

Just to Be Sure....

# Managing Test Anxiety

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**BE WELL**

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**DO WELL**

# Outline

- Types of test anxiety?
- Relationship between performance and anxiety
- Internal and External Experiences that impact Test Anxiety
- Importance of Interpretation
- Coping Skills



# Types of Test Anxiety

**Test Anxiety**

Poor time  
management  
& study  
preparation

**Thoughts, feelings,  
and physical  
responses related  
to test taking**



# Internal Factors that Impact Test Anxiety

Thoughts and/or past negative experiences that impact how we feel about the test

## Thoughts



## Feelings

- Everyone else looks like they are more prepared than I am.
  - I should have prepared more.
  - What if I fail? What if I fail again?
  - If I don't do well, I won't pass the class.
  - How am I going to finish in time?
  - I can't concentrate.
  - Oh no...I'm getting too nervous again!
- Panic
  - Worry
  - Depressed
  - Disappointed
  - Irritated
  - Frustrated
  - Difficulty concentrating

# External Factors that Influence Test Anxiety

Things that occur before or during a test taking situation that may impact our thoughts/feelings about the test.

## Visual

Other students getting up  
The room emptying  
People turning pages  
Hands on the clock moving

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## Auditory

Pencils dropping  
Backpacks zipping  
Desks moving  
The clock ticking

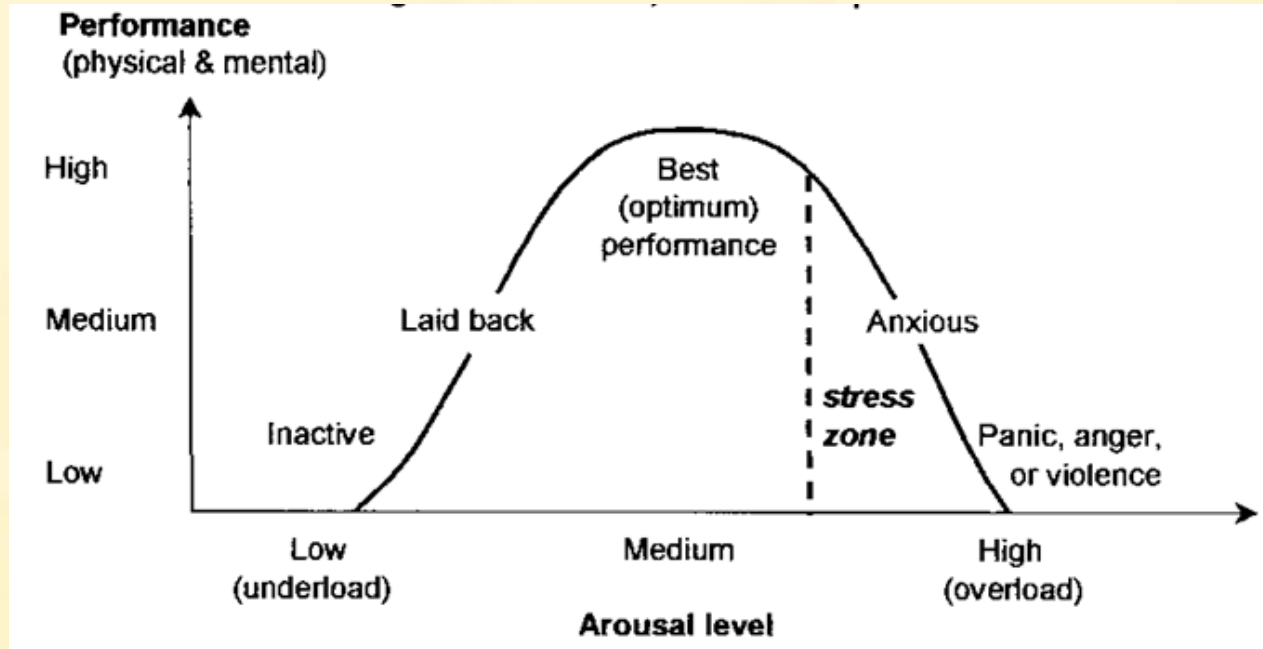
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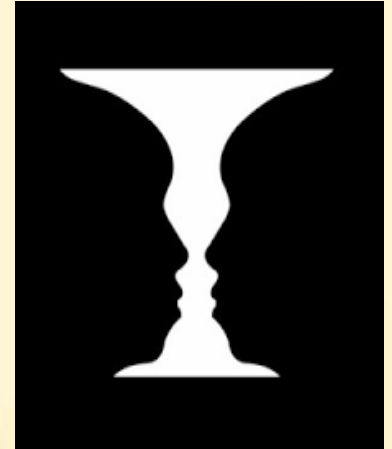
# Is Anxiety Always Bad?

A moderate amount of anxiety helps us perform at our best. But, too much anxiety can cause us to perform poorly. The goal is to stay at the top of the curve of anxiety and performance.



# Interpretation Matters

- Our thoughts and beliefs about the presence of anxiety can make us feel worse.
- It's best to *acknowledge* that we're feeling anxious and interpret differently
- Anxiety can actually be helpful



# Coping with thoughts

- Try to bring more balance and perspective to your thoughts

Thought	Balanced Thought
Everyone else looks like they are smarter or more prepared than I am.	
What if I fail?	
If I don't do well, I won't pass the class.	
How am I going to finish in the allotted time?	
Oh no...I'm getting too nervous again!	



# Additional Coping Skills

## **Progressive Relaxation**

- Tense the muscles where you feel the most stress for 15-20 seconds, then release them. Repeat this for each muscle group

## **Visualization**

- Imagine a peaceful/calm setting (beach/forest)

## **Meditation**

- Clear your mind and focus on your breathing for a few moments at a time

## **Desensitization**

- Before the test, imagine taking the test in as much detail as you can. Then, use visualization, meditation, progressive relaxation, or the skill of your choice

# Before the Test

- Managing your time to adequately prepare and study for the your test
- Find out the format of the exam (types of questions, # of questions, time limit)
- Rework problems or homework- Try to recreate the test environment
- Avoid cramming
- Eat well & get an adequate amount of sleep
- Organize your materials the night before the test
- Come up with a clever mantra you can use to help focus the day of the test

# On Test Day

- Arrive a *little* early so you can choose your seat and relax
- Choose a seat that will minimize distractions
- Read the whole exam before answering the questions
- Complete problems that you know first and mark those that you may not know as well
- Work at a reasonable pace
- Try to be positive-remind yourself you prepared adequately
- If you start to worry, use coping thoughts, visualization, or focus on your breathing

# Just Remember...

- There will be some stress and moderate amounts of stress are helpful
- There may be some questions that catch you off guard
- You may have difficulty recalling some material
- Be patient and compassionate with yourself
- One test doesn't equate to your entire grade-there are options



# CAPS Services

- LOCATION:** Counseling Building - Bldg #27  
(Near Health Center)
- TELEPHONE:** (407) 823-2811
- WEBSITE ADDRESS:** [www.caps.sdes.ucf.edu](http://www.caps.sdes.ucf.edu)
- HOURS OF OPERATION:** Mon –Thurs (Fall/Spring) 8AM-6PM  
Fri (Summer) 8AM-5PM
- AFTER HOURS:** CAPS Hotline #5  
Victim Services  
Police  
Local Hospitals

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After-hours crisis services available by phone

## CRISIS HOTLINE

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407-823-2811

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For more information visit [caps.sdes.ucf.edu/emergency](http://caps.sdes.ucf.edu/emergency)

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