A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach to Overcoming Test Anxiety Workshop Outline

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Time Required: 80 minutes

Workshop Outline:

I. Wait for Late-Comers - 5 min

II. Preliminaries - 3 min
   - Introduction of Presenter(s)
   - Distribute term workshop list
   - Distribute workshop title sheet with presenter contact information

III. Reflecting on Experience - 7 min
   A. Group Discussion - What is Test Anxiety? (list on board)
      1. Physical symptoms?
      2. Feelings?
      3. Actions?
      4. Thoughts? (Create long list, as will use this list later)

IV. Assimilating & Conceptualizing
   A. Why Do We Have Anxiety? - 5 min
      1. Ask class
      2. Discussion of evolutionary purpose (fight or flight)
   B. Times When Test Anxiety is Good - the Inverted U curve - 2 min
C. How Test Anxiety Arises - the Cognitive Model:

1. Distribute and Review The Cognitive Model of Test Anxiety - 10 min

V. Experimenting and Practicing - 35 min

A. Distribute and Review The Four-Step Model to Reducing Test Anxiety - 5 min

1. Step One - discuss, then have each write in Step One
   a. Distribute Common Anxious Thoughts About Tests
   b. Each student to circle those that apply to them
   c. Then, copy from sheet, board, add to Step One page

2. Step Two- discuss with examples on board, then each writes - 7 min

3. Step Three- discuss with examples on board, then each writes - 7 min

4. Step Four- Relaxation Exercises
   a. Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Guided Imagery - 15 min

VI. Planning for Application

A. Distribute The Test-Anxiety Bill of Rights and Test Anxiety References for students to read at home - 2 min

B. "Assign" them to use 4-steps for upcoming studying and exams - 1min

C. Questions & Comments on today's topics - 3 min

VIII. Evaluation - 3 min

Bert H. Epstein, Psy.D. is a psychologist at Oregon State University's Counseling and Psychological Services