
Tolerating Uncertainty And Combating Anxiety

— FUHSD 2021 —

Intro to Today's Lesson: Watch this first!



Agenda

- For today's lesson, you will need a piece of paper!
- You will be learning what tolerating uncertainty means and identify your own uncertainties and anxieties about school re-opening (whether you are returning to school or staying remote).
- You will identify one or two habits, tasks, or changes to implement in your day to make going back to school work for you- whether is in April 19th or next fall!
- Be ready to share some of these in advisory next time!

Uncertainty and Anxiety Around Opening Back Up

It is a very anxiety-provoking decision for everyone involved to re-open schools, restaurants, the world. Although it is a positive sign that classrooms are beginning to open up, it can still be difficult to cope with the uncertainty of changing our current routine.

We have been isolated for virtually over ONE YEAR.



What does “Dealing with Uncertainty Mean?”

Dealing with uncertainty is an unavoidable part of re-opening our schools. Because we can't see the future, we can never be certain about what exactly is going to happen day to day. People vary in their ability to tolerate uncertainty.

That is, some people are okay with having a lot of uncertainty in their lives, and other people cannot stand even a small amount of uncertainty.



What are you uncertain about in this new situation?

Think about what you are uncertain about in this return to school. Jot two uncertainties down on your paper.

Ideas include:

- Being unsure how to talk to others or socialize in this new way of doing school
- Being uncertain if you have learned enough to succeed in class
- Potentially contracting the virus yourself and bringing it home to your family
- Being a carrier of the virus and passing it on to others
- Being unable meet your own standards of doing a good job
- Staying home and worrying you'll never want to return to school
- Being unsure if school will be like this for next year

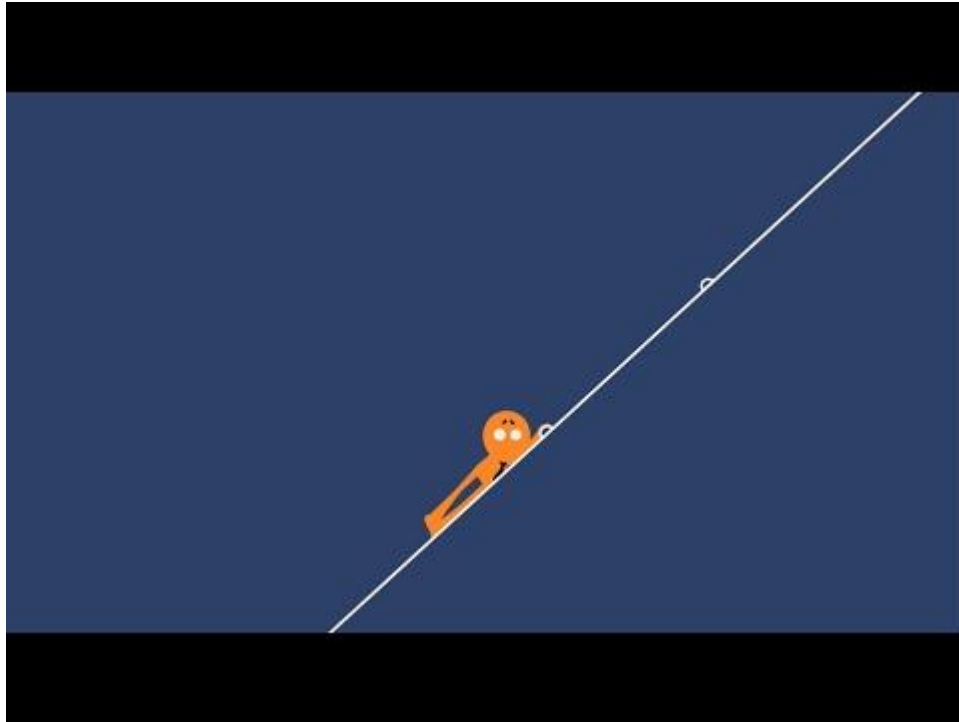


So, what's the solution to uncertainty?

- **We cannot completely eliminate risk in most situations**, regardless of whether or not it is COVID-19 related. Life is uncertain.
- **When we are faced with uncertainty, we have two options:** 1) work to increase our certainty about a situation or 2) learn to tolerate the uncertainty. Many anxious people choose the former (e.g., reading multiple articles about returning to school in other parts of the world or problem-solving hypothetical situations in advance).
- **A healthy relationship to risk should involve developing reasonable safety precautions so that we feel that the risk is low and negative events are unlikely** (not impossible, but unlikely), instead of trying to eliminate all risk. Being tolerant of some uncertainty in life, rather than trying to eliminate uncertainty, is not only a helpful goal when returning to school, but a good goal to strive for in life.

Tolerating Uncertainty

Watch this [video](#) to review what tolerating uncertainty means, and some strategies for coping with all these changes and the stress, anxiety, and worry that comes with it!



Remind Yourself of the Reasons to Re-Engage

There are many benefits to returning to school that can outweigh the uncertainty and worry.

