

How To Maintain Your Mental Health While Working From Home

Source: [Forbes](#)



Whether you've been based in your home office long before COVID-19 restrictions came upon us or you're brand new to working out of your house, it's no secret that there are particular mental health challenges that can arise while doing so.

First of all, you're at home all day. If you don't live with anyone else, this can mean you're isolated, and perhaps with little additional stimuli to keep you motivated.

On the other hand, if you do live with a partner or family, it can be even more challenging to set firm boundaries, focus with children in the house, a list of chores to accomplish, and the feeling that you might just want to hang out on the couch for a few more hours.

Whether this is a temporary or permanent shift is yet to be seen (though remote work is undoubtedly going to become even more popular as the years go on) it's important to learn how to stay mentally healthy while getting your job done. Here, Dr. Nicole LePera, a psychologist based in California, shared with me a few ideas for how to do just that.

Break up your workday

Dr. LePera says that one of the biggest challenges she faces while working from her own home office is the monotony of the day.

"Some common challenges when working from home during COVID is the lack of stimulation and connection to people you used to see regularly," she says, noting that we are likewise working in places that are also regarded as areas to relax. This can become a bit confusing, so it's great to try to break up the schedule.

“One of the best tips for working from home that I’ve discovered is breaking up the work day with movement. This can be a quick burst of movement (like jumping jacks, or lifting kettle bells) or some lower impact movement like a walk,” she says.

Stay connected

Likewise, Dr. LePera notes that the isolation factor may be difficult for people who are working alone.

Remember to keep up with friends and family, even if that can only be done through a Zoom or FaceTime call. Text someone you care about, and when restrictions are lifted in your area, try to make plans as regularly as you feel comfortable.

Connection is key, and it can be challenging when you don’t leave your home for long stretches of time.

Get a routine and stick to it

Routine is essential, and it’s even more important when structure is missing.

Sticking to a routine does not mean that you have to abide by the old standard 9-5 office hours, and only take downtime in the evening.

It simply means that you have a system for waking up on time, getting ready, feeling confident and getting your work done in a timely manner.

When you do this regularly enough, it will feel more natural over time, and you won’t have to think about it so much.

This doesn’t mean that you can’t take gaps of time to do things that are decidedly non-work related, it just means that you’re ensuring your most important tasks of the day are always getting done — and you’re keeping up with yourself in the process.

Incorporate wellness activities into your day

One of the biggest perks of working from home is that you get to do things you might not be able to if you’re in an office all day.

“I’ve been doing 20 minute walks around my neighborhood while listening to music,” Dr. LePera says. “This moves the energy in the body and allow us to to have a shift in consciousness.”

She continues: “Another way to experience new energy in the body is to pause from work, find a comfortable place to sit, and then do deep belly breaths. This involves taking one deep breath in, and then focus on the exhale. You’ll notice your shoulders will relax, and your body will feel lighter.”

No matter what you do, remember that working from home is yet another “new normal” to get used to — and the sooner you adapt to what makes you most productive, healthy, and mentally well, the better.