

## Managing Test Anxiety

Butterflies in your stomach? Feeling a little apprehensive? Not much sleep last night? These are some common and quite normal experiences we would be having the day of an exam. Test anxiety is something that we all have experienced from time to time. Even when you are well prepared for an exam, you experience the all too familiar feelings that accompany the fear of not doing well enough and the nagging question – “Did I study enough for this?”

Research shows that we all could use a little stress and anxiety when doing something that needs concentration and peak performance. It keeps us on our toes and helps us to do our best work. But when that anxiety gets above a certain level, our ability to do the best job starts to suffer. This is when test anxiety becomes an obstacle that can really affect your grades.

Everyone here probably did very well in High School or they wouldn't be at Case. Now the work has become significantly harder and you might not be at the top



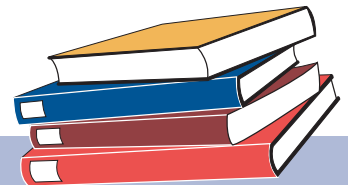
of the class anymore. Grades can take on a brand new meaning if scholarship is riding on them. The importance that many students put on grades and the fear of not doing well on a particular exam can increase the level of anxiety and actually have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

by William Hale, Ph.D., Psychologist/Asst. Director - UCS

One of the biggest problems extreme test anxiety causes is blanking out and not being able to “access” the information you have learned, no matter how well you have learned it! This can happen especially when you focus on the fear you are feeling, rather than on the test itself. The anxiety can be very real, but you don't have to give it more power than it already has. Focus on the test itself and not on your nerves. Always remember – this is just one test and not the defining moment of your life. Sure, it's important, but it is not the end of the world if you don't do as well on this one as you would like to. Put the test you are about to take in a more realistic perspective and it will help you manage your anxiety.

For more information on test anxiety, check out these websites:

[www.studygs.net/tstprp8.htm](http://www.studygs.net/tstprp8.htm) or  
[www.campusblues.com/test.asp](http://www.campusblues.com/test.asp)



## HELPFUL STRATEGIES TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT EXAM

### PREPARE WELL IN ADVANCE

Keep up day to day, if you can, but be hard on yourself if you don't. Avoid last-minute cramming. Get enough sleep the night before. Try to take a bit of time before the test to relax and compose yourself.

### BE SURE OF THE TIME AND PLACE

for the test and what you need to bring. Be on time and make sure you have everything you need. Rushing and panicking can result in poor performance.



**DON'T TALK ABOUT THE TEST** with others just before you take it. It can raise everyone's anxiety level.

**PLAN YOUR APPROACH** by reading the test first. Determine the amount of time you need to spend on each part. You may want to consider point values of each section if you can.

**ASK FOR CLARIFICATION** if necessary, from the professor, TA or proctor, rather than letting your anxiety build up because you aren't sure about something.

### DEVELOP AN AGGRESSIVE BUT REALISTIC ATTITUDE

Approach the test vigorously, determined that you will do your best, but also accept the limits of what you know at the moment. Use everything you know to do well, but don't blame yourself for not knowing everything. This can be distracting and inhibit your concentration and performance.

### DON'T GET STUCK

If you go blank on something go on to another part of the test. On an essay, jot down everything you can recall so you don't forget it and to stimulate your memory.

### RELAX YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

If you are having trouble thinking clearly during the test, pause for a minute, lay the test aside and take several slow, deep breaths. Concentrate on your breathing and nothing else for the moment, then return to the test. You will be amazed how easily this helps clear your mind and reduce your anxiety.

### PAY ATTENTION TO THE TEST

instead of the clock, other people or your own nervousness. If you focus on the task rather than worrying about time, doubting yourself, or wondering how others are doing, you can do a significantly better job.

Good luck on your next exam!

# Problem Gambling

by Joy G. Willmott, LISW, LICDC  
Substance Abuse Specialist, UCS

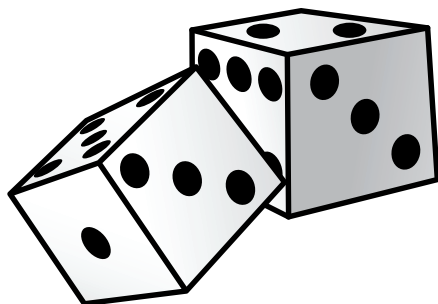
The Lottery, Casino Gambling, Texas Holdem, On-line Gambling are waiting for you to spend your money. Gambling is legal for adults in 48 States.

Gambling can be a relaxing pastime, or it can cause you trouble. From 1974 to 2002 the amount of money spent on legal gambling has increased from 3 billion to 70 billion dollars.

In the adult population, 13.4 % have gambling problems; for college students that rate is 14%.

It is very easy to move from social gambling to problem gambling. Problems with gambling are characterized by preoccupation, use of increasing amounts of money, and irritability when not gambling. It can be an escape from problems, a reaction to stress and/or "chasing" losses. A gambler, who is having difficulty, might spend hours in front of a computer, misusing credit cards. It is considered a non-substance addiction in its pathological form. Families and individuals suffer when gambling reaches a problem level.

