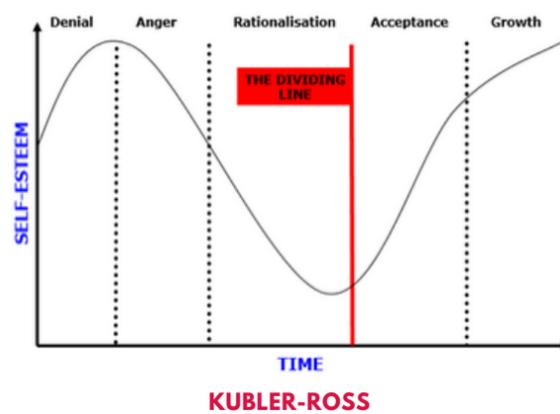


THE EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF CHANGE

Also known as the 'change curve'. This cycle shows the different stages people experience in times of change. It is important to realise that the emotions associated with each stage are normal. It is possible to become stuck at any one stage; making change more difficult. It is also possible to move back and forth between all stages.



1 DENIAL

In this stage change is approaching without the true impact being realised. Often without an understanding of the true nature, extent or impact being realised the following feelings are common:

- shock is a typical reaction
- fear of the unknown
- feeling threatened



2 ANGER

As the impact of the change takes effect the following feelings are natural:

- 'why me?'
- injustice at the lost opportunity
- loss of control
- blame which is directed at others
- suspicion, scepticism and frustration



3 RATIONALISATION

Once the initial denial and anger is past the individual seeks a reason for what has happened and tries to make the events fit with their world.

- rationalisation allows passage to the next and most important step- acceptance
- without rationalisation the individual can revert back to the initial stage of denial and start the whole process again

The individual may revert back to early stages, this can be a signal that although rationalisation is taking place, barriers are still to be overcome. Generally once the barriers are overcome a notional 'dividing line' is crossed and they start looking forward.



4 ACCEPTANCE

The transition to this stage can come quite suddenly.

It is characterised by:

- a shift in thinking
- people stop focusing on what they have lost
- let go of the past and accept change
- optimism and enthusiasm
- hope and trust

This is a good time to try and identify new ways of working / behaving as a consequence of the change.



5 GROWTH

Change has now been accepted, it becomes the new normal / second nature where people start to embrace the new situation.