

# Ep #109: How to Conquer NCLEX Anxiety and Pass on Your First Try



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

**Sarah Michelle and Anna**

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Welcome to *The Real Deal Nurse Practitioner Club*. Whether you're hoping to become a real deal nurse practitioner or you already are one, this is the place for you to get the resources you need as you tackle this massive transition into practice. We're your hosts, Sarah Michelle, Chief Nursing Officer of Blueprint Test Prep, and Anna Miller, Director of Nursing Content. And we're here to hang out with you each week like your best friends in the NP space. Let's dive in.

Sarah: Hello my friends. We are so excited to talk with you today, and this is an especially exciting episode for any future real deal registered nurses out there. Now, as a lot of you guys know that listen, we have been helping nurse practitioner students really overcome their anxiety and become confident as they take their boards and enter into practice for the last couple of years.

Test anxiety and mental health in nursing really wasn't discussed widely before this, and now we have taken all of the wonderful things in the past couple of years that we have worked on and developed our own NCLEX course. No matter who you talk to, whether that is a new grad nurse, a nurse with many years of experience or a nurse practitioner, we can all relate and remember how anxiety-provoking the NCLEX can be.

But that's where we come in, that's our job, right? So today Anna and I want to share a little bit about the NCLEX and how we can help students prepare so they can walk into their exams confident, stress-free and really just ready to pass on the first try and succeed.

Anna: Yeah, I still remember how I felt leading up to my NCLEX and like walking into the testing center. It just feels like the weight of everything you have learned in nursing school rests on your shoulders, and that's a lot.

There's the fear of the unknown, I'm wondering what topics am I going to get or how many questions am I going to get on this exam or have I studied the correct information because, y'all, it is a lot of information. And I just felt

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really, really anxious and I wish I could return and have had the resources that we offer for myself back then.

Sarah: Oh absolutely. I agree entirely. I had so much anxiety about how many questions, how many questions? I think that's what a lot of nursing students really hyper focus on because then you start to read into the number of questions, like if I got 85 questions it means this. If I got 125 questions it means this. And then it becomes this mind game really quickly.

But just remember, you go through such a journey to become a nurse. So I think back to how I felt even just applying for nursing school, taking those prerequisites, getting into my nursing program, which was super competitive by the way, going through all the courses, the clinical work. And then as you approach graduation and prepare for the NCLEX, it can feel like you're starting at the beginning because suddenly you go from having gained all this knowledge in nursing school to being a brand new nurse.

The journey to becoming a real deal registered nurse is a challenging one, and it is so important that you find ways to feel supported throughout that journey. And that whole nurses eat their young motto you may have heard of, we together are working on changing that every single day.

Anna: Yeah, I could not agree more. And for those that don't know, Sarah and I actually went to nursing school together and it was a really, really tough, really competitive program. Especially, I think it was in our second year where we had this huge readout class. It was a lot. But finding those resources that can support you all along the way is essential, really no matter where you are in your nursing or your nurse practitioner journey.

Our goal here at SMNP and at Blueprint is to be able to provide resources to nurses every step of their journey, and really just build up that confidence, so whether you're preparing for the NCLEX or you're a nurse practitioner in daily practice.

And another important consideration is to stay updated with how things are changing so that you can study or you can practice appropriately. So

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Sarah, have you heard about all of the changes that were recently implemented to the NCLEX?

Sarah: Oh my goodness, have I heard, yes. So it seems like it's all new and improved, nothing like it was about a decade ago, but is that true?

Anna: Yes. So yes it is. It has changed quite a bit since we took the NCLEX. And I remember feeling like I was headed basically into battle with my textbooks and my highlighters for weapons. But the NCLEX has had a few tweaks and changes, especially since the recent introduction of the next generation NCLEX.

So the format has really evolved. There is just a lot more emphasis on critical thinking and more interactive questions. So it's not just a multiple-choice party anymore, it's like a full-on fiesta of case studies.

Sarah: Fiesta? I mean, I love the sound of a party, but we all know that the NCLEX is really kind of the furthest thing from a party. And those case studies that Anna mentioned really focus on that clinical judgment model. We're basically testing how nurses can make decisions based on all the knowledge that they gather, critical thinking, and then ultimately using that clinical reasoning.

And I know this can sound scary and overwhelming and intimidating, but it's really just focused on making sure that new graduate RNs are better prepared to enter into the workforce.

Anna: Yeah, and I think we can both agree that this change and just the unknown can be anxiety-inducing in itself, and those are completely normal feelings to have. That's also where we come in, right? We will help prepare for that next generation NCLEX and supply everyone with those anxiety management tips to help walk into that exam feeling really ready to rock it.

And pass rates with this next generation NCLEX are rising. So if you are one of those learners who is just a little bit anxious about that, just

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remember that those pass rates are going up and you get partial credit now, which in and of itself is huge.

Sarah: Yes, so basically what Anna is saying here, change is not always a bad thing. The pass rates have been really interesting to watch since this change over to the next generation of NCLEX. And we have to remember too that with the next generation change, about 30% of the exam is the next generation NCLEX item. So it wasn't a total overhaul, but it definitely is a significant portion of that exam.

And just overall we have led tens of thousands of students to a 99.7% pass rate on their board exams through our innovative courses. And we really just teach you how to study smarter, not harder, and have courses designed to focus on the content that you need to know to pass your exam the first time.

And that's exactly what we're doing with NCLEX as well. No one has time to remember all the fluff and all of those random details, so we only focus on studying precisely what will be on your exam. And so in a gist, we help you figure out what to study, how to study it, and leave you ready to walk into your exam and pass that thing.

