

ANXIETY

Interpreting its symptoms for better dance performance

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WHAT IS IT?

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling of worry or nervousness about something, especially when facing a challenging situation or task

Like an audition, an exam, or a performance



Anxiety can either help or hurt performance, depending on how dancers interpret their symptoms

SYMPTOMS

SOMATIC (bodily)

- Raised heart beat
- Tensed muscles
- Sweating
- Fidgeting
- Stomach butterflies
- Adrenaline rush

COGNITIVE (thought-related)

- Self-doubt
- Negative thoughts
- Difficulty concentrating
- Anticipating the worst possible outcome

They influence each other



INTERPRETATION

FACILITATIVE

This rush of adrenaline means I'm ready!

DEBILITATIVE

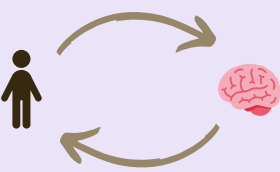
This rush of adrenaline will affect my control, I will not be able to perform to my best.

IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE

Dancers who interpret their anxiety symptoms as more facilitative:

- Tend to **perform better**
- Have higher **self-confidence**

REINTERPRETING

- Remember the interaction of cognitive and somatic symptoms. Use it to your advantage. 
- **Mental rehearsal:** Imagine yourself dancing to your best before a performance.
- **Positive self-talk:** Tell yourself, "I am a great dancer, and I am prepared for this exam"
- **Thought stopping:** When negative thoughts arise, say "stop" and replace them with useful ones.