

Conquering Test-Taking Anxiety and Fear of Failure

Welcome to the ABPANC Webinar – "Conquering Test-Taking Anxiety and Fear of Failure."

This 30 minute webinar will help you understand the causes for Fear of Failure and how to address them head-on and overcome the anxiety that is normal for most people taking an important careerchanging exam like CPAN or CAPA.

We have received a lot of requests for a webinar on this topic because it's such a universal concern. Many people get nervous when preparing for an exam so we've collected valuable information to guide you through the process. Join thousands of CPAN and CAPA nurses who have walked in your shoes.

ABPANC has many resources available to help you prepare for the examination, and good preparation is a strong deterrent to the Fear of Failure. We encourage you to visit our website at **www.cpancapa.org** for a comprehensive list of study resources. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to call our office in New York, we'd be glad to help. Our phone number is also on the website.



"There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: The Fear of Failure."

– Paul Coelho

www.cpancapa.org 1-800-6ABPANC abpanc@proexam.org



Congratulations





CPAN® and CAPA® Certification: *Nursing Passion in Action*®

Congratulations on making the decision to take the perianesthesia nursing certification journey!

There are many personal and professional benefits of holding the CPAN and/or CAPA credentials. As you know, the nursing field is changing rapidly, as is healthcare in general. Your commitment to perianesthesia nursing certification is one way you can help ensure you have the knowledge and credentials necessary to take charge of your career, while improving patient care.

Certification validates your specialized knowledge and experience anywhere in the U.S. Studying for and maintaining CPAN or CAPA certification keeps you up to date on the latest developments in perianesthesia nursing.

You'll also enjoy a strong sense of personal pride and accomplishment as you join thousands of perianesthesia nurses who are CPAN and/or CAPA certified.



Goals and Objectives

After viewing this webinar, you will be able to:

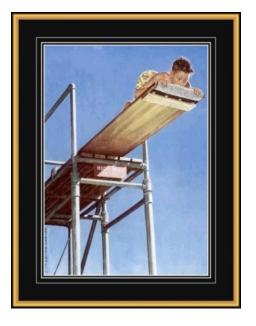
- 1. Describe how fear of failure can impact one's ability to succeed.
- 2. Identify if you are significantly influenced by test taking anxiety.
- 3. Identify two to three strategies that will help manage your anxiety and fear of failure.
- 4. Overcome test-taking anxiety by being better prepared for the CPAN/CAPA examination.

Everybody is different, and fear of failure does not affect everyone in the same way. For this reason, what works for one person may not work for another. It is important that you find the strategies that work for you.

What is Fear of Failure?

What is Fear of Failure? Fear of failure is a psychological condition that can cause a significant amount of stress related to preparing for and taking an examination. Left unchecked, it can block the thinking process and cause poor performance in test results, regardless of the amount of preparation for the exam.

"People are disturbed not by a thing, but by their perception of a thing."



– Epictetus



Fear Can Become a Significant Psychological Threat

Fear of failure can pose a significant psychological threat. Everyone hates to fail, but for some people failing presents such a significant psychological threat that their motivation to avoid failure exceeds their motivation to succeed. This fear of failure causes them to unconsciously sabotage their chances of success in a variety of ways.

Guy Winch, Ph.D. How Fear of Failure Makes us Sabotage Our Efforts. Psychology Today, June 2013

Fear Can Hold You Back

The fear of failure can be immobilizing – it can cause us to do nothing, and therefore resist moving forward. But when we allow fear to stop our forward progress in life, we're likely to miss some great opportunities along the way.

"When you fail, it doesn't mean that you are a failure. It just means at one moment in your rich, full life you didn't accomplish what you wanted. You become a failure when you make that moment the definition of your life. Learn from your failures, take action, and accomplish what you want in life."

– Ed Sykes

Fear of Failure can be Physical

According to the American Institute of Stress, the most common definition of stress is "physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension." Based upon a 2014 American Institute of Stress and American Psychological Association Study, 73% of people experience psychological symptoms of stress, but even more people — 77%, regularly experience physical symptoms of stress.

