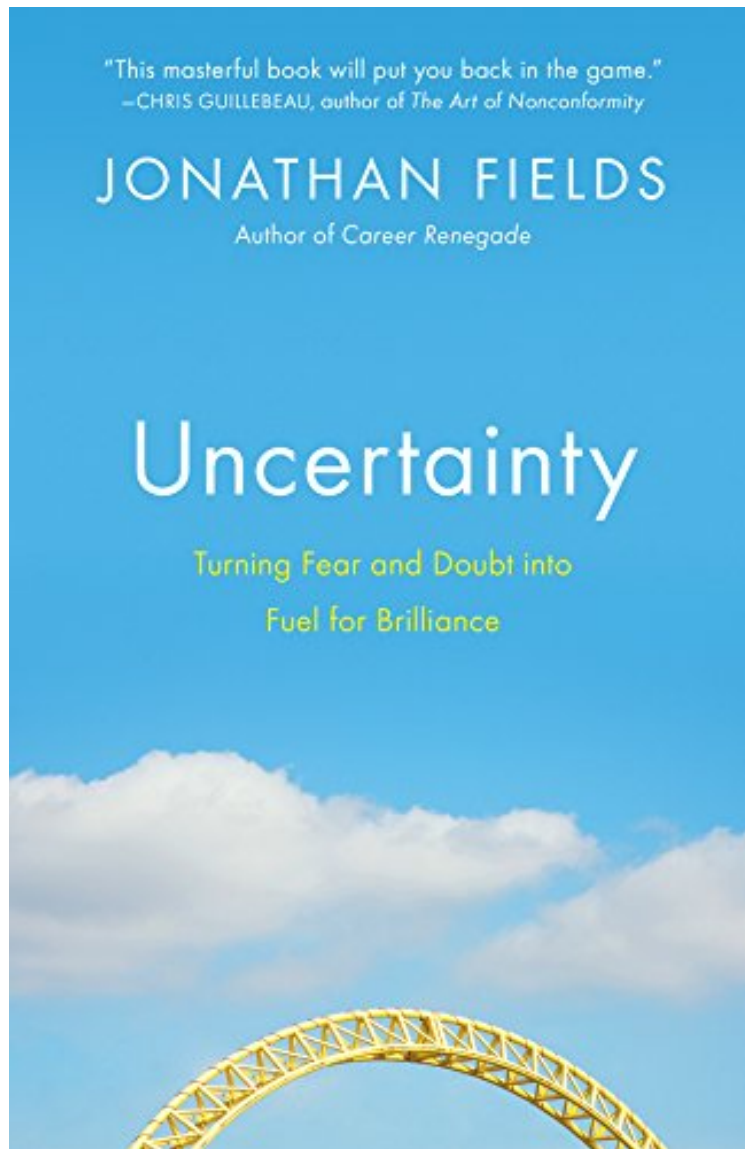


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Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt into Fuel for Brilliance

Jonathan Fields

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Jonathan Fields : Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt into Fuel for Brilliance before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Uncertainty: Turning Fear and Doubt into Fuel for Brilliance:

123 of 127 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring Stories, Useful Format By Debra Eve If we dare to create, fear and uncertainty become bedfellows. So how can we work through those emotions and thrive? In this book, Jonathan Fields' uses stories and research to chart an answer. His suggestions don't break new ground, but he assembles them in a useful and inspiring format. Here's the gist (headings correspond to chapters): FIND YOUR

CERTAINTY ANCHORS"Certainty Anchor" is Jonathan's catch-phrase for a ritual or schedule. One example: Work (create, practice, write) in bursts and pauses. Go for no more than 45 to 90 minutes. Exercise, meditate, nap. Work again.

BUILD YOUR HIVEThey're not just cheerleaders, they give honest (but gentle) feedback. Specifically, your Hive can help you shift your focus to learning and away from traffic, sales or profits, and explore a minimum viable product (MVP) that you can release and gather feedback to fold into the next iteration.

The most important thing about a hive: "One person's success isn't necessarily another person's loss. There is no zero-sum game."

TRAIN YOUR BRAINEngage in what Fields' calls attentional training: exercise, meditation, visualization, specifically process visualization: "If you're a writer, visualize yourself putting your notebook or pad in your bag, walking to your favorite cafe, choosing your table, ordering your favorite beverage, spending a few minutes reviewing handwritten notes, then opening your current creation and writing X words or for X minutes or hours." "Not surprisingly, exercise mitigates uncertainty because it changes the brain, tamping down the amygdala's fear and anxiety signals."

OWN THE STORYLINETo overcome fear and uncertainty about your path, ask yourself three questions: 1. What if I go to zero? What would happen if you failed completely? 2. What if I Do Nothing? Fields maintains "there is no way to move sideways in life. Not in relationships, not in business, not in spiritual growth, not in the quest to build something brilliant from nothing. There's only up or down." He points out that if any of the following are left unaddressed over time: nagging pain becomes chronic; unrewarding work becomes soulless; your currently "passable" life becomes increasingly painful as you enter the long, slow slide toward death. 3. What if I Succeed? Create your own storyline of success.

