

MENTAL PREPARATION
for
EXAMINATIONS

OVERVIEW (1)

- Are exams important?
- How important?
- Important enough to cause stress?
- What is stress?
- Is stress always bad?
- Am I “getting stressed out”?
- How can I manage stress?

OVERVIEW (2)

- What are Anxiety and Depression?
- Know myself and my capabilities
- I can only do my best
- Mental Preparedness
- Make topics interesting
- Discuss your study with your friends
- Have a laugh

Milton - Paradise Lost

*“The mind is its own place
and in itself can make
a heaven of hell
or a hell of heaven.”*

Are Exams Important?

- A fair, objective way to measure standards
- Gate-keeper to 3rd level courses
- Keeps out those not suited
- Results may influence career path
- May be judged by others to reflect ability or intelligence
- Contribute to feelings of self-esteem

How Important?

More Important Than....?

- Physical Health?
- Mental Health?
- Popularity with Friends?
- Friends?
- Family?
- Athletic Ability?
- Musical Ability?
- Nice Job?

Important Enough to Cause Stress?

Yes

- but only a Reasonable Amount
- an amount that is fun and can be handled without too much Discomfort

What is Stress?

A weight or pressure which tests the strength of a system ...

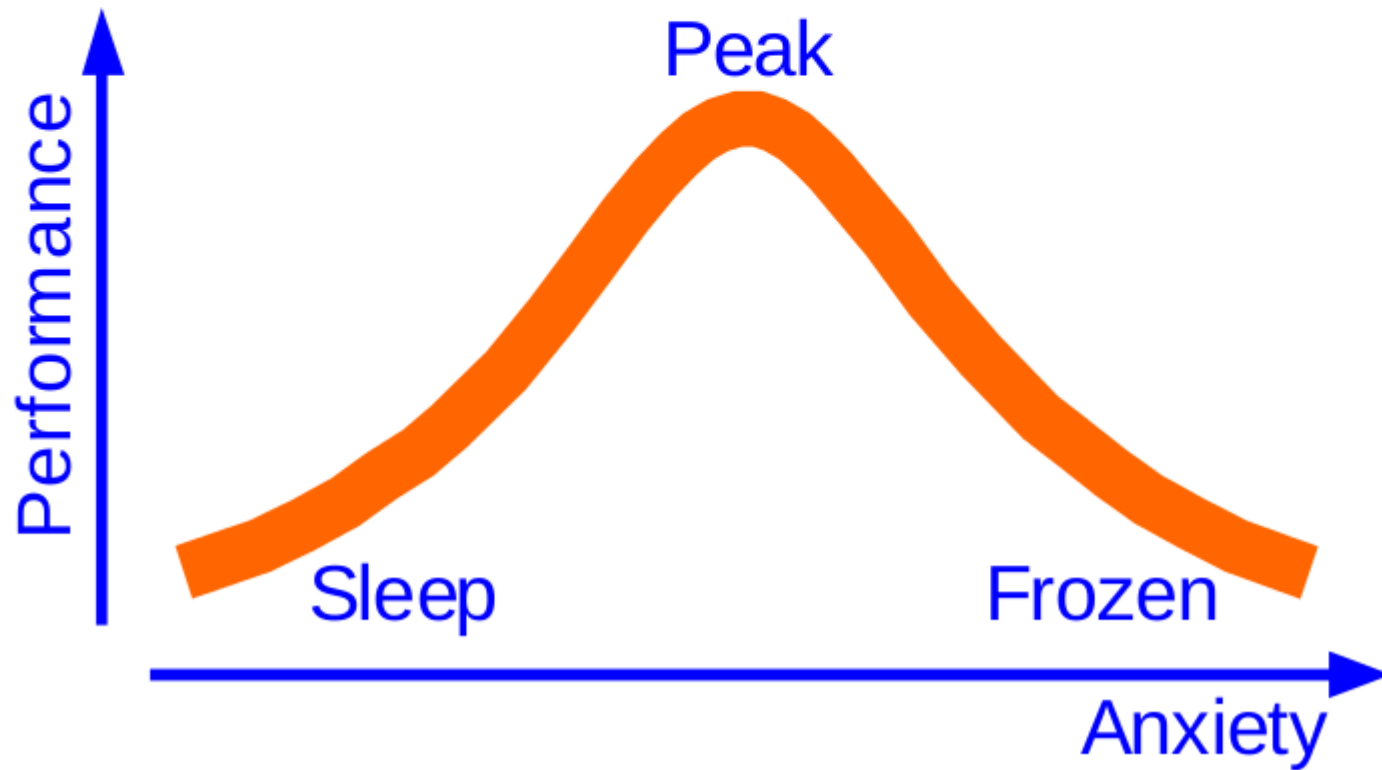
- bridge
- building
- muscle
- intelligence
- nerves

Is Stress Always Bad?

No

- Most stresses are good - they allow us to test the limits of endurance or strength.
- When these limits are exceeded the system breaks down.
- When the nervous system breaks down we get “stressed out”

Performance vs. Anxiety



“Stressed Out” ?

- Irritability
- Poor Sleep
- Anxiety - Nervousness
- No Appetite
- No Interest in Previously Enjoyable Activities
- A Feeling of Hopelessness
- Using Drugs or Alcohol for Relief

Are you getting “Stressed Out” ?

If you are - you need to Back Off!

- Take a Break
- Reduce your Workload
- Have Some Fun
- Relax
- Review your Ambitions

ANXIETY

A Pervasive Feeling of Fear Associated with these Physical feelings ...

- Heart Racing
- Tension Headaches
- “Jumpiness”
- “Butterflies in the Stomach”
- Tremor

DEPRESSION

- Low Mood
- Poor Sleep
- Loss of Interest
- Low Appetite
- Hopelessness
- Guilt
- Feeling Suicidal

***“This above all:
to thine own self be true”***
(Shakespeare)

Get to Know Yourself and
Your Capabilities

You Know More Than You Know

You Can Only Do Your Best!

Mental Preparedness

- Research what is ahead
 - Define your goals
 - Have a fall-back position
 - Remain focussed
 - Practise, practise, practise
 - Be a rounded person
- “All work and no play.....”

“Fail to Prepare, Prepare to Fail”

How do I recognise the
correct amount of stress?

Mental Hygiene

- Hygiene - The science that deals with the promotion and preservation of health.
- Mens Sana in Corpore Sano
- “Golden Mean” - Balance in Everything
- Positive Thinking
- Avoid Addictions
- Healthy Relationships
- Correct Amount of Stress

How to Study

- Be motivated to learn
- Have a nice cocoon
- Plan
- Make lists
- Test yourself against yourself and others
- Argue with the book/notes
- Mind-maps
- Pictures, words, sounds

SUMMARY

1. Exams are important
2. But other things are more important
3. Everybody is different
4. Some are brilliant and need no work - most of us are average and need some work
5. The work can be enjoyable
6. Mental hygiene is important
7. Marathon not a sprint
8. Mind is like muscle
9. RELAX!