Of people reporting physical symptoms of stress, the top five physical symptoms are:

Fatigue	51 %	Muscle tension	30 %
Headache	44 %	Change in appetite	23 %
Upset stomach	34 %		

So, by working on managing your stress response, you will feel better both mentally and physically.

Fear of Failure is Common

All of us have a certain amount of Fear of Failure heading into an important event such as a certification exam. The thought of failure is always in the back of our minds and has the potential to conjure up feelings of embarrassment, humiliation and disappointment.

Fear of Failure has one thing in common with any other fear emotion – it is a "feeling," not a "fact." Because it is an emotional feeling, you have control over it and you CAN change your mind and your feelings about failure. When you overcome the fear of failure in your mind, you are on the road to success. There is still work to be done in setting goals and establishing productive study habits, but overcoming the anxiety is an important first step.



A failure is not always a mistake, it may simply be the best one can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying.

– B. F. Skinner

Failing is a Step on the Path to Success

It's almost impossible to go through life without experiencing some kind of failure. The good news is that it's entirely up to us to decide how we let it affect our lives. We may choose to see failure as proof of how inadequate we are; or, we can look at it as an incredible learning experience.



FAIL:

First Attempt In Learning

Every time we fail at something, we can choose to look for the lesson we're meant to learn. These learning lessons are very important; they're how we grow, and how we keep from making the same mistake again. Failure stops us only if we let it.

Failure can help us discover how strong a person we really are; Overcome our fears; discover our friends; find new resources; and to gain unexpected motivation to succeed.

You CAN do this!



Many Famous People Have Failed

You are not alone. Many Famous People Have Failed. ABPANC believes that proper preparation, paired with a positive attitude, is essential to helping you pass the CPAN or CAPA exam... but if something happens that you don't pass the first time, you are in good company.

Michael Jordan, one of the greatest basketball players of all time, was cut from his high school basketball team because his coach didn't think he had enough skill.

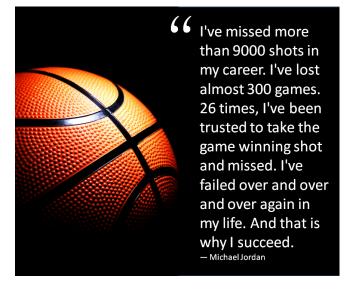
Warren Buffett, one of the world's most successful businessmen, was rejected by Harvard University.

Bill Gates dropped out of Harvard and started a failed business called Traf-O-Data before creating the global empire – Microsoft.

Oprah Winfrey was fired from her job as a television reporter because she was "unfit for TV."

HONOR YOUR CALLING. EVERYONE HAS ONE. TRUST YOUR HEART, AND SUCCESS WILL COME TO YOU. — OPRAH WINFREY

Source: We Heart It



For them, failure was a setback, but by no means a roadblock. You may be watching this because you're nervous about the examination, or you may have tried in the past and are afraid to try again.

Regardless of where you are in the testing journey, by studying for the CPAN/CAPA examinations, you improve your knowledge about caring for perianesthesia patients and meeting their physiological, behavioral/cognitive and safety needs – so you still will make a difference in the care you provide to your patients, and you have continued to learn!



Nurses are Particularly Susceptible to Fear of Failure

High Test Anxiety

- Average: 16 20%
- Nurses: 35%

An independent study by the College of Nursing at the University of Tennessee showed that nurses tend to be more test-anxious than other professionals, which may be the result of the pressures of their jobs, where an inadvertent mistake could seriously harm a patient as well as jeopardize their own careers.

Studies have verified that approximately 16% to 20% of test candidates, in general, have high test anxiety, while approximately 35% of nurses have high test anxiety. And, further studies find that high test-anxiety candidates score about 12 percentile points lower on exams than low test-anxiety candidates.



It's in your nature to be a caring, conscientious perfectionist and that means you have very high expectations for yourself. It follows

naturally that these qualities also cause you to hold some anxiety about the fear of failure. If you would like additional information beyond this webinar, there may be courses on text anxiety at your local colleges that cover this subject in much more detail.

