

1

WHAT IS STRESS?

- **STRESS** IS THE BODY'S AUTOMATIC RESPONSE TO ANY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DEMAND PLACED ON IT.
- ANYTHING CAN BE STRESSFUL.
- EXACERBATED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND QUARANTINE
- TOO MUCH STRESS CAN LEAD TO BURNOUT

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

2

BURN OUT

A SYNDROME RESULTING FROM CHRONIC STRESS THAT HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFULLY MANAGED

- 3 DIMENSIONS OF ACADEMIC BURNOUT SYNDROME
 - EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION
 - DEPERSONALIZATION
 - DECREASED PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT
- ZOOM FATIGUE
 - 20X20X20
 - 20 MIN SCREEN TIME X 20 MIN OFF SCREEN TIME X LOOK 20 FT AWAY FOR 20 SECONDS

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

3

MANAGING STRESS AND BURN OUT

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

JOURNALING AND ORGANIZATION

MINDFULNESS (GROUNDING EXERCISES)

BREATHING EXERCISES

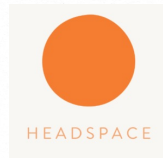
BOUNDARY SETTING

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

4

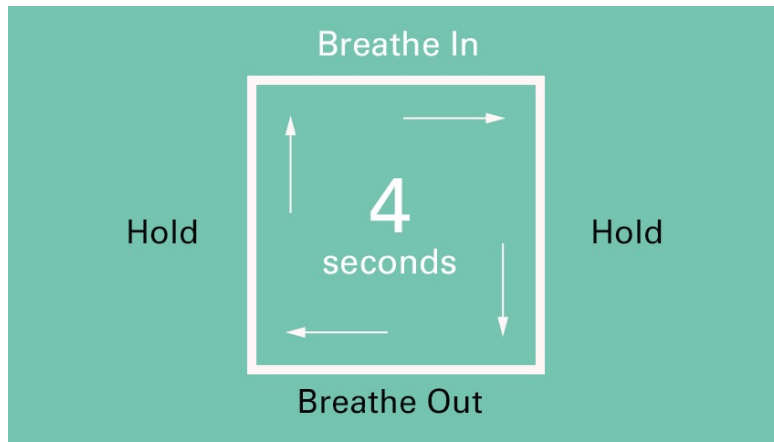
MINDFULNESS

- DESCRIBE YOUR SURROUNDINGS USING YOUR FIVE SENSES (5-4-3-2-1)
- FULLY ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITY IN FRONT OF YOU (E.G., EATING, SHOWERING, ACTIVE LISTENING ON ZOOM WITH NO OTHER WINDOWS OPEN)
- OBSERVE AND NOTICE THE THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, SENSATIONS OR URGES THAT COME UP FOR YOU WITHOUT ENGAGING WITH THEM (GIVING INTO THEM)



THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021), ADAPTED FROM T. GERBER (2021).

5



BOX BREATHING

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021), ADAPTED FROM T. GERBER (2021).

6

DEAR MAN: Steps That Help You **Strike Efficient Communication**

The Steps of DEAR MAN Technique

D **'D' stands for describe**
Make use of facts, Dont Elaborate on unnecessary things, Emphasise on issues.

E **'E' stands for express**
Explain how things are affecting you personally and professionally.

A **'A' stands for assert**
Assert factors that you wish to see in the near future.


R **'R' stands for reinforce**
Instead of insulting other individual, Reward them! it will create a happy bond.

M **'M' stands for Mindful**
Don't get sidelined by your past experiences. Don't put forth your past grievances in any way.

A **'A' stands for appear/act confident**
Embrace confidence in every possible way.

N **'N' stands for negotiating**
Not every person might agree with your plea. So, does it mean you leave the conversation? Instead Stay and hear the Other person out

PRACTICING ASSERTIVENESS AND BOUNDARY SETTING CAN HELP WITH MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND MAKING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOURSELF.


www.themindfool.com

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021). ADAPTED FROM T. A (2021)

7

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- FOSSLIE, L. & WEST DUFFY, M. (2020, APRIL 29). HOW TO COMBAT ZOOM FATIGUE. *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*. [HTTPS://HBR.ORG/2020/04/HOW-TO-COMBAT-ZOOM-FATIGUE](https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue)
- LAMM, J. (2021, FEBRUARY 1). DEAR MAN: LEARN EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION. *THE MINDFOOL*. [HTTPS://THEMINDFOOL.COM/DEAR-MAN-STEPS-THAT-HELP-YOU-STRIKE-EFFICIENT-COMMUNICATION/](https://themindfool.com/dear-man-steps-that-help-you-strike-efficient-communication/)
- SAKHPARA, A. (2019, OCTOBER 4). *BOX BREATHING TECHNIQUE*. MAIMONIDES EMERGENCY MEDICINE. [HTTPS://WWW.MAIMONIDSEEM.ORG/BLOG/BOX-BREATHING-TECHNIQUE-NBSPNBSP](https://www.maimonideseem.org/blog/box-breathing-technique-nbspnbsp)

