

Best practices on "work from home"

Webinar – 1 April 2020, 9:00 Dubai

غرفة دبي
DUBAI CHAMBER

CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY

Any use of this material without specific permission of McKinsey & Company
is strictly prohibited

Today's presenters



Margaux Constantin

McKinsey, Associate Partner,
Dubai

margaux_constantin@mckinsey.com



Martin Checinski

McKinsey, EEMA Director of
Impact with Experience, Dubai

martin_checinski@mckinsey.com



Wolfgang Halb

McKinsey, Engagement Mgr.,
Abu Dhabi

wolfgang_halb@mckinsey.com



Annette Kirby

Aberkyn, Associate Leader,
Abu Dhabi

annette.Kirby@aberkyn.com



Christian Stür

McKinsey, Partner,
Abu Dhabi

christian_stueer@mckinsey.com

What we are increasingly hearing as many organizations are transitioning into a “remote working crisis mode”

“The problem changes by the time you figure out what to do”

“How can I keep my team aligned and responsive in a remote setup?”

“This is overwhelming - how can I create space for people to recharge?”

“How am I going to keep my team productive in the coming weeks?”

“What is the impact of this on the emotional wellbeing of my team?”

“How can I show my team that I care?”

“How can I make the best of this situation and shift my culture or establish new habits in my team, so that it will be performing better after all of this?”

Remote working likely to be a marathon – how to keep going?

Overview of ways to maintain high productivity and employee wellbeing in a distributed environment



Personal productivity and emotional wellbeing

- **Target three dimensions** of Mind, Body and Purpose to support employees being at their best
- **Careful curation of supporting tools required**, as many resources are easily available
- **Dedicated effort and orchestration required** to reduce adoption barriers of healthy and productive habits among staff



Social aspects

- **1:1 interactions by leaders** to show care and support team members in their transition
- **Belonging and cohesion need to be addressed at different levels** (e.g. team, department, organization)
- **It is a sprint and then a marathon**, window of opportunity to form new habits is 2-3 weeks after that change and adoption of new habits will only happen stepwise



Professional collaboration

- **Leaders** need to **provide direction, energize the team** and **connect the dots**
- **Structure** of teams should be assembled in small groups of approx. 5 people to allow for effective collaboration
- **Culture** needs to be open and **transparent** to enable employees to be **self-disciplined** and responsive
- **Processes** need to provide a **clear structure** to every team member's day and a **regular cadence** of daily and weekly rituals along with aligned **team norms** can help
- **Effective communication** should leverage all enabling **technology**



Enabling Technology

- Use full repertoire of **remote communication channels** and tools. Consider complexity of the topic, output, reaction time, and people preference when deciding which format to use (e.g., VC, screensharing, joint document editing, etc.)
- Further IT related details are available in a **deep-dive on technology aspects**

Many challenges have to be overcome when working remotely

Key challenges in remote working



Personal productivity

Difficulty in self-organizing to address real-time challenges and resist distractions at home, especially for parents with kids

Sense of lack of direction / isolation can degrade morale and performance

Current uncertainty and media buzz combined with the shift to a remote working model **impacts employee wellbeing/mindfulness**



Social aspects

Isolation and lack of social interaction leading to **lower employee motivation** and **less cohesion** as a team

Lower communications efficiency due to missing in-person touch, time it takes to write vs talk, finding time together, or bad connectivity



Professional collaboration

Any **lack of clarity** in roles and responsibilities, decision rights or objectives is **amplified** in a remote environment

Difficulty of **navigating large or hierarchical organizational** structures

Misunderstandings or lack of clarity on priorities leading to **wasted work**

Risk to overlook **dependencies** and create **island solutions**



Enabling technology

End user devices at home not suitable for longer work from remote (e.g., too small screens, insufficient performance, risky security workarounds on personal devices)

Outdated architecture, slow VPN access

Missing tooling (e.g. for VC, co-creation, DevOps) exacerbate collaboration challenges

Impractical security inhibits remote work, leads to team members adopting insecure workarounds

Agenda

- **Personal productivity and emotional wellbeing**
- Professional collaboration
- Enabling technology
- Next steps

A few observations we made at clients and our own organization



Vulnerability differs by segment and locations



Female colleagues often more impacted, as they need to juggle family / work



Difficulties to setup healthy home office, e.g. small apartments, flat sharing



Increasing anxiety about remote family members especially as losses are occurring



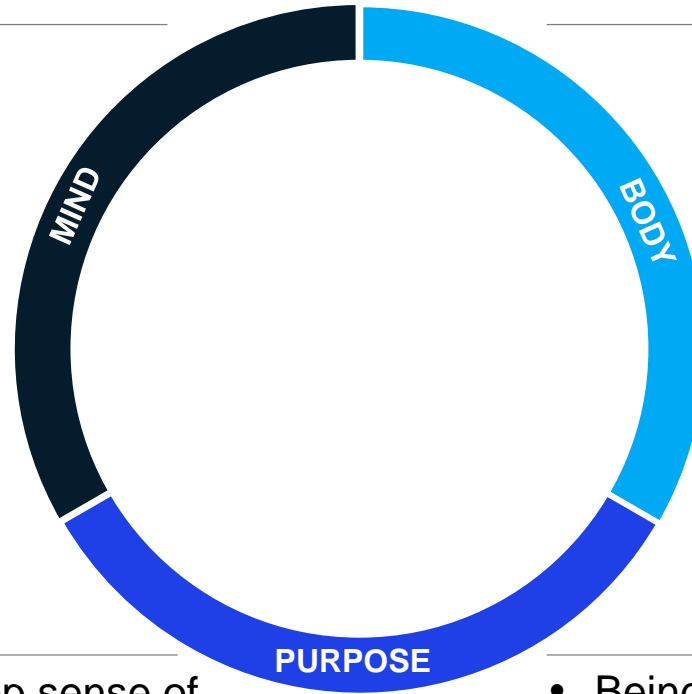
Concerns about promotions and job security



