

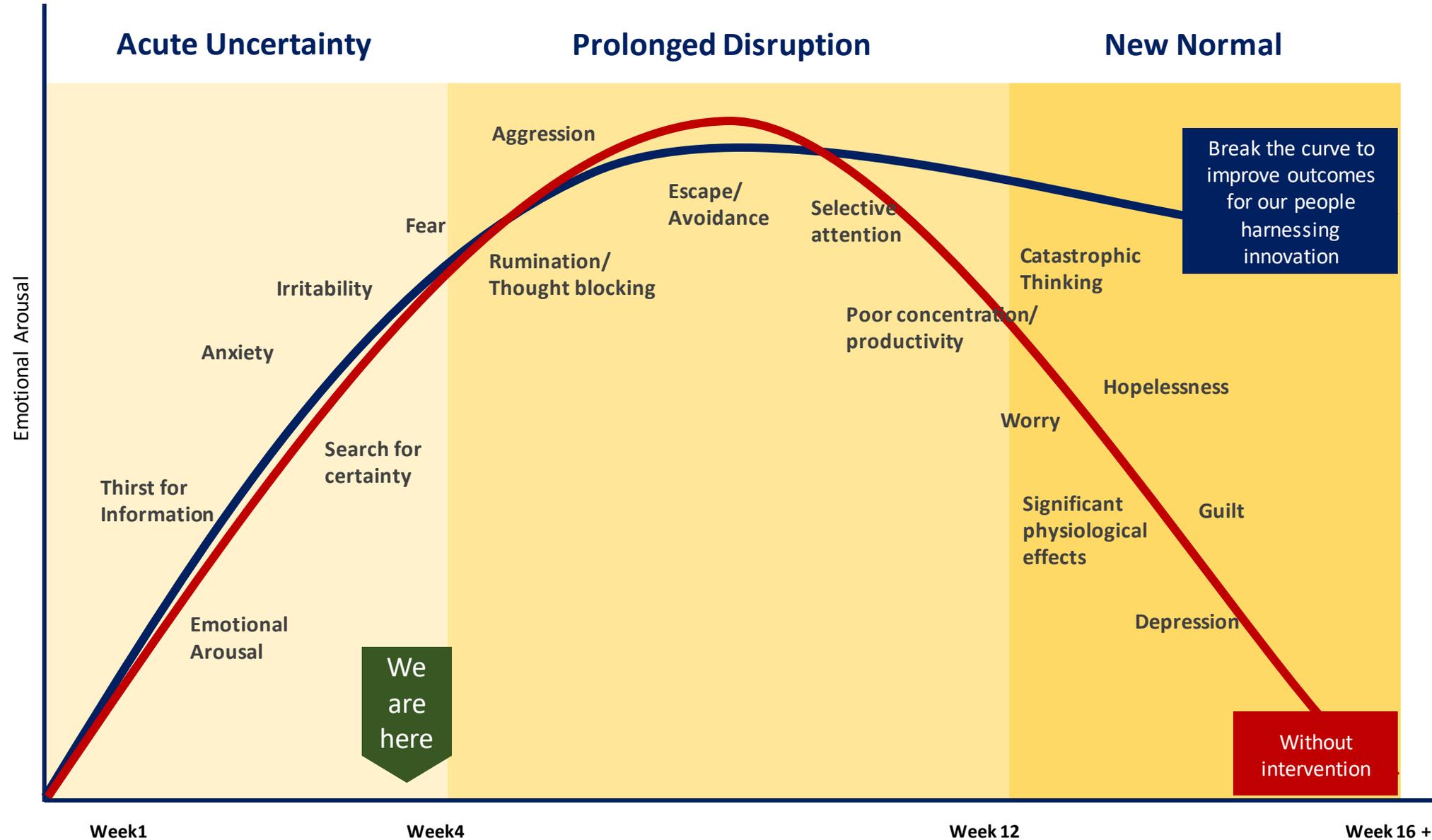
Understanding psychological responses during Covid 19

What we might see and leadership approaches

HMRC Culture and Behaviours Team - April 2019

Understanding responses during a crisis

Expected emotional responses during this time that we must proactively seek to manage



Background

- The aim of this model to understand more deeply the psychological effect of a crisis upon behaviour
- The insight draws from a mixture of external studies, academic theory and ways of working in other organisations.
- The insight can help us to time and steer our organisational responses both as professionals within our work and as leaders and managers

Understanding responses during a crisis

How those responses might emerge in practice

	Acute Uncertainty (Phases 1- Weeks 1-4) 16th March – 10th April	Prolonged Disruption (Phase 2-3 Weeks 4-12) 6th April – 12th June	Mental/Physical Fatigue (Phase 3 weeks 12-16) potential if not addressed 31st May – Mid July
How people might be feeling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritable, aggressive, impatient or wound up • Overwhelmed/ burdened • Anxious, nervous or afraid • Uninterested in life • Like you've lost your sense of humour • Worried about health and health of others • Expressing loneliness. • Broken sleep & physical fatigue • Headaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased dread and/or fear • Burdened by the suffering of others • Blaming others for their own suffering • Loss of pleasure in life • Physical and mental fatigue, possibly insomnia • Bottling up emotions/ Explosive emotional outbursts • Increased nightmares • A sense of hopelessness or powerlessness • Self-aggrandising/ Compassion fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowered levels of motivation across all areas – work, family, health • Fatigue and/or sleeping more, noticeably reduced energy • Headaches, migraine • Suspiciousness, neuroses, self-doubt • Lack of empathy • Negativity and aggression
What you might see or hear	<p><i>'I need to know more....Why? When? Where? Who? What?'</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craving information and excessive detail, Spending longer on social media/obsession with news • Finding it hard to make decisions or concentrate • Repetition • Avoidance • Lowered levels of motivation • Snapping at people • Physical distraction habits e.g. biting of nails • Changes to diet/ eating habits • Smoking or drinking alcohol more than usual • Restlessness/ Changes to sleep patterns 	<p><i>'It is your nagging at me that is stressful. If people just let me do my job, I would be fine'</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on less important tasks and process • Distracted easily and seeking distraction • Frequent complaining about work or life • Beginning to receive complaints about work • Increased self isolation/ further retreating • Overeating or undereating • Smoking or drinking alcohol more than usual • Poor self-care • Denial, sarcasm, negativity 	<p><i>'I am just tired and people are depending on me- if I can just..I need to get back to the top of my game'</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive Presenteeism. Working odd hours/ into small hours. Poor performance. • Increase absence/other physiological symptoms- hypertension, migraine, musculoskeletal issue, exhaustion • Overeating and undereating, continued poor diet • Smoking or drinking alcohol more than usual • Inability to concentrate/ foggy • Loss of perspective • Loss of time, structure to day • Negative self-talk, bargaining with oneself

Understanding responses during a crisis

How we manage and lead during the different phases of response

Week 1 - 4

Build Transparency and Communicate Clearly

- Share trusted sources of information to create certainty where possible.
- Limit volume and opportunity for interpretation so we do not overload people
- Listen- *What might the questions indicate about where people are?*

Week 3-5

Share Personal Stories Anxiety and Fear

- Sharing your stories and personal experience to unlock
- Share stories that show perspective. The way the feeling developed, what happened and what you did.
- Where can you share control to give yourself and your people a voice & influence?

Week 5-16

Check In Prolonged Disruption

- Important to utilise existing mechanisms to support communication and engagement
- Go further to acknowledge and recognise- reach out personally to those that you know need support and those you don't hear from