OVERCOMING
TEST ANXIETY

NDSCS ACADEMIC SERVICE CENTER
KEY POINTS

• Some test anxiety is good because it keeps you alert and keeps you motivated to study.

• Test anxiety can cause mental symptoms such as inability to concentrate, confusion, mental blocks, panic attacks and difficulty sleeping.

• It can also cause physical symptoms such as hair loss, headaches, asthma, high blood pressure, fainting and nausea.
DEALING WITH MENTAL EFFECTS OF TEST ANXIETY

• Visualize success: be specific about desired outcome and rehearse outcome.
• Mentally yell “Stop!” to break the cycle of worrying about tests.
• Use positive talk such as “I won’t compare myself to others” or “I just need patience and confidence to learn this.”
• Daydream pleasant thoughts and focus on the sights, sounds and textures associated with these thoughts.
• Praise yourself for moving toward an academic goal, small steps at a time.
MORE ON DEALING WITH MENTAL AFFECTS OF TEXT ANXIETY

• When stressed, consider the worst that could happen to see the absurdity of your predictions.
• Imagine being detached from the situation... zoom out and get the larger point of view.
• Gain perspective... will the situation you are stressing over matter in one week, one month, one year, or even ten years?
• Be organized and prepared for an exam to help counteract test anxiety. Don’t procrastinate!
COUNTERACTING PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF TEST ANXIETY

- Focus on slow, regular breathing for 2-3 minutes when stressed.
- Scan your body before, during and after a test, focus on specific muscle groups and tense and release those muscles, one group at a time.
- Perform aerobic exercise for 20 minutes between study sessions.
- Eat a healthy diet and set a regular sleep schedule.
- Plan study sessions in advance and avoid cramming before a test.
- Get professional help if symptoms persist!
• Remember that grades often reflect how well you do on tests, so improve your test-taking skills.
• The more tests you take, the less anxiety you should experience about test taking (as long as you feel prepared for the test).
• Test grades do not measure your creativity, intelligence, ability to contribute to society or your self-worth.
• After you have taken a test, be pro-active and learn from the mistakes you made and adjust your studying techniques.
CELEBRATING MISTAKES

- Get mistakes out in the open to fix them.
- Mistakes help a person learn and improve.
- Mistakes encourage cooperative learning.
- Mistakes promote accountability and commitment to planning.
FINAL THOUGHTS

• Find out all you can about the exam.
• Get acquainted with the test site.
• Master your material.
• Maintain a positive attitude!