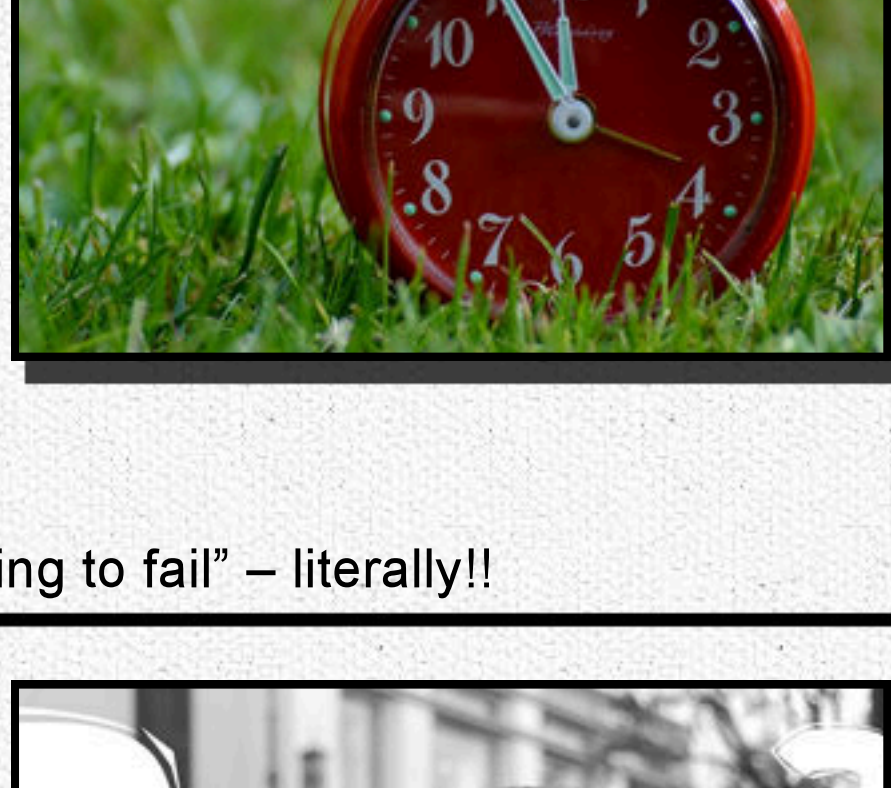


Studying Tips For PANCE / PANRE

01 "Your money is time, so spend it wisely and your play time is up when the streetlights come on"

After graduating and before taking the PANCE, PA students have all the time in the world to study (though many of them argue against that notion). For practicing PA's, free time is like a Pink Star Diamond, extremely precious and exceedingly rare!! So when you do find the time to study, you have to maximize that time so that you get the most out of the study time.