Anna: And I also have to mention that our team of instructors and content creators, it is just amazing and it is made up of unique individuals who are so, so passionate, just like us, about helping future nurses succeed. So these individuals have not only passed their NCLEX RN exam, but some have even gone on to pass graduate level exams as well. And they are all true experts in the area of the NCLEX, and they only want to help each and every learner succeed.

Sarah: Yeah, and just like in the NP world, we have a wonderful community and team behind our NCLEX courses. And it's really awesome to know that nursing students who participate in our courses are in the hands of experts in our field, like true, genuine experts, and relatable experts too.

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And so let's say a future real deal registered nurse is listening to this podcast right now, what are some things that we're offering right now, Anna, regarding study materials and resources?

Anna: Yeah, absolutely. So we currently offer a few options for students preparing for their NCLEX RN. So we have a Crash Course. We have the live courses. We even have free live classes on TikTok dissecting practice questions and a YouTube channel. So let's go through those.

First, our Crash Course. The Crash Course is a really beautiful guide to help you figure out what areas to study further. So the course is a question-and-answer format. You can quiz yourself as you go. It includes a one month study plan, so you know exactly what to study each day.

I think that's a really common source of confusion for people. It's like, what do I even study when? And so it consists of about a little over 15 hours of video, we have over 200 topics in there. And within those videos, there are hundreds of NCLEX style and NGN style practice questions with rationales and explanations.

And as we've mentioned, anxiety reduction is a huge, huge part of our values. So we have a whole video section on pre-test anxiety and stress management during your exam.

Sarah: Yeah, that's incredible. And you have to remember too, that's just the Crash Course. We mentioned the live course, and with the students that have taken that course already and raved about it, definitely something I want to hear more about.

Anna: Yeah, our live course, I just love it. It is truly fantastic. And passing is guaranteed.

Sarah: I know that sounds kind of crazy, but yes, guaranteed passing the live course is what it sounds like, a Live Study Group session. It consists of doing several Zoom sessions live with our NCLEX instructors, and they're

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relatable and fun and have a passion for helping students, which comes through in literally everything they teach.

Students will receive access to the course, the day-by-day structured calendar and plan for the course, and access to a private community to ask all those burning questions too. So within the community, students can interact with an entire team of board certified registered nurses to get any and all questions answered.

So back to the passing portion, if you complete this live course and you fail to pass on your first try, we're going to stand behind you as we always do over here at SM and give you access again for free. These live courses are available monthly, and when you're listening to this, the next month's enrollment is open.

Anna: Yeah, I just love our Live Study Groups. They are just a new, better way to study than what was available way back when we were studying.

And the last two things we mentioned here, weekly live classes on TikTok and YouTube videos. So we are on TikTok live at least weekly, if not more, and we're going over practice questions and test taking tips. So definitely give us a follow. Right now it's Sarah Michelle NCLEX on TikTok, but it will be Blueprint Nursing soon. And our next-gen experts, they are there reviewing those questions live, doing interactive Q&As for any questions you might have.

We also have that YouTube channel where we post weekly. We've literally broken down every type of NGN or next-generation NCLEX style question, and we do bonus content and practice questions there as well.

Sarah: Yeah, there's so much fantastic content that we've already put out and are continuing to put out, and it's something that I just really wish I would have had as a new grad nurse. So thank you so much for touching on all that, and I have no doubt that all these resources are going to benefit so many future real-deal nurses.

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So let's kind of finish off by talking a little bit about anxiety management. So we touched on it throughout this discussion together, but in any type of education that we do, we aim to provide instruction, education, and really just tools to help you not only study for your exam, but do so in a way that will help you reduce your anxiety before and during exams.

When you sign up for our live course, we are going to spend time teaching you how to feel the most prepared that you can. And you are surrounded by a team here that has been in your shoes. We get it. We've done this before. We know all those feelings, and it feels like the rest of our lives are hinging on this one exam.

So we're really here to help you through all those fears, all that anxiety, and get you that pass. Our review courses and techniques helped us pass the exam the first time, and we're just going to help you do the same. That's the goal. You will pass. You've got this, and we're going to be your cheerleaders in the background cheering you on every step of the way.

Anna: Yeah, and one thing that we always say is that knowing the content is only half the battle to passing the exam. And if you are graduating nursing school, that is such a feat of its own. You should be so proud of yourself. You have the knowledge base, you just have to tie the loose ends together, and that is what we are here for.

And the other equally important half is anxiety management. That is why we are focused on building you up every single step of the way so that you can enter your exam and enter into the real world as a confident and safe new nurse.

Sarah: Yes, that's absolutely the goal.

So, all right, y'all, we have just walked you through everything that we offer here to help you study for, but not only study for, pass that NCLEX the first time with as little anxiety as possible. That's the goal.



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Anna: Yeah, I hope you just feel a little more excited and maybe you're going to feel more prepared and less anxious about this exam because that is exactly what we are here for, and we are going to do everything possible to help you succeed.

Sarah: Yeah, and thank you everyone for tuning in for another week. We hope you enjoyed this topic. I know it was a little bit of a segue from what we normally do, and be sure to check us out as you prepare for your exams.

As an extra bonus friends, if you're looking for support no matter what phase of your nurse practitioner journey that you're currently in, I have communities available for both students and new nurse practitioners. In these communities, we work to uplift one another and grow this profession together every single day. Links to join will be included for you in the show notes.

Thanks for listening to *The Real Deal Nurse Practitioner Club*. If you want more information about the different types of support that we offer to students and new nurse practitioners, you can visit [npreviews.com](https://npreviews.com), with an S, dot com. We'll see you next week.