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WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE – Author Unknown:

Below is an infographic shared by one of the organization’s strategic business partners ~ In times of uncertainty what we can control is how we individually react to the change around us.



9 TIPS FOR DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTY & ANXIETY RIGHT NOW



By: Katya Fernandez



As coronavirus updates dominate the news, many of us are facing disruptive changes we've never experienced — or even imagined. Because our routines are paused, we're finding new footing in our work lives, social lives, and mental and physical health.

For many, a plethora of distressing feelings have emerged: anxiety, worry, fear, frustration, sadness, anger, panic, helplessness, uncertainty, skepticism, confusion, stress, and even loss. And of course, these feelings don't just linger in the pit of our stomachs. They ripple out and impact how we behave, how we treat others, even how we see the world.

Maybe you've experienced difficulty concentrating or sleeping. Maybe you've felt more socially withdrawn or disconnected from those around you. Or maybe you've become hyper-focused on the news. Some of us are feeling hyper vigilant about our health and the health of those around us (maybe side-eyeing anyone who coughs, or wondering when they last washed their hands for 20 seconds).

Why Uncertainty Is Linked to Anxiety

As a researcher who studies anxiety and emotion regulation, I can tell you that these are all valid and understandable responses to a disruptive event, such as a global pandemic — especially when elements of such an event are new, unknown or unpredictable, and unclear. Indeed, multiple research efforts are underway to better understand the psychological impact of global events.



One core element underlying many of these feelings and reactions is **uncertainty**, and uncertainty is associated with anxiety.

Given that we can't do much right now to make COVID-19 (and all the uncertainty that goes with it) disappear overnight, what can we do to cope with the distress we're experiencing?

Read on for 9 tips, based on what we know from research, for dealing with uncertainty and anxiety.

1. Be honest with yourself.

The first step in managing distressing thoughts is to notice and acknowledge those thoughts. When you feel anxious, ask yourself, "What am I afraid of or worried about in this very moment?"

2. Challenge anxiety-driven, distressing thoughts.

Challenge any assumptions you're making. For example, remind yourself that just because someone around you is coughing doesn't mean they have COVID-19. Many times, we tend to respond to anxiety-driven thoughts by seeking out evidence supporting those thoughts (i.e., confirmation bias), all the while ignoring evidence to the contrary.

Challenge your thoughts by considering alternative perspectives and weighing all available evidence.

3. Look on the bright side.

Consider reframing your thoughts to focus on the positive. For example, when you catch yourself thinking, "I'm stuck at home," you might instead tell yourself, "I'm safe at home and am able to do some things I normally don't have time to do." If you feel panic when having the thought, "I'm definitely going to get sick," reframe it to, "I cannot predict the future, but I know that if I take proper precautions, such as social distancing and washing my hands, I will be doing what I can to be preventative."



4. Focus on what you can control.

Channel your energy into aspects of your life that you can control. For example, you can be safe and cautious through measures like social distancing and hand washing, but you cannot fully control whether others make the same choice; who or how many will contract COVID-19; and whether the government will respond in a specific, desired way.

Ask yourself, “What is within my power?” If you have done all you can, or the answer is “nothing,” consider redirecting your attention to a topic or concern over which you can exert more control.

5. Practice mindfulness by being aware and intentional.

When distressing feelings increase, notice your breathing. Oftentimes people will over breathe when feeling anxious. Consider intentionally focusing on extending the exhale; for example, breathing in to a count of 4 and breathing out to a count of 6.

Find ways to ground yourself to the present moment. Do a 5-sense check and notice what you are experiencing through all 5 senses. Remind yourself that you are capable of tolerating the distress via calming, affirming thoughts, such as “Right now, I am fine” and “I can handle this.”

6. Take action through value-driven behaviors.

If you greatly value family, for example, find a creative way to behaviorally engage with that value. Maybe that means calling your aunt whom you haven’t spoken to in some time to check on her or to ask if she needs help.

7. Start a gratitude journal.

Gratitude has been shown to relate to a variety of positive outcomes, like greater well-being. Consider keeping a gratitude journal where you jot down 3 things for which you are grateful every day or sending a brief note of gratitude to someone. Giving thanks can actually make you a better leader.

8. Find new ways to connect with others.



Social distancing can occur without total social withdrawal. It is possible to remain in contact with loved ones, even if social distancing may be preventing your typical ways of connecting.

Get creative! If you normally don't engage with video calls, consider experimenting with it for virtual "face-to-face" interactions. Or seek out an online game you can play with a friend or loved one.

9. Infuse your day with physical activity.

You don't have to train for a marathon to get your heart rate up. Even 5- to 10-minute stretch breaks will increase your productivity and creativity. Pick a favorite song and devote the length of that song to stretching out your body. The important thing is to keep moving.

Want more ideas? Learn more about how to make time for your wellness in our article that shares 4 techniques proven to decrease stress and boost your potential.

IN TIMES OF CRISIS, MAKE TIME FOR YOUR WELLNESS



By: Jessica Glazer



Reach Your Full Potential Using Positive Psychology Techniques

For the last few weeks, every time I've picked up my phone, turned on the television, or opened a browser on my computer, one topic dominates the news.



It's only natural; the coronavirus pandemic is rapidly altering every aspect of our lives. From our approach to work to our interactions with friends and family, news of the coronavirus and its spread influences even our miniscule daily transactions.

This onslaught of information — coming from all directions — has an impact on our health. For some of us, the anxiety comes in waves. For others, it's more like a steady drip into our sanity bucket — and we know it's just a matter of time before that bucket overflows.