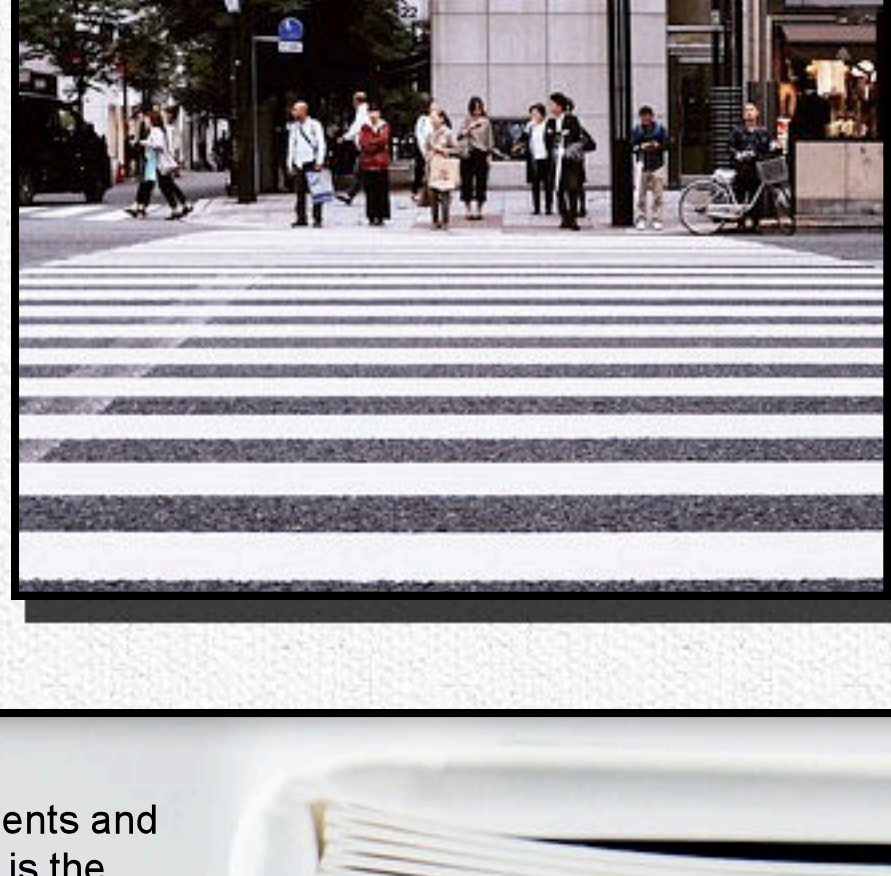
02 "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail!" – literally!!

You have to spend some time studying in order to pass the PANCE or the PANRE, especially for what I call the "Silver-Star PA's" – those who have been practicing over 20 plus years or close to retiring but still have to pass the PANRE to continue practicing (even if its only for a few more years). The earlier you start, the more time you have to prepare. Even if it means studying for that half an hour that it takes you to get to work on the commuter rail, or during down time at work etc.

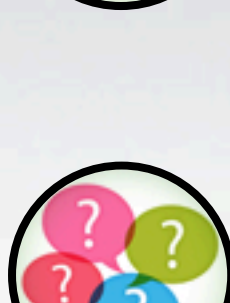


03 "Look both ways before you cross!!"

Just as important as it is to set aside time, learning how to divide that study time is important to maximize the effectiveness of your studies. Most people are aware of the PANCE blueprint and for those of you who aren't, the NCCPA website has graciously provided us with a blueprint which breaks down the exam percentage by organ systems. They even go one step further as to provide us with all the details of the things that comprise that organ system. So your study time should reflect that.



