

Dealing with uncertainty

Understanding uncertainty, activating hope and embracing change and new possibilities



Uncertainty is a natural part of life

Change is our ever constant in life. Whilst we may understand this, dealing with this uncertainty can often be easier said than done.

"The biggest issue that most people struggle with when it comes to change is dealing with uncertainty."

Tony Robbins, 2020

However, medical research shows that sometimes we can overestimate the risks involved in forthcoming change as well as inflating perceived uncertainty that we have previously faced into, termed 'hindsight bias', (Bupa UK, 2020).

So, in other words, our perceived challenges may not be as big as we would both imagine or remember them to be.

Some uncertainty can be beneficial

Some would challenge that in fact we need some uncertainty within our lives (Robinson and



Smith, April 2020). Such uncertainty can be a source of motivation, opportunities and growth.

"Uncertainty can be our ally, when good things can happen without being anticipated."

Deepak Chopra, 2020

A life devoid of change may be experienced as monotonous. So we need a balance of both certainty and uncertainty to lead a fulfilled, passionate and successful life (Tony Robbins, 2020).

When managing our life's uncertainties, we may have developed different strategies, including controlling what we can, letting go of what we can't, tuning out unproductive thoughts and stimulating our rational thinking.

However, another approach that we may consider is how we can welcome these inevitable uncertainties of life (Robinson and Smith, 2020). How can we embrace uncertainty for its creative potential and hidden wisdom? (Deepak Chopra, 2020).



Hope can be a tremendous resource

Hope can help us to embrace uncertainty; it can be our guide, giving us control and power. Hope isn't a throw-away comment, wishful thinking, or a passive expression, instead it is a life supporting force within us (Deepak Chopra, 2020).

"There was never a night or a problem that could defeat sunrise or hope."

Bernard Williams, Philosopher

Fear and hope can't co-exist. We can begin to release our fears when we realise that its power largely comes from past experiences. Through activating hope we can begin to heal wounds from the past (Deepak Chopra, 2020) and free ourselves to live in the present time.

We can foster hope within our lives

Hope may seem ephemeral or difficult to grab hold of. However, it is something that we can learn to cultivate for ourselves.

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When fostering hope it is important for us to connect in with our true self. What is it that we truly wish for? What is our desired purpose in life? Hope can be elusive if we are disconnected from our true, authentic self, often leading to self-doubts and fears to emerge.

Building our awareness skills will help us with this:

1. **Taking personal responsibility** – determining our own focus and direction
2. **Being open to new possibilities** – embracing the opportunities that arise today
3. **Being alert to changes** – being open to changing circumstances
4. **Having a confident response to change** – being flexible to evolving situations
5. **Creating solutions** – finding ways around presenting problems and obstacles

How can we activate hope?

We can hone our ability to cultivate hope by following these practices:

Recognising unresolved issues – reflecting upon and identifying those areas in your life that are not how you'd wish them to be

Setting the intention for a solution – clarifying the outcomes that you'd wish to emerge in these areas

Letting go of the need to know the answer – freeing yourself of the need to 'work it out' and determine the response will enable the answers to come to us

Listening to our intuition – slowing down and noticing the thoughts and insights that appear in our mind

“We need to trust that our awareness can lead to the solution, being alert to the signals from our intuition.”

Deepak Chopra, 2020

Noticing what emerges in our life – being observant of what surfaces in our life, being mindful of what our life is trying to tell us

Through following these practices, hope can arise naturally. This is a transformative discovery that as our awareness expands life can take care of itself (Chopra, 2020). We can become confident in creating our own life and reality that we wish for.

How can we embrace uncertainty?

So rather than trying to control change, we can open ourselves up to uncertainty and embrace the benefits that can emerge.

Taking time to free ourselves of others expectations and understand our true self will help us to surface what really matters to us. As part of this, clarifying our purpose in work and life can allow us to clarify our guiding compass and reveal our path.

“When we co-operate with our own evolution, it can lead to new insights, truths and creativity.”

Deepak Chopra, 2020

Developing our meditation practice can help us to enhance our awareness skills and hone our intuition. Slowing our mind and noticing our thoughts, can help us to spot the insights that our subconscious mind generates. Having a quieter mind allows us to see the ideas and opportunities that come our way in life.

Trusting in ourselves will free ourselves up to understand our own preferences, own our choices and create our own possibilities. This enables us to be empowered, owning our own life.

Top tip



If you'd like to explore in more depth the topics that this article has raised, then I would totally recommend listening to and reading:

21 Day Meditation Challenge: Hope in Uncertain Times – Deepak Chopra and Oprah Winfrey, 2020

Discovering our Life Purpose – Cathy Brown, Spring 2020 (www.evolve.eu.com)



About the writer

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Cathy Brown is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, consultant and author. She runs Evolve Consulting Services Limited which works with individuals, teams and businesses to manage transition and change.

She works as a transition coach and a career counsellor with individuals and teams. She is also a guest lecturer at University of Derby. In addition, Cathy is a founding trustee of the Evolve Transition Trust, which supports disadvantaged people through life transitions.