Ginger Evans, MSN, APN, BC & Gary Ramsey, DNP, RN College of Nursing, University of Tennessee Richard Driscoll, Ph.D. Westside Psychology Test-Anxiety Program and Test Gains

Ergene, T. (2003). Effective Interventions on Test Anxiety Reduction School Psychology International. 24, 3 (Aug), 313-329

> Driscoll, R., G. Evans, G. Ramsey, S. Wheeler (2009). High Test Anxiety Among Nursing Students. ERIC, 3pp



Do You Have Test Anxiety?

So, do you have test anxiety or not? Chances are if you're watching this webinar you have enough concern to be considered susceptible to the fear of failure. Think about how you would answer these eight questions:

Question #1:

Are you so fearful that you cancel your plans to apply for the examination?

Question #2:

Are you so fearful that once you've applied for the examination, you cancel the appointment?

Question #3:

Before an exam are you so worried about worst-case scenarios that you procrastinate in studying?

Question #4:

Do you worry that you are not well prepared for tests even though you have studied diligently?

Question #5:

Before an exam do you begin to doubt your knowledge of the material?

Question #6:

When you get into the testing room on test day, do you get so nervous you begin to have a mental blackout?

Question #7:

Do you think about potential failure during the exam?

Question #8:

During a test do you get so nervous that your hands shake, you feel faint, get dry mouth, your pulse races, you breathe faster, get headaches and perspire?

If you answer yes to only one or two of these questions, fear of failure may not be hindering your ability to succeed. That said, you may still be helped by the strategies that we are discussing.

If you answer yes to about half of these questions, your level of test anxiety is average. Reviewing these recommended strategies will help you to address these fears.

If you answer yes to most of these questions, you are likely experiencing some pretty intense test anxiety. But that's okay, plenty of people do. You can overcome your stressors with the knowledge and practice of information we are about to review.



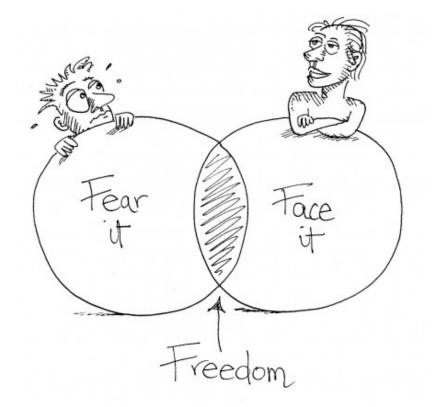
Identity the Root Cause

Fear of the Unknown Feeds on the Unknown

Most stressors come from the unknown. One thing you can do, is to try to confront your fears headon. What is it that you are afraid of? Of letting yourself down, disappointing your colleagues, or your patients? Or, are you afraid of the exam itself?

Sometimes, you need to visualize the worst possible outcome to move past it. Ask yourself, what would happen if... Answering that question is the first step to overcoming that fear.

By asking that question, you may also see the things that are within your control. For example, the CPAN/CAPA exam might be frightening because the information seems overwhelming, or because you are nervous about the testing process.



Source: dharmaconsulting.com



Your Road Map to Success

The three things you need to be successful in reducing test anxiety are:

- Adequate Preparation

to learn what the exam covers and identify the areas of study that need the most attention.

- Strong Organization

to create a structured study plan that covers all of the material in manageable allocations of time over several weeks leading up to the exam.

- Proper Practice

The more practice you get answering similar test questions, and pacing yourself, the more comfortable you will feel when you actually take the exam.

These are all things that YOU control, and by gaining control of the unknowns surrounding the CPAN/CAPA exam, you gain control of your fear.

Confront Fear Head-On

Some people deal with fear of failure by ignoring it. They hope that if they avoid worrying about their fear, it will go away. Unfortunately, it won't, and it will likely rear its ugly head at the most inopportune time, just as they are about to take the exam.

