

LEARN HOW TO

COPE WITH

UNCERTAINTY



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How to Cope with Uncertainty

Worried about the future? Try out these strategies to be more resilient in the face of uncertainty.



When uncertainty stresses us out, making us wonder which path to take, what decision to make, or whether to respond at all, it can be crippling for some of us if we have not developed emotional resilience. So, how can you become more emotionally resilient in the face of uncertainty?



1. Try to be flexible.

Often, we have difficulty learning to “go with the flow.” Obstinance, ego, fixed beliefs, expectations, and habits are some of things that lead us to resist change. But when the house you thought you’d live in forever is destroyed in a fire or hurricane, or the job you had trained for has been automated, or perhaps the “love of your life” has married someone else, what do you do?

It can be heartbreaking and crushing all at once. But it is also true that your life is demanding a “course change.” In these situations, it’s wiser to practice acceptance and acknowledge that the situation has changed. You do not control the world; you only control yourself. The only way forward now is to adjust your attitude, shift your thoughts, and create new dreams by being flexible.

2. Practice being OK with discomfort.

When we are navigating a situation in flux, most of us will feel somewhat unsure of ourselves. This is normal. Accepting yourself and your situation is a good place to begin. Calm the inner voices of fear, blame, or resentment, and resist the urge to create drama around the uncertainty. Appraise the situation from a balanced place, realizing that it is OK to feel genuinely uncomfortable at times. You’ll build emotional resilience if you use this time to practice accepting yourself despite the discomfort you feel.



3. Learn from your mistakes and successes.

By allowing discomfort amid uncertain circumstances to reveal something about yourself, you can grow and become more emotionally resilient. Trial and error are how we learn. Once you adapt to being somewhat uncomfortable, you can apply yourself to the challenge at hand, which often triggers a flood of new ideas. Explore the positive thoughts, emotions, and ideas. Perhaps you will learn to speak up for yourself, or you may be forced to apply new approaches to the situation in flux.

This can open up whole new avenues of experience for you that may enhance your coping skills, build resilience, and even expand the range of your resume with newly discovered abilities. Test out some new approaches to see what works in this situation. And don't be afraid to make mistakes, because they will make you more emotionally resilient if you are willing to learn from them. By recognizing uncertainty as an opportunity for growth, you can more easily move through it to attain your desired goals. Ultimately, resilience is just getting back up when you fall down.

4. Step back to gain a broader perspective.

Widen your field of vision by reviewing the past and imagining the future. From this perspective, envision various plans, and estimate how they might unfold into the future, until you discover a path that shows promise. Then give it a shot. If that one doesn't meet your goals, don't hesitate to try another approach. A shift in perspective can help you see the situation from a new point of view and try out new solutions that make you more emotionally resilient in the future.



5. Coordinate with others.

Review your options and then enlist helpers. Before moving forward with a plan of action, share your uncertainty, and brainstorm ideas for how to move forward with colleagues and friends. Remain open to suggestions, but defend ideas that you really believe in with fervor. Then move forward, knowing you've considered multiple options.

6. When at a loss, imitate someone you respect.

Sometimes the hurdles seem too high, or we are at a loss about how to proceed. In these moments, we don't feel very emotionally resilient. One trick is to think of someone you respect and imagine what they might do in this situation. For example, you might think about how your friend Jane, the most gracious and balanced person you know, maintains her poise in the face of crisis. If her method is to listen attentively, speak slowly, and establish good eye contact while responding, try that. A shift in the way you act can give ideas for how to be more emotionally resilient.

7. Practice self-compassion.

In difficult moments, it's essential to practice self-compassion. Be kind to yourself to maintain your self-confidence. It's OK to take some time to release your disappointment or take a break from your routine. A walk or run in nature may be helpful for processing your thoughts and releasing pent-up emotions. Or eating healthfully can help remind you of the importance of being kind to



yourself. Once calm, research several options, and open your mind to all possibilities, so that a new avenue of experience can blossom for you.

8. Celebrate your successes.

After all the work you have done to wend your way through uncertain times and situations, once you have initiated a plan that is working or picked yourself back up after a tough experience, celebrate your success with those who helped you achieve positive results. Give yourself credit for a “win” that feels affirming, and let joy sweep into your heart. Congratulate yourself and commit to continuing your success. Practice being grateful for who you have been, as well as who you are becoming. Emotional resilience is about more than recovering from challenges — it's about thriving in the face of those challenges.

9. Learn to love change.

Heraclitus once said: “The only thing that is constant is change.” Besides, doing the same thing over and over can wear us down with its accumulative boredom. Change breeds something different and potentially exciting. New efforts stimulate growth potential through new experiences. It is “our ability to respond to life” that is being put to the test here, and the more we exercise this muscle, the more we will feel invigorated by the variety of life, and therefore the more emotionally resilient we will become.

CHANGE A HABIT, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Click here to [schedule a free Discovery Session](#) to discuss your situation and find ways to cope. You don't have to make this decision alone.

