

TEST ANXIETY

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Fear

- Initiated by an outside event
- Response to a real danger/threat
- Aware of the cause
- Intensity of response is proportional to the real danger
- Temporary & acute

Anxiety

- Initiated by internal feelings
- Response to a perceived threat
- Not always aware of the cause
- Intensity of response is not proportional to the perceived threat
- Persistent & chronic

Test anxiety comes from individual's characteristics

- Self-worth as a student – “I am not a great student” vs. “I am a good student”
- Confidence in the subject area – “I’m not good at ___” vs. “I am good at ___”
- Ability to regulate emotions – Emotions vs. mental facts.

Test anxiety comes from environment

- School Environment – Caring, Compassion, Competence, & Communication
- Home Environment
 - Worrier - Imagines the worst: “What if...”
 - Critic – Judgmental & Negative “You could have....”
 - Victim – helplessness /Hopelessness “You can’t...”
 - Perfectionist – control, perfect, best - “You Should have...”
- Community Environment – Peer pressure

3 things that will contribute to test anxiety:

- Sharing feelings - You need messages to convey positive feelings & relationship to others students
- Peer Pressure will affect the Critic & Perfectionist
- Self-Perception - In the mirror & on the stage – Motivate us to prepare to be better.

LEVELS OF ANXIETY

Level

Low

Characterized by:

Little emphasis on test preparation
Limited time on reviewing content
Test results not viewed as important

Optimal

Appropriate amount of test preparation
Adequate levels of content review
Test results viewed as important

High

Excessive emphasis on test preparation
Constant preoccupation with upcoming test
Massive time spent on studying (“cramming”)
Test results viewed as extremely important



PRE-TESTING STRATEGIES

- Positive message
- Effective study skills and habits
- Tutoring

TEST-IN-PROGRESS STRATEGIES

- Techniques to reduce physical symptoms (Deep breathing, muscle relaxation)
- Techniques to reduce emotional symptoms (Visualization & Self-expression)
- Techniques to reduce mental/cognitive symptoms (positive self-talk)

POST-TESTING STRATEGIES

- Goal Setting
- Comparing group testing results

WAYS TO OVERCOME ANXIETY:

- Learning to Calm the Nervous System – The need to address the physiological symptoms associated with anxiety
- Originating an Imaginative Plan – The need to develop creative ideas and effective problem solving to overcome anxiety
- Persisting in the face of Obstacles and Failures – The need to persevere in the face of adversity by having faith in one.
- Evaluating and Adjusting the Plan – The need to get objective feedback on how the plan is working.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Linguistic = Word Smart
Logical/Mathematical = Math Smart
Musical = Music Smart
Spatial = Picture Smart
Bodily/Kinesthetic = Body Smart
Interpersonal = People Smart
Intrapersonal = Self Smart
Naturalist Intelligence = Nature Smart
Emotional Intelligence = Emotion Smart



TEST ANXIETY TRIANGLE

- Physical : Body Temperature, Breathing, Muscular, Abdominal, Head/senses, Cardiovascular, Sleep, eating,
- Emotional: Mood responses, Emotionally Labile, feeling of losing control
- Mental/Cognitive Component: Irrational thinking, Feelings of failure/rejection, Forgetfulness & memory loss, Loss of concentration and focus

POST TRAUMATIC TEST DISORDER'S VICIOUS CYCLE (TEST ANXIETY)

- Perception - contributes to poor performance on test
- Feelings - lead to post-test "feelings of failures"
- Validation - Test results confirm worst fears
- Stress & Phobia – Leads to task avoidance

BASIC NEEDS (GLASSER)

- Survival
- Sense of belonging
- Power
- Freedom
- Fun
- Physical needs
- Acceptance, love, friendship
- Knowledge, expertise, recognition
- Choices, options, independence
- Laughter, happiness, joy

NOTE TAKING

- Listen for key words
- Listen to teacher's voice
- Watch the teacher
- Review your notes
- Know what the purpose of the lesson is
- Break it into smaller points
- Prompt and identify points
- Repeat important points
- Visuals
- Teach & practice
- Review notes



IMPROVING OUR MEMORY:

- Rhymes and songs
- Visualization
- Acronyms
- Accessing Information & Resources

STUDY HABITS

- Anticipatory planning - How(Alone, Friend, Group), When (Time), Where (Location),
- Time Management - Time frames, frequent breaks, Vary study subjects, Monitor emotions & Feelings
- Organizational Skills - Have all your materials, keep it all together
- - Make up own test, practice cards

During the tests: Test taking techniques that will help you be successful.

Multiple Choice Items

- Look over the tests
- Underline or circle key words in the questions
- Try to eliminate those choices that you believe to be incorrect
- Answers that you first choose are often the best choice.
- Answer the easiest questions first & skip the more difficult ones
- Make sure you are filling in the blanks correctly

True/False

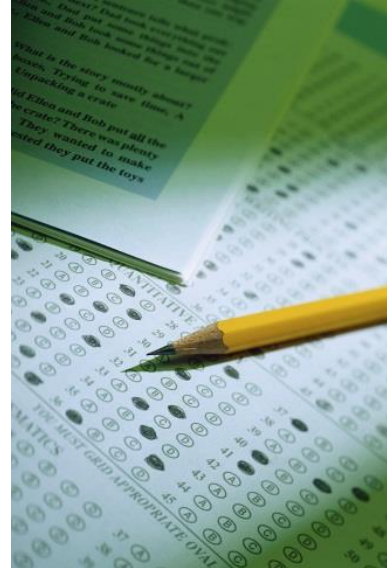
- Pick True unless you can prove it is false
- Underline/circle key words
- Watch out for absolute or qualified-type: (All, NONE, EXCEPT, etc.)
- Take a guess

Matching

- Read items and statements carefully
- Match the easiest then work towards the hardest
- Look for key words or concepts
- Consider the grammar of the sentence
- Think and use logic
- Guess when a few are left

Essays

- Read question carefully and underline key action words
- Use an outline & identify main points
- Graphic organizer
- Focus on purpose
- Use reference & resources to support key points
- Be Sensitive to technical writing
- Proofreading
- Write clearly and legibly



Joseph Casbarro, P. (2003). *Test Anxiety & What You Can Do About It*. Port Chester, New York: Dude Publishing.