



## CUP OF CALM



## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

# 5 Ways to Handle Uncertainty

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*Will I have a job in six months? Will we have enough money? What if my new boss and I don't get along?* Dealing with the uncertainties of life causes stress and anxiety—and there's a lot of uncertainty in the air right now.

When it comes to change, you may not always be able to control the outcome, but you can control your response to it. And that's resilience. It gives you the tools to bounce back from tough situations and thrive in the face of challenges.

## Here are Five Key Ways to Dealing with Uncertainty:

### 1 Let Go

The first step is to accept that you can't control everything. This is where Iceberg beliefs—those big, bone deep assumptions we have about the way the world works—come into play. If you believe, “**I should never be uncertain**” or “**Everything must always stay the same,**” then uncertainty can be especially challenging.

Try to replace that belief with something more open-minded and realistic, such as “**uncertainty is less than ideal, but it is acceptable and tolerable.**” Recognize there is only so much you can do right now—and that makes you human, not powerless. Things will unfold soon enough. In the meantime, the way you treat yourself is in your control, so be kind!

## 2 Envision the Best

Research shows that people tend to overestimate the risks and negative consequences that may result from a situation. That leads to a lot of anxiety. Instead, try imagining the best possible scenario. Picture your surroundings and how it will feel. Not only will you feel more confident about where you're headed, you'll feel calmer and clearer about where you're at now, which helps with decision-making and boosts your odds of success.

## 3 Reflect

Remember that you've faced uncertainty before. We tend to create the illusion that everything in our past was certain, when in reality, it was once uncertain. The fact that you stand here now is proof that you are strong enough to make it through. Take time to think and reflect on what helped you before. Write it down—and then read it when your worrisome thoughts start to take hold.

## 4 Avoid Avoidance (And Keep Moving!)

A little uncertainty can be healthy. It activates the sympathetic nervous system—the “fight or flight” response—which gives you a jolt of energy and mobilizes you to take action. When this response makes you too anxious, however, it can have the opposite effect and be paralyzing. If you know that you tend to avoid dealing with the future, remind yourself that although dealing with uncertainty is hard, there are consequences for not facing it head on.

## 5 See the Possibility

A blank slate ahead means there's nothing written on it yet. While that may appear daunting, think of it this way: You are standing on the threshold of possibility. Remember why you made this shift in the first place and be proud of yourself for making a move—no matter how it turns out.

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