

# Managing Writing Anxiety in the Writing Center

**ACTLA 2014 Conference Presenters**  
**Prof. Diane Flores-Kagan**  
**and**  
**Wendy Rider**  
**Writing Center Learning Specialists**  
**Antelope Valley College**

# Why this topic?

- Research-based
- Observations from the Writing Center
- Feedback from English faculty
- Math anxiety course in place (1/2 unit)
- Writing anxiety course in place (1 unit) two years and counting
- Results and findings
- Campus-wide opportunities to promote understanding



# Writing:

## The Last Language Skill We Learn



# What is writing anxiety?

- Definition
- Symptoms
- Causes
- Cycle:

Causes lead to

negative thinking

which leads to

anxiety and bad feelings

which lead to

writing avoidance and lack  
of writing success

which lead to

negative thinking

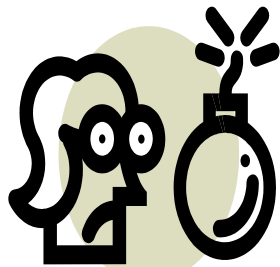
“And so the cycle continues”



(Arem 18)

# Tutor training for the following:

Recognizing  
Symptoms



Expressing  
Empathy



Referring to  
Resources



Using  
positive  
self-talk

My skills will improve each time I write.

Writing will help me achieve my goal to pass this class.

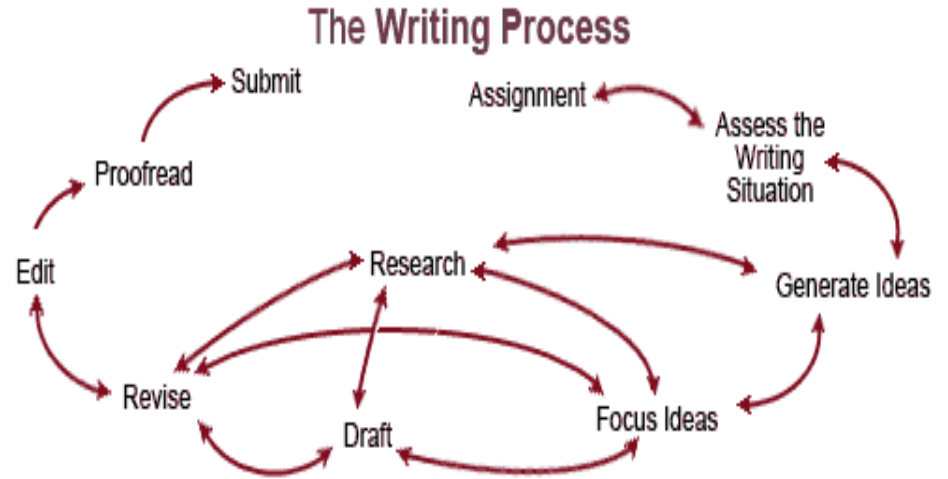
Writing is a process of discovering what I have to say about a topic.

# Stopping the Negative Cycle: ILIP and Workshop Strategies

- Obstacles journal
- Writing history and Daly-Miller Test
- Breathing techniques
- Music therapy
- Positive statement posters



# Tutor training re: thinking like a writer



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<p>What is my goal? How motivated am I?</p> <p>Goal: To get an A on next week's essay exam.</p> <p>Motivation level: High</p>	<p>What do I already know about the topic?</p> <p>Assess prior knowledge</p>
<p>How much time will it take me to study?</p> <p>Estimate time needed: Set priorities Schedule time</p>	<p>What strategies work best for me on essay exams?</p> <p>Memorization? Outlining? Mnemonics? Diagramming? Self-testing?</p>



# Practical Strategies to Improve Writing: ILIP Sessions, workshops, and tutoring sessions



Learning styles survey



Study environment inventory



Visual aids



Visualizing success



# More practical strategies offered in ILIP sessions, workshops, and tutoring sessions

- Understand what is expected for college writing

<http://www.avc.edu/student-services/lc//writing/>

- Choose an English class wisely

- Know how to participate in a tutoring session

- Schedule writing assignments

- Avoid plagiarism

- Tips for taking essay exams



# About the Antelope Valley College Writing Center

- Centralized with other areas (academic skills, math, reading, general tutoring, and SI) for across the curriculum instruction.
- Full-time instructor (Diane) coordinates the functions of the center.
- Classified staff member (Michele Lathrop, Tutorial Specialist) for day-to-day supervision of tutors.
- CRLA certification for three levels of peer tutoring.
- Tutoring on site, in-class for English, and DLAs.
- Learning Specialists (Diane and Wendy) teach ILIPs, on site and in-class workshops, Introduction to Tutoring (3 unit course) and Managing Writing Anxiety (1 unit course), and Flex sessions for faculty.
- Contact information:

[dfloreskagan@avc.edu](mailto:dfloreskagan@avc.edu) and [writder1@avc.edu](mailto:writder1@avc.edu)

# Questions??????

## Works Cited:

Arem, Cynthia A. *Conquering Writing Anxiety*. Englewood, CO: Morton, 2011. Print.

## Articles of interest:

Kara, Selma. "Writing Anxiety: A Case Study on Students' Reasons for Anxiety in Writing Classes." *Journal of Educational Sciences International*. Jan. 2013. (3) 1.

Reigstad, Thomas J. "Perspectives on Anxiety and the Basic Writer: Research, Evaluation, Instruction." *Journal of Basic Writing*. Spring 1985. 68-77. Print.