Less time to recharge, due to workload and additional responsibilities to “run the household”

Employee wellbeing is particularly important in the current situation along three dimensions of mind, body, purpose

- Objective is to increase resilience, emotional flexibility and ability to focus in work and private life
- This includes but is not limited to meditation practices, creating space for personal renewal



- Focused on sleep as process to restore the mind and body that is crucial for mood, energy and cognitive abilities
- Regular physical exercise combined with a healthy nutrition (quantity and variety)

- Includes developing a deep sense of connection to communities, of making valuable contributions to them and of welcoming others into them

- Being compassionate and of service to others, and helping without expecting anything in return

Current uncertainty and media buzz combined with the shift to a remote operating model can create challenges on each of these dimensions, requiring employers to provide support in the creation of healthy habits of employees

Measures and resources to create a balanced life for employees while working from home (1/2)

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Hacks for a balanced life in a remote setup
Mind	Mindfulness	<p>Use the time you would otherwise spend on transport (e.g. driving to work) in the morning to try out (or consistently practice) mindfulness – it will help you be fully in the moment when connecting remotely with colleagues or in-person with your loved ones at home</p> <p>Try out one of the many mindfulness apps like Headspace or Calm or use a short meditation exercise to practice mindfulness at home</p>
	Space for renewal and connection	<p>Make sure to draw a line between work and family/ leisure time even when consistently working from home – the separation will help you enjoy the leisure moments more. E.g. you can try to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ...set yourself clear rules on when to start and when to finish work and communicate these to your team• ...implement a “ritual”, which marks the end of your day, e.g. pack up your working station to turn your temporary office back into your home <p>Do (remote) tune-in and tune-out questions with your team in order to strengthen your connection and to create mental space</p> <p>Give yourself a break and resist the urge to “binge” crisis news – while it is essential to keep informed, it can also be crucial to take our minds off things at times</p>

Measures and resources to create a balanced life for employees while working from home (2/2)

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Hacks for a balanced life in a remote setup
Body	Sleep	Use the comfort of your home and the increased predictability to not only improve the quantity but also the quality of your sleep... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have light dinners• Get yourself a smart alarm clock• Avoid blue screens before bedtime
	Physical exercise	Make sure to move and exercise regularly. While you may not be able to go to your favorite gym anymore, there are great workout routines you can do from home, ranging from stretching exercises to yoga and high intensity interval training
	Nutrition	Make keeping a healthy diet a priority while working from home to stay healthy und keep your energy levels high. Make sure to set aside enough time for shopping and cooking (e.g. agree a 1h lunch break with your team and block it in everyone's calendars)
Purpose		Stay in touch with your loved ones e.g. by giving daily "lunch-break" calls to friends and family. This way you can have some fun and make sure you get your "daily dose" of social interaction
		Connect with colleagues also beyond work-related topics e.g. hold a virtual game night
		Support each other within and beyond work , e.g. connect with a colleague, who is struggling with the current situation. Caring and supporting each other will help us find purpose in these challenging times and navigate this crisis together

Be sure to send out regular pulse checks in the form of online questionnaires (e.g. via survey monkey) or weekly check-in session with the team to check on how they are doing across the different dimensions

5 practical things for you as a leader to embark on this journey

- 1 Create space to connect, e.g. a virtual coffee break**
Translate typical physical meetings into the virtual space, e.g., by having a team meeting every day at 3 p.m. that is strictly dedicated time for personal chats
- 2 Get personal and share a bit of yourself**
Start meetings with an honest discussion how everyone feels, set the tone, be vulnerable and share something personal (can be a highlight or a current challenge)
- 3 Invest time in one-on-ones**
Call direct reports and encourage them to do the same, get in touch with other people from your organization / network to show that you care – now is the time to reconnect
- 4 Nominate a wellbeing officer**
Create some form of (part-time) dedicated capacity to select and drive adoption of the right tools / resources for your team, incl. the formation of new healthy and productive habits
- 5 Protect the asset**
Role model self-care, block time to recharge (e.g. 1 hour family lunch, exercise), take care of yourself to take care of others

Keeping oneself engaged while working remote

How do you continue to bring your A-Game to work when remote?

Best practices

Dress up

You have to look your professional best when on video calls through the day. Continue your daily routine the way you would, when you go to office – do your morning routine, dress up and then start working from your home-office desk

Never work out of bed

Even if no calls scheduled for the day, never work out of bed. It becomes difficult for your mind to relax while actually going to bed then, since it continues to associate the bed as a place where you work.

