

# Managing change through the COVID19 pandemic



# How are you?

It's been a challenging few months hasn't it? The COVID19 pandemic has meant there has and continues to be a lot of change to our community rail work. We may have felt a lot of different emotions and pressures.

With this in mind, this initial short resource has been designed to...

- **Help us explore change as a process**
- **Help us understand why we may feel difficult emotions when experiencing it**
- **How we can look after ourselves when things get tough?**



# How has all this change at work been making you feel at work?



**Missing my colleagues and my usual routine**

**I'm worried about future funding**

**I'm missing being out and about**

**Frustrated and angry that my project isn't going as I/we had planned.**

**Job security is a worry**

**Finding it hard to adapt to online meetings and get to grips with new technologies**

**I'm worried about going 'back in' to work with social distancing rules and using transport**

**Finding it hard to be productive while juggling home and work**

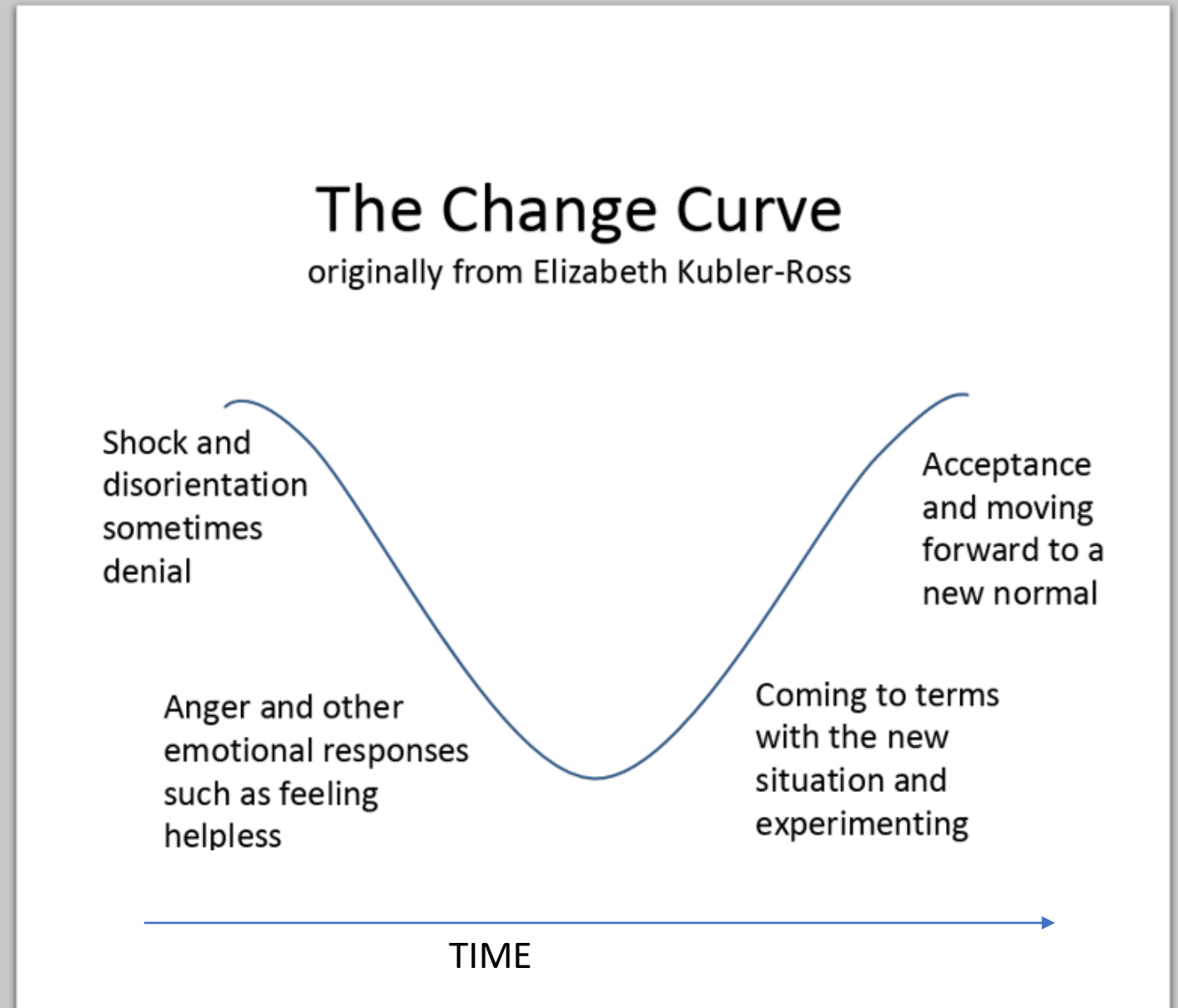
# Seeing change as a process

- **Change can be a difficult and complex thing to experience**, both as an individual and a team. Everyone's experience of change will be slightly different and will change over time
- **We are all facing different and unique personal pressures/stresses** in lockdown which can affect our ability to respond to and plan for change
- **It can make us feel lots of different emotions over time** and hugely impact our stress and energy levels
- **By appreciating that change is a process** and reflecting on where we might be on this journey, we can be kinder to ourselves and others in these hugely turbulent times