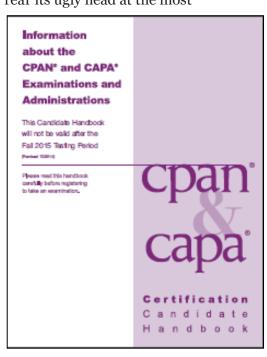
Learn About the Exam

The first thing you can do to deal with the fear of failure is to make sure you know all the basic facts about the exam.

You should be able to answer these questions:

- What topics are covered on the exam?
- How do I know what to study?
- How many questions are on the exam?
- What format are the questions in?
- What do the questions look like?
- How much time do I have to complete the exam?
- How are the answers scored?

The CPAN and CAPA Certification Candidate Handbook contains answers to all of these questions and is the best place to start.



The Certification Candidate Handbook is a must-read for any nurse considering CPAN and/or CAPA certification. It is a comprehensive guide full of information about exam requirements, exam construction, and ABPANC policies. Be sure to read the Appendices.

ABPANC's test taking strategies webinar is a wonderful tool to help you develop your study plan, and cultivate studying skills, and identify tools that will help you study successfully. You will find it on the ABPANC website. Be sure to watch it.



Prepare your Study Plan

	Appendix (
	CPAN ^e and CAPA ^e Test Blueprin	
The following blueprints are based on the 2010-2011 ABPANC H		
administration of the Fall 2012 CPAN® and CAPA® examinations		
	If patients across the lifespan continuum to address their physiological, by of settings throughout the perlanesthesia experience.	
TASKS ADDRESSING PERIANESTHESIA PATIENT NEEDS	PERIANE STHESIA NURSING KNOWLEDG	
TASKS ADDRESSING PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS - 57% of CPAN* Examination 49% of CAPA* Examination	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED TO MEET PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS	
Assess, diagnose, plan, intervene, and evaluate in order to promote:	Nursing Process	
	Evidence-based practice	
Stability of respiratory system	Anatomy and physiology of body systems	
Stability of cardiovascular/peripheral vascular/ hematological systems	Growth and development Pathophysiology	
Stability of neuropoical system	Normal and abnormal diagnostic values	
Stability of musculoskeletal system	Acceptable deviations #om normal physiclogic states	
Stability of gastrointestinal system	Comorbidities/potential complications	
Stability of renal system	Physical assessment techniques	
Stability of integumentary system	ACLS/PALS	
Stability of endocrine system	Airway Management	
Stability of genitourological and reproductive systems	Vital signs/hemodynamic monitoring	
	Fluid and electrolyte management	
Stability of fluids and electrolytes Maintenance of normothermia	Themoregulation Pain assessment and management	
Mantenance of normotherma Physiological confort	(psychological, physiological, medical)	
(including, but not limited to, relief from pain, shivering, nausea, vomiting, temperature control and appropriate costilioring)	Postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV) and post discharge nausea and vomiting (PDNV) assessment and management	
Atherapeutic environment	Pharmacodynamics/pharmacokinetics	
(including, but not limited to, minimal interruption of normal regimen, preemptive interventions)	Pharmacological interventions	
ioma regimer, premptive mervenions)	Anesthesia techniques (general, regional, moderate sedation, Monitored Anesthesia Care (MAC), Total Intravenous Anesthesia (TNA))	
	Anesthetic and reversal agents	
	Surgical and procedural interventions	
	Normal and abnormal physical response to surgery/procedure/anesthesia	
	Atemative and adjunctive treatment modalities	
	Injury prevention	
	Positioning	
	Phases of anesthesia experience Environmental influences affecting patient care	
	Environmental influences affecting patient care MHAUS guidelines/protocols	
	ASPAN Standards	

Read the CPAN and CAPA Certification Candidate Handbook carefully and review Appendix C -

CPAN/CAPA Test Blueprint, to clearly understand the test blueprint used to determine how questions on the exam are categorized into three domains of perianesthesia patients' needs:

- Physiological Needs
- Behavioral & Cognitive Needs
- · Safety Needs

The Test Blueprint also defines the knowledge needed by the perianesthesia nurse to meet the needs of patients. Think about your own areas of knowledge and experience so that you can prioritize your study time in the areas where you need to focus your study efforts most.