Here are a few, can you think of more? Jot two reasons to re-engage on the same paper!

- Seeing friends in person
- Being able to get out of the house and not be as isolated
- Begin in person activities again- i.e. sports

What can we control right now?

Even though there is a lot of uncertainty right now, there are a few things that we can control that can help us tame some of our anxiety. These include:

- Daily Routines
- Sleep Hygiene
- Knowing Where To Get Help

Things I can control



Mya Carter

Establish a new Daily Routine

A few days before hybrid learning starts (or for those of you coming back later)...

- Take a look at the bell schedule. The hybrid schedule is slightly different whether you are on campus or not. Plan when you will need to wake up, how long it will take you to get ready, and how long it will take you to get to campus.
- If going on to campus, familiarize yourself with the campus map, and where your classes are located. It has been a year! For some of you, it might be your first time on campus!

Daily Schedule

Quick Activity: Look at the schedule below. On your paper, brainstorm 1-2 changes that you might need to make or add to your routine to be successful and ease anxiety/uncertainty.



Return to Campus Bell Schedule - Spring 2021

Monday/Thursday			
Period	Start	End	Minutes
1	8:00	9:30	90
Brunch	9:30	9:45	15
2	9:50	11:20	90
Lunch	11:20	12:15	55
3	12:20	1:50	90
7	2:00	3:30	90

Tuesday/Friday			
Period	Start	End	Minutes
Collaboration	7:50	8:50	60
4	9:00	10:30	90
Brunch	10:30	10:45	15
5	10:50	12:20	90
Lunch	12:20	1:10	50
6	1:15	2:45	90
Office Hours	2:50	3:30	40

Student Wednesday			
Period	Start	End	Minutes
Tutorial/ Asynchronous Learning Time & Occasional Homeroom/ Advisory	9:00	10:00	60
Break	10:00	10:15	15
Asynchronous Learning Time	10:15	12:00	105
Lunch	12:00	1:00	60
Office Hours	1:00	1:45	45
Break	1:45	2:00	15
Asynchronous Learning/ Student Activity Period/ Tutorial	2:00	3:30	90

Establish a new Daily Routine, cont.



- **Build safety into your routine.** Pack an extra mask and hand sanitizer in your backpack.
- You will be completing a daily symptoms checker while on campus. **If you are not feeling well, do not risk it,** stay home. You can still log on to class from home.
- **Read your school emails and schoology messages!** These messages will contain information about safety protocols, parking, lunch information, etc.

Sleep Hygiene

We know, we know, you have heard the speech before about how important sleep is....well **IT STILL IS.**

For the past year, you may have been able to get away with rolling over, rubbing your eyes, and logging on to class. Now, you may have to actually walk into class.



Sleep Hygiene

There are tons of great sleep tips out there, but here are some of the most useable and effective:

- **Schedule your sleep hours and make them non-negotiable**
 - 8 hours at least
 - Work backwards from there - even if it means stopping your current activity until the next day
- **No caffeine after 12pm**
 - Half-life (the time it takes for ½ of the drug to be out of your system) of caffeine is up to 5 hours
 - If you consume it in the afternoon, it will still be in your system at bedtime and will disrupt your sleep quality and ability to fall asleep
- **Have a wind-down routine/digital detox before your desired bedtime**
 - At least 30-60 minutes before your scheduled bedtime, put devices/electronics away
 - Just looking at an LED screen is engaging to the brain, let alone whatever content is on there
 - Apps, Games, Videos, Social Media all have teams of highly-paid professionals whose job is to maximize user engagement and attention
 - Extra Credit - check out The Social Dilemma on Netflix

Sleep Hygiene

- **Engineer your sleep environment to maximize sleep quality**
 - Keep your room cool. 65-72* F is ideal, if possible.
 - Keep it dark. Use shades, blinds, eye masks to block out all light.
 - Keep it quiet. Use earplugs, a fan, white noise machine, or some other source of constant, soothing background noise.
- **Avoid long naps, if possible**
 - The human body/brain needs consistency, and naps can potentially throw-off our main sleep cycle at night, when most of the high-quality deep sleep is available
 - If absolutely needed, keep naps to 20-40 minutes maximum
- **Beds are for sleeping only**
 - Again, our brains/bodies crave routine and habit, so we can confuse our programming if we're using the place where we expect to sleep for studying, entertainment, etc.
 - Set up a separate area for other activities, such as studying, relaxing, etc., so that your brain and body associate your bed with just sleeping

Need To Talk About This Uncertainty and Anxiety?

[Complete a Wellness Request Form](#) found on your schools website, and a School Based Therapist will reach out to you.

or

Contact you Guidance Counselor if you have any questions.

or

Let your teachers know how you're feeling, and they can help connect you to the appropriate person.

Any other concerns?

Do you have any other worries or anxieties about school re-opening? If so, take this time to write them down, and then bring them up to your parents, teacher, counselor, coach, or any other trusting adult or peer.

When you share your uncertainty, worry, or anxiety, it is much easier to get help.

Thank you!