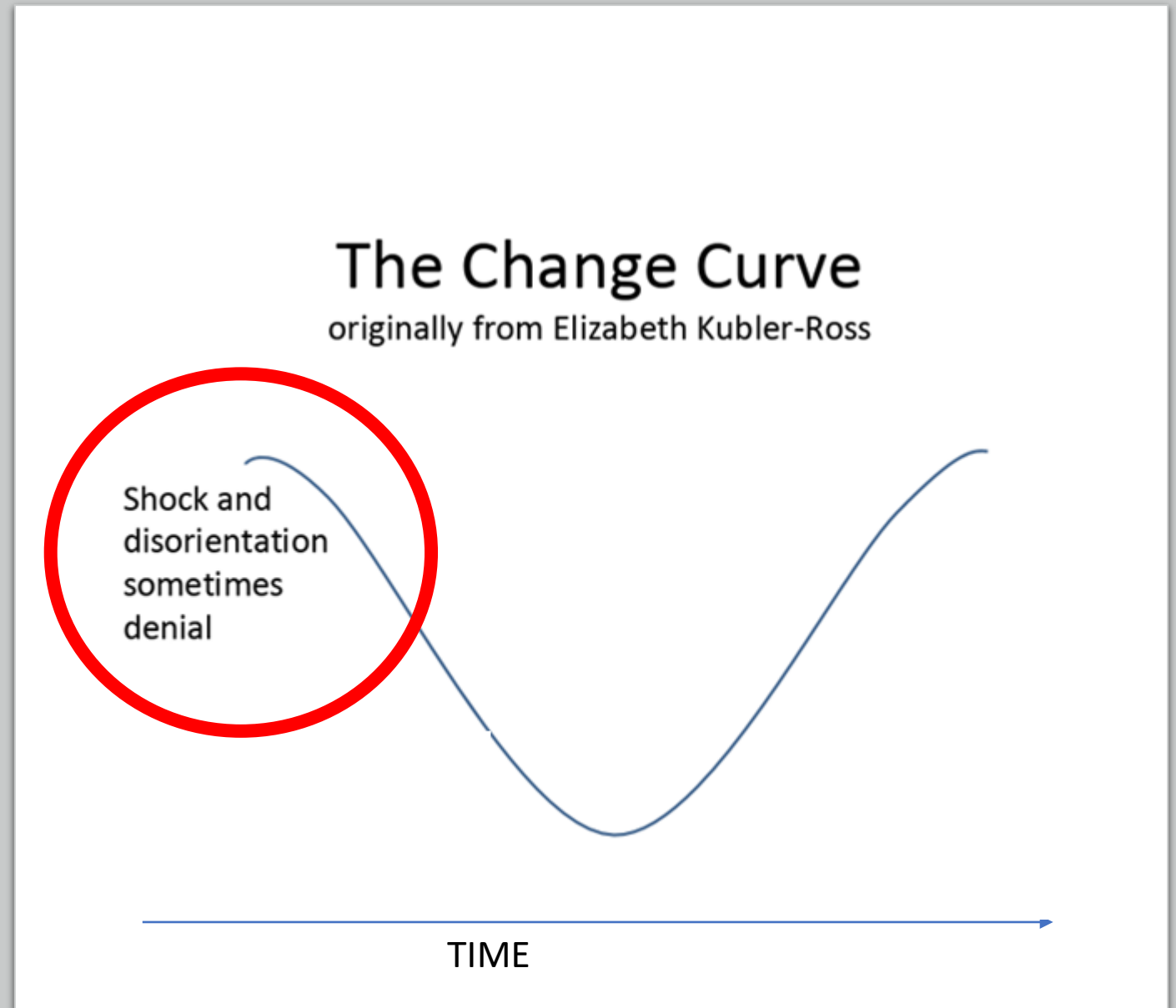
# The change curve

- The change curve outlines our defence and coping mechanisms that we typically transition through over time.
- Not everyone will experience all the stages and people will travel at their own speed, reaching each stage at a different time.
- By understanding where we might be on the curve during this crisis, it can help us to identify what support we might need ourselves and how to be sensitive to others.
- In COVID19, we may be experiencing many and multiple change curves!