Pre-schedule time for breaks

Slot in break time in your calendars, else you will not get up from your desk.

Build a permanent, ergonomic work space

With remote working expected to stay around longer, try to set up a designate area of your home with a comfortable office chair and desk. Consider using a laptop riser

Plan your daily work schedule

Identify what needs to get done every day and make sure you do it. Prepare a personal to-do list for the day

Set clear rules for working uninterrupted

Align with your family on times when you must work without being disturbed, e.g., by using "red flag" cards when you need time to work concentrated

Draw a line between work family/leisure time

Set clear rules on your working times and align it with your team

Have fixed routines

Implement "rituals", e.g., to mark the end of your day by closing the laptop and leaving your temporary office

Align on expectations with family members

Discuss openly the expectations your family has on time for work and time for spending "quality time" with your kids or partner



According to the [Owl Labs 2019 State Of Remote Work report](#), you end up over-compensating for not being seen at work by working more number of hours when you are remote.

There is also an increased threat of loneliness and impostor syndrome, which can lead to risks of depression and burnout.

Agenda

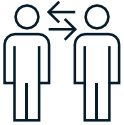





- Personal productivity and emotional wellbeing
- **Professional collaboration**
- Enabling technology
- Next steps

Smart remote working Best Practices and Daily Organization principles for effective distributed interactions

(X) Detailed next

Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">① Leaders have an essential role in setting direction, energizing the team & connecting the dots② Split large groups into smaller groups of <5-7 people organized against concrete outcomes, to maximize efficient communication<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create clear & shared understanding on roles & responsibilities in the group
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster open communication, transparency & good-will• Get commitment from all employees to be self-disciplined and responsive (e.g. pro-actively provide updates, be responsive to others' questions)• Conduct frequent retrospectives & collective learnings to improve the way of working
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">③ Structure and follow a cadence, incl. daily check-ins/check-outs and weekly reviews<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a weekly sprint plan and prioritized backlog, with a dashboard that allows to identify blockers/risks easily and focus issue-solving time on those④ Result-oriented performance evaluation can improve employee productivities while working remote – OKRs are a proven mechanism for remote teams<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align on virtual team norms to make sure they are working efficiently and sustainably together• Create a widely accessible “single source of truth” across process and content, using digital tools
Effective communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⑤ Use full repertoire of remote communication channels and tools. Consider complexity of the topic, output, reaction time, and people preference when deciding which format to use (e.g., VC, screensharing, joint document editing, etc.)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setup virtual rooms and facilitate effective remote problem solving & co-creation• Use group chats / channels for persistent, seamless real-time communication in small topic-focused channels• Keep safe through cybersecurity awareness & best practices during remote work

1: Leaders have an essential role in setting direction, energizing the team & connecting the dots

	Descriptions	Leading company examples
Setting direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear directions: Leaders need to set clear direction for remote teams to pursue common goals• Frequent check-ins: Increase the level of communication and goal setting compare to working on site, i.e. have weekly or even daily check-ins	 <p>When remote working, Alibaba increase the frequency of employees review to weekly basis to ensure clear goals and progress are on track</p>
Energize the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psychological safety: Lead by example of the company's actions and increase open communication with employees• Delegate decision making power: Involve employees in decision making for empowerment• Intrinsic motivation: In addition to traditional extrinsic rewards and incentives, use intrinsic motivation, such as streamline workflow, clear R&R, clear span of control, and meaningful tasks to motivate employees• Replicate normal team setting, such turn on all team member's webcam	 <p>Ctrip CEO announced to decrease her and other key executives' salary to 0 until business operation resume to pre-crisis level in order to demonstrate confidence in Ctrip to survive the crisis to employees</p>
Connecting the dots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactive problem solve: engage with remote team frequently to understand roadblocks and progress, proactively offer assistance and be in problem-solving mode to provide value• Mobilize resources: Gather existing resources and have an overview of all progresses and interdependencies of each workstream, connect teams together to solve problems together	 <p>Coinbase CEO published company's COVID-19 response plan on internet blog in a move to create transparency and help customers, partners & employees in decision making</p>

2: Small cross-functional teams are essential to get work done while minimizing need for communication

