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Recalibrating Your Work-Life Balance

One of most indicative signs of a healthy lifestyle is a measured work-life balance. In fact, many candidates cite work-life balance as a deciding factor when looking for jobs. But since the onset of self-quarantine and stay-at-home orders, the physical distinction between work and home has been all but erased—and as a result, many of our work-life balances have suffered.

Living and working under a global pandemic is stressful enough, especially with additional responsibilities like childcare and other family obligations. When your work-life balance starts to falter, it's a recipe for poor performance and burnout, not to mention the toll it takes on your mental health. In fact, [Small Business Trends found](#) that employees working over 55 hours a week are at a higher risk of depression and anxiety than their 35-40 hour/week counterparts. Here are a few tips for maintaining your work-life balance—even under a crisis.

Designate a workspace. The tried-and-true remote work advice is more relevant now than ever—creating a physical distinction between work and home in your house helps to replicate the usual separation you'd have if commuting to work. If you don't have a home office already, consider designating a different room in the house, or even a specific desk or table. Whatever it is, just make sure it's not the same space you use to relax, like in bed or on the couch.

Dress for the workday. Remote work comes with its fair share of perks, one being a much more lax dress code.

Quick Takes

When Work-From-Home Becomes More Work Than Home

Quarantine has eroded the boundaries between work and home, and as a result, many of us are working more than ever, even when we're supposed to be off the clock. This can lead to an unstable work-life balance, an important aspect in any healthy lifestyle, but especially now. Read on and learn a few tips to help you preserve your work-life balance, even when you're operating from home.

There's nothing wrong with dressing down while working from home, but wearing the same thing whether you're on or off the clock further blurs the boundary between your job and your free time. You don't need to dress in business casual, but putting on a "real outfit" for work and then changing into sweatpants when you're done for the day can promote a healthier work-life balance.

Plan for breaks and an official lunchtime. In your usual office environment, you probably have breaks peppered in throughout the day to talk with a coworker, enjoy lunch in the breakroom, and maybe take a walk to stretch your legs. At home, these important reprieves from the workday often fall to the wayside. Consistently block out ten to fifteen minutes a day, as well as a lunch hour, to make sure you're not working through your breaks.

Take some time off. If your work-life balance still feels off-kilter, and you feel like you're burning out, consider taking some time for a day, or two, or more. While it may seem like a waste to use vacation days when you're stuck in your own home, it can do wonders for your mental health and overall productivity. Use that reset button, and when you're ready, go back to work feeling refreshed and ready to go.

Source: Guta, Michael. "The Stats on the Work-Life Balance of Your Employees (INFOGRAPHIC)." Small Business Trends, 13 Feb. 2018, smallbiztrends.com/2018/02/work-life-balance-statistics.html.

Pizza with Olives, Aleppo Pepper, and Fresh Mozzarella Makes 4 servings

Less assertive and more nuanced than red pepper flakes, Aleppo pepper makes a terrific pizza seasoning—a little spicy and a little fruity to complement the tangy sauce and rich cheese. Look for Aleppo pepper at spice stores, gourmet grocers, or Middle Eastern markets. A sprinkle of kalamata olives adds briny flavor and a touch of umami.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (28-oz.) can unsalted whole peeled tomatoes
- 3/8 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced fresh basil, divided
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon crushed Aleppo pepper, divided
- 1 tablespoon plain yellow cornmeal
- 12 ounces fresh or frozen thawed prepared whole-wheat pizza dough
- 4 ounces small fresh mozzarella cheese balls (bocconcini)
- 1 ounce coarsely chopped pitted kalamata olives

DIRECTIONS

1. Place a pizza stone or baking sheet on center rack in oven; preheat oven to 450°F. (Leave stone in to preheat.)
2. Pour tomatoes into a colander set over a large bowl; squeeze and break into chunks. Reserve liquid for another use. Stir together tomato chunks, salt, 1/4 cup basil, 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, and 1 1/2 teaspoons Aleppo pepper in a bowl.
3. Sprinkle cornmeal on a piece of parchment paper. Roll pizza dough on cornmeal into a 14- x 8-inch rectangle or a 12-inch circle. Spread tomato mixture over dough, leaving a 1/2-inch border. Top with cheese balls and olives. Leaving pizza on parchment paper, place onto hot pizza stone. Bake at 450°F for 10 minutes or until crust is done and cheese is bubbly. Brush edges of crust with remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons oil.
4. Sprinkle with remaining basil and remaining Aleppo pepper. Cut into 8 slices.



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

374 Calories
 22 g Total fat
 5 g Saturated fat
 17 g Unsaturated fat
 688 mg Sodium
 43 g Carbohydrates
 5 g Fiber
 3 g Sugar
 12 g Protein