



For most of us, nothing unleashes our inner control freak like uncertainty. I should know: When I got pregnant, my husband and I decided to trade our apartment for a home in the burbs. We quickly snagged a buyer for our place but couldn't find a house we could afford, which meant I spent my entire pregnancy losing sleep over where we'd be living when I delivered. (A hotel? My in-laws? The street?) "Many people feel that uncertainty isn't an adventure; it's an indication that things may not unfold the way they want them to, which is anxiety-provoking," says psychotherapist Abby Seixas, author of *Finding the Deep River Within* (Wiley). "But it's impossible to control everything; trying to do that will ultimately make you miserable." Instead, learn to live more happily in limbo with these coping strategies.

COMPARTMENTALIZE YOUR STRESS During one of my 3 A.M. panics, my husband offered to shoulder my angst. "You concentrate on having the baby. I'll worry about the rest,"

he said. Ha, I thought. As if I could hand off my concerns like a baton! Yet soon, I found myself focusing on getting seven hours of sleep a night rather than lying awake until dawn sweating the details. "If you don't have a partner to carry the stress," Seixas says, "imagine writing down your worry, putting it in a safe and taking it out only at set times, say for five minutes a day."

CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN "Finding something bite-size to get a handle on will make the bigger picture feel less overwhelming," Seixas says. Although I have no influence over the real estate market, I could, and did, purge our overflowing closets to make moving day less onerous, if and when it finally comes.

FIND THE SILVER LINING Uncertainty and pessimistic thinking go hand in hand, but if you consciously list the positive aspects of even the most negative outcome, it will seem more manageable, Seixas says. I tried it and came up with this scenario: If we wound up living in a hotel for a few weeks, at least we'd have daily maid service. Now *that* I could learn to live with!