Pass the test to build coalitions for Community Empowerment

Presented at the National Association of Black Social Workers 2013 Annual Conference
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10:30 am-Noon
Pass the Exam to Build Coalitions for Community Empowerment
Presenters

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Reduce Test Anxiety

Increase Test Preparation Strategies

Increase Knowledge of the Types of Exams

Increase Confidence to Pass the ASWB Licensure Exams

Identify the Effectiveness of ASWB Study Guides and Practice Exams
Introduction:
ASWB Exam Facts

- The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) administers the national social work exams.

- Several states require the BSW or MSW exam to be employed as a social worker.
Introduction:

ASWB Exam Facts

- Several employers require a state license to work as a social worker.

- ASWB Clinical Exam will be required in all 50 states effective January 2014.
Introduction:

ASWB Exam Facts

- ASWB administered 34,000 exams in 2012.

- Exam Pass Rates for 2012 are:
  - Bachelors: 77.1%
  - Masters: 83.6%
  - Advanced Generalist: 63.3%
  - Clinical: 76.8%
ASWB Exam Format

- 170 items (questions)
- 150 scored and 20 pretest items
- Each question is multiple choice with four possible answers
- There is a 4-hour limit to the exam
LICENSING IS
A SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE

- Protects the public – the whole public
- Ensures everyone seeking services from a social worker has access to providers who meet minimum standards
- Provides recourse to the public if something goes wrong
Manage Test Anxiety

Reduce Anxiety

Increase Exam Score

Association of Social Work Boards
Reduce **anxiety** related to taking national exams

- Most people experience stress at the thought of taking an exam.
- Anxiety is good, as it signals the need to prepare for the event.
- Unfortunately for some, the level of anxiety can escalate and interfere with successful performance, especially when the stakes are high.
Arlin Cuncic identified ten strategies to manage test anxiety

1. Prepare well
2. Watch self-talk
3. Visualize success
4. Use relaxation techniques
5. Stay healthy
Arlin Cuncic identified ten strategies to manage test anxiety

6. Arrive early
7. Focus during the test
8. A little anxiety is good
9. Expect setbacks
10. Reward yourself
1. Prepare well

- PURCHASE ASWB PRACTICE EXAMS ONLINE
- COMBINE INTENSE STUDY AND REVIEW USING A STUDY GROUP OR GET A TUTOR

- USE STUDY GUIDES TO PLAN STUDY AROUND CONTENT AREAS
- USE TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
- ARRIVE WELL-RESTED
Full practice exams

- Available for Every Exam
- Available for 30 Days
- Show the Right Answers
- Give the Rationale for Why the Answer Is Correct
ASWB STUDY GUIDES

- Identify the percentage of questions from various content areas
- Have sample questions
- Include test-taking strategies
- Developed and updated by ASWB
- Cost less than test preparation programs offered by other organizations
2. Watch self-talk

- **Listen to that little voice**
- **Use positive affirmations to build confidence**
2. Watch self-talk

- **ADOPT A MANTRA**
- **LEARN AND USE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES TO STAY IN THE MOMENT**
- **FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION**
3. Visualize success

- See the word "PASSED"
- Picture the license on your wall
- Design your business cards
4. Use relaxation techniques

- Give Yourself Permission to Relax
- Breathe Deeply Through Your Nose
- Use Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Visualize Yourself in Your Most Relaxing Spot
4. Use relaxation techniques

- Make a nonsense sound
- Spend two, 20-minute periods of relaxation per day for 90 days.
5. Stay healthy

- The Mind and the Body Work Together
- Train Like an Athlete for a Marathon
- What Are You Eating?
5. Stay healthy

**What are you doing?**

**How much are you sleeping?**

**What should you stop doing?**
6. Arrive early

- Avoid additional stressors
- Stay calm and positive
- Be a cheerleader
- Stay focused
- Pray and turn it over
7. Focus during the test

- **Read the Answers First**
- **Ask What Type of Question Is This?**
- **What Does It Ask?**
- **Don’t Read More Into the Question**
8. A little anxiety is good

- Adrenalin is a Motivator
- Find the Positives
- Use your Coping Skills
- Pray some more
9. Expect setbacks

- **How Can You Reframe the Disappointment?**
- **Use the Feedback to Improve for the Next Time**
- **Make Sure There Is a Next Time**
10. Reward yourself

- Reward yourself for the sustained efforts to prepare for the exam.

- Understand the score you earn on the test does not define you.
10. Reward yourself

✓ If you are not successful, use the feedback to think about your plan to succeed the next time.

✓ Evaluate what worked well and what you can improve and harness your power and energy one more time.
Types of exams required for social work practice

The exam is offered in five categories:

- **Associate** – non-social work degreed applicants for paraprofessional social work licenses (only a few jurisdictions)
- **Bachelors** – appropriate for BSWs with 0-2 years of experience
- **Masters** – appropriate for MSWs with 0-2 years of experience
- **Advanced Generalist** – appropriate for MSWs with 2-5 years of experience in nonclinical settings
- **Clinical** – appropriate for MSWs with 2-5 years of experience in clinical settings
QUESTIONS?

- We are available now.
- Come by the ASWB booth if you have questions later.
- Call or write the ASWB office or your state licensing office if you have questions after this conference.
References

CONTACT ASWB

For more information:

- Website: aswb.org
- Facebook: ASWBoffline
- Twitter: @ASWB
- Email: info@aswb.org