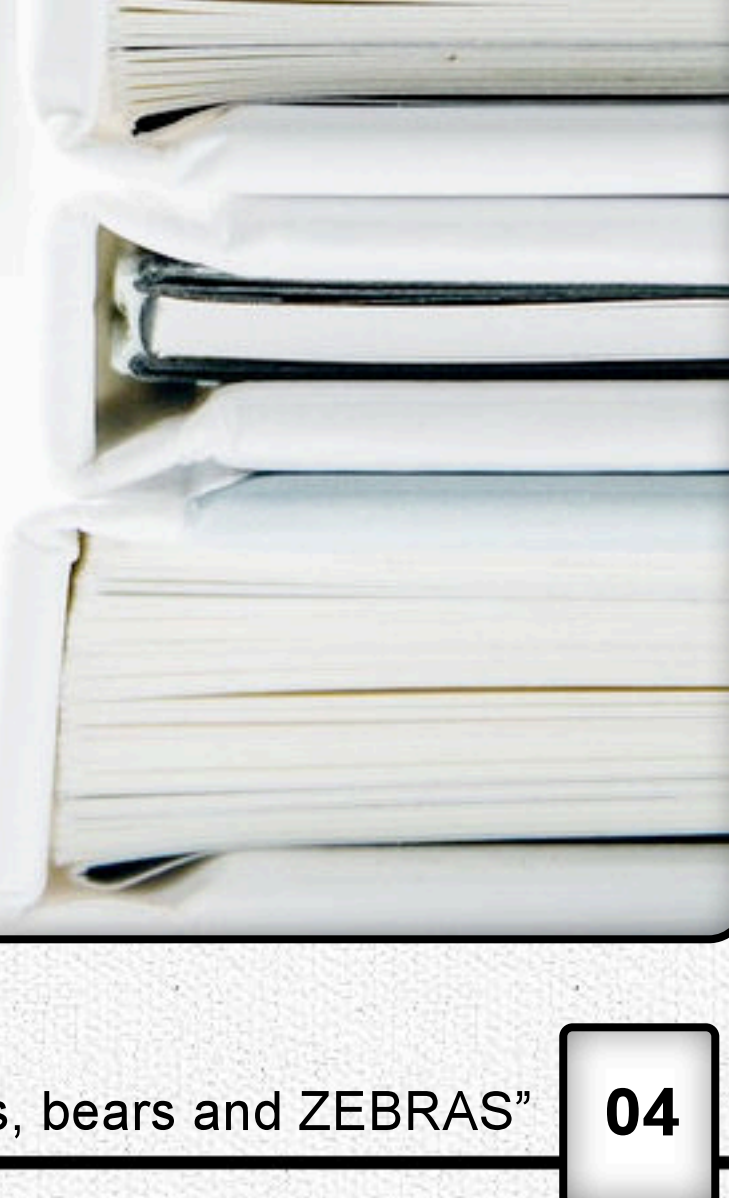
BONUS



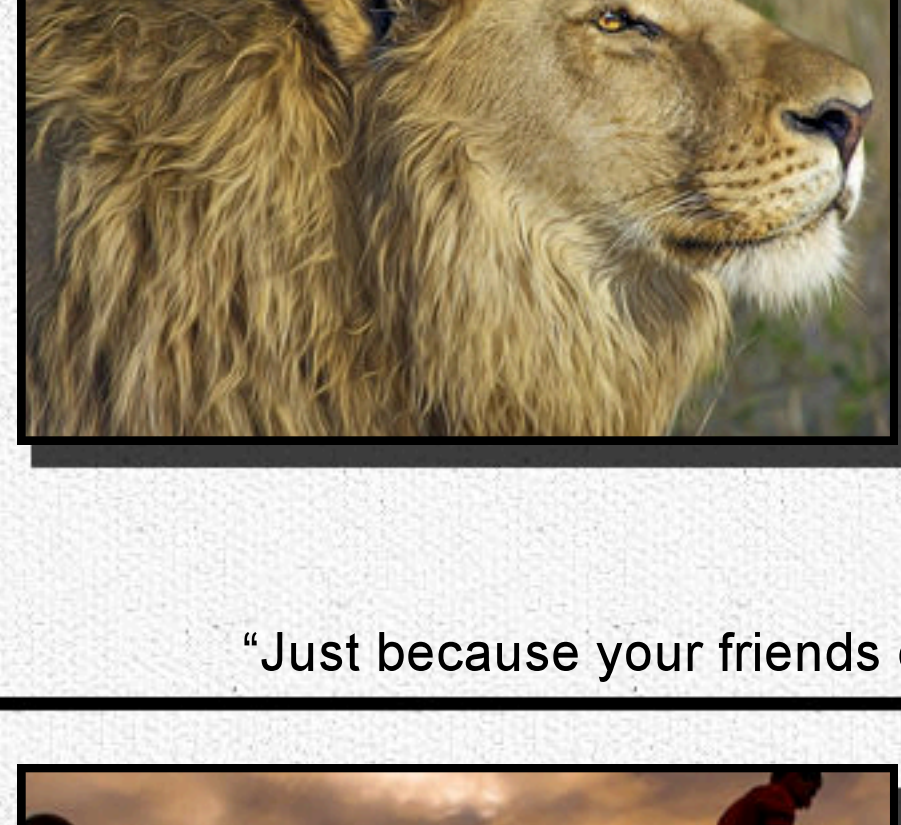
Reading is important because most students and practitioners fail to read enough and that is the foundation to passing. In reading, the goal should be to memorize what you need to.



