

Reducing Zoom Fatigue

After more than a year of videoconferencing and virtual meetings, many workers are experiencing “Zoom. fatigue.” In a recent report in the journal *Technology, Mind and Behavior*, Professor Jeremy Bailenson, founding director of Stanford University's Virtual Human Interaction lab, identified four main causes of Zoom fatigue and offered the following recommendations to mitigate its effects:



1. Excessive amounts of close-up eye contact is highly intense.

Mitigation: Take Zoom out of full screen mode and reduce the size of the Zoom window relative to your monitor to minimize face size. Use an external keyboard to increase the space between yourself and the Zoom grid.

2. Constantly seeing yourself in real-time during video chats is tiring.

Mitigation: Once you verify that your face is framed properly in the video, use the “hide self-view” button, which you can access by right clicking your thumbnail.

3. Video chats dramatically reduce our usual mobility.

Mitigation: Consider the room you are videoconferencing in, where the camera is positioned, and whether things like an external keyboard can help create distance or flexibility to allow you to move around and doodle like you might in a real meeting.

4. “Cognitive load,” or the effort required to process information, is much higher in video chats.

Mitigation: During the long stretches of meetings, give yourself an “audio only” break by not only turning off your camera, but also turning your body away from the screen to create a brief respite from having to actively interpret gestures and nonverbal cues.