Since COVID-19, we’re on video calls more than ever. And while video calls are helping many stay employed and connected, many are finding it exhausting.

Why we experience fatigue

During a virtual meeting, a number of factors can require more focus and mental energy than a face-to-face meeting. For example:

- **Non-verbal cues.** Much of human communication is through nonverbal clues—facial expressions, tone and pitch of the voice, body language—which can be lost or distorted in a video call.

- **Focusing on multiple people** in a gallery view can be intimidating, especially for those who are uncomfortable speaking up in groups.

- **Worrying about how you appear on camera,** and aware that you are being watched adds stress.

- **Pressure to be “on” and responsive** can be nerve-wracking because you know everyone is watching.

- **Having multiple devices open** during meetings, like Twitter, email, cell phone, is causing your brain to respond to one thing, then another, and another.

- **Video chat is more time consuming** adding to the stress of already busy schedules.

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**Tips to Alleviate “Zoom Fatigue”**

- **Limit video calls** to those that are truly necessary.

- **Make turning on the camera optional.** Use your phone when possible, allowing you to move around more freely.

- **Don’t multitask.** Treat the video chat like a real conversation.

- **Having the screen off to the side** instead of straight ahead can help with concentration.

- **Taking some time** to catch up with coworkers before diving into business is a way to reconnect with the world.

- **Take breaks between calls** and allow your brain to switch gears. Try stretching, have a snack, do some light exercise, go outside and get some sun.

- **Create buffers and transitions** as you move between work video calls and private chats with family and friends.

- **Find balance.** Life lived through video calls can be cognitively and emotionally taxing. While recognizing the benefits of video conferencing, consciously reach out and connect to the people behind the screens.

Sources: **USA Today, Harvard Business Review, BBC, EcoWatch**