Questions are helpful because they allow you to apply what you have learned so that you are able to see what you understand and what you still struggle with. Another reason why questions are so beneficial is in understanding the explanation of the correct answers. Sometimes we pick the right answers for the wrong reasons, which may have gotten us a correct answer, but could lead to a wrong choice selection where it counts most, on the exam. So when you get an answer right, still read the explanation to solidify the material you already know and to see if your train of thought was in line with the thought of the question writer, which will enhance your exam taking techniques.

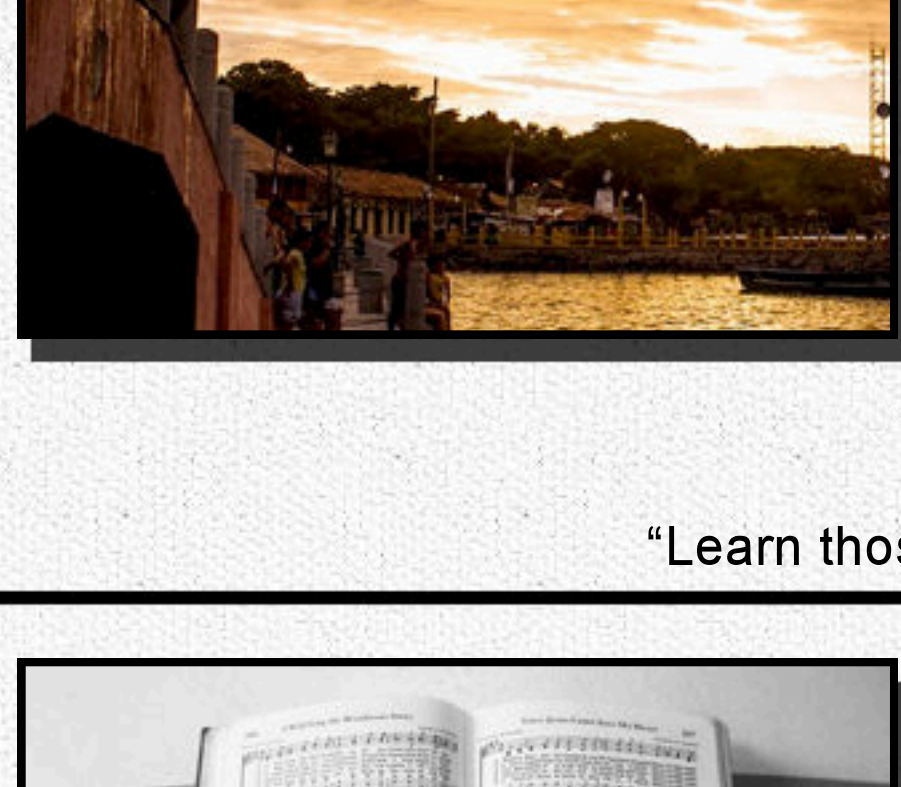


04 "Don't be afraid of the lions, tigers, bears and ZEBRAS"



The PANCE/PANRE exam is not an exam based on clinical experience. It is based on the exam content and standards of practice. So for practicing PA's, don't use the strategy that the Zebras (the diseases that are rare in compared to the horses) are not important to study. There are certain high-yield topics that come up a lot on exams and you will begin to notice the pattern once you start doing questions.

05 "Just because your friends do it doesn't mean you can do it too!"



