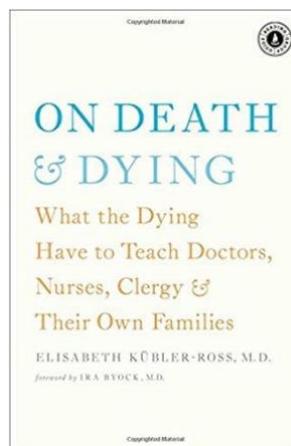


# The Change Curve - Transcript



Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a Swiss-American psychologist, was a pioneer in near-death studies. She published a ground-breaking book in 1969 called *On Death and Dying*.



In this book she began to generate a map of the sequence of emotions people went through when faced with death.

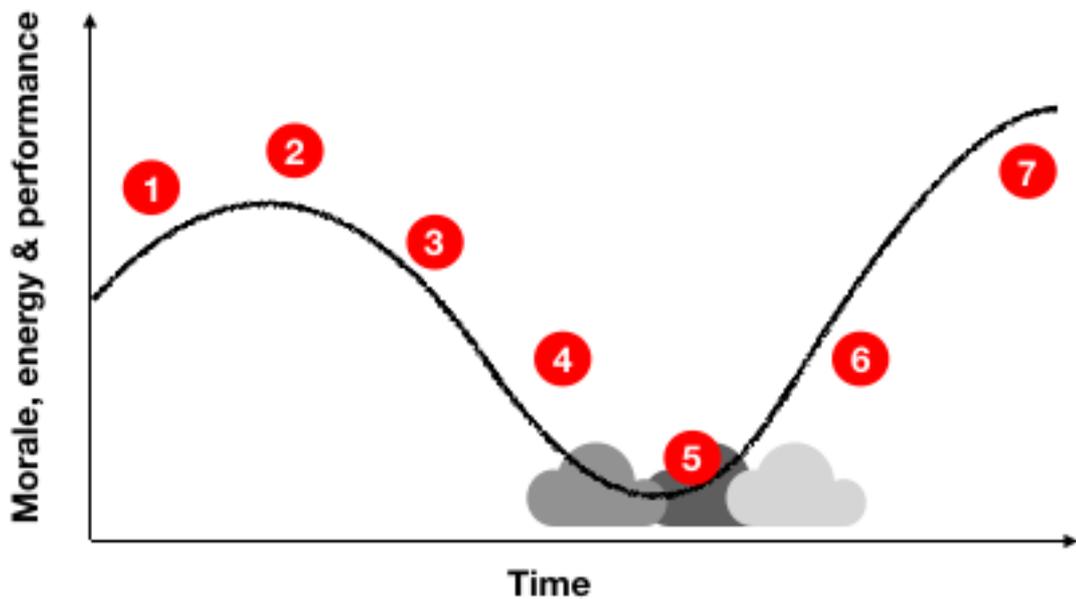
She interviewed patients and loved ones of patients who had been told that they were dying and she tracked their emotional states. She discovered a fairly consistent sequence of emotions. And where patients were told early enough, they were more likely to end the emotional roller-coaster much more positive than when they began.

Called sometimes called *the five stages of grief*, this was later elaborated upon by others. It is also referred to as the *change curve* or the *transition curve*.

Then it was found to be helpful when an individual was faced with other kinds of unwelcome, non-negotiable changes, not just death, such as, for example, being made redundant, or something relatively trivial such as a car breakdown.

Here is what the curve broadly looks like:

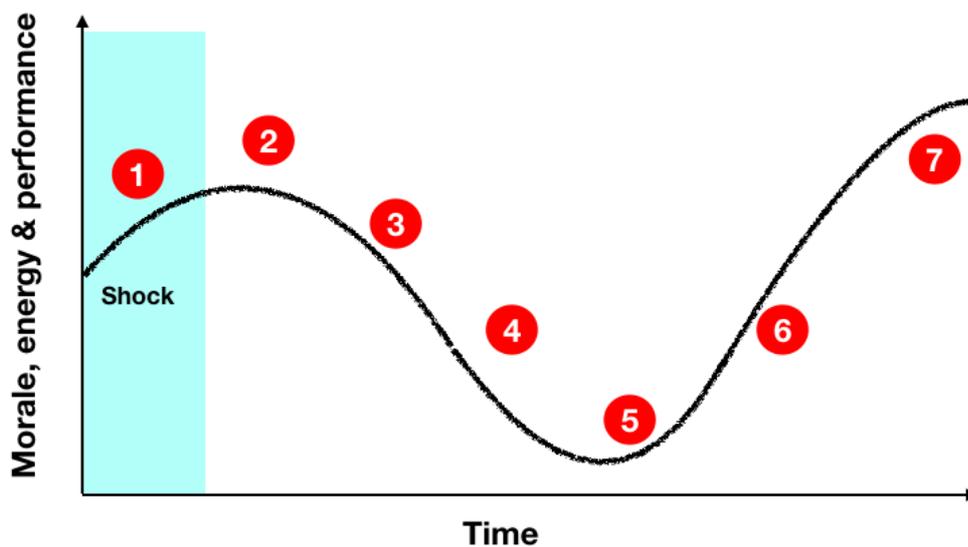
## The Change Curve



The vertical axis represents the individual's morale, energy that they bring to their situation, and their overall performance.

The first stage is

## The Change Curve

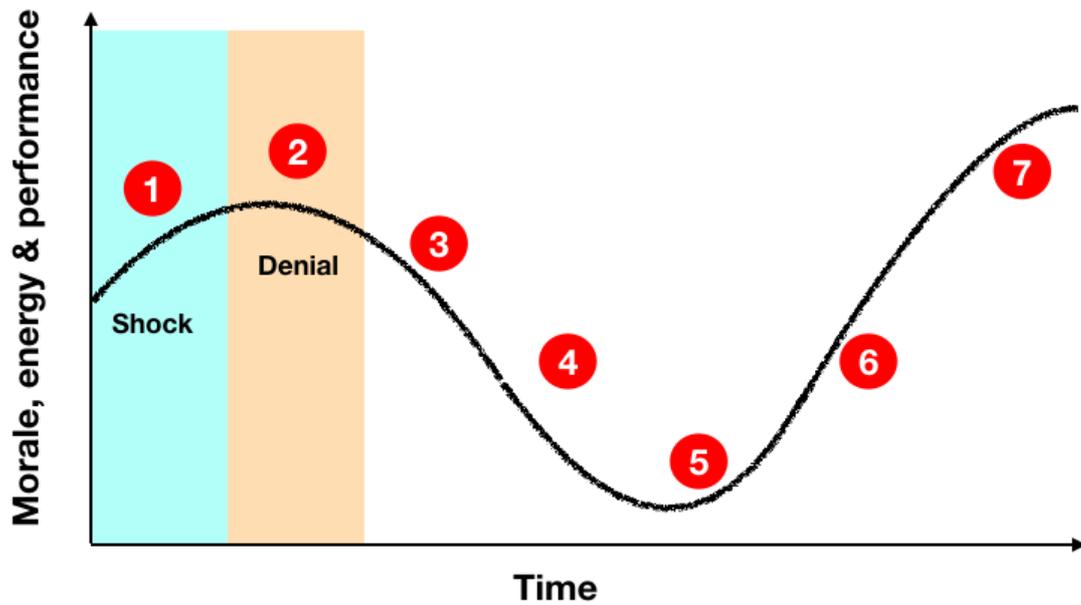


shock.

Shock allows little, if any, other information to be received by the individual. Shock makes it almost impossible for a patient, for example, to consider treatment options immediately after they are told that they are going to die.

The second stage is denial.

