

# OWL Ready



Tip of the Month

## *Prevention, Mitigation, and Preparedness: A Tea Cup Storm*

So, to break the monotony of COOP planning from a “big picture” perspective, I have decided to share a personal story and how it relates to the need for Continuity Planning and how to differentiate between prevention, mitigation, and preparedness.

My wife, Katy, loves Frozen. I saw the first Frozen movie in theaters . . . twice. Note that we did not have any kids at the time. I saw Frozen 2 in theaters twice—only once did our, at the time, 2 1/2-year old son attend. Since my wife loves Frozen (and drinking tea or coffee), I decided to buy her a bone china Frozen teacup and saucer for Christmas.

I must also tell you that my wife’s nickname is Mayhem. You know the commercials from All State Insurance with the Mayhem guy? That’s my wife. Her Valentine to me last year had the line “will you be my emergency contact” instead of “will you be my valentine.”

So, how does all of this relate to Continuity Planning? Well, considering the delicate nature of the tea cup and my wife’s propensity for destruction, I must consider my three options: prevention, mitigation, and preparedness. I could *prevent* mayhem by showing Katy her tea cup and then carefully placing it on a high shelf in the china cabinet where she cannot reach it—thus preventing its destruction. I could *mitigate* against its demise by wrapping it in bubble wrap in just the right way so she can still use it, but it is more protected. Yes, she could still manage to break it, but at least the shards and damage would be relatively contained and not scatted across the kitchen floor, which makes cleanup easier and less intrusive. Of course, she likes the tea cup and wants to use it, so I can *prepare* for its eventual shattering by standing by with the appropriate resources—a broom and a dust pan—so that I am ready to respond when she eventually breaks it.

Each of these options are also available to everyone when crafting a Continuity Plan and overall framework. We should consider what steps we can take to *prevent* the devastation. However, we must also realize that not everything can be fully prevented. As such, we must also consider how we could *mitigate* the impact, which involves taking steps to lessen the overall impact of a disaster. Lastly, we must also *prepare* for what could happen by taking the necessary steps to have the right resources and plans in place for the eventual disaster. Each of these options are important in their own right and should all be considered when developing a fully-functional Continuity of Operations Plan. We can prevent some things and we can mitigate against others, but we should always prepare for the worst case scenario.

As always, if you have any questions regarding continuity planning or the OwlReady COOP Tool (which can be found here: [https://kennesaw.kuali.co/ready/users/sign\\_in](https://kennesaw.kuali.co/ready/users/sign_in) ), please contact James Westbrook, Assistant Director of OEM, at [jwestbr9@kennesaw.edu](mailto:jwestbr9@kennesaw.edu) or 470-578-6370.