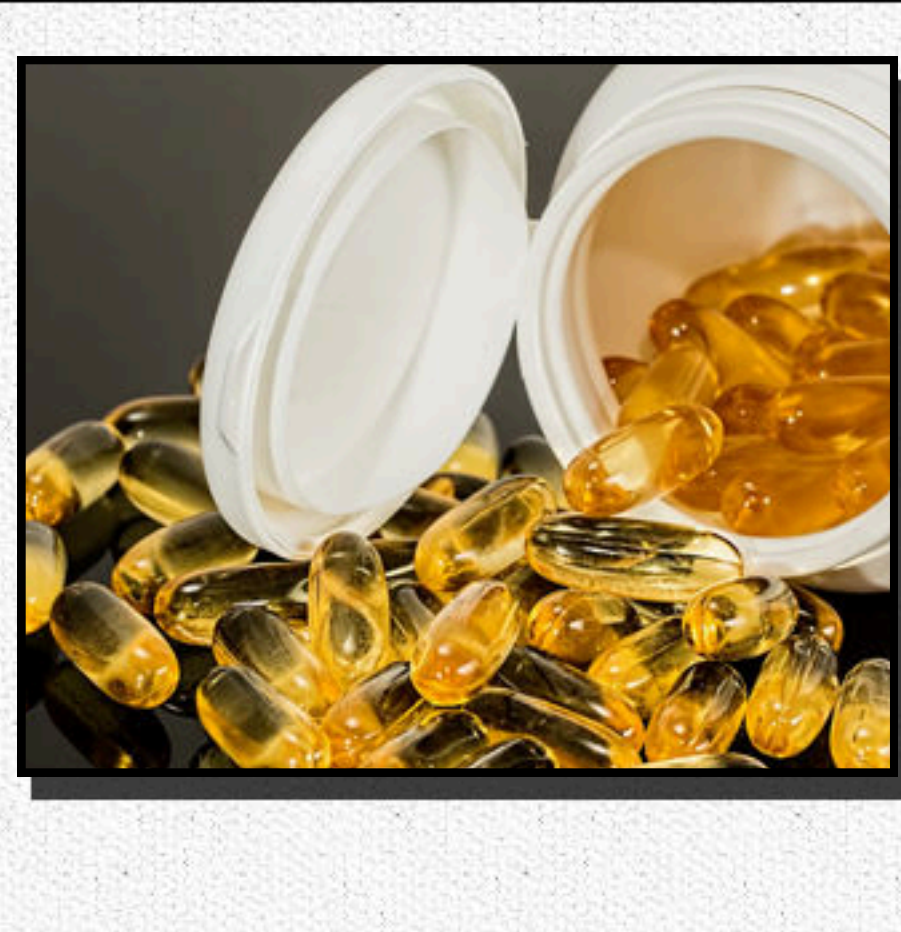
What we see and do in clinical practice can be different than what is on the PANCE/PANRE. The PANCE/PANRE is based on standards of medicine.

06 "Learn those books like you learn those songs."



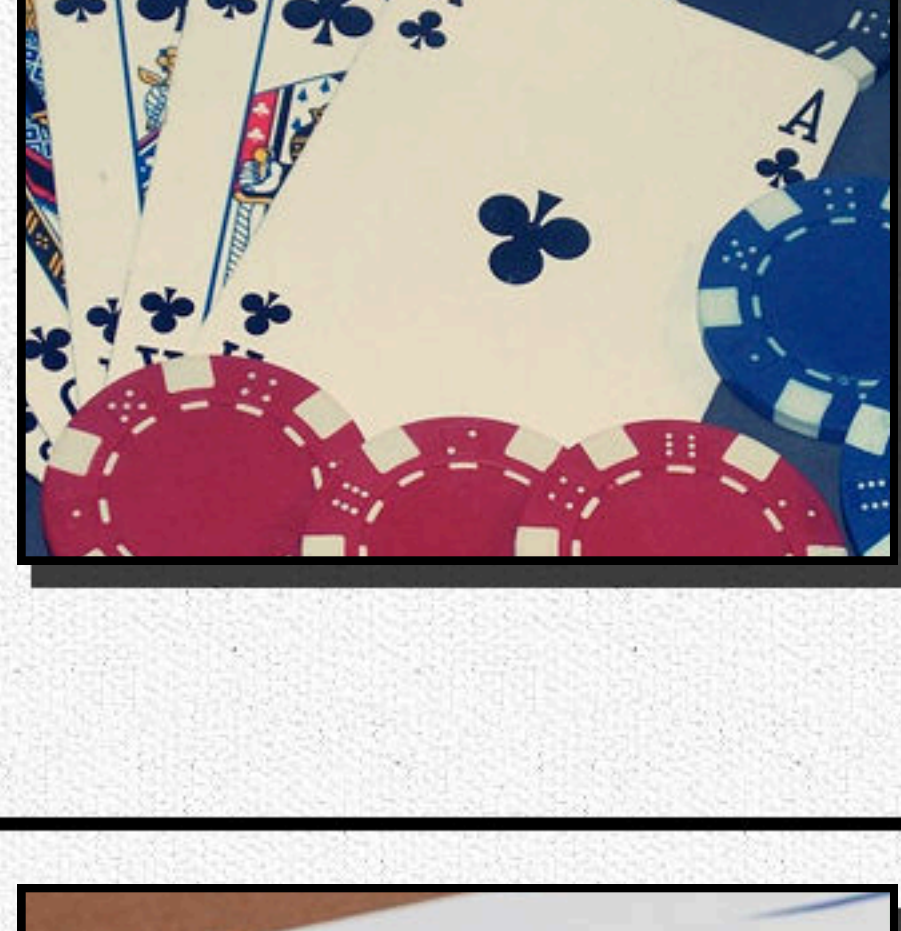
Learn the buzz words because they are often the deciding factor when you are left with two choices with a relatively similar presentation or similar exam findings. Also when learning them, know all the different disorders that buzz word is related to so you can look for the differences to help find the right answer.

