the week and relax over the weekends
8. Select TV programmes carefully
STEP 2: GET READY - STUDY FITNESS

1. Study regularly from the first day of school
2. Follow a study time-table regularly. (Avoid studying late at night.)
3. Determine your own concentration period and take a short break now and then
4. Get enough sleep
5. Exercise frequently; participate in outdoor activities, but don’t neglect your studies
6. Get a total picture of your work by reading it through as a whole; then start identifying key words and writing short summaries which must be revised regularly
7. Revision must be spread over a long period. Avoid a desperate attempt just before the examination
8. Do not stop studying as soon as you think you know the subject matter – revise it again and again. Repetition will enforce your memory
9. Talk to your subject teacher whenever something is not clear to you
10. Study in a well-ventilated room with adequate lightning. Use a comfortable desk and avoid a soft chair
11. Change the intensity of concentration by varying your work load. Avoid continuous concentration on one subject matter.

If the brain is ready, learning is easy.

STEP 3: WARM-UP!

Eat FOOD - not junk. Water is brain fuel. Boost the essential skills for test writing by taking a few sips of water, stretch your hands and fingers wide open a few times and do the following Mind Moves® before writing a test or exam:

Memory and confident test writing Mind Moves as illustrated in Mind Moves – moves that mend the mind.

POWER ON
Rub the indentation just below the collar bone in line with the left eye. This move re-establishes the electrical flow via the Vagus nerve to the speech organs and stomach to help relax butterflies and talk with ease

ANTENNAE ADJUSTER
Massage both ear lobes simultaneously from top to bottom using circular movements. This move develops the near senses, auditory processing and perception as well receptive language ability.

MOUSE PAD
The eyes are to the brain what the mouse is to the computer. The eyes access different parts of the brain when turning up, down, horizontal, left and right. Focus the thumb held at elbow distance from the eyes. Move the thumb upwards, fist around the left eye

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and then around the right eye. Repeat five times. Swap hands and repeat the same process, always first drawing a circle around the left eye and then around the right eye. This move stimulates the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic receptive ability, while crossing the midline to integrate the left and right parts of the brain and body. It develops eye-hand coordination and visual integration.

**HOMOLATERAL WALK**

Lie down. Slowly raise the left arm and left knee. Relax. Slowly raise the right arm and leg. Relax. Repeat at least ten times. Once the move can be performed smoothly, do it standing up. This move develops hip flexion, the left and right brain, it interrupts reflexive movement, relieves impulsive and hyper and hyper active movement. Always follow with the Bilateral walk.

**BILATERAL WALK**

Touch the left knee with the right hand, twisting the trunk to bring the opposite shoulder and hip towards each other, extending the other arm and leg. Now touch the right knee with the left hand, extending the other arm and leg. This movement stimulates left-right integration through crossing the lateral midline and is best done first lying down and then standing up. Repeat 10 times. This exercise can be done singing or doing some form of role learning. This move integrates the left and right parts of the brain and body, while crossing the midline. When eyes are moved into visual, auditory and kinesthetic positions, this move also crossed all 3 midlines.

**RISE AND SHINE**

Fling the arms wide open while breathing in deeply and slowly. Close the arms over the chest in a hug, breathe out deeply and slowly. The parent may simultaneously hug from behind. This move boosts relaxation, rhythm in breathing and a sense of wellbeing.

**STEP 4: GET READY - EXAMINATION TECHNIQUE**

1. Do not leave studying until last minute
2. Do not think continuously about your work before the examination. It leads to unnecessary frustration
3. Do not consume a large meal before exams - blood must flow to the brain and not to the stomach
4. See to it that your writing materials are in order
5. Do Mind Moves before you start
6. Read the examination paper VERY carefully
7. The mark allocated is a good guide to know how much to write and how much time to spend on a question
8. Write neatly
9. Do not waste time on things that you cannot do immediately. Do the questions you are able to answer and return afterwards to those you couldn’t do

**Source:** De Jager, M. 2010. *Mind Moves - moves that mend the mind*. Johannesburg: Mind Moves Institute