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***"If you feel like you are regressing, you're not alone."* Harvard Business Review**

We have been at this pandemic thing for a bit now – it may not feel new anymore, but it may not feel normal yet either. Some of you may be feeling like you've settled into a routine, others may continue to feel out of sorts and others still may not know how to articulate how they are feeling. You may find that you undulate between these feelings or that you are stuck in one. All these experiences are valid and all of them are ok.

The Harvard Business Review (HBR) recently published an article (it is short and an easy read) entitled ["If you feel like you are regressing, you're not alone."](#) It outlines the phases one may pass through during a crisis: Emergency, Regression and Recovery and provides insights on each. These elements are briefly outlined below.

Emergency: In this phase one feels energized and able to pull on untapped resources to get things done. When we are in the Emergency phase, we become the best versions of ourselves, we're highly productive, able to collaborate and we use adrenaline to our advantage.

Regression: In regression, our brains retreat to an emotional comfort zone. In this phase you may feel tired, you may lose motivation and/or notice that you fight about the small stuff. When one is in regression they may forget to eat or drink or they may eat or drink too much or one may be withdrawn and somewhat silent. This phase is sadly uncomfortable, unavoidable and, according to HBR, it *"hits you like a hammer."*

Recovery: Once out of the clutches of regression, recovery offers the opportunity rebuild and prepare for the future. This may involve a pivot in the way something is done or anticipating what is next, HBR refers to this as a reorientation to the situation.

How do I Apply This?

Understanding the patterns of crisis response helps us to understand ourselves and those around us. Sharing the article and then talking about it with others may help to open up communication channels that extend beyond the simple, "how are you doing?" Sharing the article could provide you with the context to have discussions about what individuals are experiencing and how support can be provided or a way for you to talk about how you feel and what you need.

To determine where you are at, the article suggests taking your temperature by rating yourself on a scale of 0-10. With a score of 9 or 10 you would be feeling high on energy, perhaps on red-alert while at 0 to 2 you would be feeling totally drained. A mid-range score of 6 to 8 would have you feeling ready to act and measured, but not super amped up. You can use this simple tool to check in on yourself and others around you including your family and team members. In discussions we have had with colleagues lately, it seems that some people are undulating between emergency and regression in response to the constantly changing environment and the challenges they face. Movement through this continuum is not necessarily linear. It can be helpful to just understand where you are at and why you may be feeling the way you are.

If you feel like you are regressing try speaking to someone about it like a good friend or your supervisor and think about ways you can reorient yourself to your environment. Remember that the regression phase will be uncomfortable, and it cannot be skipped. Acknowledge how you are feeling and allow yourself to be there, while being open to exploring the steps you can take to exit regression and move past it.