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

8

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- SANDER, E. L. & BAUMANN, O. (2020, MAY 5). 5 REASONS WHY ZOOM MEETINGS ARE SO EXHAUSTING. *THE CONVERSATION*. [HTTPS://THECONVERSATION.COM/5-REASONS-WHY-ZOOM-MEETINGS-ARE-SO-EXHAUSTING-137404](https://theconversation.com/5-reasons-why-zoom-meetings-are-so-exhausting-137404)
- SHANKLAND, KOTSOU, I., VALLET, F., BOUTEYRE, E., DANTZER, C., & LEYS, C. (2018). BURNOUT IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SENSE OF COHERENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DAILY HASSLES AND BURNOUT. *HIGHER EDUCATION*, 78(1), 91–113. [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.1007/S10734-018-0332-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0332-4)
- THE MIND FOOL. (N.D.). *STRESS MANAGEMENT*. [HTTPS://THEMINDFOOL.COM/CATEGORY/SELF-IMPROVEMENT/STRESS-MANAGEMENT/](https://themindfool.com/category/self-improvement/stress-management/)

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

9

RESOURCES

- THERAPEUTIC JOURNALING PROMPTS ([HTTPS://WWW.JOURNALBUDDIES.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2020/04/ANXIETY-PROMPTS-PRINTABLE-PDF.PDF](https://www.journalbuddies.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/anxiety-prompts-printable-pdf.pdf))
- PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION GUIDED VOICE PROMPTING - AUDIO ([HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/IHO02WUZGKC](https://youtu.be/IHO02WUZGKC))
- BOX BREATHING VIDEO WITH GUIDED VOICE PROMPTING – AUDIO ([HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/AUSPSSJU-D8](https://youtu.be/AUSPSSJU-D8))
- BOX BREATHING VIDEO WITH ANIMATION AND SOUND PROMPTING, NO VOICE – AUDIO ([HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/AFVQKNK1PF4](https://youtu.be/AFVQKNK1PF4))
- BOX BREATHING VIDEO WITH ANIMATION – NO AUDIO ([HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/QM7BMUJKIVO](https://youtu.be/QM7BMUJKIVO))

THIS MATERIAL IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF DR. KIMBERLY "KIM" LEE (2021)

10



Taking Hold of Your Mind: “What” Skills

OBSERVE

- Notice your body sensations** (coming through your eyes, ears, nose, skin, and tongue).
- Pay attention** on purpose, to the present moment.
- Control your attention**, but not what you see. Push away nothing. Cling to nothing.
- Practice wordless watching:** Watch thoughts come into your mind and let them slip right by like clouds in the sky. Notice each feeling, rising and falling, like waves in the ocean.
- Observe both inside and outside yourself.**

DESCRIBE

- Put words on the experience.** When a feeling or thought arises, or you do something, acknowledge it. For example, say in your mind, “Sadness has just enveloped me,” or “Stomach muscles tightening,” or “A thought ‘I can’t do this’ has come into my mind.”
- Label what you observe.** Put a name on your feelings. Label a thought as just a thought, a feeling as just a feeling, an action as just an action.
- Unglue your interpretations and opinions** from the facts. Describe the “who, what, when, and where” that you observe. Just the facts.
- Remember, **If you can’t observe it through your senses, you can’t describe it.**

PARTICIPATE

- Throw yourself completely into activities of the current moment.** Do not separate yourself from what is going on in the moment (dancing, cleaning, talking to a friend, feeling happy or feeling sad).
- Become one with whatever you are doing**, completely forgetting yourself. Throw your attention to the moment.
- Act intuitively from Wise Mind.** Do just what is needed in each situation—a skillful dancer on the dance floor, one with the music and your partner, neither willful nor sitting on your hands.
- Go with the flow.** Respond with spontaneity.

Ideas for Practicing Observing

BY COMING BACK TO YOUR SENSES

Remember: Observing is bringing your mind back to the sensations of your body and mind.

Observe with your eyes:

1. Lie on the ground and watch the clouds in the sky.
2. Walking slowly, stopping somewhere with a view, notice flowers, trees, and nature itself.
3. Sit outside. Watch who and what go by in front of you, without following them with your head or your eyes.
4. Notice the facial expression and movements of another person. Refrain from labeling the person's emotions, thoughts, or interests.
5. Notice just the eyes, lips, or hands of another person (or just one feature of an animal).
6. Pick up a leaf, a flower, or a pebble. Look at it closely, trying to see each detail.
7. Find something beautiful to look at, and spend a few minutes contemplating it.
8. Other: _____

Observe sounds:

9. Stop for a moment and just listen. Listen to the texture and shape of the sounds around you. Listen to the silences between the sounds.
10. If someone is talking, listen to the pitch of the voice, to the smoothness or roughness of the sounds, to the clarity or the mumbling of the speech, to the pauses between the words.
11. Listen to music, observing each note as it comes and the spaces between the notes. Try breathing the sounds into your body and letting them flow out again on your out breath.
12. Other: _____

Observe smells around you:

13. Breathing in, notice any smells around you. Bring something close to your nose, and notice the smells. Take it away, and then notice the smells again. Do they linger?
14. When eating, notice the aroma of the food; when cooking, notice the aroma of the spices or other ingredients; when bathing, smell the soap or shampoo; when walking outside, notice the aroma of the air; when near flowers, bend down and “smell the roses.”
15. Other: _____

Observe taste and the act of eating:

16. Putting something in your mouth, pay attention to the taste. Keep it in your mouth, and notice all the taste sensations.
17. Lick a lollipop or something else. Notice just the sensation of taste.
18. Eat a meal, or even a part of a meal, paying attention to the taste of each mouthful.
19. Other: _____

