Anxiety...
Worries
...and fears...
Learn something about…
Understanding Anxiety
Coping with Anxiety
   Mind-Body Techniques
   Cognitive Strategies
Handling Worries
Test Anxiety Strategies
Other Anxiety Reduction Strategies
Understanding Anxiety
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WHAT IS Anxiety?

- Natural Defensive system
- Red warning light that something is amiss
WHAT IS Anxiety?

- Fight or flight response is engaged
- Anxiety arises with stress

WHAT IS Anxiety?
“FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE”

A SERIES OF BIOCHEMICAL CHANGES IN THE BODY WHICH PROVIDES A BURST OF ENERGY TO PREPARE FOR CONFRONTATION OR ESCAPE FROM A THREAT.
Anxiety Facts

- 10-12% of US population (36 million) have a treatable anxiety disorder
- Fewer than 25% of them get proper treatment
- More individuals go to the Emergency Room each year with panic attacks than with a heart attack
- It is always important to rule out organic causes for anxiety
Anxiety can actually enhance our performance by motivating us to:

- prepare for a test,
- drive with care,
- perform in sports.

Anxiety: WHEN Is it Healthy?
Is something upsetting us and we need to problem solve?

Is there a conflict between our behavior and our values?

Is there a feeling we aren’t talking about?

Anxiety holds important information:
Anxiety: What it feels like

- Physical symptoms
- Anxious thoughts
- Anxious feelings
Anxiety: What it feels like

Physical symptoms

- increased heart rate,
- sweating, shortness of breath,
- chest pain, chills or hot flashes,
- dizziness,
- trembling,
- muscle tension
Anxiety: What it feels like

- **Physical symptoms**
- **Anxious thoughts**
  - difficulty concentrating, racing thoughts, fear of losing control or going crazy, fear of looking foolish, fear of criticism or disapproval
- **Anxious feelings**
Anxiety: What it feels like

Anxious feelings

- anxiety, worry, fear, uptight, a sense of impending doom

Anxious thoughts

Physical symptoms
Understanding Anxiety

Coping with Anxiety

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Other Anxiety Reduction Strategies
Coping with Anxiety
Mind-Body Relaxation Strategies
Mind-Body Relaxation Strategies

- **Relaxation** is the natural antidote to stress and anxiety
- Move from *flight/fight/freeze response*” to *repair*
Mind-Body Relaxation Strategies

• Techniques include:
  – Deep Breathing
  – Progressive relaxation
  – Visualization
  – Autogenic
  – Meditation
  – Yoga
Cognitive Strategies
Meichenbaum and Cameron (1974) urge the use of positive self statements to reduce the threat of anxiety-provoking situations.
Positive self statements:

“I’m going to do well at this”

“I’m well prepared”

“I can handle this”

“My ability is as good as anyone else’s”
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Other Anxiety Reduction Strategies
1. Notice your thoughts
   “I’ve started worrying”

2. Choose to stop them
   “These thoughts aren’t helpful, I can let them go.”

Cognitive Strategies  Handling Worries
3. Take supportive action

Start with 3 calming breaths
Shift your attitude
Postpone your worries
Supportive statements

“I can slow down and think”
“I can be a little anxious and perform my task”
Test Anxiety
Anxiety: Strategies

• As you breathe in, tense your hands and let go as you breathe out...

• Breathe in and during your exhale say “...calm, peace...”
Breathe in to a count of 4...

...and exhale to a count of 4....
Test Anxiety: Strategies

Visualize yourself being successful
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Other Anxiety Reducing Strategies
Other Anxiety Reducing Strategies

- Concentrate on some simple repetitive task
- Observe - decide what color is predominant in the clothing of the other students in class
Other Anxiety Reducing Strategies

• Take out your backpack and reorganize your pictures and cards, order your dollar bills by serial numbers, etc.
Enjoy a brief experience of Guided Meditation
(click to play)
Other Anxiety Reducing Strategies on Campus...

 Massage Therapy
 Chair Massage is offered twice a month. Cost is $5.00
 Sponsored by ASSMU
 Sign up in the Counseling Office
Other Anxiety Reducing Strategies on Campus...

SMU Counseling Center Virtual Pamphlets

Consult with SMU Counseling Center
• Email – jberney@stmartin.edu
• Call – 360-438-4371
• Drop By – Old Main Room 203

If it is Academic-related, consult with LRC (Learning Resource Center)
In Summary...

Understanding Anxiety
Coping with Anxiety
  Mind-Body Techniques
  Cognitive Strategies
Handling Worries
Test Anxiety Strategies
Other Anxiety Reduction Strategies
Manage Anxieties
Handle our Worries
Calm our Fears
Be Free!