Illustrative

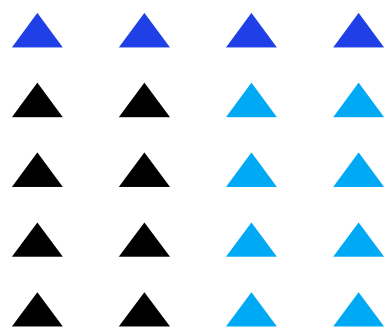
▲ Role 2 ▲ Role 1 ▲ Team Lead

Principles of small cross-functional team setup

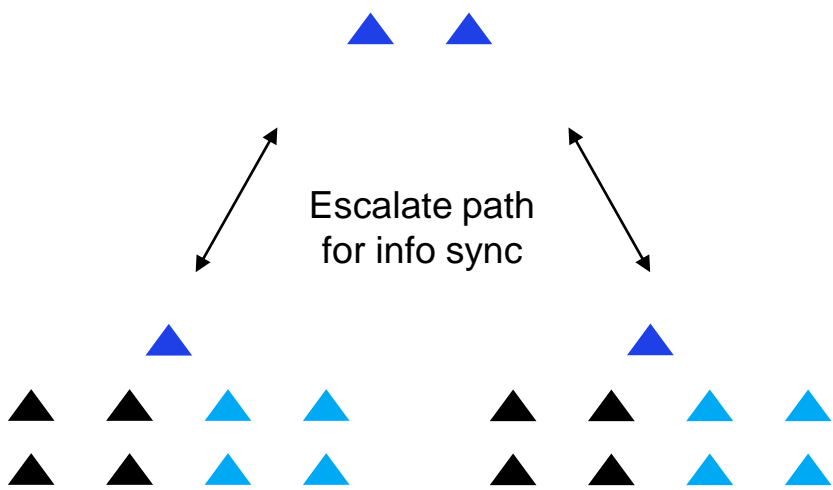
- Define clear, measurable business objectives
- Set a small team size: approx. 5 people can work efficiently together remotely
- Minimize dependency on the other teams
- Have all competences necessary to complete work in the team
- Have more T-shaped specialists: full-stack vs back-end / front-end



Status Quo: Large team of 20 people



Future: Small cross-functional team setup¹



1. Cross-functional teams should ideally have fewer than eight members, but no more than nine total.

3: Example: Agendas for daily check-in and check-out

Agenda “Good morning” meeting	Minutes
Daily emotional check-in , e.g., What am I feeling ? How is the COVID-19 situation impacting me? What do I most need to work effectively from home?	5'
Daily task management Review ToDos from previous day List all ToDos for the day and prioritize Assign ToDos to team members	8-10'
Daily meeting schedule Review all meetings for the day (use "hearts – minds" framework for agenda setting) Confirm who should attend and lead each meeting (to be decided at least 1 day before)	2-5'
Meeting rules Not more than 20 minutes Led by team lead Output captured on virtual to-do list or whiteboard	

Agenda “Remains of the day” meeting	Minutes
Progress update Check progress on the day's To Do list Update on alignment/consensus	3'
Evening task planning Prioritize remaining tasks and define corrective actions, if needed Review task ownership to balance workload Estimate finish time and plan logistics for dinner	7'
Team spirit Share one highlight from the day, e.g., breakthrough insight or end product created Check team energy – did we get the best from each other today?	5'
Meeting rules Not more than 15 minutes Initiated and led by any member of the team No problem solving	

3: Emotional check-in example on "How are you feeling?"

Ashamed	Distracted	Heartbroken	Guarded	Shaky	Dislike	Calm	Compassionate	Energized
Flustered	Exhausted	Heavy hearted	Hesitant	Shocked	Edgy	Centered	Satisfied	Engaged
Uncomfortable	Fatigued	Hurt lonely	Horried	Startled	Enraged	Comfortable	Friendly	Enthusiastic
Uneasy	Helpless	Miserable	Insecure	Surprised	Exasperated	Composed	Loving	Excited
Unsettled	Hopeless	Upset	Leery	Tense	Frustrated	Content	Moved	Fascinated
Guilty	Indifferent	Wretched	Lost	Terrified	Furious	Relaxed	Sympathetic	Happy
Regretful	Listless	Afraid	Mystified	Torn	Grumpy	Relieved	Warm	Intrigued
Remorseful	Numb	Alarmed	Nervous	Troubled	Impatient	Tender	Absorbed	Invigorated
Apathetic	Overwhelmed	Anxious	Panicked	Worried	Irate	Encouraged	Alive	Joyful
Bored	Sleepy	Apprehensive	Paralyzed	Envious	Irked	Hopeful	Amazed	Pleased
Burnt out	Uninterested	Baffled	Perplexed	Expectant	Irritable	Inspired	Amused	Refreshed
Depleted	Weary	Bewildered	Perturbed	Longing	Jealous	Invigorated	Wonder	Rejuvenated
Depressed	Withdrawn	Dazed	Petrified	Pining	Outraged	Motivated	Fulfilled	Relaxed
Despondent	Worn out	Discombobulated	Puzzled	Restless	Resentful	Motivated	Awed	Renewed
Disappointed	Agony	Distress	Rattled	Turbulent	Troubled	Optimistic	Enchanted	Spellbound
Discouraged	Appalled	Disturbed	Repulsed	Agitated	Unhappy	Wishful	Energetic	Stimulated
Disheartened	Devastated	Fragile	Reserved	Bitter	Self-conscious	Appreciative		Thrilled
Dismayed	Gloomy	Frightened	Scared	Contempt	Alert	Grateful		
Distant	Grief		Sensitive	Disgusted	Curious	Thankful		
					Strong	Touched		

4: OKRs can be used to effectively set and communicate goals and outcomes pursued by teams

	What it is	Business examples	Sport examples
KPI	Holistic and fixed list of measures of success we know we need to meet day-in, day-out	Revenue OPEX Utilization Headcount	Golf handicap League points Training hours
OKR	A bold Objective set to achieve a step-change in performance, touching one or more KPIs. Backed up by trackable Key Results (leading and lagging)	“Reduce 20k annual contact center calls via digital adoption” “Launch new product X to increase revenue by 20%”	“Improve swing accuracy by rebuilding technique” “Increase weekly training hours through moving closer to gym”