Observe urges to do something:

When you are feeling an urge to do something impulsive,

20. “Urge-surf” by imagining that your urges are a surfboard and you are standing on the board, riding the waves.
21. Notice any urge to avoid someone or something.
22. Scan your entire body, and notice the sensations. Where in the body is the urge?
23. When you are chewing your food, notice when you have the urge to swallow.
24. Other: _____

(continued on next page)

MINDFULNESS HANDOUT 4A (p. 2 of 4)

Observe sensations of touch on your skin:

25. Stroke your upper lip with your fingernail.
 - Stop stroking, and notice how long it takes before you can't sense your upper lip at all.
26. When walking, notice the sensations of walking—your feet hitting the ground and rising up and down. Sometimes walk very slowly and notice. Sometimes walk very fast and notice.
27. When sitting, notice your thighs on the chair. Notice the curve of your knees and your back.
28. Pay attention to anything touching you.
 - Try to feel your feet in your shoes, your body touching your clothes.
 - Feel your arms touching a chair.
 - Notice the sensations of your hands.
29. Touch something—the wall, a fabric, a table top, a pet, a piece of fruit, a person.
 - Notice the texture of what you feel, notice the sensations on your skin.
 - Try it again with another part of your body.
 - Notice the sensations again.
30. Focus your attention on the sensations in your chest, your stomach, or your shoulders.
31. Focus your attention on the place in your body where you feel tight or tense.
32. Focus your attention on the space between your eyes.
33. Other: _____

Observe your breath: *Breathe evenly and gently, focusing your attention on:*

34. The movement of your stomach.
 - As you begin to breathe in, allow your belly to rise in order to bring air into the lower half of your lungs.
 - As the upper halves of your lungs begin to fill with air, your chest begins to rise.
 - As you breathe out, notice your belly, then notice your chest. Don't tire yourself.
35. The pauses in your breathing.
 - As you breathe in, notice the brief pause when your lungs have filled with air.
 - As you breathe out, notice the brief pause when you have expelled all the air.
36. The sensations in your nose as you breathe in and as you breathe out.
 - As you breathe, close your mouth and breathe in through your nose, noticing the sensations traveling up and down your nostrils.
37. Your breath while walking slowly. Breathe normally.
 - Determine the length of your breath—the exhalation and the inhalation—by the number of your footsteps. Continue for a few minutes.
 - Begin to lengthen your exhalation by one step. Do not force a longer inhalation. Let it be natural.
 - Watch your inhalation carefully to see whether there is a desire to lengthen it. Now lengthen the exhalation by one more footstep.
 - Watch to see whether the inhalation also lengthens by one step or not.
 - Only lengthen the inhalation when you feel that it will be comfortable.
 - After 20 breaths, return your breath to normal.
38. Your breath while listening to a piece of music.
 - Breathe long, light, and even breaths.
 - Follow your breath; be master of it, while remaining aware of the movement and sentiments of the music.
 - Do not get lost in the music, but continue to be master of your breath and yourself.
39. Your breath while listening to a friend's words and your own replies. Continue as with music.
40. Other: _____

(continued on next page)

MINDFULNESS HANDOUT 4A (p. 3 of 4)

Observe thoughts coming in and out of your mind:

41. Notice thoughts as they come into your mind.
 - Ask, "Where do thoughts come from?"
 - Then watch them to see if you can see where they come into your mind.
42. As you notice thoughts in your mind, notice the pauses between each thought.
43. Imagine that your mind is the sky and that thoughts are clouds.
 - Notice each thought-cloud as it drifts by, letting it drift in and out of your mind.
 - Imagine thoughts as leaves on water flowing down a stream, as boats drifting by on the lake, or as train cars rolling by you.
44. When worries go round and round in your mind, move your attention to the sensations in your body (those most intense right now). Then, keeping your attention on your body sensations, notice how long it takes for the worries to ooze away.
45. Step back from your mind, as if you are on top of a mountain and your mind is just a boulder down below.
 - Gaze at your mind, watching what thoughts come up when you are watching it.
 - Come back into your mind before you stop.
46. Watch for the first two thoughts that come into your mind.
47. Other: _____

Imagine that your mind is a:

48. Conveyor belt, and that thoughts and feelings are coming down the belt.
 - Put each thought or feeling in a box, and then put it on the conveyor belt and let it go by.
49. Conveyor belt, and that you are sorting thoughts and feelings as they come down the belt.
 - Label the types of thoughts or feelings coming by (e.g., worry thoughts, thoughts about my past, thoughts about my mother, planning-what-to-do thoughts, angry feeling, sad feelings).
 - Put them in boxes nearby for another time.
50. River, and that thoughts and feelings are boats going down the river.
 - Imagine sitting on the grass, watching the boats go by.
 - Describe or label each boat as it goes by.
 - Try not to jump on the boat.
51. Railroad track, and that thoughts and feelings are train cars going by.
 - Describe or label each as it goes by. Try not to jump on the train.
52. Other: _____

Observe by expanding awareness:

53. Breathing in, notice your breath. Then, keeping your breath in your awareness, on the next breath notice your hands. Then, keeping both in your awareness, on the next breath expand your awareness to sounds.
 - Continue holding all three in awareness at the same time.
 - Practice this awareness of threes at other times, selecting other things to be aware of.
54. Keeping your focus on what you are currently doing, gently expand your awareness to include the space around you.
55. Go hug a tree, and feel the sensations of the embrace.
 - Attend to the embrace of the sheets and blankets or comforters around you as you lie in bed.
 - Do this when you feel lonely and want to be loved or to love.
56. Other: _____

