



Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

ANXIETY DEEP DIVE SERIES • PART 3

# The Shadow of Control

## THE TRAP OF CERTAINTY

### The Illusion of Control

Anxiety is often described as an intolerance of uncertainty. To manage the discomfort of the unknown, we construct elaborate mechanisms of **control**. We plan, we worry, we check, we research, we seek reassurance.

While these behaviors give us a temporary sense of relief, they ultimately shrink our world. The more we try to control the uncontrollable, the more rigid and fragile our lives become.

### Control vs. Trust

The opposite of anxiety is not calm; it is **trust**. Not the trust that "everything will be fine" (which is just another prediction), but the trust that you can handle whatever happens.

Control asks: "How can I make sure X doesn't happen?"

Trust asks: "How will I show up if X happens?"

### Examining Your Control Strategies

**1. The Strategy:** What is one thing you do to try to gain a sense of control or certainty? (e.g., over-preparing, checking phones, asking for reassurance)

**2. The Cost:** What does this strategy cost you in terms of time, energy, or connection?

**3. The Experiment:** What would happen if you let go of this control strategy just by 5%? What is the catastrophe your mind predicts?

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