07 "Drugs are good for you"



Remember, pharmacology is 18% of the boards and many students and practitioners alike tend not to do well on this topic. They stress this on the PANCE/PANRE because one of the benefits of being a PA is our ability to prescribe medications. We have to understand how the drugs are working for the disease we are using it for, side effects to warn the patients about (which often are related to the mechanism of action), contraindications and drug interactions so that we don't cause harm to our patients unknowingly.

08 "You gotta know when to hold them."



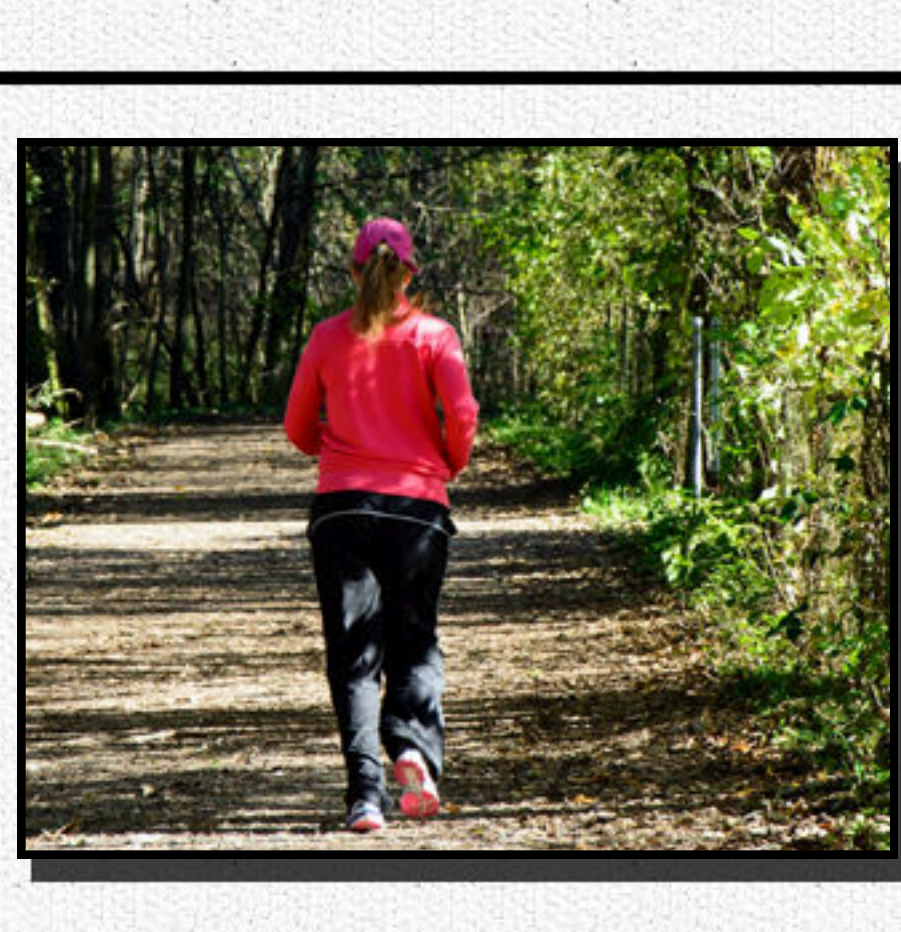
You also need to know when the endings may mislead you. For example metronidazole is an antibiotic that is not in the same class as fluconazole (an antifungal) or that because many antibiotics were derived from Streptomyces, some drugs can have similar endings but are in different classes, such as streptomycin, vancomycin, clindamycin, erythromycin.