(continued on next page)

MINDFULNESS HANDOUT 4A (p. 4 of 4)

Open your mind to your senses:

57. Practice walking with your senses as wide open as you can make them.
- Notice what you hear, see, and feel.
 - Notice what you feel when shifting your weight between each step.
 - Notice your body experience as you turn.
58. For one mouthful in a meal, pause with a spoonful or forkful of food.
- Look at what you are going to eat, smell it, and listen to it. Then, when you are ready, put it in your mouth.
 - Note the taste, texture, temperature, and even the sound your teeth make in chewing your mouthful slowly.
 - Note the changes in its taste, texture, temperature, and sound as you chew it to completion.
59. Focus your mind on paying attention to each sensation that comes into your mind.
- Attend to sensations of sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste, or to the thoughts generated by your brain.
 - Notice sensations as they arise, and notice them as they fall away.
 - Let your mind focus on each sensation as it arises.
 - Notice each sensation with curiosity, allowing it to be. Examine the uniqueness of each sensation.
60. Be here. Be in the present now.
- Take a moment to notice every sense you are aware of.
 - To yourself, make a statement, about each sense: “I feel the chair; the chair feels me.” “I hear the heater; the heater hears me.” “I see the wall; the wall sees me.” “I hear a stomach growl; it hears me.”
61. When a feeling arises within you, notice it—saying, for example, “A feeling of sadness is arising within me.”
62. When a thought arises within you, notice it—saying, for example, “The thought ‘It is hot in here’ is arising within me.”
63. Take just a moment of your time, and practice “nothing-to-do” mind.
- Let yourself become completely aware of your present experience, noticing sensations and the space around you.
64. Find a small object, one you can hold in your hand. Place it in front of you on a table or in your lap. Observe it closely—first not moving it, and then picking it up and turning it over and around, gazing at it from different angles and in different lights. Just notice shapes, colors, sizes, and other characteristics that are visible.
- Then change your focus to your fingers and hands touching the object. Notice the sensations of touching the object; notice the texture, temperature, and feel of the object.
 - Put the object down. Close your eyes, and inhale and exhale deeply and slowly.
 - Then, with beginner’s mind, open your eyes. With new vision, once again notice the object. With beginner’s mind, open to feeling new textures and sensations, explore the object with your fingers and hands.
 - Put down the object, and once again focus your mind on inhaling and exhaling once.
65. Other: _____

Ideas for Practicing Describing

Practice describing what you see outside of yourself:

1. Lie on the ground and watch the clouds in the sky. Find and describe cloud patterns that you see.
2. Sit on a bench on a busy street or at a park. Describe one thing about each person who walks by you.
3. Find things in nature—a leaf, a drop of water, a pet or other animal. Describe each thing in as much detail as you can.
4. Describe as accurately as you can what a person has just said to you. Check to see if you are correct.
5. Describe a person's face when the person seems angry, afraid, or sad. Notice and describe the shape, movement, and placement of the forehead, eyebrows, and eyes; the lips and mouth; the cheeks; and so on.
6. Describe what a person has done or is doing now. Be very specific. Avoid describing intentions or outcomes of the behavior that you do not directly observe. Avoid judgmental language.
7. Other: _____

Practice describing thoughts and feelings:

8. Describe your feelings as they arise within you: "A feeling of anger is arising within me."
9. Describe your thoughts when you feel a strong emotion: "I feel X, and my thoughts are Y."
10. Describe your feelings after someone else does or says something: "When you do X, I feel Y."
11. Describe thoughts, feelings, and what you observed others do: "When you do X, I feel Y, and my thoughts are Z." "When X occurs, I feel Y, and my thoughts are Z."
12. Describe as many of your thoughts as you can while feeling a strong emotion.
13. Other: _____

Practice describing your breathing:

14. Each time you inhale and exhale, as you inhale, be aware that "I am inhaling, 1." When you exhale, be aware that "I am exhaling, 1." Remember to breathe from the stomach. When beginning the second inhalation, be aware that "I am inhaling, 2." And, slowly exhaling, be aware that "I am exhaling, 2." Continue on up through 10. After you have reached 10, return to 1. Whenever you lose count, return to 1.
15. Begin to inhale gently and normally (from the stomach), describing in your mind that "I am inhaling normally." Exhale in awareness, "I am exhaling normally." Continue for three breaths. On the fourth breath, extend the inhalation, describing in your mind that "I am breathing in a long inhalation." Exhale in awareness, "I am breathing out a long exhalation." Continue for three breaths.
16. Follow the entrance and exit of air. Say to yourself, "I am inhaling and following the inhalation from its beginning to its end. I am exhaling and following the exhalation from its beginning to its end."
17. Other: _____

Ideas for Practicing Participating

Participate with awareness of connection to the universe:

1. Focus your attention on where your body touches an object (floor or ground, air molecules, a chair or armrest, your bed sheets and covers, your clothes, etc.). Try to see all the ways you are connected to and accepted by that object. Consider the function of that object with relation to you. That is, consider what the object does for you. Consider its kindness in doing that. Experience the sensation of touching the object, and focus your entire attention on that kindness until a sense of being connected or loved or cared for arises in your heart.

