

# How to Prevent Anxiety Paralysis

Miller Consultants, PBC

# Causes of Anxiety Now

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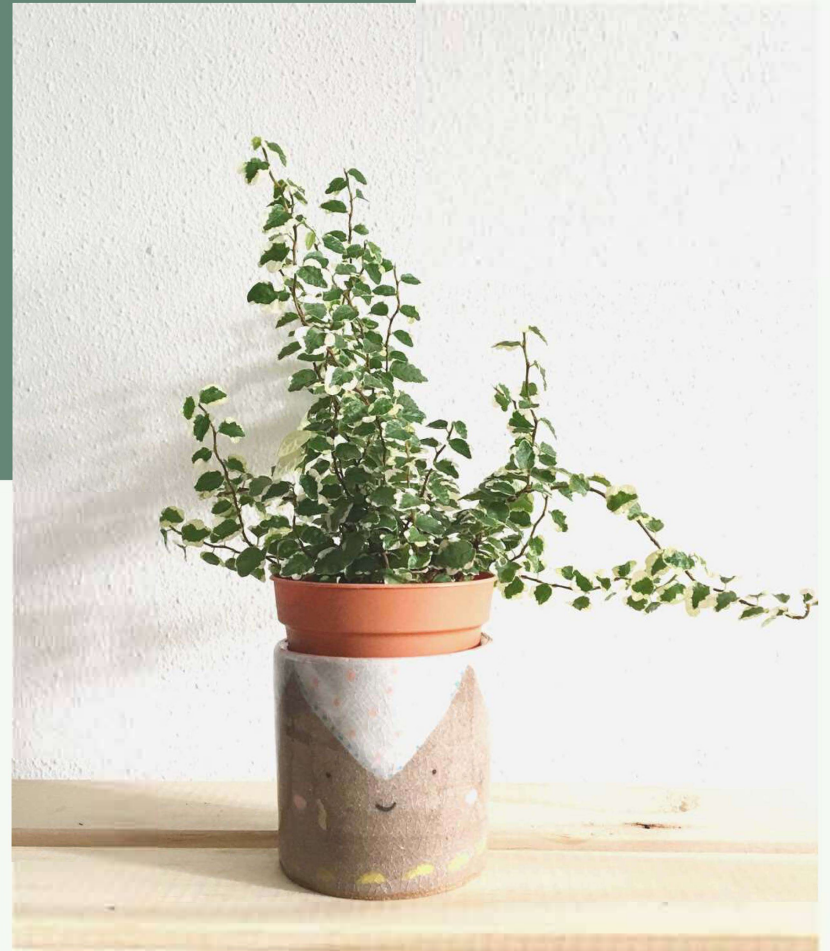
## Why are we so anxious?

Because of relentless uncertainty and ambiguity. As 2022 dawns, we don't know what to expect - whether we will work from home or in the office, what the ups and downs in the economy might mean for our work, how family challenges might disrupt our work. We do not know what each day will bring.

# The Truth

## We like stability.

Uncertainty is uncomfortable because we feel we have lost control. When we feel like we are at the mercy of events beyond our reach, we are subject to anxiety.



# The Key to Dealing with Circumstances Now?



Learning to live with maybe!

That means increasing our tolerance for  
ambiguity and uncertainty.



“

Think about it

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**“HAPPINESS CAN BE FOUND,  
EVEN IN THE DARKEST OF  
TIMES, IF ONE ONLY  
REMEMBERS TO TURN ON  
THE LIGHT.”**

ALBUS DUMBLEDORE

# Increase Tolerance for Ambiguity

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH MAYBE

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Tolerate Ambiguity

PERCEIVE IT  
AS A THREAT

Don't like unknown  
risks.

DIVIDE THE  
WORLD INTO  
EITHER OR  
CATEGORIES

Reject that situation  
can be both positive  
and negative.

BELEIVE  
EVERY  
PROBLEM IS  
SOLVABLE

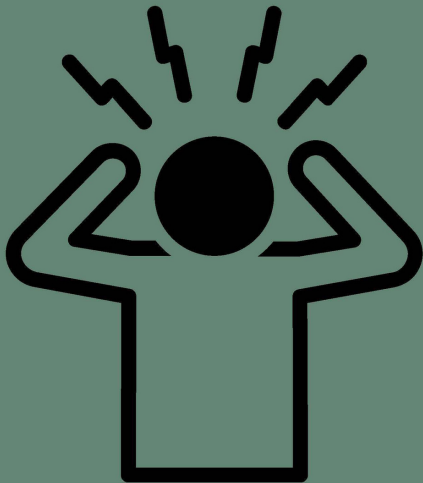
Can't act without  
"complete"  
information.

RELY ON  
RULES

Worry about every  
detail.

