

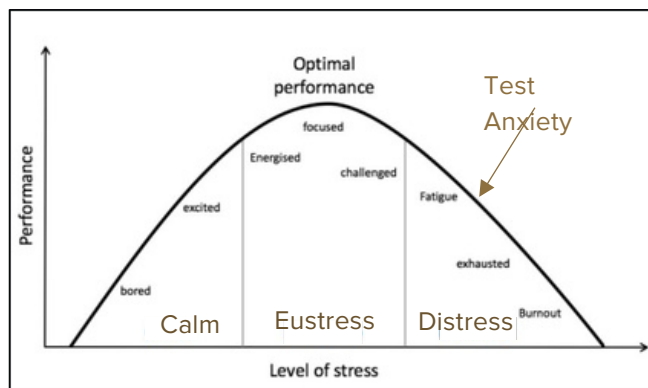
# Understanding Test Anxiety

## WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY AND WHY CAN IT OCCUR?

- o “Test anxiety is a feeling of agitation and distress associated with test taking, which impacts your ability to study or perform on the test” (SHCS UC Davis, 2019). Can occur due to
- o pressure of “perfectionism” which is a set of beliefs, feelings, and behaviors aimed at excessively high and unattainable goals.

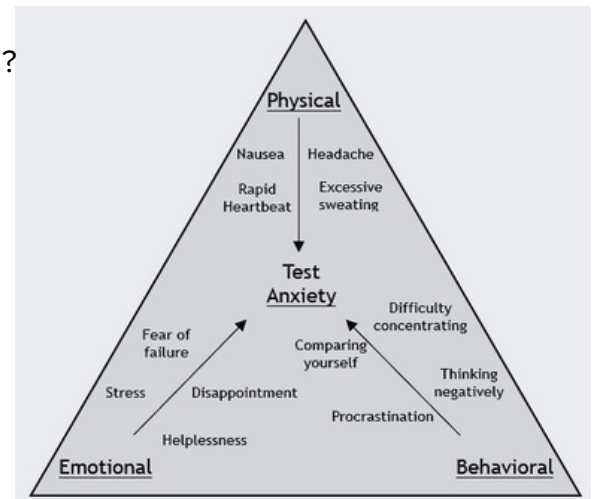
## HOW DO STRESS AND TEST ANXIETY RELATE TO EACH OTHER?

- o Eustress – A form of stress having a beneficial effect on health, motivation, performance, and well-being. Distress – A form of stress with negative implications and causes poor
- o performance.



## WHAT SYMPTOMS CAN OCCUR DUE TO TEST ANXIETY?

- Can experience physical, emotional, or behavioral symptoms.
  - o Physical – nausea, headache, rapid heartbeat, excessive sweating
  - o Emotional – fear of failure, stress, disappointment, helplessness
  - o Behavioral – comparing yourself to others, thinking negatively, difficulty concentrating, procrastination



## SO, WHAT CAN BE DONE TO OVERCOME TEST ANXIETY?

- Achieve resilience through academic buoyancy! o Academic buoyancy is defined as “a students’ ability to successfully deal with academic setbacks and challenges that are typical of the ordinary course of school life” (Martin and Marsh, 2008).
- o Utilize the 5c’s of academic buoyancy to set yourself up for success and overcome test anxiety!

# Understanding Test Anxiety

## WHAT ARE THE 5 C'S OF ACADEMIC BUOYANCY:

### Composure (low anxiety)

The ability to remain calm in an anxiety provoking situation and replace negative thoughts with positive ones.

### Confidence (self efficacy)

The ability to accept and face your fears and obtain belief in your ability to complete a given task.

### Commitment (persistence)

The ability to set your own goals, stay on task, resist distractions, and recover from setbacks

### Control (low uncertain control)

The ability to feel/know that you are in control of your own learning and the way you attribute the causes of success and failure.

### Coordination (planning)

The ability to plan, monitor, manage, and complete tasks within a specific time.

## TIPS TO REDUCE TEST ANXIETY AND ACHIEVE ACADEMIC BUOYANCY:

### BEFORE EXAM:

- Ask professor or TA about the format of the exam. Create and follow a study schedule.
- Replicate the testing environment. Practice and self-test. Do not cram!!! Take proper care of yourself – eat and sleep well!

### DURING EXAM:

- Arrive early and dress comfortably. Calm your body, thoughts, and emotions, and engage in positive self-talk. Read the exam one-time through before answering questions. Do all problems you are sure of first – go with your first instinct! Focus only on yourself and work at a reasonable pace.

### AFTER EXAM:

- Relax and reward yourself – you're done with it! Write down how you can improve your test taking approach, and what worked/what didn't work in preparing and taking the exam.
- Note the kinds of questions you missed and keep those available when it comes to future exams.