

Guest Column: Facing the fear and anxiety of the unknown

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Almost everybody worries about what will happen in the future. The prospect of not knowing if something good or bad will happen can produce a lot of fear and anxiety. As a result, here are seven ways on how to deal with the fear of the unknown.

1. No one can predict the future with one hundred percent certainty: Even if the thing that you fear does happen there are circumstances and factors that you can't predict which can be used to your advantage. For instance, you miss the deadline for a project you have been working on. Everything you feared is coming true. Suddenly, your boss tells you that the deadline is extended and that he forgot to tell you the day before. This unknown factor changes everything.
2. Take it one day at a time: Instead of worrying about how you will get through the rest of the week or coming months, try to focus on today. Each day can provide us with different opportunities to learn new things and that includes learning how to deal with your problems.

3. Use Self-Visualization: Sometimes, we can get anxious over a task that we will have to perform in the near future. When this happens, visualize yourself doing the task in your mind. For instance, you have to play in the championship volleyball game in front of a large group of people in the next few days. Before the big day comes, imagine yourself playing the game in your mind. By doing this, you will be better prepared when the time comes.
4. Take a break: Take a deep breath and try to find something to do to get your mind off of your anxieties and stresses. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read the newspaper, watch TV, play on the computer, or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things. This will distract you from your current worries.
5. Challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking: When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. Focus on the reality of your situation and not on your thoughts.
6. Worrying can make the problem worse: All the worrying in the world will not change anything. All you can do is to do your best each day, hope for the best, and when something does happen, take it in stride. If you still have trouble dealing with the fear of the future, then talking to a counselor or clergyman can be of great help.
7. Get some help: Sometimes, it helps to be able to talk to someone about your stressful situations. Talking to a trusted friend, counselor, or clergyman can give you additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. In time, you will become better able to deal with the fear of the unknown.