

**Melissa McMullin, Psy.D.**

MCAPS Workshop

(909)621-8202

Melissa\_McMullin@cuc.claremont.edu

# MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

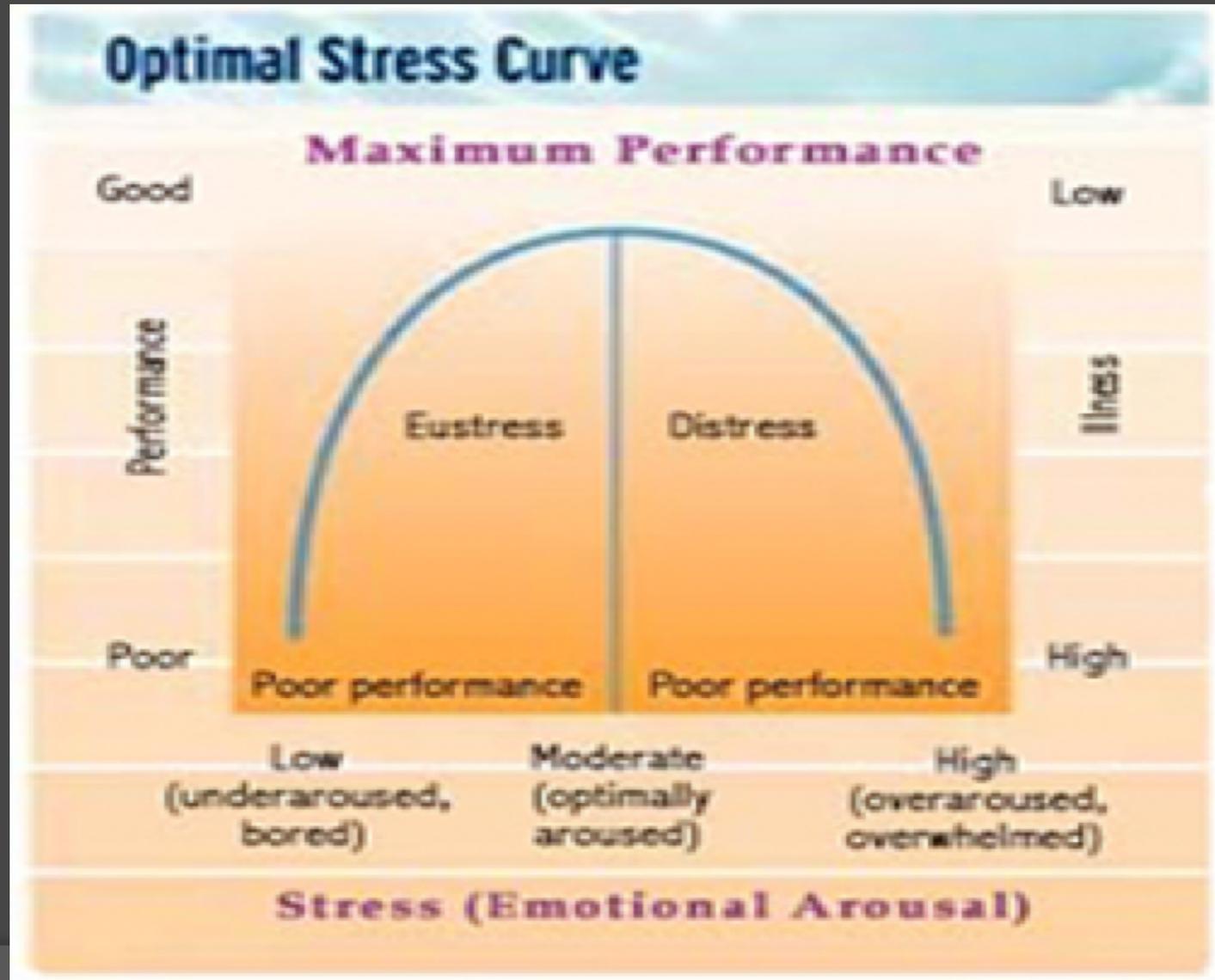
# What is test anxiety?