# Stage 1: shock

- Our first reaction to change is often shock.
- We may experience a **surge of adrenaline** initially, but a **sharp dip in our productivity** follows
- A **lack of information** and understanding, and a **fear of unknown** can make the future feel very uncertain.
- Thinking about and **planning for the future is very difficult** for most of us at this stage!

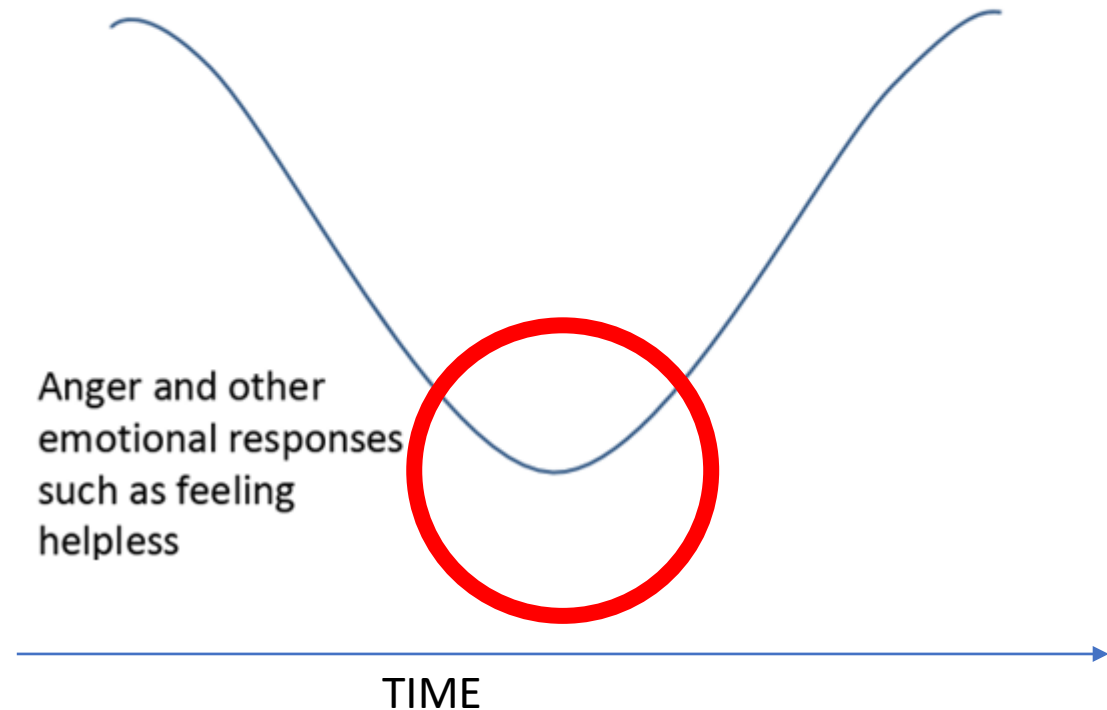


# Stage 2: in the pits!

- At the lowest part of the curve , our productivity and energy is at its lowest.
- **It is the most uncomfortable stage for many of us** and is often when we may find it hardest to express how we feel.
- We many feel **anxious, helpless, demotivated and exhausted** as we begin to process what we have lost
- The isolation and remoteness that we are experiencing with lockdown can certainly heighten these emotions.

## The Change Curve

originally from Elizabeth Kubler-Ross



## Stage 2: first aid!

When we are at this stage in particular, it is very important for us to acknowledge that we are finding change hard and we are not alone in feeling this way. It is important that we carefully manage our stress levels.

Change doesn't happen in a vacuum. The pandemic is likely to have added other personal stresses and responsibilities into the mix too – heightening the need for self-care.

The **Stress Bucket Analogy** is a helpful way to think about how we manage our stress...





