



Working from Home Fatigue: Why You're So Tired and How to Feel Better

October 1, 2021 / in Blog, Recruitment

The **pandemic** has shifted the way we work. Once COVID-19 hit, people were suddenly forced to move their work remotely, and many offices are still closed or have continued to encourage at-home work.

While there are advantages to working from your own place (like wearing sweatpants all day and feeling less need to look in the mirror), the downsides can lead to burnout. Working from home fatigue is a real thing, and we'll explain why before getting into ways you can bring yourself some relief.

Why Working from Home Leads to Fatigue

Work-from-home fatigue can leave you feeling tired before you even start your day. Maybe you're feeling extra irritable lately, kind of lost, and everything you do feels hard or heavy. You have more tension in your neck and shoulders or new persisting headaches. And you can't figure out why your focus is fragile and, despite the time you save working at home, you're feeling less productive than ever.

These are all symptoms of working from home fatigue. The good news is that recognizing them is an essential first step — then, you can work on making helpful changes.

Many factors contribute to burnout and fatigue, such as:

- **Distraction.** Before, home and work were separate entities, but now everything is right there. Home chores, pets, children, spouses, and more are competing for your attention along with work.
- **Overwhelm.** The juggling act of home versus work demands a lot more emotional energy from you than before, and it's much more challenging to turn off your "work brain" at the end of the day.
- **Loneliness.** Perhaps, when you break things down, you notice you're lonely for the face-to-face connection you had in an office. Even if others live with you at home, it's nice to see different faces at work. Video calls just don't provide the same experience, and they're actually **more exhausting**.

4 Ways to Relieve Work from Home Burnout and Fatigue

Here are some tips on caring for yourself during this new normal.

1. Maintain Your In-Office Work Routine

When you work from home, it's easy to throw routines out the window — unless you make an active effort to maintain them.

If you commuted before, spend that same time listening to music or a podcast while drinking your coffee. You might also set a specific time you'll be at your computer and a set time you'll log-off, just as you would before heading home.

Routines help keep your brain on a schedule so that it's easier to keep a good workflow but not be on 24/7.

2. Do One Task at a Time

Did you know that multitasking is **not really a thing**? Doing 162 tasks at once might feel productive, but it's really just zapping your mental focus (and energy) without accomplishing much.

Help yourself avoid fatigue by trying to be fully present with one task at a time instead of switching back and forth all day.

3. Find Ways to Be More Active

You're likely moving less when working at home, and that can contribute to fatigue. Keep your same workout routine, and look for ways to add extra movement into your day with walking, yoga, stretching, etc. Give yourself a break between tasks or meetings by walking away from your desk for a few and shaking out your body.

4. Re-think Your Meeting Processes

Businesses should evaluate their meeting schedules and see if they're still necessary when everyone is working from home. Many meetings can become an email (or at least become shorter), which can reduce fatigue.

Also, remember to take breaks after meeting times. Take some deep breaths and give yourself a lunch or snack break.

Working-from-home fatigue is prevalent today, but there are solutions. Start by being kind to yourself and looking for gradual ways to re-energize yourself.

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