



## How to Relish Uncertainty®

Uncertainty is the antidote to boredom, stagnation, and the narrowing of our worlds. So, let's examine how to welcome its presence.

Recognize that relishing uncertainty is a mindset that we can choose in any situation. It's a lens through which to assess and approach our circumstances. We can ask what it looks like to embody this mindset right now?

### **Option 1: Sit with uncertainty**

Perhaps surprisingly, sitting with uncertainty can be an active process, albeit an internal perspective-based one.

We can start by exploring our uncertainty and getting curious about it.

We can remember that uncertainty is not the same as risk. In many situations where people are feeling uncertain, they imagine a catastrophic outcome. But many of the possible outcomes are positive or neutral; very few are likely catastrophic. Instead of focusing on these, we can think about all the positive or even neutral outcomes that are more probable.

Another thought exercise is to step back and give your future self some credit. You can't start figuring the potential problems of the future until you are in the moment when they arise. But you can trust that your future self will be resourceful and capable in that moment when you actually have the data about what needs to be figured out.

Finally, we can allow ourselves to loosen our grip on the outcomes and paths we hope to travel. We can acknowledge that there's more than one good way to navigate towards a goal and more than one good goal worth achieving.

## **Option 2: Get moving**

Sometimes, the way to deal with uncertainty is to act. There are some things that you can only learn by engaging with the world.

For example, we live with almost unlimited access to information and expertise, thanks to the internet. Sometimes we can reduce the uncertainty we feel by seeking more knowledge that already exists.

There are many things that we can know, which lessen the uncertainty of a situation. You can mitigate uncertainty by reading a book, doing some research, and learning some things about the area of uncertainty. If there's homework where you can eliminate uncertainty, by all means go do that.

But there are some things that you can't predict by reading a book. Don't delay moving forward because you're still doing research on something that you can't know from a book.

Instead, when you reach that point, it's helpful to think like a scientist. Don't make yourself wrong for not knowing; instead, run good experiments to learn about what feels uncertain.

## **Option 3: Deny the tyranny of the "OR"**

While it is helpful to separate Option 1 and Option 2 for the sake of explanation, the practice of relishing uncertainty almost always benefits from a combination – shifting our perspective about uncertainty and taking action to clarify and move through what is uncertain. As our attitude towards uncertainty changes, we find ourselves more willing to run an experiment or try something new. And as we try something new and get the feedback that the world didn't end, we feel more open towards the experience of uncertainty.

In this way, relishing uncertainty creates a virtuous cycle. A cycle where we confront more questions, but also build the confidence to meet those questions and seek an answer. And as we live a life that is expanding, the questions become ever more compelling.

If this sounds like a life you would want to live, like a great movie worth watching, remember there is a price for admission. You must be willing to trade the comfort of knowing for the thrill of discovery.

### **THAXA Executive Coaching**

THAXA provides personalized coaching to high performers to help them clarify their visions and goals, focus their strategic plans, and accelerate their progress. THAXA's methodologies are based on the best research into the science of performance sourced from diverse fields including strategy, psychology, and productivity.

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