



It's Not Just You: Why We All Feel So Bad Right Now — and How to Cope

August 3, 2020 Jeff Brooks

Have you had any really stupid fights with people in your life lately?

Do you feel like you “run out of gas” much too early in the day?

Have you been making bonehead mistakes that you would normally never make?

Welcome to the club. We're all doing these things.

And there's a reason. It's described in a recent Harvard Business Review article on the psychology of living through a crisis: [If You Feel Like You're Regressing, You're Not Alone](#) .

According to this helpful article, there's a predictable trajectory to living in a crisis. It goes like this:

1. Emergency
2. Regression
3. Recovery

Guess where we are at right now.

That's right, regression. The bad stage.

Here's how the article puts it:

"In the beginning, when the emergency becomes clear, team energy rises, and performance goes up.... Then the second phase hits: a regression phase, where people get tired, lose their sense of purpose, start fighting about the small stuff, and forget to do basic things"

Umm ... yes. Have they been spying on me?

You've heard of the seven stages of grief. Seven distinct stages, most of them truly unpleasant. But you can't skip them. There's no way around — only through.

Living in a crisis is like that. As much as you'd like to hang on to the energy and sense of purpose that marks the first phase, that's over now.

You are in the regression phase.

It's miserable. But it's where we are now.

Knowing *it's not just you* really helps. Knowing it's normal helps too.

But here's some additional things worth knowing about yourself right now, from an article in Healthline: [How 'Anticipatory Grief' May Show Up During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) .

Anticipatory Grief is a sense of loss of normal life, not only now but in the future. Everything is weird right now, and we sense that things might never get really normal ever again.

So we grieve.

It takes shape in things like these:

- You're on edge — and it's not always clear exactly why.
- You feel angry at things you can't control.
- You're resigned to the worst-case scenario.
- You find yourself withdrawing or avoiding others.
- You're completely exhausted.

Here are some things you can do to cope with all this:

Validate and affirm your feelings. You aren't messed up for feeling this way. We all feel this way. It's not something to be ashamed of or to hide.

Get back to basics. Seriously, it's more important than ever that you eat well, stay hydrated, get the rest you need — all that normal stuff. Don't let that stuff slide!

Connect with others, even if you don't want to. It's tempting to shut down when you're stressed. (Especially if you're an introvert.) Don't! Seek connection. You need it more than ever right now. Remember that friendship is joy multiplied and sorrow divided.

Prioritize rest and relaxation. Anxiety makes you wear yourself down. You have to consciously seek calm. Be dogmatic about getting the rest you need.

Express yourself. Do creative things. Journaling, dancing, music, art — it really helps.

Talk to a professional. It's okay to get help. It's not a sign of weakness — it's a sign of wisdom. Online therapy is a real thing that you can use now!

Remember, you're not alone.

Remember also that this time will pass. It will not always be this way.

And when it passes, you will be stronger than ever before.

Get all kinds of support by joining The Fundraisingology Lab by Moceanic. It's a gathering of the kind of smart and loving fundraisers you really want to hang out with — along with all kinds of courses, templates, checklists, and other resources that can help you go to new places as a fundraiser. [More information here.](#)