Setting OKRs allows to link results & outcomes

Cascading OKRs requires sync across the organization

In remote model, OKRs for teams need to be easily understood and understandable through a common single source of truth (e.g. on Confluence)

An initial adjustment of KPIs and OKRs may be caused by the underlying reasons for emergency remote work

5: New ways of working – Use full repertoire of remote communication channels and tools

Channel	Best for...	Communication considerations Time to create vs time to process information Synchronous vs Asynchronous 1:1, 1:N, or N:N Structured vs stream Formal vs chatty Urgent vs important Visual vs spoken vs written vs non-verbal clues
 1:1 Call / VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual catch-ups and building relationships• Discussing sensitive and difficult topics	
 Video conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem solving and co-creation using shared screen or whiteboard• Weekly planning and review sessions• Decision meetings• Workshops and trainings• Team talks and retrospectives	
 Chat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process syndication• Urgent questions and seeking guidance• Keeping up to date in real-time• Social team talk	
 Video captures & voice notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showcasing and explaining work• Guidance to the team from managers with limited time• Debriefs after meetings that some may have missed	
 eMail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates and status to large groups of people• Formal communication inside and outside the company	

Agenda

- Personal productivity and emotional wellbeing
- Professional collaboration
- **Enabling technology**
- Next steps

To enable digital remote working tools requires a concerted effort between Business leaders, CIO, Infosec & Legal

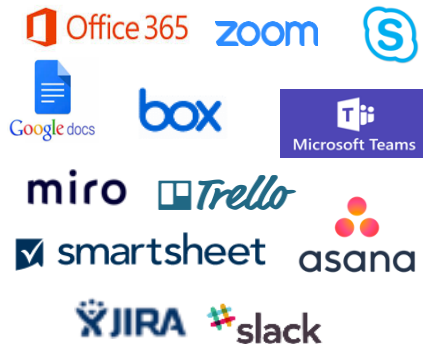
Remote workers require SaaS collaboration tools...

Multiple tools required for effective remote collaboration (e.g., video, realtime communication, file sharing, task management, etc.)

SaaS makes these easily available to teams

Users need them fast

Mix of best-of-breed and suite solutions



...yet security & sustainability considerations are crucial in choosing

Many **regulations and risks** need to be considered (not exhaustive)

- GDPR and local data privacy regulations
- Data retention regulation by industry
- Data residency
- User access management

As a result **not all tools are equally suitable** for all situations

- In particular, B2C tools do not provide the enterprise grade management of user experience
- End-to-end users experiences need to be defined carefully along with priority use cases
- Avoid overwhelming users with siloed technologies
- Ensure IT can support the new tools with lower cost channels



Approaches for rolling out

Create **special taskforce** with CIO, Infosec, Legal & business leaders to prioritize use cases & tools, and move through vetting & enterprise negotiation funnels quickly

Prioritize **use cases** and implement tools for end-2-end experiences

Clearly define rules around **data use** on different tools






























Run awareness campaigns on secure working practices (e.g., via screensaver, intranet, online certification)

Leverage **power users** to create **tutorials** and company best practices to **drive adoption**

Invest into underlying infrastructure (e.g., API-based single sign-on and user management services)

Business teams need to adopt a suite of digital tools for remote collaboration and to create a virtual team room

Not Exhaustive

Content creation	Video conferencing	Document sharing	Channel-based communication ¹	Task management	Polling
   	 <p>approved:</p>       	  	    	    	   
<p>Joint document creation</p> <p>Live co-editing</p> <p>Joint white-boarding</p> <p>Central knowledge space</p>	<p>Problem solving and co-creation using shared screen or whiteboard</p> <p>Weekly planning and review sessions</p> <p>Decision meetings</p> <p>Workshops and trainings</p>	<p>Sharing files and documents</p> <p>Structured repository of information</p> <p>Version control management</p> <p>Access across organizations</p>	<p>Process syndication</p> <p>Urgent questions and seeking guidance</p> <p>Keeping up to date in real-time</p> <p>Social team talk</p> <p>Stream-based repository of knowledge</p>	<p>Keeping track of and assigning tasks</p> <p>Backlog prioritization</p> <p>Performance management</p> <p>Project management</p> <p>Checklists</p> <p>Single source of status</p>	<p>Interactive presentations</p> <p>Retrospectives and team learnings</p> <p>Interactive Q&A</p> <p>Engagement</p> <p>Polls</p>

Enterprise SaaS that allows to scale rapidly & securely

Most tools can integrate with each other and single sign-on

1. Chat software (e.g., WhatsApp, WeChat, Line) lack security and therefore should be used only for non-confidential chats, i.e., coordination/logistics

Working remotely and securely requires team members to follow common sense security practices

Online collaboration

Only use **approved tools** and ensure you **share only intended materials** (i.e., share apps rather than your whole screen)
Mute notifications from communications tools to avoid mistakenly showing internal chats or communication to third parties
Use enterprise solutions where possible and **avoid using free conference or screen sharing** services as they may not have adequate data protection

Document sharing

Use **document sharing tool as the best options** and email as the next best option
When not absolutely sure of communication channel, **encrypt files**
Ensure to **check access lists** on document sharing tools and **distribution lists** on email
Review emails and documents for **professionalism** whenever sharing internally or externally
Do not use unapproved tools for document sharing because they may be insecure

