5 ways to cope with WFH fatigue

By Vivian Chuene

23 Jul 2021

It's undeniable that the pandemic has taken so much from us over the past year, it has also in turn required a lot from us - mentally, physically and emotionally.

Ljupco Smokovski – 123RF.com

What we don't speak enough about though, is just how much of an effect working from home has had on most of us. Work as we know it has changed fundamentally and caused a drastic shift in our daily operations and of course routines – especially for creatives.

I speak for myself when I say, *I am exhausted!* I had to escape to a coffee shop to even gather the creative energy to write this piece, but one thing is clear, having had the different conversations with my peers, that I am not the only one experiencing this fatigue.

We're not working at home because it's a choice, we're forced to actually be at home and work but let's be honest, as convenient as it is to be working from home, it is also really boring. Personally, I have the kind of personality that requires me to have human interactions at least once a day. I prefer actually being around people and having energetic exchanges with them but working from home has made it really hard.

At home, you shower, jump onto a Zoom/Teams meeting one after the other and the next day, repeat the same thing. You hardly even know what it feels like to sit in the boardroom with your team and bounce ideas off each other, by the time you're done with your online meetings (which take up most of your working day), you have absolutely no energy to engage your team.

The lack of choice is frustrating to say the least. I realised when I started to experience a creative block that it was because I had been in the same place for too long – and so I had to find ways that would allow me to manage the fatigue, and these are just some of the things I do to escape this mess:

1. **Go out for some air and sun**

   Breathe! I take time out of my busy day even if it's 30 min to go soak up some sun and fresh air. Even if it's for a short period, your mental health needs it and so does your overall well-being. So, give yourself that time out of your day to soak up some vitamin D but also to breathe and let go of the frustration of being stuck in the same place.

2. **Mental vacations**

   These are my favourites, luckily I have a highly imaginative mind so this is an easy one for me. I put on really good music, wear my headphones and visualize a beautiful place / beach in my head and literally travel there in my head. It keeps me sane!

3. **Take mental health days**

   I feel like this should come as a standard in the workplace - we all deserve a mental health day. I know I'd be pushing it if I said weekly but definitely, at the very least twice a month, we need a day where we do absolutely nothing but take care of our mental health. The workplace can get overwhelming and so much more when you're working from home. When you're not in the right place mentally, it's hard to be present for the work you're expected to do so I 100% would recommend a mental health day.

4. **Take a walk**

   There's something really calming about taking a walk, not only is it a stress reliever but it also allows you space to think. Morning walks, lunch break or evening walks – take them just to clear your head.

5. **Lastly, find an escape**

   My perfect escape on days where absolutely feel stuck and don't want to be at home, is a coffee shop. I love coffee so I find quaint little coffee shops that will allow for me to still have my meetings in peace without having to take a knock at my finances.

   It helps my creative flow of energy. I hope it does the same for some people.