Texas Holdem is a favorite of college students and it is

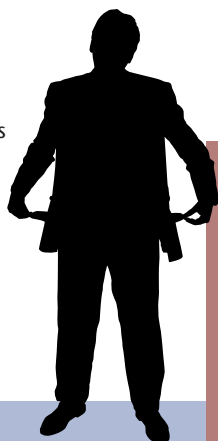


easy to find a game, on line, in the dorm, with friends or in tournaments.

Gaming is available, compelling and trouble for some. Think before you play!

For more information on problem gambling, check out these websites:

[www.ncpgambling.org/](http://www.ncpgambling.org/)  
[www.addictionrecov.org/qandagam.htm](http://www.addictionrecov.org/qandagam.htm)  
[www.ohiolottery.com/problems/problem.html](http://www.ohiolottery.com/problems/problem.html)  
or call Problem Gambling at  
1-800-589-9966



## Recovery House

Do you want to start a new, substance-free chapter in your life? You are not alone. THE RECOVERY HOUSE AT CASE is a residence for students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction to help them change their lives for the better.



We are now accepting applications for Summer and Fall. For more information call 216-368-5872 or email [RecoveryHouse@case.edu](mailto:RecoveryHouse@case.edu) or visit us at [www.case.edu/stuaff/mind-body](http://www.case.edu/stuaff/mind-body).

## Balanced-Living at Case

A new, special interest housing option for 2006-07 at Case Western Reserve University is being proposed.

Want to help create Case's first wellness-focused living option centered on health, fitness, meditation, nutrition, sleep and other elements balanced living? Share your thoughts with us on this housing option and learn more about community health promotion on our campus. Contact us for comments and questions at [mind-body@case.edu](mailto:mind-body@case.edu).



## GROUPS

### COPING WITH GRIEF & LOSS

This group is for students who have suffered significant losses in their lives to understand the normal grieving process. Models of the stages and types of grief will be presented along with suggestions for coping with loss. An ongoing grief support group can be provided if interest is demonstrated. For more information contact [william.hale@case.edu](mailto:william.hale@case.edu).

*Mondays, 2:30-3:30pm, 201 Sears*

### MANAGING STRESS THROUGH MEDITATION

Participants in this group will learn to reduce their stress and achieve a more consistent state of calm and balance through various meditation techniques. Wear comfortable clothes and be prepared to sit on the floor. Pillows will be provided. Meditation is not associated with, nor does it conflict with any religious tradition. For more information contact [william.hale@case.edu](mailto:william.hale@case.edu).

*Fridays, 3:30-4:30, CBH (Health Service – 2nd Floor)*

### SUPPORT GROUP FOR RECOVERING STUDENTS

College and professional education programs are high-risk venues for trouble with alcohol and other drugs. This support group is for students who want to explore their relationship with mood altering chemicals and develop skills for freeing themselves from substance use. Students can join this group anytime during the year. For more information contact [joy.willmott@case.edu](mailto:joy.willmott@case.edu).

*Thursdays, Noon-1:00pm, 201 Sears*

### CHECK IN - CHECK UP

This is a confidential support group for students addressing chronic mental health issues, including managing medications, sustaining behavioral changes and working toward fulfilling personal, social and academic goals. For more information contact [jes.sellers@case.edu](mailto:jes.sellers@case.edu).

### MAKING PEACE WITH FOOD

This is a counseling group for women college students who have experienced problems with food and weight obsessions, unhealthy eating patterns, or negative body image. Cultural, family and individual factors that contribute to eating disturbances will be addressed in a confidential manner. Group members can learn to develop healthier attitudes and behaviors related to themselves and their relationship with food. For more information contact [joy.pengilly@case.edu](mailto:joy.pengilly@case.edu).

*Date/Time/Location TBA*

### HEALTHY CHOICE CLINICS AT CBH

Healthy Sleep Clinic  
Mondays – 1:30-3:00pm

Alcohol & Drug Clinic  
Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00pm

Anxiety & Stress Management Clinic  
Fridays, 2:30-3:30pm /  
Meditation Group: 3:30-4:30pm

## Talk To Us

For more information or if you would like to see a specific topic presented in this newsletter, please email [william.hale@case.edu](mailto:william.hale@case.edu)

For any other questions or comments, please e-mail Collegiate Behavioral Health at [mind-body@case.edu](mailto:mind-body@case.edu)

Collegiate Behavioral Health  
Health Services, 2nd Floor,  
2145 Adelbert Road  
216-368-2510  
Monday - Friday, 8:30 - 4:30

University Counseling Services  
Sears 201  
216-368-5872  
Monday - Friday, 8:30 - 5:00

## Center for Collegiate Behavioral Health Mission Statement

*The Center for Collegiate Behavioral Health promotes a university environment dedicated to the development of healthy life practices.*