A Goal is a Dream with a Deadline

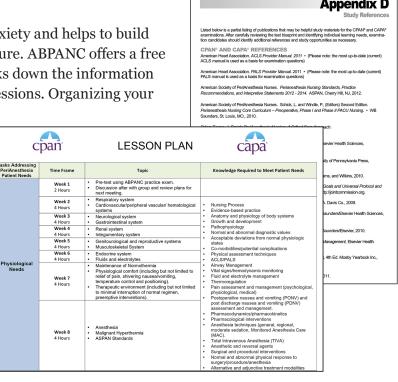
Adopt regular study patterns and set aside specific time each week to study specific topics. Setting goals and following a structured study plan not only organizes your time efficiently, it also builds confidence and pushes anxiety into the background.

Commit to a Study Plan... and Follow It

Good organization and planning reduces anxiety and helps to build confidence, minimizing potential fear of failure. ABPANC offers a free 12-week Study Plan on its website that breaks down the information from the test blueprints into small weekly sessions. Organizing your

study goals into small steps will help make the process more attainable. You can learn about other studying strategies by watching ABPANC's Test Taking Strategies webinar.

Appendix D (found on the ABPANC website as well as in the Certification Candidate Handbook) is available with a list of references to help you study. This list is the only list of reference materials approved by ABPANC and the only resources used by the Exam **Construction Committees to construct** examination questions.



Appendix D



Practice Exams Help to Build Confidence

Taking practice exams in advance to become familiar with the testing format and style of questions helps to build confidence and minimizes the fear of the unknown. This also makes you more comfortable on the day of the exam, reducing another component of anxiety.

ABPANC offers practice exams that include questions in the same format as those in the exam with the correct answers and reference sources. The practice exams will help you to:

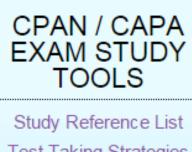
- Become used to taking an exam on the computer.
- Get comfortable answering the types of multiple choice questions that you will encounter on the exam.
- Evaluate the areas in which you are strong, as well as those you will need to study further.



ABPANC's Study Resources

Source: 12 Minute Athlete, LLC

ABPANC offers a wide range of study tools on the website: www.cpancapa.org



Test Taking Strategies Webinar Study Tips & FAQs

Coaches

Most are free and are designed specifically to help nurses prepare for the CPAN and CAPA certification exams.

Just click on the link on the home page to access Lesson Plans, Study Tips, FAQs, Test Blueprints, a Mind Mapping Study Guide, links to the Practice Exams, and contact information for locating a Certification Coach in your area. ABPANC Coaches are experienced leaders who have been through the exam testing process and can advise you in ways to overcome your fear of failure as well as provide great advice to help you study and prepare for the exam.

Studying in a group with other colleagues interested in becoming certified can be extremely useful, whether coordinated by an ABPANC Certification Coach or a group that you organize. Being able to support one another and share positive feedback is very useful.

The "Test Taking Strategies" webinar discusses ABPANC's study resources in great detail, and identifies best practice strategies related to studying for and taking a multiple-choice exam.



"Striving for Excellence Motivates You; Striving for Perfection is Demoralizing"

I like this quote, it's realistic and true. Putting too much pressure on yourself is likely to increase anxiety and therefore, your fear of failure.

You don't have to pass this exam with a perfect score. In fact that is rare. Sure, it's tough, and you're likely going to get some answers wrong, but that's part of the testing process.

Take the time early in your study process to become educated about the information on the exam. The more informed and prepared you are, the less anxiety you will have.



Fear is a Learned Behavior, So You Can Learn to Overcome It

There is a body of research about self fulfilling prophesies—negativity leads to negative things. You can start to overcome fear by fighting the negativity head-on.

Start by creating a positive mental attitude and visualize yourself with this new certification. Don't think about the potential failure, concentrate on the positive experiences this will create for your career and your life. Focusing on the value this certification brings will help keep you focused on the study and preparation needed to pass the exam.

Keep your goals in focus and organize your study plans to accomplish those goals.