**THOSE  
INTOLERANT  
OF AMBIGUITY**

# Ambiguity Intolerant



Worry more



Can't think clearly



Have trouble solving  
problems

# Ambiguity Tolerant



Experience less stress



Think clearly



Have sense of self-efficacy



A tolerance for ambiguity is essential to our ability to function in our current circumstances. Our well-being depends on it.



# Lean into Self-Control

IT TAKES DISCIPLINE AND IT IS WORTH IT!

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# SELF-CONTROL

While we can't control our circumstances completely, we can take control of ourselves.



## STATE YOUR WORRIES

Identify what you fear.



## SORT YOUR WORRIES

Sort your fears into those that are controllable and uncontrollable.



## PLAN

List actions you can take regarding areas where you have control.



## Avoid Catastrophizing

This involves jumping to the belief that dire events and outcomes are inevitable.

## Worst-case Scenario

Uncertainty can lead to fear of risk which can trigger the expectation of a worst-case scenario and a downward spiral of thinking and feeling.



# Downward Spiral

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## THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE DIRE

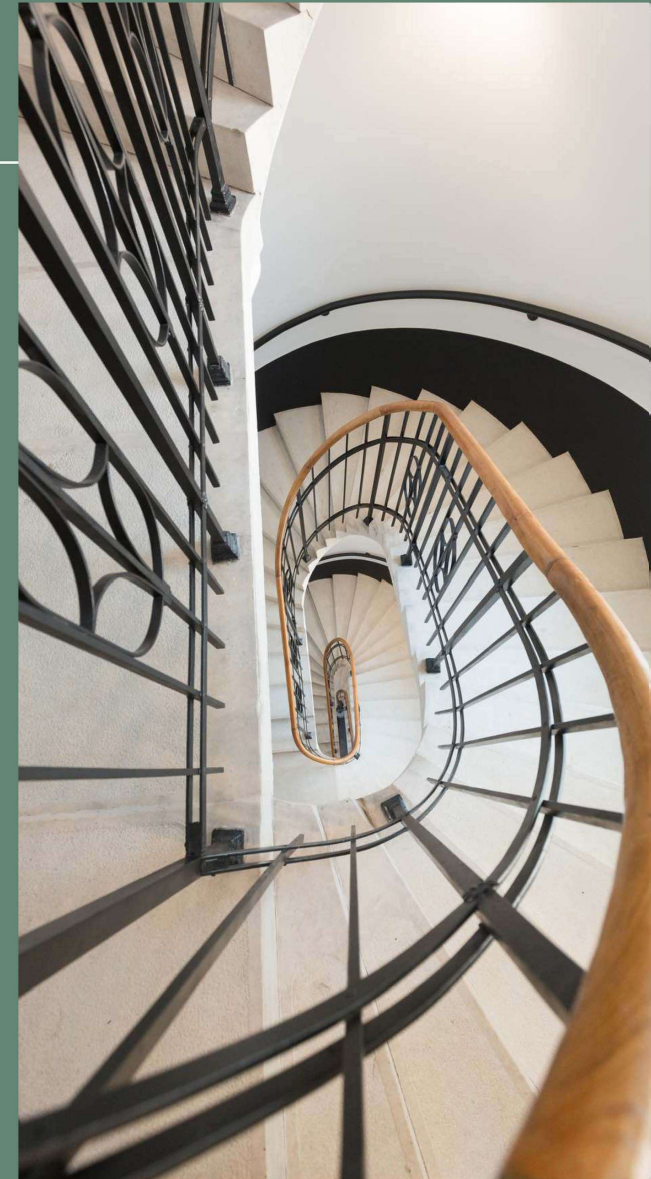
You become panicky and immobilized by fear, which leads to...

## INABILITY TO THINK CLEARLY

which prevents you from seeing options, which leads to...

## DECREASED CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH THE FUTURE

which leaves you overcome by feelings of impending disaster which increases panicky feelings and fear .





Control your thoughts.



Now is the time for rational thinking. Engage in contingency planning.

# Scenario Planning

## IMAGINE "WHAT-IF'S"

Think of all possible work scenarios for the next few months.

## ESTIMATE PROBABILITIES

Gather relevant information and estimate the likelihood of the scenarios.

## PLAN FOR ALL

Develop a plan for each scenario.



# Keep in Mind

WORST CASE SCENARIO

Is probably the least likely.

YOU ARE STRONGER THAN  
YOU THINK.

And you can deal with whatever comes.

YOU HAVE COME THROUGH  
BAD TIMES BEFORE  
and you can do it again.

# It's all about self-control.

While many of our current challenges are outside of our control, we can have power over what we think, how we feel, and what we do. It is about courage and resilience.

