THE COGNITIVE MODEL OF TEST ANXIETY

**QUESTION**: WHY FOCUS ON BELIEFS?
**ANSWER**: BECAUSE WHAT YOU BELIEVE DETERMINES HOW YOU FEEL (and behave)!

BELIEFS $\rightarrow$ FEELINGS (like anxiety) $\rightarrow$ BEHAVIORS (like "blanking out," avoiding studying, sweating...)

Example:
- Situation: Hiking along a trail. You hear a noise, a rustling sound nearby.
  
  Person A: Inexperienced hiker. What might she or he think about the noise?
  Notice how these thoughts would lead to feeling anxious (& certain behaviors).
  
  Person B: Experienced hiker. What might she or he think about the noise?
  Notice how these thoughts would likely lead to minimal anxiety (& behavior).
  
  Lesson: What you think will determine what you feel (& how you behave).

Other examples?

**HOW THIS RELATES TO REDUCING TEST ANXIETY**

Test "anxiety" is a feeling with associated behaviors. It comes from anxious thoughts.

Solution: Have different thoughts. How do you do that???

1) Identify what thoughts you have right before you feel anxious.
2) Evaluate how accurate (or helpful) these thoughts are.
3) Respond back to these thoughts with
   a) Reasons why the first thought is inaccurate, and
   b) A different and better way to think about the situation.
4) Relax your body to further reduce any leftover tension.