It's hard work, but it's worth it!





Think Positively and Visualize Yourself Succeeding

The law of attraction is a powerful phenomena. If you harbor negative thoughts about this exam, you are likely to incur negative results. If you have positive thoughts about the exam, you are likely to create positive results. Don't let negativity overcome you.

Practice relaxing with deep breathing exercises to help clear your mind of negative thoughts and to focus on positive thinking, which will help reduce stress levels.

If you find yourself thinking negatively, quickly replace those thoughts with positive thinking.

- I AM well prepared.
- I DO know how to study for this exam.
- I CAN do this.
- I WILL pass the exam, because I have studied and know this information.

Surround yourself with positive thoughts and positive people, and remember that your self-confidence in your ability to succeed is critical to your continued success.

Courage Is Like a Muscle; Use It or Lose It

Courage is like a muscle, you use it or lose it. The more you use it, the stronger you get. Harness the strength of courage and you have the power to succeed. Don't sell yourself short, you've had many successes in your life and passing this exam will validate your nursing knowledge and give you the confidence and empowerment to be a better nurse AND a stronger person.

"Take risks: if you win, you will be happy; if you lose, you will be wise."

- Anonymous



Self Care

According to the American Stress Institute, poor nutrition, relationships, media overload and sleep deprivation are among the top contributors to stress. That means that, by taking care of yourself and engaging with loved ones, you can help yourself succeed.

Try a Relaxation Exercise

If you are finding that your fear is interfering with your concentration, or immobilizing you, here are a few exercises that can help to calm your body, thereby reducing your stress level. Take a minute to practice these, if you can:



Feet on the Ground

Begin by putting your feet flat on the floor. With your hands, grasp under your chair. Push down with your feet and pull up on the chair for 5-10 seconds. Then, relax for 25 seconds. You should feel tension coming out of your body. Repeat this exercise 2-3 times.

Breathing

Now, take a deep breath, and hold it for about three seconds. Let it all out at once. As you exhale, relax your jaw, relax your shoulders. Clear your head and concentrate on being calm. Keep your mouth ajar and let your teeth remain slightly apart.

Visualization

Maybe you are more of a visual person... close your eyes, and imagine your ideal spot for relaxation. Maybe it's somewhere you've been, or somewhere you've always wanted to go. Maybe it's a serene beach, or a rolling meadow, or your favorite room. Imagine yourself there, wearing your favorite comfortable clothes, with not a care in the world. This is YOUR special place. You can go there whenever you like. If you feel yourself getting tense, go to your special place for fifteen seconds.

There are many more relaxation exercises. For more information, you can look up 'relaxation exercise' or 'breathing exercise' on the internet. Find one that works for you, and use it when you feel yourself getting stressed and make relaxation a part of your study routine.



Summary

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed."

- Theodore Roosevelt

In summary, fear of failure is a learned behavior that needs to be unlearned. The best way to overcome your fears is to minimize anxiety by preparing well and getting as much information as possible about the exam. The more you know, the more confidence you will have.

Recognizing the symptoms of test anxiety is the first critical step, and this webinar has already helped you do that.

The fear of failure, associated with test anxiety, is not something you can fix overnight. It's something you need to address and prepare for in the earliest stages of your study plan, so that your techniques for dealing with test anxiety have become second nature by the time you actually take the exam.

Identify aspects of the exam preparation that are in your control and focus on those. As you heard in this webinar, three key aspects to reducing test anxiety are preparation, organization and practice.

Reducing Test Anxiety

- Preparation
- Organization
- Practice

Be sure to use the tools that ABPANC makes available. Watch the Test Taking Strategies Webinar and identify what will work best for YOU. Organize your study plan and be sure to cover all of the topics listed in the test blueprint.

Stay focused on your goal. Take care of yourself, and be positive. Seek support from a coach, and from your colleagues to help focus your study habits and schedule.

It's Your Goal – Own It and Achieve It!

Do it for yourself; but more importantly, do it for your patients and families.

CPAN[®] and CAPA[®] Certification: Nursing Passion in Action[®]



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