Examples: Focus your attention on your feet touching the ground. Consider the kindness of the ground holding you up, providing a path for you to get to other things, not letting you fall away from everything else. Focus your attention on your body touching the chair you sit in. Consider how the chair accepts you totally, holds you up, supports your back, and keeps you from falling down on the floor. Focus your attention on the sheets and covers on your bed. Consider the touch of the sheets and covers holding you, surrounding and keeping you warm and comfortable. Consider the walls in the room. They keep out the wind and the cold and the rain. Think of how the walls are connected to you via the floor and the air in the room. Experience your connection to the walls that provide you with a secure place to do things. Go hug a tree. Think of how you and the tree are connected. Life is in you and in the tree and both of you are warmed by the sun, held by the air and supported by the earth. Try and experience the tree loving you by providing something to lean on, or by shading you.

2. Dance to music.
3. Sing along with music you are listening to.
4. Sing in the shower.
5. Sing and dance while watching TV.
6. Jump out of bed and dance, or sing before getting dressed.
7. Go to a church that sings, and join in the singing.
8. Play karaoke with friends or at a karaoke club or bar.
9. Throw yourself into what another person is saying.
10. Go running, focusing only on running.
11. Play a sport and throw yourself into playing.
12. Become the count of the breath, becoming only “one” when you count 1, becoming only “two” when you count 2, and so on.
13. Become a word as you slowly say the word over and over and over.
14. Take a class in improvisational acting.
15. Take a dance class.
16. Other: _____

progressive muscle relaxation

One of the body's reactions to fear and anxiety is muscle tension. This can result in feeling "tense", or can lead to muscle aches and pains, as well as leaving some people feeling exhausted. Think about how you respond to anxiety. Do you "tense up" when you're feeling anxious? Muscle relaxation can be particularly helpful in cases where anxiety is especially associated to muscle tension. This information sheet will guide you through a common form of relaxation designed to reduce muscle tension.

Muscle tension

Muscle tension is commonly associated with stress, anxiety and fear as part of a process that helps our bodies prepare for potentially dangerous situations. Even though some of those situations may not actually be dangerous, our bodies respond in the same way. Sometimes we don't even notice how our muscles become tense, but perhaps you clench your teeth slightly so your jaw feels tight, or maybe your shoulders become. Muscle tension can also be associated with backaches and tension headaches.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

One method of reducing muscle tension that people have found helpful is through a technique called Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). In progressive muscle relaxation exercises, you tense up particular muscles and then relax them, and then you practise this technique consistently.

preparing for relaxation

When you are beginning to practice progressive muscle relaxation exercises keep in mind the following points.

- **Physical injuries.** If you have any injuries, or a history of physical problems that may cause muscle pain, always consult your doctor before you start.
- **Select your surroundings.** Minimise the distraction to your five senses. Such as turning off the TV and radio, and using soft lighting.
- **Make yourself comfortable.** Use a chair that comfortably seats your body, including your head. Wear loose clothing, and take off your shoes.
- **Internal mechanics.** Avoid practicing after big, heavy meals, and do not practice after consuming any intoxicants, such as alcohol.

general procedure

- 1 Once you've set aside the time and place for relaxation, slow down your breathing and give yourself permission to relax.
- 2 When you are ready to begin, tense the muscle group described. Make sure you can feel the tension, but not so much that you feel a great deal of pain. Keep the muscle tensed for approximately 5 seconds.
- 3 Relax the muscles and keep it relaxed for approximately 10 seconds. It may be helpful to say something like "Relax" as you relax the muscle.
- 4 When you have finished the relaxation procedure, remain seated for a few moments allowing yourself to become alert.

Relaxation sequence

1. **Right hand and forearm.** Make a fist with your right hand.
2. **Right upper arm.** Bring your right forearm up to your shoulder to "make a muscle".
3. **Left hand and forearm.**
4. **Left upper arm.**
5. **Forehead.** Raise your eyebrows as high as they will go, as though you were surprised by something.
6. **Eyes and cheeks.** Squeeze your eyes tight shut.
7. **Mouth and jaw.** Open your mouth as wide as you can, as you might when you're yawning.
8. **Neck. !!!** Be careful as you tense these muscles. Face forward and then pull your head back slowly, as though you are looking up to the ceiling.
9. **Shoulders.** Tense the muscles in your shoulders as you bring your shoulders up towards your ears.
10. **Shoulder blades/Back.** Push your shoulder blades back, trying to almost touch them together, so that your chest is pushed forward.
11. **Chest and stomach.** Breathe in deeply, filling up your lungs and chest with air.
12. **Hips and buttocks.** Squeeze your buttock muscles
13. **Right upper leg.** Tighten your right thigh.
14. **Right lower leg. !!!** Do this slowly and carefully to avoid cramps. Pull your toes towards you to stretch the calf muscle.
15. **Right foot.** Curl your toes downwards.
16. **Left upper leg.** Repeat as for right upper leg.
17. **Left lower leg.** Repeat as for right lower leg.
18. **Left foot.** Repeat as for right foot.

Practice means progress. Only through practice can you become more aware of your muscles, how they respond with tension, and how you can relax them. Training your body to respond differently to stress is like any training – practising consistently is the key.

