

EXAM & ASSESSMENT ANXIETY

Many people experience stress or anxiety before an exam. In fact, feeling a little nervous can help you perform your best. However, when this distress becomes so excessive that it interferes with performance on an exam, it is known as test anxiety.

What does it feel like to experience test anxiety? You paid attention in sessions/workshops, took detailed notes, read every chapter, and even attended extra sessions with your Trainer Assessor, so you should do great on that big end of standard exam, right?

When the test is presented, however, you find yourself so nervous that you blank out the answers to even the easiest questions. If this experience sounds familiar, then you might be experiencing test anxiety.

So, What Is Test Anxiety?

Test anxiety is a psychological condition in which people experience extreme distress and anxiety in testing situations. While many people experience some degree of stress and anxiety before and during exams, test anxiety can actually impair learning and impact on test performance.

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety. In situations where the pressure is on and a good performance counts, people can become so anxious that they are actually unable to do their best.

Identifying Test Anxiety

While people have the skills and knowledge to do very well in these situations, their excessive anxiety impairs their performance. The severity of test anxiety can vary considerably from one person to another. Some people might feel like they have "butterflies" in their stomach and while others might find it difficult to concentrate on the exam.

A little bit of nervousness can actually be helpful, making you feel mentally alert and ready to tackle the challenges presented in an exam. Excessive fear can make it difficult to concentrate and you might struggle to recall things that you have studied. You might feel like all the information you spent some much time reviewing suddenly seems inaccessible in your mind.

Symptoms of Test Anxiety

Physical Symptoms

Physical symptoms of test anxiety include sweating, shaking, rapid heartbeat, dry mouth, fainting, and nausea. Sometimes these symptoms might feel like a case of "butterflies" in the stomach, but they can also be more serious symptoms of physical illness such as nausea, diarrhoea, or vomiting.

Cognitive and Behavioural Symptoms

Cognitive and behavioural symptoms can include avoiding situations that involve testing. This can involve skipping class or even dropping out of school. In other cases, people might use drugs or alcohol to cope with symptoms of anxiety.

Other cognitive symptoms include memory problems, difficulty concentrating, and negative self-talk.

Emotional Symptoms

Emotional symptoms of test anxiety can include depression, low self-esteem, anger, and a feeling of hopelessness. Fortunately, there are steps that students can take to alleviate these unpleasant and oftentimes harmful symptoms. By learning more about the possible causes of their test anxiety, students can begin to look for helpful solutions.

To find out more click here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/resources-to-help-with-test-anxiety>