CONCLUSIONDoes Fields say anything we haven't heard before? Isn't a Certainty Anchor just a ritual or schedule? A Hive another name for network? Meditation and exercise obvious ways to overcome fear and anxiety? It's not new information. But Fields connects the dots with individual stories, helps analyze what's holding you back, and inspires you to do something about it. His portrait of "What if I do nothing?" is chilling. He includes chapter summaries, something I wish all nonfiction books would do. Plus, I just like the word Hive. All and all, a good read.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. The Writing Style Is A Little Inaccessible For My Tastes. Interesting Ideas, Though. By Ken Montville (note: I was sent a copy of this book, signed by the author - thanks, Jonathan! - in exchange for an honest review. It was also the January selection for 12 Books - a reading group on Goodreads) I first ran across Jonathan Fields on his blog and was impressed by his giving heart and generous spirit. So I was interested to read his take on overcoming the fear we all have when beginning something new. To his credit, the book is not just a collection of blog posts cobbled together to make a few bucks. Yet, after the Introduction and first few chapters my mind began to wander. It seems Fields is writing to an audience that wouldn't normally pick up a personal development/self-help type book. The title itself is a bit hyperbolic. Surely, most people would be happy with outcomes less than "brilliant". This continues into the body of the book where he writes about "creators" and their "creations" in the same way most people might think of producers and products. After all, since marketability is a goal isn't most of what we "create" really a product. Surely, even a product of our imagination doesn't have to be couched in such lofty terms. Jonathan is a good writer but the language makes the book a little inaccessible, at least to me. His case studies also seemed a little inaccessible. Most of them are what some people refer to as Renaissance Men (or Women). It's not enough that they are clearly successful in one field, they also seem to excel in several others and, of course, they all have the epiphany that there must be something more. They feel unchallenged, unfulfilled. So they go out and start (create) something new. It helps that the success they've enjoyed before starting over has probably given them plenty of money to take chances without worrying too much about paying the bills. Finally, some of the advice in this book is eons old wrapped in the language of the Web 2.0 twenty or 30 something trying to find themselves. Routine and ritual become certainty anchors, surrounding yourself with positive, like minded people becomes finding mentors, heroes and champions. Even Jonathan's interesting visions of co-creation through feedback loops or co-working environments might be considered as developing a mastermind group. Oh, and focus? You get that through Attention Training (AT) aka meditation.

As I progressed through the book, I began to like it more and more. It does have some interesting ideas and the author has obviously done his research. So if you'd like a book that provides a path on your journey to bringing your creation to market, this is a good place to start.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Someone finally said it. By Johnny B. Truant This is a fantastic book. The truth is that there is no magic formula for greatness, and that every amazing act is generated out of a place where nothing is for certain. We've learned to fear uncertainty because -- go figure -- we never know what's going to happen. So we avoid it, and then nothing great does happen. Jonathan Fields finally said it: Uncertainty is THE WAY. Uncertainty is the fertile ground for amazing things. Without uncertainty, there is no greatness. Finally, someone admitted the truth instead of telling the world what it wants to hear: that there's a paint-by-number blueprint for success. In other words, if you're uncertain, you're on the right path and you're in good company. Only once you see that and embrace it can you achieve what you want to achieve. And Jonathan shows you exactly how to do it without undue pain, without undue angst.

Jonathan Fields knows the risks-and potential power-of uncertainty. He gave up a six-figure income as a lawyer to make \$12 an hour as a personal trainer. Then, married with a 3-month old baby, he signed a lease to launch a yoga center in the heart of New York City. . . the day before 9/11. But he survived, and along the way he developed a fresh

approach to transforming uncertainty, risk of loss, and exposure to judgment into catalysts for innovation, creation, and achievement. Properly understood and harnessed, fear and uncertainty can become fuel for creative genius rather than sources of pain, anxiety, and suffering. In business, art, and life, creating on a world-class level demands bold action and leaps of faith in the face of great uncertainty. But that uncertainty can lead to fear, anxiety, paralysis, and destruction. It can gut creativity and stifle innovation. It can keep you from taking the risks necessary to do great work and craft a deeply-rewarding life. And it can bring companies that rely on innovation grinding to a halt. That is, unless you know how to use it to your advantage. Fields draws on leading-edge technology, cognitive-science and ancient awareness-focusing techniques in a fresh, practical, non-dogmatic way. His approach enables creativity and productivity on an entirely different level and can turn the once-tortuous journey into a more enjoyable quest. Fields will reveal how to: Make changes to your workflow that unlock buried creative potential. Build "creation hives" -- supportive groups that can supercharge and humanize the process. Tap social technology and user co-creation to add clarity, certainty, and sanity, even if you're an artist or solo-creator. Develop a set of personal practices and mindset shifts that let you not just tolerate, but invite and even amplify, uncertainty as a catalyst for genius. Drawing on extensive case studies and research, Fields shares a set of detailed personal practices and environmental changes that can not only humanize the creative process, but also allow individuals and teams to stay more open to opportunity and play a bigger creative game.