09 "Know when to walk away."



You need to know what are some of the precautions when using certain drugs, such as beta blockers can mask hypoglycemia.

10 "Know when to run"



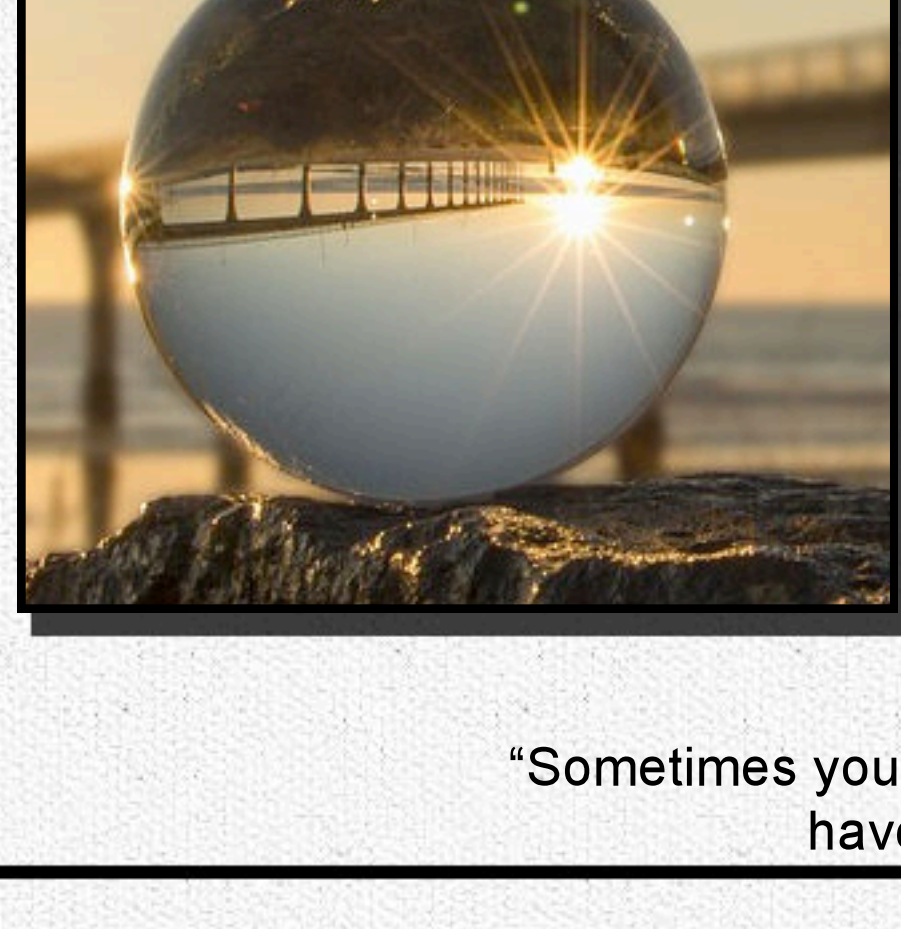
You need to know absolute contraindications of medications.

11 "Answer all of your questions."



In doing exam questions, never leave any questions unanswered. Answer all of your questions. Because the PANCE/PANRE is a timed exam, you should practice doing questions in a certain amount of time, leaving yourself about a minute for each question to assure that you answer questions sufficiently. If you think you have an answer but you spend 10 minutes perseverating on which one is right, then you have lost valuable time to answer other questions for that one question, forcing you to rush your thought process in answering the remaining questions. So put an answer down and flag it so that you can come back to it at the end of the exam and then have all the remaining time to spend on the flagged questions now that you have given an answer to all of the other ones.