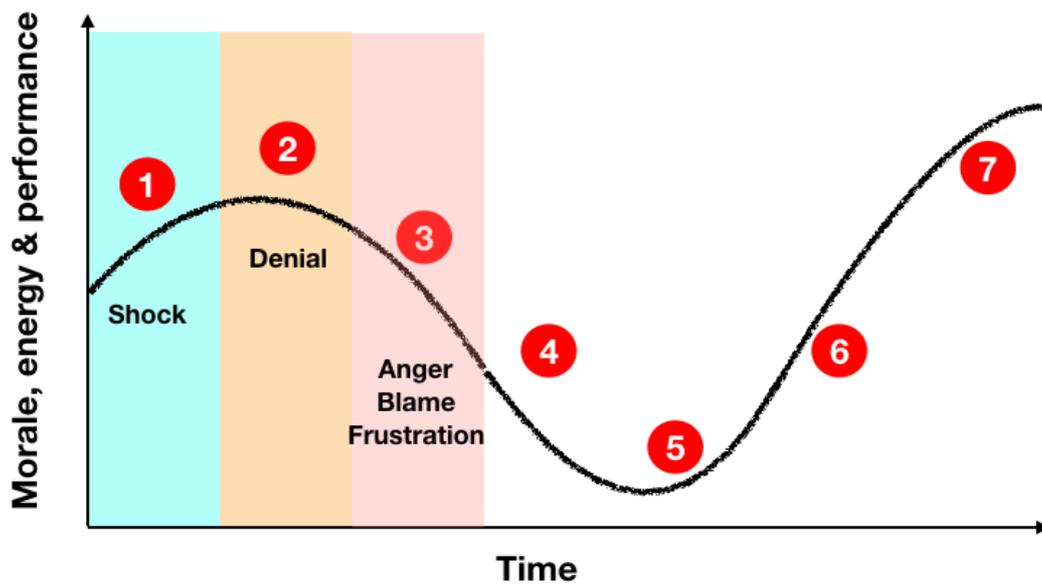
### The Change Curve



"There must be some mistake. They must have mixed my records up with another patient. I feel fine!"

Then comes anger, blame and frustration: "Why wasn't I diagnosed sooner? I could have done something about it!"

### The Change Curve

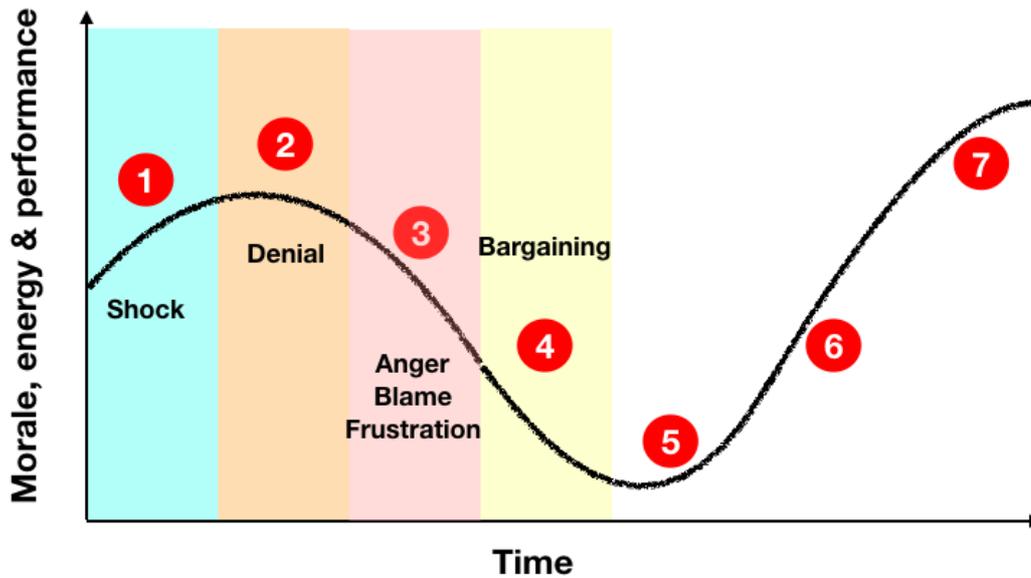


Disappointment of the the news sinking in seeks someone to blame - often

God.

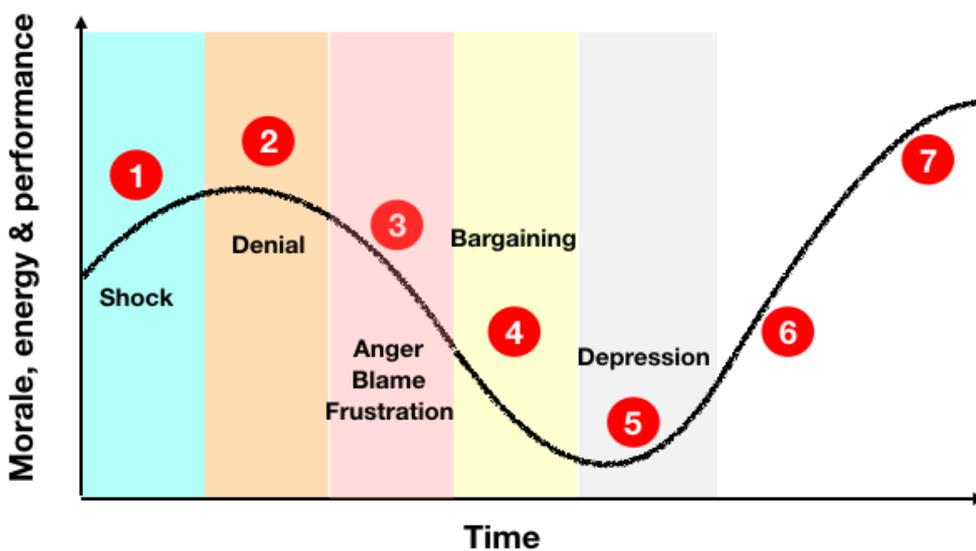
Next is bargaining: "What if I stop smoking/exercise more/change my diet/live a good life? Surely that *has* to make a difference??!"

