THE INFORMATION SEARCH PROCESS

Based on two decades of empirical research by Carol Kuhlthau

It's normal to feel anxiety while you're doing research.

Research is a process that increases uncertainty before decreasing it. You don't have all the answers in the beginning - that's why you're doing research!

"At first I was excited about my topic, but now I'm not so sure... I find searching confusing and I can't seem to find any supporting research! I'm not sure where to go from here."

- said every student ever, at some point

Be open to what you find and take time to reflect on what it means.

Let the information you find guide you toward refining your topic.

Feelings of uncertainty and apprehension often give way to optimism.

Don't be discouraged. The secret is to keep searching.

Find the best database for your subject area using the [A-Z list of databases](#).

After you've gathered some resources it's time to develop a focus (thesis).

While a focus may be formed in a sudden moment of insight... it is more likely to emerge gradually as you construct your thoughts. Associated feelings are increased confidence and clarity!

There's help!
Visit the reference desk at your favourite Dalhousie Library for help at any stage of the research process.

Make an appointment with your [Subject Librarian](#) or visit their [Subject Guide](#) for resources.