Using business partner's tools

Do not use business partner's tools (e.g., their versions of Slack, Jira, etc.) **without explicit internal permission**
Ensure to **setup strong passwords** and use **appropriate login mechanisms** (e.g., security tokens) for their tools
Do not install tools from business partners (e.g., their VPN client) without explicit internal permission

Agenda

- Personal productivity and emotional wellbeing
- Professional collaboration
- Enabling technology
- **Next steps**

Next steps to consider



Adapt good practices for remote working

Implement practical tips for working remotely efficiently

Leverage good practices on organizing teams, establishing cadence with daily/weekly rituals, and maintain team morale with aligned team norms. Make sure that your technology environment is capable of supporting a pro-longed time of working remotely

Re-structure your teams to reflect the "new normal"

Try to form small teams of approx. 5 people and re-align teams based on your expected work load priorities for the coming months



Focus on employee productivity and wellbeing

Plan initiatives and support for employee productivity and well being

Appoint responsibility to make sure dimensions of your employee's Mind, Body and Purpose are covered in your company – dedicated coaching sessions can help



Reconsider your performance management approach

Short-term: Consider impact of remote work in goal setting and reviews

Counting hours does not work in a remote working environment. Start moving to aligning on targets for the day and the week with teams. Start considering shift in working mode in annual performance reviews

Mid-term: Develop a performance management system based on OKRs

Review your performance management and consider applying the proven "objective - key result" approach that successful companies with long experience in remote working have applied

Q&A

When joining from laptop or mobile app

Use the chat feature to ask your question



Backup

Measures and resources to create a balanced life for employees while working from home (1/2)

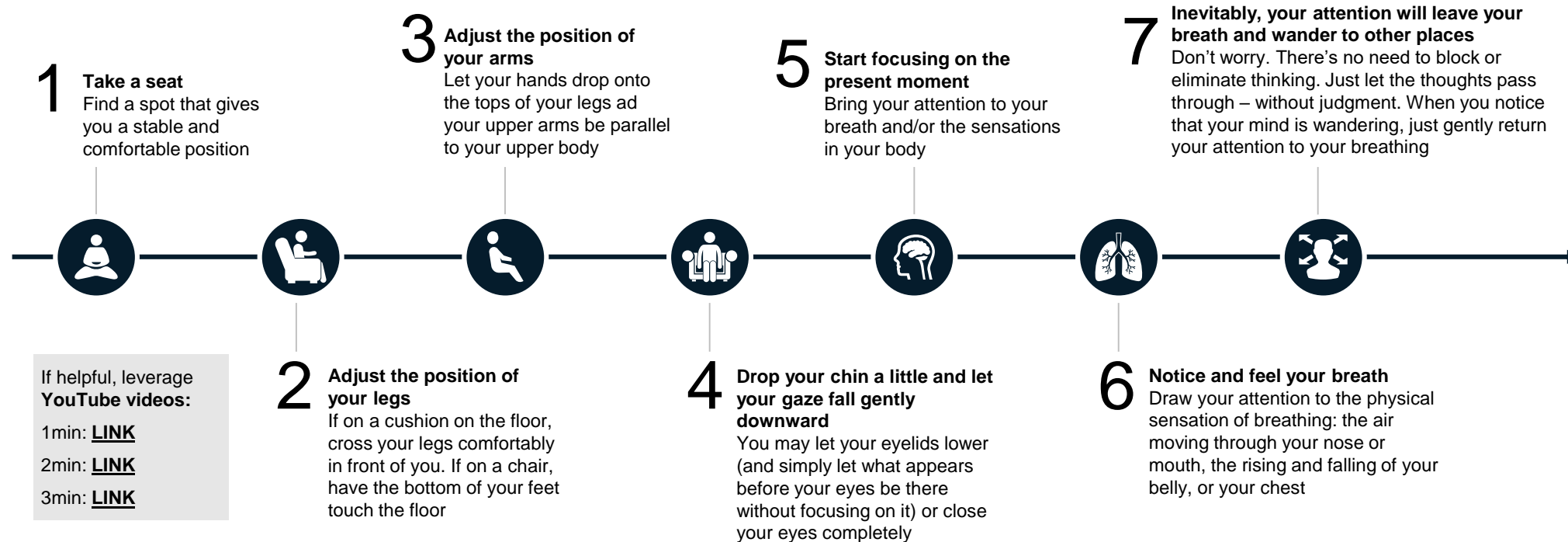
Dimension	Sub-dimension	Hacks for a balanced life in a remote setup	Supporting resources
Mind	Mindfulness	Use the time you would otherwise spend on transport (e.g. driving to work) in the morning to try out (or consistently practice) mindfulness – it will help you be fully in the moment when connecting remotely with colleagues or in-person with your loved ones at home	1
		Try out one of the many mindfulness apps like Headspace or Calm or use a short meditation exercise to practice mindfulness at home	2
	Space for renewal and connection	Make sure to draw a line between work and family/ leisure time even when consistently working from home – the separation will help you enjoy the leisure moments more . E.g. you can try to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...set yourself clear rules on when to start and when to finish work and communicate these to your team ...implement a “ritual”, which marks the end of your day, e.g. pack up your working station to turn your temporary office back into your home 	
		Do (remote) tune-in and tune-out questions with your team in order to strengthen your connection and to create mental space	3
		Give yourself a break and resist the urge to “binge” crisis news – while it is essential to keep informed, it can also be crucial to take our minds off things at times	4