Positive Psychology Can Help

In the 14 years I've taught in the field of Positive Psychology, I often hear colleagues issue the same dire warning: "If you don't make time for your wellness, you will never be successful."

It's a serious message — and it's especially true now.

As leaders, we are called to be strategic. We're responsible for setting the direction for our organizations, getting alignment within the group, and inspiring commitment from our people.

That's a tall order, and it requires more than just our physical presence (whether we're working from home or in the office). As we rise to the challenge of leading effectively in a disrupted world, we must take care of our mental health so that we can meet our full potential on the job.

Make Time for Your Wellness to Reach Your Full Potential

By whatever measure we choose — career trajectory, paycheck size, a happy family — we often gauge our own success.

But “success” doesn't necessarily correlate with achievement of true potential. By not addressing that element, we run the risk of leaving a whole lot of potential on the table.



Accessing your full potential is easier than you might think. Making even small changes in your daily habits can have a significant impact on your success, regardless of how you measure it.

These changes needn't be major life overhauls. At CCL, we teach that making time for our wellness pays off in all areas of our lives.



4 Techniques Proven to Decrease Stress & Boost Potential

Specifically, I share with clients 4 of the only techniques that have been scientifically proven to decrease stress and increase well-being:

- Increase both your sleep quality and quantity.
- Get more exercise/increase your movement throughout the day.
- Develop your mindfulness skills (via various meditation techniques).
- Foster a culture of gratitude, at work and at home.

Making headway in any of these areas requires no more than 20 minutes a day — and often, as few as 3 minutes will do the trick.



How to Make Time for Your Wellness

By increasing each of these 4 areas — sleep, movement, mindfulness, and gratitude — you can take easy steps that move you closer to accessing your untapped potential.

1. Increase Sleep.

Time commitment: 20 minutes a day

Research shows that you lose one IQ point for every lost hour of sleep. Catch up by taking a quick nap during the day, and reap the added benefit of increasing both your alertness and productivity levels for the afternoon. Or consider a short nap between arriving home and having dinner with your family. Your partner, friends, or children deserve your attention, and it can be hard to focus if you're nodding off.

If naps won't work, set your alarm to wake you at the time you'll actually need to get up. Hitting the snooze button may make you feel like you're sneaking in a few extra minutes of rest, but you'd be better off letting your alarm go off 20 minutes later and getting up after an extra bit of restorative sleep.

Learn more about how sleep can make you a stronger leader.

2. Increase Movement.

Time commitment: 5 minutes a day

If you're not currently able to fit exercise into your busy schedule, don't feel you must jump headfirst into a CrossFit membership. **Just taking a break and a quick walk can have immediate positive effects on your stress levels, creativity, and productivity.**

These effects are even greater if you get that walk in outdoors, around some trees or greenery. Aim to increase your movement a little each day, and don't forget to notice exercise that you are actually getting but may be ignoring.

Also, try these 3 quick workouts that don't take much time and are easy to do from your own living room.



3. Increase Mindfulness.

Time commitment: 1 minute a day

Put a meditation app — I like Calm and Headspace — in the spot on your smartphone where your most commonly used social media app usually sits. You'll be surprised, both by how mindlessly you open up the app without a thought, and by how easily you can fill the few minutes you might have spent scrolling with a grounding meditation instead.

You may like a short, guided recording, or you may prefer the timed sessions that just play background music — try a few and figure out what works best for you. A recent favorite of mine is Calm's breathing meditation, which rings a chime as an indication to inhale, a chime to hold your breath for a count of two, and a chime to exhale. It's simple and effective, and best of all: You can use it for a little as 60 seconds to help re-center yourself whenever you need to hit reset.

Getting into the practice of centering yourself — and becoming more mindful of your emotions and environment — will benefit you in a multitude of ways. Don't be surprised if you find yourself more aware of the needs of your colleagues and family, or if you are less rattled by the constant change we all confront each day. **Being mindful helps us to notice more things, both internally and externally, and thus navigate through our days more effectively.**

Read more about how mindfulness practices can boost your leadership skills.

4. Increase Gratitude.

Time commitment: 3 minutes a day

Keep a gratitude journal. Use a book, use your phone, or use one of the many apps that offer this service, but don't miss the opportunity to reframe your long-term mindset. Writing down even 3 good things every day will quickly train your brain to look for positives throughout your day. This will pay off both personally and professionally, as your happiness boost will be noticed in and out of the office.



If you want to spread the benefits of gratitude to those around you, you may wish to extend your thanks to others at work; this will help your team members feel appreciated, engaged, and supported.

Want to make this a daily practice? Once a week — I suggest first thing on Monday or last thing on Friday — spend no more than 3 minutes writing a quick gratitude letter to someone in your life. This can be handwritten or sent via email, but try following our widely-recognized SBI™ feedback model to make it quick, easy, specific, and impactful:

- Share the **Situation**. (*This morning, just before our weekly call...*)
- Describe the **Behavior** you observed. (*...when you agreed to accommodate my last-minute request to reschedule...*)
- Depict the **Impact** on you. (*...I felt supported and grateful. I'm so glad to get to work with you.*)

Sign it, send it off, and you've not only benefited from gratitude, but you've made someone else's day better, too. Get even more tips on how to encourage gratitude in the workplace.

So, remember these 4 tips from positive psychology to help you boost your resilience levels, because while you may be successful by most accounts — including your own — you may *still* be falling short of your reaching your full potential.

Strengthening the foundations of your wellness (your physical, mental, and emotional health and happiness) equips you to seize all the possibilities that await and truly reach your full potential.

THE TIME FOR LEADERSHIP - Dr. Paul Homoly CSP

Please click the link below to access the video

<https://vimeo.com/401634387>