5-4-3-2-1
GROUNDING EXERCISE



--	--	--	--	--	--



--	--	--	--



--	--	--



--	--



--

The 54321 Technique

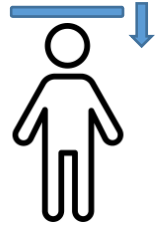
The 54321 technique is a **grounding technique** that you can use whenever you need to calm down, relax and bring your focus back to the present moment.

Take a 5 deep breaths and notice:

- 5** Things you can see
- 4** Things you can hear
- 3** Things you can feel
- 2** Things you can smell
- 1** Thing you can taste

Body Scan

The body scan will bring you into the here-and-now by directing your focus to sensations in the body.



Take some deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Start at the **top of your head** and move down, **noticing** how each part of your body feels

Notice:

- Any tension in your muscles: in your face, jaw, shoulders, back, legs
- How your body weight is supported by the chair, bed or your feet
- How your clothes feel on your skin, your temperature, any other sensations

Mental Exercises

Use mental exercises **to take your mind off** upsetting thoughts. Do these until your body and mind have calmed down.

Categories: Pick a category and think of an item in that category which starts with each letter of the alphabet. For example: Apple, Banana, Carrot, Dragonfruit etc.

Numbers: Count down backwards from 100. To make it harder, count down in 7's!

Names: In your head, spell the names of people you know backwards.



Mindful Breathing

You can simply use your **breathing** to reduce physical symptoms of distress such as: racing heart, difficulty breathing, shaking, sweating and stomach "butterflies".

Deep Breathing Exercise: Close your eyes and sit comfortably. Gently place one hand on your stomach. Inhale deeply through your nose for 4 seconds. Pause. Then exhale through your mouth. Feel the hand on your belly move in and out with your breath.

Finger Breathing: Put one hand out with your fingers apart. With a finger from your other hand, slowly trace the outline of your open hand. As you move up towards a fingertip, inhale. As you move down towards your palm, exhale.



MEETINGS

How to Combat Zoom Fatigue

by [Liz Fosslien](#) and [Mollie West Duffy](#)

April 29, 2020



HBR Staff/1001slide/Getty Images

We've made our coronavirus coverage free for all readers. To get all of HBR's content delivered to your inbox, sign up for the Daily Alert newsletter.

If you're finding that you're more exhausted at the end of your workday than you used to be, you're not alone. Over the past few weeks, mentions of "Zoom fatigue" have popped up more and more on social media, and Google searches for the same phrase have steadily increased since early March.

Why do we find video calls so draining? There are a few reasons.

In part, it's because they force us to focus more intently on conversations in order to absorb information. Think of it this way: when you're sitting in a conference room, you can rely on whispered side exchanges to catch you up if you get distracted or answer quick, clarifying questions. During a video call, however, it's impossible to do this unless you use the private chat feature or awkwardly try to find a moment to unmute and ask a colleague to repeat themselves.

FURTHER READING



Coronavirus + Business: The Insights You Need from HBR

FREE EBOOK

[View Details](#)

The problem isn't helped by the fact that video calls make it easier than ever to lose focus. We've all done it: decided that, why yes, we absolutely can listen intently, check our email, text a friend, and post a smiley face on Slack within the same thirty seconds. Except, of course, we don't end up doing much listening at all when we're

distracted. Adding fuel to the fire is many of our work-from-home situations. We're no longer just dialing into one or two virtual meetings. We're also continuously finding polite new ways to ask our loved ones not to disturb us, or tuning them out as they army crawl across the floor to grab their headphones off the dining table. For those who don't have a private space to work, it is especially challenging.

Finally, "Zoom fatigue" stems from how we process information over video. On a video call the only way to show we're paying attention is to look at the camera. But, in real life, how often do you stand within three feet of a colleague and stare at their face? Probably never. This is because having to engage in a "constant gaze" makes us uncomfortable — and tired. In person, we are able to use our peripheral vision to glance out the window or look at others in the room. On a video call, because we are all sitting in different homes, if we turn to look out the window, we worry it might seem like we're not paying attention. Not to mention, most of us are also staring at a small window of ourselves, making us hyper-aware of every wrinkle, expression, and how it might be interpreted. Without the visual breaks we need to refocus, our brains grow fatigued.

If this all sounds like bad news, don't despair. We have five research-based tips that can help make video calls less exhausting.

Avoid multitasking.

It's easy to think that you can use the opportunity to do more in less time, but research shows that trying to do multiple things at once cuts into performance. Because you have to turn certain parts of your brain off and on for different types of work, switching between tasks can cost you as much as 40 percent of your productive time. Researchers at Stanford found that people who multitask can't remember things as well as their more singularly focused peers. The next time you're on a video chat, close any tabs or programs that might distract you (e.g. your inbox or Slack), put your phone away, and stay present. We know it's tempting, but try to remind yourself that the Slack message you just got can wait 15 minutes, and that you'll be able to craft a better response when you're not also on a video chat.

Build in breaks.

Take mini breaks from video during longer calls by minimizing the window, moving it to behind your open applications, or just looking away from your computer completely for a few seconds now and then. We're all more used to being on video now (and to the stressors that come with nonstop facetime). Your colleagues probably understand more than you think — it is possible to listen without staring at the screen for a full thirty minutes. This is not an invitation to start doing something else, but to let your eyes rest for a moment. For days when you can't avoid back-to-back calls, consider making meetings 25 or 50 minutes (instead of the standard half-hour and hour) to give yourself enough time in between to get up and move around for a bit. If you are on an hour-long video call, make it okay for people to turn off their cameras for parts of the call.

