



CONNECT WITH EASE

Employee Assistance Service for Education



Monthly Article

Combating Zoom Fatigue

**EASE CAN HELP DURING DIFFICULT TIMES
CONNECT WITH EASE:
(800) 882-1341**

Free confidential professional help for district employees and family members:

Family troubles. Emotional distress.
Job stress.
Anxiety. Drug/alcohol use. Grief. Loss.
Life transitions issues.

Professional counselors are ready to help.

Call the EASE Hotline for 24/7 assistance.

MESSAGE FROM EASE

The last six months have been a great challenge and collectively we have experienced a great amount of transition, change, and loss. Managing the end of a school year and preparing for back to school during a pandemic certainly calls for unprecedented times and is no easy task. Although, the educators of Los Angeles County have navigated and moved forward with flexibility and resilience. After migrating abruptly to an online teaching environment in the middle of a pandemic, you embraced the opportunity and did your best to continue to teach, serve, and support students. Management, certificated and classified staff worked tirelessly to meet the demands of the moment and the needs of students, families, and schools. You bridged the home and school learning environments by adopting new modalities and pedagogy for teaching, connection, operations, and outreach. Any crisis presents the opportunity to learn, cultivate compassion and increase resilience while building a safer and more caring community.

EASE would like to remind you to take care of yourself!

- Practice self compassion and gratitude.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- Accept that there are events that you cannot control.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques and
- Exercise regularly, eat healthy well-balanced meals, and get good sleep.
- Be kind to yourself and support each other.
- Protect from "Zoom fatigue" and take regular screen breaks.

EASE is always here for additional support, if needed.

COMBATING ZOOM FATIGUE

By: EASE STAFF

For many of us, Zoom and other video conferencing applications have helped us to stay employed and connected. As you've maneuvered the transition to working online, video conferencing platforms like Zoom have forced you to focus more intently on conversations in order to absorb information. But you may find yourself feeling more exhausted at the end of your work day than you used to be. If you've ever felt that satisfying relief when you finish your last Zoom call, then wonder why you're so exhausted, you may be experiencing Zoom fatigue. Zoom fatigue can be triggered in people who spend a lot of time on virtual meetings and calls, trying to compensate for the loss of face to face interaction.

So, why are zoom calls so exhausting?

Communicating remotely - with video on - has long been known to be more mentally taxing. When we're able to physically be with another person, we have the experience of body language but with remote communication we lack these signals. As a result, our brain makes an extra effort to compensate for those aspects of communication that we lack. On video calls, we expend energy as we try to stay present, attentive and attuned. Additionally, with video calls you may be transitioning from call to call with no space in between to rest. Although we're able to engage in these calls from the comfort of our home, this exhaustion is the same kind you would experience if you had back to back meetings in a regular day without a break. More so, you may not find yourself getting up from your chair if you're engaging in back to back calls. This is contrary to what we were learning before as we were encouraged to use standing desks and walking breaks to make sure our bodies were being active. Now, you may find that you're sitting for long periods of time without getting a walk in. In turn, this not only affects your physical balance but psychological balance as well. Overall, research suggests that our exhaustion comes from the cognitive overload that videoconferencing brings. But some of it might also be the emotional burden of loss that we have experienced during these difficult times and have not been able to fully process.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/zoom-and-google-hangouts-are-making-kids-miserable_L_5ebd5cbbc5b655620b13a149
<https://goop.com/wellness/mindfulness/zoom-fatigue/>
<https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue>



TIPS TO BREAK UP SCREEN TIME

- **Build in breaks.** If possible, avoid scheduling meetings back to back and build in short breaks in between your meetings to allow your eyes and body to rest.
- **Make virtual social events opt-in.** Make virtual social sessions optional and not an obligation.
- **Switch to email or a phone call.** If you're able to, switch to email or schedule phone calls instead of video conferences.
- **Set aside time for a digital detox.** Designate a time where you put away your phone, computer or tablet and focus on non-digital stimulation.
- **Turn off your camera.** When possible, a good tip is to not use your camera and only focus on people's voices during a call. Your brain won't have to work as hard if it's only listening to voices rather than social cues of who's talking.
- **Practice and model movement.** During long zoom conferences, take movement breaks and suggest everyone take a moment to stand up and stretch frequently, or you may consider standing for the call.

TIPS FOR KIDS

- **Give kids the space to feel.** With social distancing learning and measures in place, kids may be feeling sad, helpless and at a loss. Help kids try to identify their feelings, give them the vocabulary they need to express their feelings and be open to hearing what they're going through.
- **Skip zoom chats.** Let kids express themselves in other ways. If kids don't feel like engaging in a Zoom chat, let them take a break.
- **Plan calls with clear structure.** It can be helpful to plan a specific thing that kids are going to do on zoom calls. Finding ways to create interaction and engage can help protect from zoom fatigue.

TALK TO US

EASE has counselors if you want to talk.

(800) 882-1341