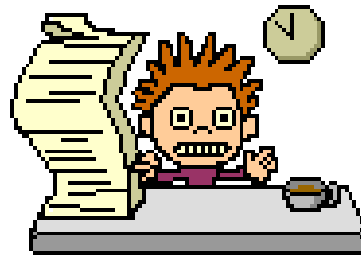


# Stress Management and Test Anxiety



# Stress Management

**Stress:** a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances. It can be good or bad...

## **Positive Stress (Eustress):**

a difficult situation is considered as a **positive challenge** which needs to be overcome and which can even be enjoyed. You are usually **highly motivated and concentrated** during positive stress. In these situations, stress is the driving force for success.

## **Negative Stress (Distress):**

a difficult situation is one that is **completely overstraining**. You feel like you are at the mercy of a situation **beyond your control**. It seems like there are **no options and no possibilities** to change anything. This kind of negative stress can cause illness.

What kind of stress are you experiencing so far this semester?

# Reducing Negative Stress

## Steps to reducing distress:

1. Start early and **over-prepare** for exams, so you feel extra confident in your knowledge of the material.
2. Develop **incentives** for yourself – build in rewards to help you study early and often.
3. Meet with your **professor** to discuss questions about the content or the structure of the exam.
4. Be prepared by getting **organized to study early** on.

# Test Anxiety

- Some level of anxiety before a test is normal... but when it affects your performance on the test, that is when it becomes a problem.

## Goal:

- Decrease anxiety to a manageable level.
- Feel more positive stress (eustress) than negative stress (distress).

# Battling Test Anxiety

- Before the exam, imagine the worst that could happen – and then go back to being reasonably concerned.
  - “No test is the difference between a successful and unsuccessful person!”
- Create a **practice exam**, and then take it in an environment similar to your classroom with the time limit you’ll have on test day – you may be anxious, but it should make test day easier.
- **Think positively!** Tell yourself over and over that you CAN do this, you have studied, and that you are doing your best.
- During the exam you should take a few **mental breaks** using relaxation techniques and breathing deeply.

# Make Healthy Choices

- Take care of yourself!
  - Get plenty of rest.
  - Eat a nutritionally balanced diet.
  - Exercise regularly – working out is a great way to relieve stress and give yourself a break.
  - Stay properly hydrated and avoid alcohol and other mood altering drugs.