12 "When in a rut, trust your gut"



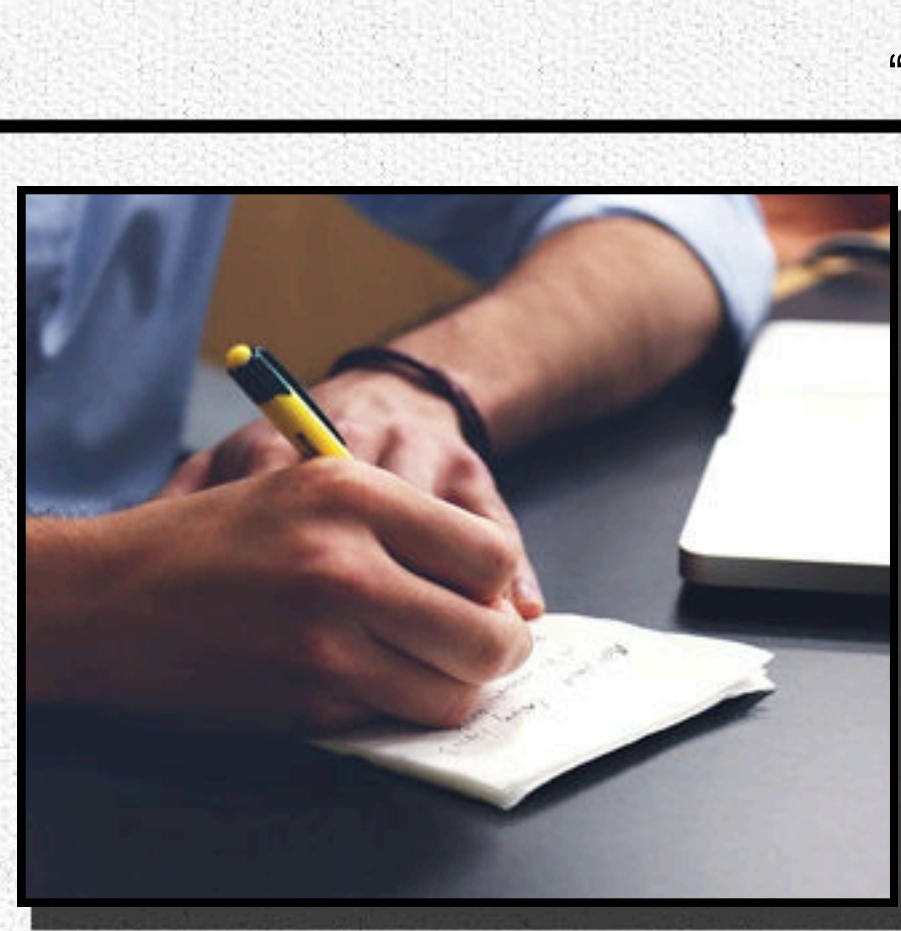
This is also crucial in time management tool when you are stuck on a difficult question. Many people will have a right answer and then change it to a wrong one because they falsely doubted their choice. Changing it may work if you were initially unsure of the choice you made and, through further reading, you now feel there is a better answer. But if you strongly believe an answer is right based on material that you feel you understand, then chances are your gut was right.

13 "Sometimes you avoid choking when you realize you have bitten off more than you can chew."



Be honest with yourself. If you are not ready to take the exam, don't go into it "hoping for the best". This is different than being nervous or apprehensive about the exam. Deep inside, you know when you are not ready.

14 "Hope for the best, plan for the worst"



Make sure if your certification is up soon, don't wait until the last minute to take the exam. In the worst case scenario that you fail, you have to wait 3 months to take it again, which can put your career in jeopardy if you are a practicing PA. Give yourself enough time cushion so that you can retake it, take another course, study more etc. to ensure you pass the second time around.