- Physical symptoms
- Feelings
- Thoughts
- Behaviors

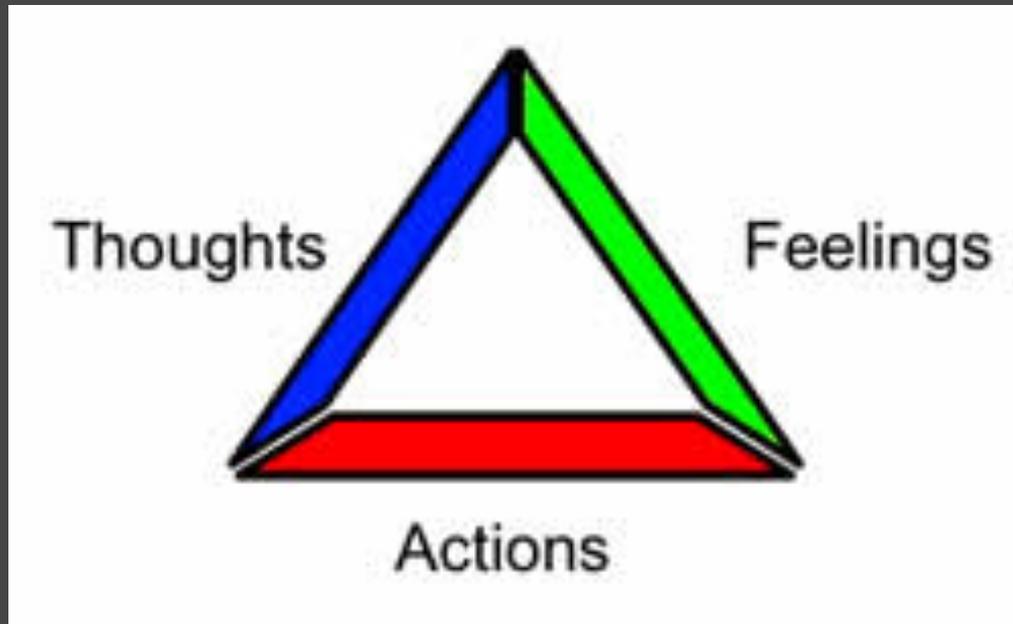
# Do you have test anxiety?

1. Can you recall the information you forget when you leave the exam?
2. Are you stressed or anxious during the test?

# Why do we have anxiety?



# What can you do about anxiety?



# Alter your actions

- ⦿ Do something else during the exam.
- ⦿ Practice guided imagery.
- ⦿ Engage in progressive relaxation.
- ⦿ Breathe.
- ⦿ Change how you take the exam.
- ⦿ Change where you take the exam.

# Before the Exam

- ① Create a study plan.
- ① Rehearse taking the test (practice exams and imaginary exams).
- ① Study in the exam space.
- ① Plan out what you need for the test.
- ① Plan time for yourself away from studying.
- ① DON'T study at least 1 hour prior to the exam.

# During the exam

- ⦿ Write down any information you are apt to forget when you first get the exam.
- ⦿ Preview the exam.
- ⦿ Read all of the instructions.
- ⦿ Plan a timed strategy for the exam.
  - Prioritize high point items.
  - Answer what you know first.
  - Then answer what you half know.
  - Then answer the tough questions.
- ⦿ Don't forget to use every tool available to you (e.g. calculator, periodic table, etc.).

# If the anxiety starts to creep in...

- ⦿ Think about the exam as a conversation between you and your professor.
- ⦿ Revisit your imaginary exam.
- ⦿ Breathe.
- ⦿ Sharpen your pencil.
- ⦿ Move on to another question.
- ⦿ Substitute simple language for complex terms.

# Change your thoughts

- ① Identify your thoughts
- ① Evaluate your thoughts
  - Are my thoughts accurate and or factual?
- ① Respond and challenge your thoughts
- ① Relax

# Challenging your thoughts

- What is the evidence that the thought(s) is/are true? Not true?
- Is there an alternative explanation?
- What's the worst that could happen?
- Could I live through it?
- What's the best that can happen?
- What's the most realistic outcome?
- What are the consequences of adhering to the distorted thinking?
- What would happen if I changed my thinking?
- If (friend's name) were in this situation what would I tell him/her?