

Just to Be Sure....

Managing Test Anxiety

Benetta H. Wholuba, PhD

Counseling and Psychological Services



BE WELL

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

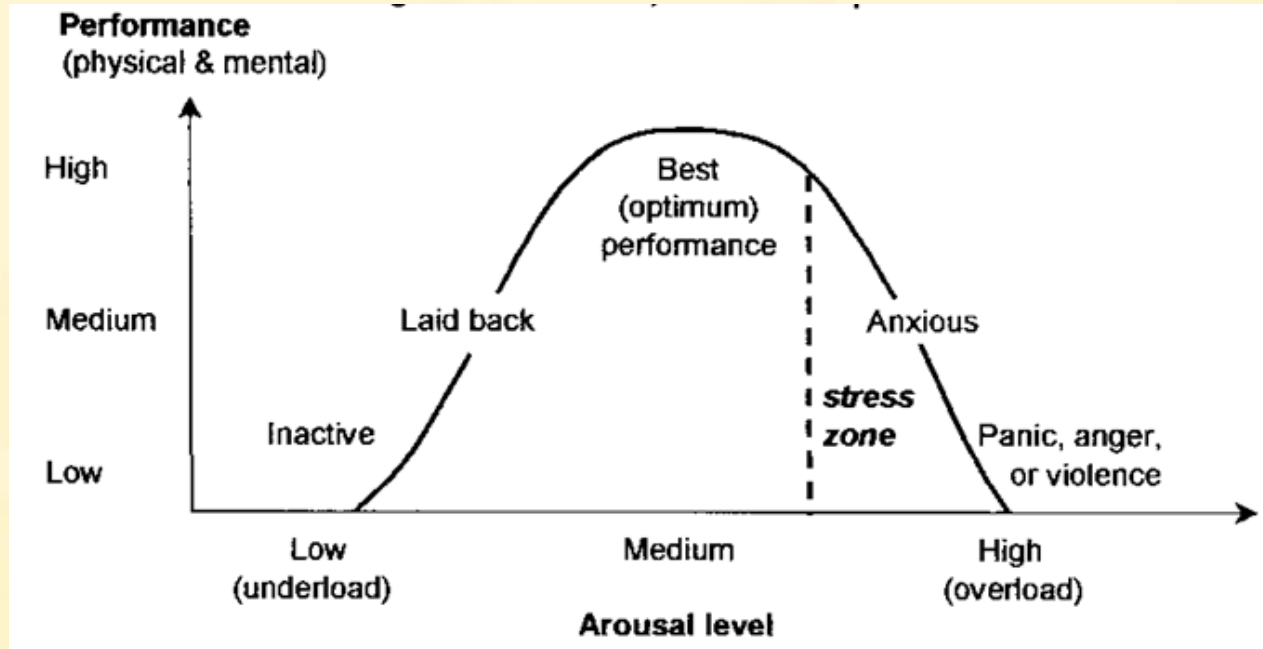
Other students getting up
The room emptying
People turning pages
Hands on the clock moving

Auditory

Pencils dropping
Backpacks zipping
Desks moving
The clock ticking

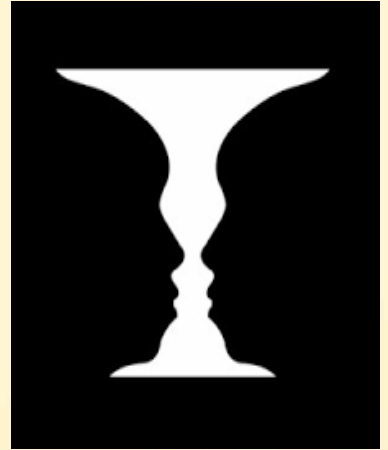
Is Anxiety Always Bad?

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
- HOURS OF OPERATION:** Mon –Thurs (Fall/Spring) 8AM-6PM
Fri (Summer) 8AM-5PM
- AFTER HOURS:** CAPS Hotline #5
Victim Services
Police
Local Hospitals

ARE YOU IN A CRISIS?



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407-823-2811



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