HIGH STAKES EXAM AND TEST ANXIETY

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My Purpose
To help people improve their quality of life through better mental health.
To educate and empower the next generation of social work practitioners.

Professional Titles
Therapist.
Adjunct Faculty.
Social Innovator.

DR. ADIJAT OGUNYEMI, DSW, LMSW

SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT
TODAY’S AGENDA

- Test anxiety and myths.
- Physical, behavioral and cognitive elements of test anxiety.
- ASWB advanced generalist & clinical exams.
- Managing test anxiety.
- Alternatives or additions for managing test anxiety.
- Psychiatric interventions and accommodations.
Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety marked by extreme distress and debilitating feelings of worry, which negatively impacts performance.
CAUSES OF TEST ANXIETY

• **FEAR OF FAILURE** – The fear of failure can affect people in a variety of ways and if connect your sense of self-worth to your test scores, the pressure you put on yourself can cause severe test anxiety.

• **LACK OF READINESS** – Inadequate preparation leads to test anxiety. If you didn’t prepare at all or didn’t prepare well enough, this can add to your feeling of anxiety.

• **POOR TESTING HISTORY** – Suppose there is a history of not doing well in tests either because it was due to the lack of preparation or because you were overcome with anxiety.

• **UNDERLYING ANXIETY PROBLEM** – Pre-existing mental health condition can intensify test anxiety and result in poor performance.
WE ARE BORN WITH TEST ANXIETY.
It is a learned behavior that is reinforced by negative experiences with test taking.

IGNORING TEST ANXIETY WILL MAKE IT GO AWAY.
Trying to pretend it is not there will cause more stress and a wide range of physical, emotional, and mental stress symptoms that result in poor performance in test taking.

ONLY PEOPLE WHO ARE UNPREPARED HAVE TEST ANXIETY.
Even people who are prepared can have test anxiety.
How Test Anxiety Shows Up
PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

Headaches.
Stomach pain.
Rapid heartbeat.
Excessive sweating.
Shortness of breath.
BEHAVIORAL ELEMENTS

Restlessness
Feeling nervous.
Angry outbursts.
COGNITIVE ELEMENTS

Overthinking.
Trouble concentrating.
Negative automatic thoughts.
Comparing self to other people.
**EXAM CATEGORIES**

- **Associate**: candidates who do not hold a baccalaureate degree in social work.
- **Bachelors**: candidates who have completed a baccalaureate degree in social work, typically a BSW.
- **Masters**: candidates who hold a master’s degree in social work, typically an MSW, with no post-degree experience.
- **Advanced generalist**: candidates who hold a master’s degree in social work, typically an MSW, with two years of experience in a nonclinical setting.
- **Clinical**: candidates who hold a master’s degree in social work, typically an MSW, with two years of experience in a clinical setting.
The ASWB Advanced Generalist And Clinical Exams.

Content Areas, Competencies, And Knowledge, Skills, And Abilities Statements (KSAs).
EXAM CONTENT ONLINE

CONTENT AREAS are the broad areas of knowledge measured by each exam. The content areas organize the content for exam construction and score reporting. When receiving exam scores, test-takers who do not pass get feedback on their performance on each content area of the exam.

COMPETENCIES describe meaningful sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities within each content area that are important to social work practice.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES STATEMENTS structure the content of the exam for item development. The KSAs provide further details about the nature and range of exam content that is included in the competencies. Each KSA describes a single knowledge component that is the basis for individual exam questions used to measure competency.
23% Human development, diversity, and behavior in the environment.

32% Intervention processes and techniques for use across systems.

18% Intervention processes and techniques for use with larger systems.

27% Professional relationships, values, and ethics.

Advanced Generalist Exam KSAs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>KSAs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Human development, diversity, and behavior in the environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Psychotherapy, clinical interventions, and case management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Professional Values And Ethics.</td>
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**CLINICAL EXAM KSAs**
CONTENT OUTLINES AND KSAs

Clinical Social Work Licensing Exam

Advanced Generalist Licensing Exam
MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

BASIC NEEDS, PREPARATION, COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL SUGGESTIONS
MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

BASIC NEEDS

- Get plenty of sleep.
- Relaxation techniques.
- Exercise.
MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

COGNITIVE & BEHAVIORAL SUGGESTIONS

• Study early.
• Remove distractions.
• Consistent studying routine.
• Avoid negative self-talk.
THE DAY OF THE EXAM
Pre And Post Test

Arrive early.

Take the test one question at a time.

Relax and trust that you have done your best work.
ALTERNATIVES OR ADDITIONS FOR MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

Psychiatric interventions and accommodations
Addressing underlying learning conditions that interfere with learning, focus or concentration may be the key to decreasing test anxiety.

If you find that you need extra support, make an appointment with your school counselor or primary care physician.
SUMMARY

Test anxiety can be persistent, unpleasant, and stressful; however, with the right tools, you can learn how to manage it, so it doesn’t interfere with your ability to perform well.

Take some time to review this slide presentation, utilize some of the self-help strategies we have discussed.

If you need additional support, please don’t hesitate to speak to your primary care provider to learn about treatment options.
THANK YOU!