Reduce onscreen stimuli.

Research shows that when you're on video, you tend to spend the most time gazing at your own face. This can be easily avoided by hiding yourself from view. Still, onscreen distractions go far beyond yourself. You may be surprised to learn that on video, we not only focus on other's faces, but on their backgrounds as well. If you're on a call with five people, you may feel like you're in five different rooms at once. You can see their furniture, plants, and wallpaper. You might even strain to see what books they have on their shelves. The brain has to process all of these visual environmental cues at the same

time. To combat mental fatigue, encourage people to use plain backgrounds (e.g. a poster of a peaceful beach scene), or agree as a group to have everyone who is not talking turn off their video.

Make virtual social events opt-in.

After a long day of back-to-back video calls, it's normal to feel drained, particularly if you're an introvert. That's why virtual social sessions should be kept opt-in, meaning whoever owns the event makes it explicit that people are welcome, but not obligated, to join. You might also consider appointing a facilitator if you're expecting a large group. This person can open by asking a question, and then make it clear in what order people should speak, so everyone gets to hear from one another and the group doesn't start talking all at once. It's easy to get overwhelmed if we don't know what's expected of us, or if we're constantly trying to figure out when we should or should not chime in.

Switch to phone calls or email.

Check your calendar for the next few days to see if there are any conversations you could have over Slack or email instead. If 4PM rolls around and you're Zoomed-out but have an upcoming one-on-one, ask the person to switch to a phone call or suggest picking up the conversation later so you can both recharge. Try something like, "I'd love a break from video calls. Do you mind if we do this over the phone?" Most likely the other person will be relieved by the switch, too.

For external calls, avoid defaulting to video, especially if you don't know each other well.

Many people now feel a tendency to treat video as the default for all communication. In situations where you're communicating with people outside of your organization (clients, vendors, networking, etc.) — conversations for which you used to rely on phone calls — you may feel obligated to send out a Zoom link instead. But a video call is fairly intimate and can even feel invasive in some situations. For example, if you're asked to do a career advice call and you don't know the person you're talking to, sticking to phone is often a safer choice. If your client FaceTimes you with no warning, it's okay to decline and suggest a call instead.

Some of these tips might be hard to follow at first (especially that one about resisting the urge to tab-surf during your next Zoom call). But taking these steps can help you prevent feeling so exhausted at the thought of another video chat. It's tiring enough trying to adapt to this new normal. Make video calls a little easier for yourself.

If our free content helps you to contend with these challenges, please consider subscribing to HBR. A subscription purchase is the best way to support the creation of these resources.

Liz Fosslien is the Head of Content at Humu, a company that nudges people towards better work habits, unlocking the potential of individuals, teams, and organizations. She has designed and led sessions related to emotions at work for audiences including TED, LinkedIn, Google, Viacom, and Spotify. Liz's writing and illustrations have been featured by The Economist, Freakonomics, and NPR. Liz and Mollie are the authors of the book, *No Hard Feelings: The Secret Power of Embracing Emotions at Work*. Follow them on Twitter or Instagram @lizandmollie.

Mollie West Duffy is an organizational development expert and consultant. She was previously an organizational design lead at global innovation firm IDEO and a research associate for the Dean of Harvard Business School Nitin Nohria and renowned strategy professor Michael E. Porter. She's written for Fast Company, Quartz, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Entrepreneur, and other digital outlets. Liz and Mollie are the authors of the book, *No Hard Feelings: The Secret Power of Embracing Emotions at Work*. Follow them on Twitter or Instagram @lizandmollie.

This article is about MEETINGS

 Follow This Topic

Related Topics: [Stress](#) | [Communication](#)

Comments

Leave a Comment

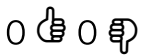
Post Comment

1 COMMENTS

JOHN DUNCAN 10 hours ago

An important contribution to the debate. However it suggests more profound leadership issues than might at first appear. Having set up and lead both nationwide and global Virtual Teams I would strongly urge that video be the primary means to interact with your team. You cannot have the water cooler chat or walk the floor to judge the mood if your team are all or predominantly remote workers. Video is the only way you are going to get the non-verbal feedback so essential to understanding your team. WhatsApp, text and phone are fine for quick short messages and email for more detailed exchanges that need to be recorded. The zoom fatigue described here suggests the leader is not delegating properly (not entrusting and empowering their staff) and not properly distinguishing between meetings to take decisions and those for discussion. I have seen this happen in the real world, particularly in crises where taking decisions and giving clear direction is replaced by endless meetings.

 Reply



[!\[\]\(003082e50e3009141f59bd5df831749f_img.jpg\) Join The Conversation](#)

POSTING GUIDELINES

We hope the conversations that take place on HBR.org will be energetic, constructive, and thought-provoking. To comment, readers must sign in or register. And to ensure the quality of the discussion, our moderating team will review all comments and may edit them for clarity, length, and relevance. Comments that are overly promotional, mean-spirited, or off-topic may be deleted per the moderators' judgment. All postings become the property of Harvard Business Publishing.

[Close](#)

THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigour, journalistic flair



www.shutterstock.com

5 reasons why Zoom meetings are so exhausting

May 6, 2020 5.54am AEST

For many of us, working from home during COVID-19 has meant we are spending a lot of time on video meeting applications like Zoom. The effects of this have taken us by surprise.

