

Overcoming Anxiety in College



Do you...

- Worry about failing or getting a good grade?
- Panic on tests when you can't remember what you know?
- Have difficulty concentrating?
- Dread speaking in front of your class?
- Always feel nervous for no apparent reason?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then this pamphlet is for YOU.

WHAT IS ANXIETY

▶ Anxiety is a state of overwhelming apprehension or fear that is not associated with an identifiable stressor (e.g. a bee):



STRESS vs. Anxiety

▶ Anxiety is caused by the perception of threat or expectation of negative consequences such as failure or suffering.

▶ Anxiety is accompanied by physical symptoms such as:

- Tension (feeling "high-strung")
- Nervousness (feeling "antsy")
- Trembling (i.e. "the jitters")
- Shortness of breath, racing heart, sweating
- Stomach upset (i.e. "butterflies")
- Headache
- Fatigue

▶ Anxiety can also have mental systems such as:

- Lack of concentration
- Irritability
- Sleeplessness

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

Everyone experiences some anxiety that can actually enhance performance. Usually, it eventually goes away. But if you have anxiety for a long time:

- ▶ It can interfere with your success in college
- ▶ It affects how you think and feel. When you are anxious,
 - You create a spiral of negative emotions that can lead to depression.
 - You are more likely to be critical of yourself and doubt your abilities to cope.
 - Your judgment is clouded, so small problems appear hopeless.

HOW CAN I HELP MYSELF?

The best treatment for anxiety is to reduce and manage it.

Here are some things you can do:

▶ **Identify and avoid your “triggers”.**

- Keep a journal. Write what triggers your anxiety and what helps.
- Think about what you think and how you feel.
- Be positive. Avoid negative thoughts and assuming the worst.

▶ **Simplify your life.**

- Plan and organize.
- Reduce physical and mental clutter.
- Set limits to avoid over-committing yourself.

▶ **Live well.**

- Exercise.
- Relax. Set aside some time to sit quietly, breath deeply, and/or meditate.
- Eat healthy food.
- Get enough (or more) sleep.
- Spend time with friends. Share your thoughts and feelings. Listen to feedback.
- Nourish your spirit if you have religious beliefs.

○ Smile and laugh!

▶ **Become a better student.**

- Practice good study habits.
- Manage your time. Try not to procrastinate.
- Get tutoring in the subjects you need help learning.
- Talk to the school counselor.

▶ **Learn good test-taking strategies:**

Before the test:

- Start preparing on the first day of class
- Review regularly (e.g. weekly). Short, frequent reviews are better than cramming the night before.
- Join a study group.
- Test yourself. Try to predict test questions and check your answers.
- Use flash cards or multimedia study aids.

During the test:

- Read the directions carefully!
- Preview the test. Are there questions on the back?
- Budget your time.
- Work on “easy” questions first, then return to the harder ones.
- Outline your work in the margin or on scratch paper.
- Spare time to review your answers and correct mistakes.

After the test

- Attend any post-exam review sessions.
- Learn and remember the reasons for the questions you missed.

RELATED RESOURCES AT CR

▶ **Academic Support Center (476-4106)**

- Tutoring
- Testing and assessment
- Study/meeting rooms

- ▶ [Math Lab \(476-4106\)](#)
 - Homework assistance for math courses
 - Group study
- ▶ [Writing Center \(476-4686\)](#)
 - Assistance for writing essays
 - English and grammar help
 - Group study
- ▶ [Counseling and Advising \(476-4160\)](#)
 - Course planning
 - Academic advice
 - Crisis counseling
- ▶ [Disabled Students Programs & Services \(476-4280\)](#)
 - Disabled accommodations for classes, note taking, testing
 - Disability counseling
- ▶ [Student Health Center \(476-4149\)](#)
 - Health assessment
 - Medical and lifestyle information.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences- Gardner

In 1983, Howard Gardner introduced his [Theory of Multiple Intelligences](#) in a seminal book, *Frames of Mind*. Based on his work as professor in the Harvard Graduate School of Education, his work as a psychologist researching brain injuries, and his long interest and involvement in the arts, he suggested that intelligence is not a single attribute that can be measured and given a number. He pointed out that I.Q. tests measure primarily verbal, logical-mathematical, and some spatial intelligence. Believing that there are many other kinds of intelligence that are important aspects of human capabilities, he proposed that they also include visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. More recently he added naturalist intelligence to this list and suggested that there may be other possibilities including spiritual and existential.



Learning Styles

This chart helps you determine your learning style; read the word in the left column and then answer the questions in the successive three columns to see how you respond to each situation. Your answers may fall into all three columns, but one column will likely contain the most answers. The dominant column indicates your primary learning style.

When you..	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic & Tactile
Spell	Do you try to see the word?	Do you sound out the word or use a phonetic approach?	Do you write the word down to find if it feels right?
Talk	Do you sparingly but dislike listening for too long? Do you favor words such as <i>see, picture, and imagine</i> ?	Do you enjoy listening but are impatient to talk? Do you use words such as <i>hear, tune, and think</i> ?	Do you gesture and use expressive movements? Do you use words such as <i>feel, touch, and hold</i> ?
Concentrate	Do you become distracted by untidiness or movement?	Do you become distracted by sounds or noises?	Do you become distracted by activity around you?
Meet someone again	Do you forget names but remember faces or remember where you met?	Do you forget faces but remember names or remember what you talked about?	Do you remember best what you did together?
Contact people on business	Do you prefer direct, face-to-face, personal meetings?	Do you prefer the telephone?	Do you talk with them while walking or participating in an activity?
Read	Do you like descriptive scenes or pause to imagine the actions?	Do you enjoy dialog and conversation or hear the characters talk?	Do you prefer action stories or are not a keen reader?
Do something new at work	Do you like to see demonstrations, diagrams, slides, or posters?	Do you prefer verbal instructions or talking about it with someone else?	Do you prefer to jump right in and try it?
Put something together	Do you look at the directions and the picture?		Do you ignore the directions and figure it out as you go along?
Need help with a computer application	Do you seek out pictures or diagrams?	Do you call the help desk, ask a neighbor, or growl at the computer?	Do you keep trying to do it or try it on another computer?

Adapted from Colin Rose(1987). Accelerated Learning.