

## COVID-19: 3 Stages of Pandemic Response

Gabrielle Treanor, a certified Life and Positive Psychology Coach explains that there are three stages of thoughts, feelings and actions that people are moving in and out of as they experience this unusual time during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her theory is outlined using the below diagram and detailed description in this article -



### 3 Stages of Pandemic Response

## 3 Stages of Pandemic Response Explained:

### The First Stage – Survival:

You feel overwhelmed by the changes, the uncertainty, the news, yours and others' feelings. You're trying to make it through each day, you're angry with other people's behaviour, you're frequently checking the news and scrolling social media. You find it hard to think about anything else, you feel powerless, you're lethargic, unproductive and it's affecting your sleep. Many of the symptoms of grief are tied up in this Survival stage.

### The Second Stage – Acceptance:

You don't like what's happening but you're not railing against the situation so much, you've realised it helps to check in with the news and social media less often and you're creating a new routine in this current normal. You're feeling a bit more able to let go of what's not in your control, you're noticing the little things that make you smile and you're getting the hang of chatting with your loved ones on a screen. You're counting the days since life radically changed and longing for life to get back to normal but you're making do for the moment.

### The Third Stage – Growth:

Here you're starting to look ahead to what you want life to be like after this is over. You're getting a sense of what you don't want to go back to, what parts of 'normal' life weren't actually working for you and that there's an opportunity here to make changes. You're savouring the present more rather than worrying about the past or future, you're feeling a burgeoning hope and you feel more connected to the people who really matter to you. While you are fully aware of the severity of the situation and appreciate how difficult life is for so many, your eyes are opening to what you may have taken for granted in the past and how you want to live going forwards.

## Can you recognise which stage you're in today?

You're going to move around the stages, in and out of them, back and forth, depending on many factors. This is an evolving process, you're adapting and changing just as the situation is. And none of it is wrong. How you're feeling is not wrong.

Spending time in one stage more than another isn't a reflection on who you are or your ability to deal with what's happening. It's simply an aid to help you to understand what's going on in your head and heart. And, with that knowledge, look at what will help you.

In Survival it could look like giving yourself a break and allowing yourself to just get through the day.

In Acceptance it could mean looking for others to talk with, share what you're thinking and feeling, find new ways of dealing with the challenges and be inspired to look for and explore the potential and possibilities that lie within this time.

And if you're spending (or wanting to spend) more time in the Growth stage it could mean looking at what will help you with the changes that you're feeling called to make. What support will empower you to go through and emerge from this time more confident that you can and will live your life in a way that feels true to yourself? Again, what support feels right for you is up to you.

Just as in 'ordinary' life where we each respond, act and feel differently, where we each have different needs, the same applies in these extraordinary circumstances.

For more information on Gabrielle's Theory of the '3 stages to Pandemic response' please visit:

[www.gabrielletreanor.com](http://www.gabrielletreanor.com)

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