Measures and resources to create a balanced life for employees while working from home (2/2)

Dimension	Sub-dimension	Hacks for a balanced life in a remote setup	Supporting resources
Body	Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the comfort of your home and the increased predictability to not only improve the quantity but also the quality of your sleep... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have light dinners Get yourself a smart alarm clock Avoid blue screens before bedtime 	5 6
	Physical exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to move and exercise regularly. While you may not be able to go to your favorite gym anymore, there are great workout routines you can do from home, ranging from stretching exercises to yoga and high intensity interval training 	7 8
	Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make keeping a healthy diet a priority while working from home to stay healthy und keep your energy levels high. Make sure to set aside enough time for shopping and cooking (e.g. agree a 1h lunch break with your team and block it in everyone's calendars) 	9 10
Purpose		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in touch with your loved ones e.g. by giving daily "lunch-break" calls to friends and family. This way you can have some fun and make sure you get your "daily dose" of social interaction Connect with colleagues also beyond work-related topics e.g. hold a virtual game night Support each other within and beyond work, e.g. connect with a colleague, who is struggling with the current situation. Caring and supporting each other will help us find purpose in these challenging times and navigate this crisis together 	11

Be sure to send out regular pulse checks in the form of online questionnaires (e.g. via survey monkey) or weekly check-in session with the team to check on how they are doing across the different dimensions

1: Mindfulness: Meditation at home 101 – Train your brain to focus on the present moment



5 minutes per session is already enough and practicing regularly will make a difference



2: Mindfulness: Apps, books and other resources



Apps

Buddhify

Guided meditation for different parts of your day (e.g., travel, taking a break)



Mindfulness app

Guided meditation tracks, reminders



Simply being

Guided meditation tracks and music and sounds to create a meditation friendly atmosphere



Insight timer

Tibetan singing bowls, charts to plot progress, robust mindfulness community



Headspace

"Personal trainer for your mind"



Books and courses

The Equanimous Mind

by Manish Chopra (McK Senior Partner)



One Second Ahead: Enhance Your Performance at Work with Mindfulness

by Rasmus Hougaard



Mindfulness in Plain English

by Bhante Henepola Gunaratana



Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world

by Mark Williams & Danny Penman



3: Space for renewal and connection: Morning tune-in and evening tune-out

Why it matters

On average, our minds spend wandering 46.9% of time ¹	Over 50% of employees lack a sense of meaning at work ²	Employees with lower feelings of loneliness perform better in teams, relationship building and day to day work ³
---	---	--

What you can do


Start your day with a tune-in question, e.g.:


- What is your hope for the day?
- How do you feel?
- How optimistic are you about today?
- What is one thing that will prevent you to be fully present today?
- What is the strongest underlying emotion you are feeling?


End your day with a tune-out question, e.g.:

- Which word best describes your today?
- What energized you today?
- What made you smile today?
- Which conversation made you feel joy today?
- What gave you a sense of belonging today?
- What are you grateful for?

How it helps you

**Bring you back to the present**

**Create mental space**

**Deepen personal connection**

¹ Killingsworth & Gilbert (2010) " A wandering mind is an unhappy mind"
² The New York Times (2014). "Why you hate work"
³ Cal State University and Wharton study (2011), Work Loneliness and Employee Performance by Hakan Ozcelik and Sigal Barsade

4: Space for renewal and connection: Apps, books and other resources



Apps



Freedom
Reclaim focus and productivity by blocking certain websites and Apps from your phone/ computer



Moment
Measures time spent on your phone and on which apps and gives you short, daily exercises to help you use your phone in a healthy way



Calm
Helps users incorporate meditation into their everyday lives



Insight Timer
Incorporates the world's largest library of more than 27k guided meditations with 4.7k teachers



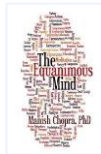
Books



Digital Minimalism: On Living Better with Less Technology
By Cal Newport



One Second Ahead: Enhance Your Performance at Work with Mindfulness
By Gillian Coutts, Jacqueline Carter, and Rasmus Hougaard



The Equanimous Mind
By Manish Chopra



Videos



Unlocking Productive Habits through Mindfulness Meditation
By Manish Chopra
[link](#)



Digital Minimalism
By Cal Newport
[link](#)

THOMAS HÜBL

Transforming Stress
online course
[link](#)



Connected, but alone?
By Sherry Turkle
[link](#)

5: Emotional flexibility: Apps, books and other resources



Apps

Happify



Creates your baseline with a short survey and gives you daily exercises to keep your emotions in check

Gratitude journal 365



Allows you to keep a gratitude journal and reminds you to do them daily

Youper



Engages the user in quick conversations and uses artificial intelligence to personalize various psychological techniques

Self-help for Anxiety Management



Users build their own 24-hour anxiety toolkit to track anxious thoughts and behaviors

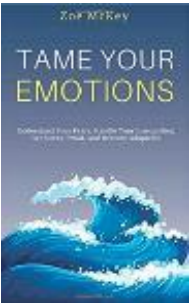
Pacifica



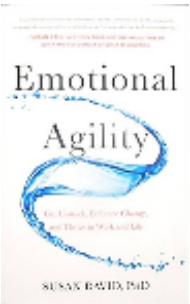
Includes guided mindful meditation programs, a mood and health tracker and peer support community. Allows to recognize feelings and taking positive steps.