Having giant heads staring at us up close for long periods can be off-putting for a lot of us. Never mind that we feel we should fix our iso-hair (COVID mullet anyone?), put on makeup, or get out of our pyjamas.

So why are online meetings more tiring than face-to-face ones?

People feel like they have to make more emotional effort to appear interested, and in the absence of many non-verbal cues, the intense focus on words and sustained eye contact is exhausting.

Get news that's free, independent and based on evidence.

[Get newsletter](#)

Authors



Libby Sander

Assistant Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Bond Business School, Bond University



Oliver Bauman

Assistant Professor, School of Psychology, Bond University

Read more: Here is why you might be feeling tired while on lockdown

Face-to-face meetings

Meetings in person are not only about the exchange of knowledge, they are also important rituals in the office. Rituals provide comfort, put us at ease, and are essential in building and maintaining rapport.

Face to face meetings are also important mechanisms for the communication of attitudes and feelings among business partners and colleagues.

Emotions precede and follow all our behaviours, and influence management decision-making. Sensitive topics are often canvassed, requiring us to notice subtleties and display empathy.

How are Zoom meetings different?

Our brains can only do so many things consciously at once, because we have limited working memory. In contrast, we can process much more information unconsciously, as we do with body language.

Meeting online increases our cognitive load because several of its features take up a lot of conscious capacity.

Read more: I had an idea in the 1980s and to my surprise, it changed education around the world



Video meetings take up a lot of cognitive resources, often leaving us feeling frustrated and drained.

www.shutterstock.com

1. We miss out on a lot of non-verbal communication

Our feelings and attitudes are largely conveyed by non-verbal signals such as facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, gestures, posture, and the distance between the communicators.

In a face-to-face meeting we process these cues largely automatically, and can still listen to the speaker at the same time.

But on a video chat, we need to work harder to process non-verbal cues. Paying more attention to these consumes a lot of energy. Our minds are together when our bodies feel we're not. That dissonance, which causes people to have conflicting feelings, is exhausting.

Also, in face-to-face meetings we rely heavily on non-verbal cues to make emotional judgements, such as assessing whether a statement is credible. We automatically take in information such as, is the person fidgeting? Predominantly relying on verbal information to infer emotions is tiring.

2. What if the kids run in?

We feel anxious about our remote workspace and controlling events that might make us look bad to our colleagues. Will my Zoom background suddenly fail leaving my hoarding tendencies on full display?

And none of us want to be like Trinny Woodall, fashion guru and television presenter, who was doing a live stream when her partner walked naked across the room.

Boy George (the truth is in your breath)  ... · May 3, 2020 

People should stay dressed if they can't pull off being naked! Lol!

ANNE THOMPSON
@annethompson7

I was watching (a couple of weeks ago) Trinny Woodall doing a live presentation from her bathroom on Facebook and Charles Saatchi suddenly appeared naked!! Put me off my porridge...

3:32 AM · May 3, 2020


 1
 See ANNE THOMPSON's other Tweets

3. No water-cooler catch-ups

In person, we often meet people on the way to a meeting to catch up on issues or discuss our views before going in. We get coffee, and the simple act of relocating to a different room is energising.

But at home, we might be just working on a task and then we get on to Zoom, often without taking breaks.

Also, walking is known to improve creativity, highlighting the importance of discussions while walking to meetings, moving around during the meeting, and holding the now popular stand-up meetings. But we can't walk on Zoom calls.

And where we meet matters. The physical environment acts as a cognitive scaffold – we attribute certain meanings to meeting rooms and this subtly changes our behaviour. This can include anchors to important topics such as creativity and problem solving.

4. Looking at our own face is stressful

The heightened emphasis on facial cues and the ability to see oneself, can also act as a stressor. Viewing our own negative facial expressions (like anger and disgust) can lead to more intense emotions than when viewing similar facial expressions in others.



Seeing our own face on screen can make us self-conscious because we are very aware of being watched. Reuters

5. Are you listening or are you frozen?

Silence in real life conversation is important and creates a natural rhythm. But in a video call, silence makes you anxious about the technology. Even a 1.2 second delay in responding online made people perceive the person talking as less friendly or focused.

In addition, frustration with people turning their microphones on and off, lagging connections and background noise mean the meeting rarely flows as smoothly.

It's not all Zoom and doom

On the upside, social anxiety is positively correlated with feelings of comfort online. So for people who dread physical meetings, meeting online might be a welcome respite.



Meeting online might help people feel more relaxed if they tend to feel anxious socialising in-person. Eduardo Munoz/Reuters

And even though the increased focus on verbal information in video meetings can be mentally more draining, it might also have some potential positive side effects by reducing biases due social and emotional signals.

For instance, certain physical factors are linked to social dominance, such as height. But these factors are less apparent in video meetings, which could lead to increased emphasis on the merits of arguments.

Read more: Online social networks can help fight social anxiety

How can we reduce the fatigue?

With predictions that the new workplace “normal” will be very different from the old one, it seems that Zoom is here to stay. There are a number of steps we can take to reduce the negative effects of online video meetings.

Firstly, consider whether the meeting needs to happen. In some cases, shared document platforms with detailed comments can reduce the need to meet.

Limiting the number of Zoom meetings in a day can assist, as well as using messaging and email.

Sometimes, the phone is better. On the phone we only have to concentrate on one voice and can walk around which can help thinking.

This article is supported by the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas.



Coronavirus Fatigue COVID-19 Zoom