

Covid 19 Side Effect: Fatigue

Covid 19 Side Effect: Physical and Mental Fatigue

How many of us are feeling exhausted these days? Even if you are not a first responder or someone recovering from Covid, everyone seems to be fatigued, both physically and mentally. Why is this happening? We are all fighting the virus in one way or the other; we are all anxious to get back to a normal life; we are all scared of the unknown. Regardless whether or not you are marginally affected, the heaviness of others' situations, constant news updates, stories of despair and overcoming the adversity impacts us all. Feeling overwhelmed makes your own responsibilities and problems seem impossible to overcome.

Physical exhaustion is defined as an extreme state of unrelenting fatigue that leaves you physically drained and can be brought on by mental exhaustion. Mental exhaustion impairs physical performance, making simple tasks more taxing and demanding. Now factor in the fact that stress is the body's natural response to a new experience, good or bad, exciting or scary. No wonder we all are tired!

So how do you get motivated to get up and get out there every day, day after day, to do the same thing? First of all, give yourself permission to admit you are having trouble staying engaged. As leaders, it is our job to dig deep and find solutions that will motivate all of the team, including ourselves. On top of your personal fatigue, it is often stressful and relentless being the leader. Staying positive for the benefit of the team while facing challenges can take a toll on you. To move forward, how about going back and reinstating a few simple things that have worked in the past and can still work now? Certainty and simplicity are soothing; thereby reducing some of the stress. Another trick to treat exhaustion is sitting less, so get up and move around! It is

also ok to ask others for help as helping others tends to give us a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Lastly, take the time to create a journal that focuses on the good. Reflecting on the good brings peace of mind.

I find it somewhat ironic that those of us who are now working remotely are generally working longer and harder than when we were onsite. Technology is supposed to make our jobs easier and tools like Zoom and Go To Meeting have definitely been beneficial; however, I have seen that overall productivity is diminished when it is non-stop all day, every day. It took a while to get the hang of being productive via Zoom and now we need to learn how to limit our "on camera" time. Mix it up. What happened to picking up the phone and calling someone? Think of it as getting up from your desk and stopping by your colleague's office to ask a question. A little one on one time. Remember how those little things helped break up your day—allowed you to stretch your legs, clear your mind.

Speaking of Zoom, try not to multitask while on Zoom. It is unproductive and can be overwhelming. It takes enough concentration to be engaged and pay attention to several people all at once, let alone trying to text or email on the side.

Create boundaries so everyone on your team has an end to their workday. Shut down your computer, put your phone aside and take some time for yourself. As the leader, you need to abide by these rules and keep yourself from sending emails to your team after hours. It will be beneficial for both you and them. Taking time for yourself while helping others will help you recharge.

Maybe learning that we are not invincible is part of the lesson that Covid is trying to teach us. We cannot do this alone, we need to acknowledge our weaknesses, we are all human. In order to move forward, you need a fresh perspective. Change your outlook and view the horizon with a clearer vision

to reveal your potential. Go forward with renewed energy and commitment, one day at a time.