

What We Can Learn From People Nailing That Work-Life Balance

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(Bloomberg Businessweek) -- You've seen them: your smiling friends, neighbors, family, and co-workers who are somehow making the best of the pandemic, the ones who talk about Covid's "silver linings." Who are these people? And how can you make lemonade, too? Here's what they emailed about their strategies and the impact they've had on ensuring work-life balance:

Staying connected

Give the group chat some guidelines.

"My family and my extended family created a WhatsApp group. Our one rule is: Don't talk too much about coronavirus." —Amit Raj, founder, Amit Digital Marketing, Glasgow, Scotland

Harness the power of Zoom post-work.

"Early on in the pandemic, I reached out to a group of girlfriends with whom I had previously had a standing monthly dinner. We now have a standing weekly call and have been able to help each other through being furloughed, a Covid outbreak at a child's day care, an outbreak within extended family, and the everyday frustrations of working from home." —Angie Yarbrough, principal and co-founder at marketing and consulting firm Stratistry, Dallas

Screen time

Set hard deadlines for logging on and off social media.

"I am banned from social media after 8 p.m. ... and I no longer go straight to social media in the morning." —Julie Ann Dokowicz, CEO and creative director, luxury lifestyle website Girl in Heels Travels, Los Angeles

Make your staycation count.

"For five days, I locked my work laptop in my safe and deleted all social media apps and work-related apps off my phone. I focused on myself, family, friends, making great food, reading, and most importantly, enjoying nature. I felt the warm sand between my toes, the

soft grass on my feet, and the sun on my skin, and I felt like I got my life back.” —Alexandra Lashner, assistant account executive, Frank Advertising, Cranbury, N.J.

Exercising

Take advantage of free live classes.

“I started following NYC gyms on Instagram while working from home, and whenever a free live class starts, I’ll pop up and work out for a bit. It’s a nice break from my entrepreneurial grind.” —Lori Cheek, founder and CEO, Cheekd dating app, New York

No Olympics? Make your own.

“We are a family of six. We set up the house: a weight room in the garage, the Peloton bike, the treadmill, family yoga in the yard, hiking, walking the dogs, biking to the stream. Everyone gets in their daily workout.” —Marcia Payton, law partner, Riebling & Payton, Mount Kisco, N.Y.

Hobbies

Weave them into your workday.

“I had slate slabs in my backyard, and I arranged them into a patio. Between Zoom calls and emails, I took a break to set other little stones between the slabs, sometimes changing some from several days ago, always in a quiet and contemplative frame of mind. I found and added in stones of special significance.” —Antonio Argibay, managing principal, Meridian Design Associates Architects, New York

Dive into your side hustle.

“Being quarantined at home with nothing to do, I focused my time on growing my passion project into full-time work. All of this extra time has really become a blessing in disguise.” —Kitty Wong, co-creator, skincare line Schmeat Naturals, Vancouver, B.C.

And, of course, a little escapism never hurts. “While our twin 4-year-old girls are splashing in a blow-up pool,” says Claudine Patel, vice president of marketing and innovation at consumer goods company Reckitt Benckiser, “we make fancy cocktails and a charcuterie board, and voilà: We are whisked away to a resort in the Bahamas! It’s about keeping your imagination alive and enjoying the little things when you can.”

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