

# Anxiety Reduction and Confidence Training for Tests

## Manual for College Programs

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Highly test-anxious students perform about half a letter grade below their low-anxiety peers.

About 18% of students have high test anxiety and another 18% have "moderately high" anxiety, while fully half of nursing students report serious anxiety issues. Only a very few of our anxious students are ever treated, as students seldom seek assistance and standard treatments require considerable resources. This manual provides a guide for implementing a highly cost-effective program with a substantial number of anxious students.

The program relies on a conditioning protocol that has been found to lower anxiety and improve student test scores by as much as 12 percentile points (approximately half letter grade). The protocol is a combination of a stretch-tense-air-release & relax-suggestions (STARS) sequences, which are faster and more robust than mere relaxation; experiencing a sense of interest and involvement; and associating the sense of mastery with each of eight testing scenes that are presented in a supportive manner.

The protocol can be presented live, or from a recorded version. The live presentation requires additional training and consumes more school resources. We recommend the recorded version, as it is simple to administer and inexpensive.

Just do it. Purchase several program disks, marked as "Tame Test Anxiety," identify one or more highly anxious students, explain the program, play the CD and have a student practice the protocol. Stay in touch, ask questions, and get a sense of how the student experienced the training. Send a CD home with the student with instructions to practice it at least once more. After a class test, ask about anxiety levels during the test.

You are now a qualified anxiety reduction trainer. Use the Westside Test Anxiety Scale to screen the various groups of students in your college. Students scoring 3.0 and above should benefit from the program.

While we do not have formal licensing for college programs, we do ask that you estimate the number of students in your program, and purchase 2 CDs for each 10 students. Thus, a nursing program with 60 incoming students might order 12 CDs, and have them available for students to practice at home. This one-time purchase is meant to help support our test-anxiety project, and licenses your school to continue using the program in upcoming years.

See [TestAnxietyControl.com](http://TestAnxietyControl.com)

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