

How to KEEP Motivated When You Are Working from Home – Part 1



Most people find working from home to be challenging. With COVID-19, we could very well be working from home for a while yet. There are tons of distractions. Whether you're home alone and the house is too quiet, or you're home with the family and the kids are out of control, you may find it's tough to stay on task, get your work done, and feel productive. The following are the first 5 of 10 strategies that will help you stay motivated:

1. **Create a Schedule** - Without a structured workday, time can get away from you. You might find that you start shifting your workdays later and later as you sip an extra cup of coffee. Then, your work hours extend later into the evenings, which causes you to stay up later at night, as well. Or you might find that you easily get off track or distracted while working. Establish a time to begin and end work. Try to stick to it as much as you can.

2. **Establish a Dedicated Workspace** - You might be tempted to work in bed. After all, it's likely the most comfortable space in the house. But when you associate your bed with work, it can interfere with your sleep. And trouble sleeping will affect your performance the following day. The kitchen table or a desk in the corner of the living room might be better alternatives to your bedroom.

3. **Work in Small Blocks of Time** - Blocking out small amounts of time—and planning what you'll do during that timeframe—can make big tasks feel more manageable. Schedule your time will also will hold you more accountable. You'll be less likely to get lost on social media when you know you only have 15 minutes to complete a task. And you'll be less likely to procrastinate when you've given yourself a tight deadline.

4. **Limit Your Distractions and Interruptions** - You might find that you struggle to get back on task each time you're interrupted. You can stay motivated by limiting the distractions and interruptions you experience. This may mean muting your phone notifications and only checking your email once an hour. Or placing your phone on "Do Not Disturb" until you complete a specific task. If you're working from home with kids, keep them occupied to reduce how often they interrupt you. Establish some ground rules about what constitutes a legitimate reason for them interrupting you while working.

5. **Practice the "10-Minute Rule"** - It can be hard to convince yourself to start working on a task you really don't want to do. One of the best ways to get moving on something you don't want to do is by using the "10-minute rule." Tell yourself that you only have to work on something for 10 minutes. Then, after the 10-minute mark, you can take a break if you want. More times than not, you'll likely find that at the 10-minute mark you'll choose to keep going. Usually, getting started is the toughest part. But once you do, it's easy to keep the momentum going.

Working from home seems easy enough. But, many struggle to keep up or stay motivated. If you have tried some of these techniques but still think you could benefit from talking to a counselor, give Best Care EAP a call at **402-354-8000** or **800-801-4182** or email eap@bestcareeap.org. Counselors are just a phone call away.