# The Stress Bucket



Developed from an idea by Brabban and Turkington (2002)

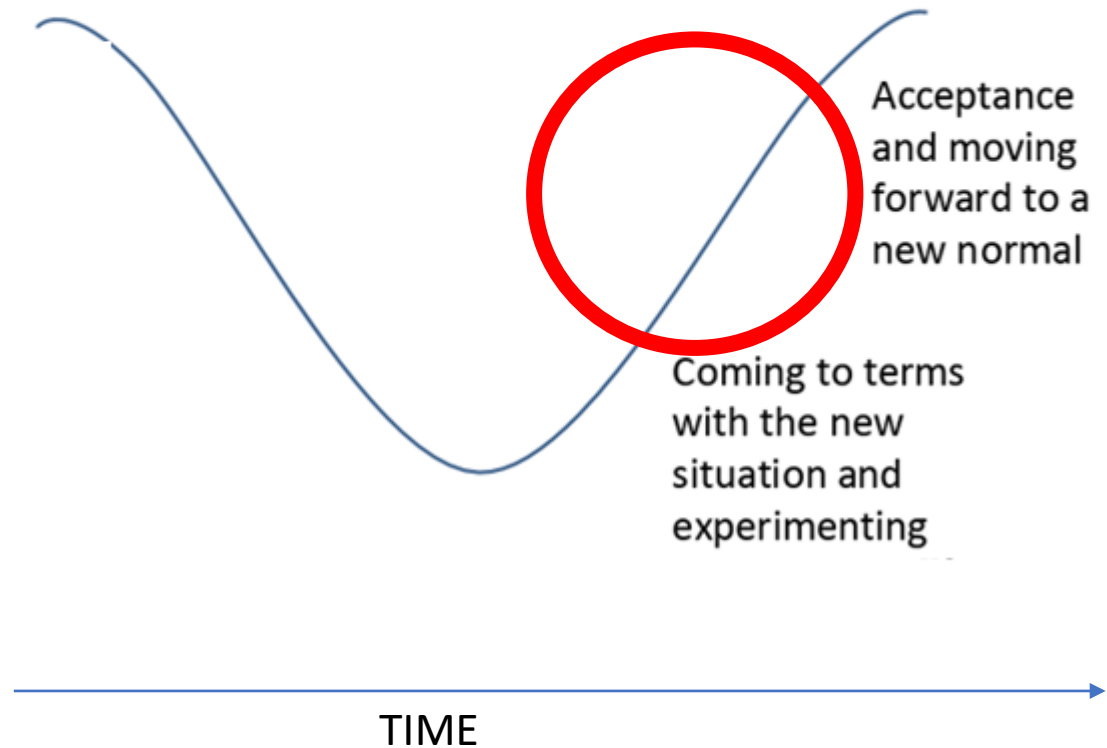
- Imagine there is a bucket you carry with you which slowly fills up when you experience different types of stress.
- Sometimes you feel strong enough to carry a lot of stress, but it's important to find activities which help you lighten the load to prevent it from over-flowing!
- Mental Health UK has a great free resource to help you think this through [here](#).

# Stage 3 and 4: moving on up

- Our energy levels start to climb again as we come to terms with the new situation and feel more optimistic.
- We may start experimenting with new ideas work with the challenges rather than resisting them.
- The final part of the curve sees us accepting our new reality and our productivity returning to 'normal'.

## The Change Curve

originally from Elizabeth Kubler-Ross



# So remember...

- ♥ The emotions we feel when experiencing change are **usual, shared and sometimes necessary in order to move forwards**. We must be kind to ourselves and to each other.
- ♥ **Change will keep happening** as we recover and rebuild from COVID19. It is understandable to feel anxious about lockdown easing and what our work and working conditions will look like. BUT, the more we can **reflect** on what has helped us to transition through such changes already, the more we can use this awareness to help us.
- ♥ **Help our colleagues by being mindful and sensitive** to where they might be on the curve. For example, we may have experienced a lot of change before and move very quickly through to the acceptance stage but others may take longer in stage one or stage two so try to be patient.
- ♥ Change can be an incredibly **bonding experience** for groups. It can encourage **collaboration** and **creativity and shared learning** – all of which are essential as we open up community rail activity again.



# Further links to support

## Wellbeing and mental health during COVID19

**Guidance for the public on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak**

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf>

**Five ways to wellbeing**

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

## Working from home advice

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) and parents working from home**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/coronavirus-parents-working-from-home/>

**Working well from home under self-quarantine for Coronavirus.**

<https://www.leapers.co/resources/little-guides/coronavirus-working-from-home#toc-plan>

**Supporting your mental health while working from home**

<https://cdn.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/20113010/Supporting-your-mental-health-while-working-from-home-3.pdf>



# Further links to support



## Changes ahead/returning to work

### **Managing feelings about lockdown easing**

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/managing-feelings-about-lockdown-easing/>

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19): Mental health and returning to the workplace**

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/supporting-mental-health-workplace-return>



# Get in touch

The training and development team are planning some further interactive online content on managing change as lockdown begins to ease. Please do get in touch with any ideas and thoughts for this.

**You can email us at [training@communityrail.org.uk](mailto:training@communityrail.org.uk)**