### The Change Curve



Then, when the unavoidable nature of the news sinks in... Morale, energy, and overall performance are at their lowest ebb. There is the temptation to give up. "What's the point of anything!"

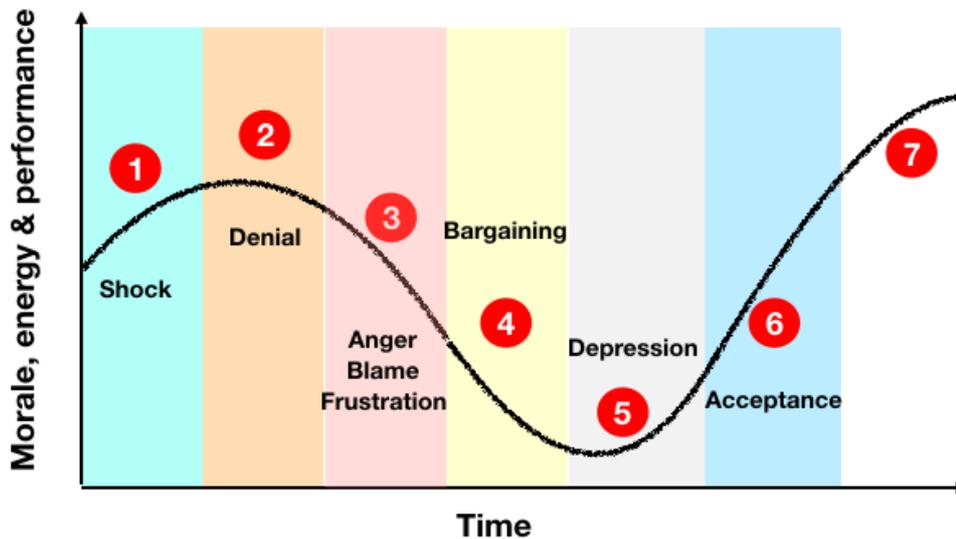
### The Change Curve



Acceptance, the next step, is where the individual begins to integrate the

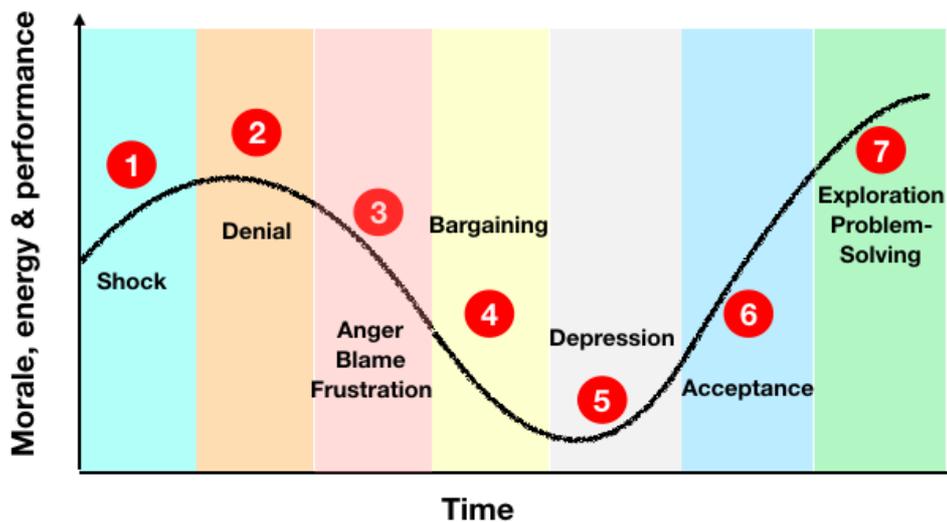
news into their current understanding of reality. "OK, this won't go away. I realise that."

### The Change Curve



Finally, there is an almost-transcendent state that some reach, which is Exploration or Problem-Solving. Here, someone takes value in who they are and the reality of what they have. "I am going to live not taking life for granted. I will live out of my best values until I finally die." There is almost a discovery of themselves and how to live, in the context of this non-negotiable news.

### The Change Curve



The strange thing is that we can observe this sequence of emotions in ourselves and others when faced with most unwelcome, non-negotiable change... even when we know about the Change Curve. It seems we are wired to go through this sequence, to a greater or lesser extent.