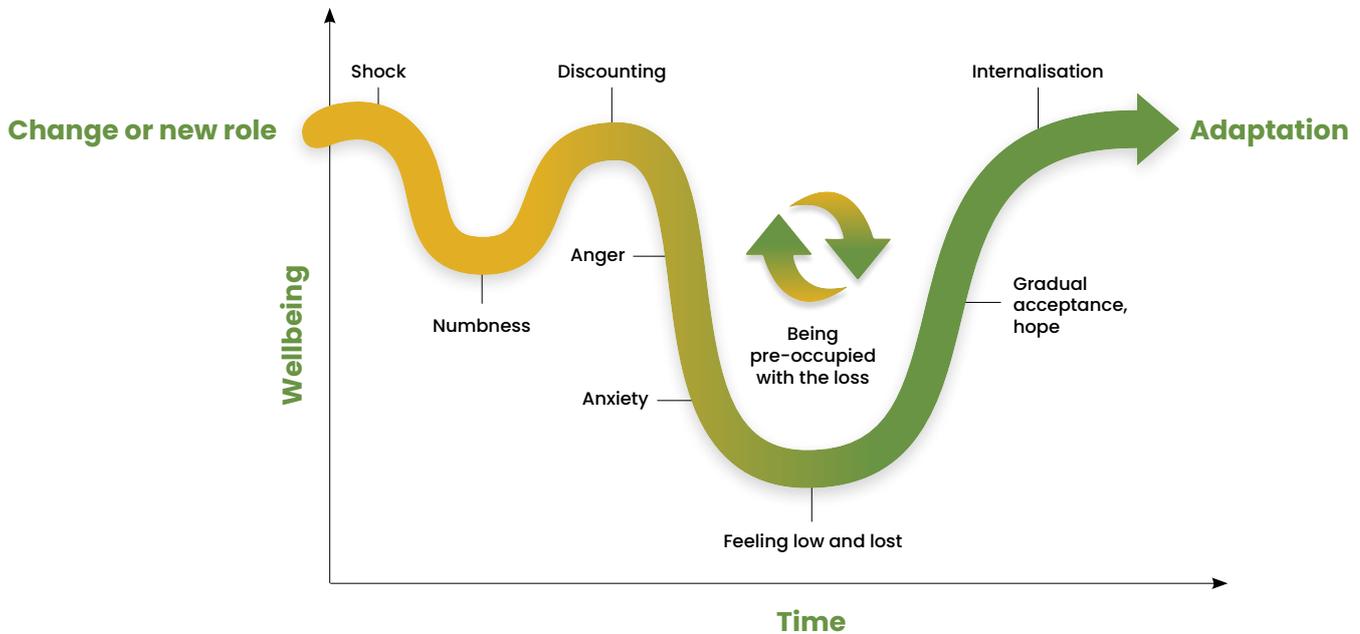


Adapting to change and new roles

People who are faced with sudden changes to their lives go through a series of powerful emotional reactions, as they accept and adjust to the reality of those changes and begin the process of adapting to them.



The diagram above shows that adjustment process as it will occur for most people - whether they are adjusting to the loss of a loved one, the diagnosis of a serious illness, the consequences of a fire, drastic changes to commodity prices, or facing an unexpectedly large bill from a supplier, for example. The amount of time it takes to progress through the stages varies a lot from person to person.

When a major change occurs, what often happens is, despite well-meaning attempts by people to support them, the person affected feels quite different and isolated and genuinely believes that no one else can understand what they are going through.

- At this time a person's need for connection is heightened, but their ability to feel connected is greatly reduced
- Sometimes people feel pressure to 'act positive' to protect other people around them, despite not feeling positive at all
- Other people (e.g. friends, family, other workers on the farm) may also be reluctant to share how they feel, to protect the people around them, or because they might think that their needs are not so important
- There is a lot of evidence that talking really does help! If you don't feel ready to speak to your family or friends, consider talking to your GP
- Reluctance to talk about feelings actually makes it more difficult to move through the adjustment process towards some kind of acceptance of the change that has occurred in your life

Learning techniques in the ifarmwell modules will also help.