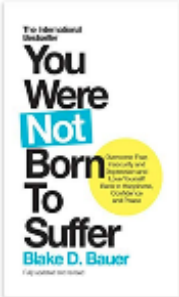
Books and courses



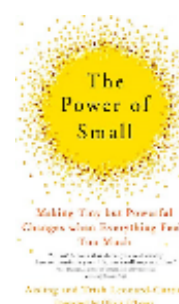
Tame Your Emotions: Understand Your Fears, Handle Your Insecurities, Get Stress-proof, and Become Adaptable by Zoe McKey



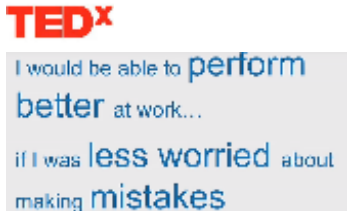
Emotional Agility by Susan David



You Were Not Born to Suffer by Blake D. Bauer



The Power of Small by Aisling Leonard-Curtin



Advancing Authentic Confidence Through Emotional Flexibility by Jacqueline Brassey

6: Sleep: Sleep is not only about quantity, but also about quality - Several small interventions that should help you to improve your sleep quality

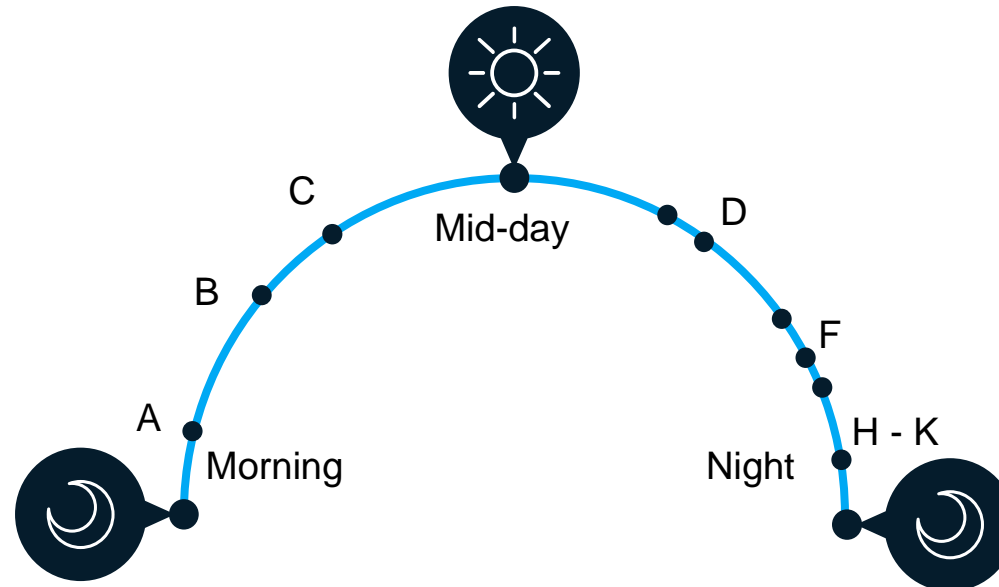
A | No snoozing

B | Get sufficient daylight in the morning

C | Do not have a coffee before 1h after waking up

D | No more caffeine after 3PM (impacts sleep time)

F | Avoid vigorous physical activity after 6PM



G | Ensure a wind-down routine when you prepare for going to bed

H | No more blue light (screens) after 9PM (download Flux app)

I | 5-10 min meditation before bed

J | Keep a regular rhythm, go to sleep at ~same time every night

K | Ensure cool room temperature (~18°C) and complete darkness

7. Sleep: Apps, books and other resources



Apps

Sleep monitor/ alarm apps

Collects sleep data using user and sensor inputs(e.g., microphone) to understand sleep patterns and provide less disruptive alarms



Sleep Cycle

Calming apps

Provides tools to help users fall asleep (e.g., audio, visual) and in some cases stay asleep (e.g., tailoring sound to specific phases of sleep cycle)



Relax Melodies

Sleep training

Combines sleep monitoring with education and sleep planning to help users reprogram their sleep habits



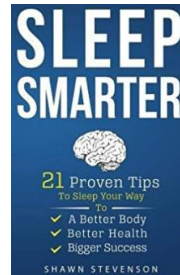
Shleep



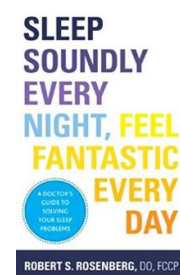
Books and courses



Why we sleep
by Matthew Walker



Sleep Smarter
by Shawn Stevenson



**Sleep Soundly Every Night,
Feel Fantastic Every Day**
by Robert S. Rosenberg



**Ted Talk: The benefits of a
good night's sleep**

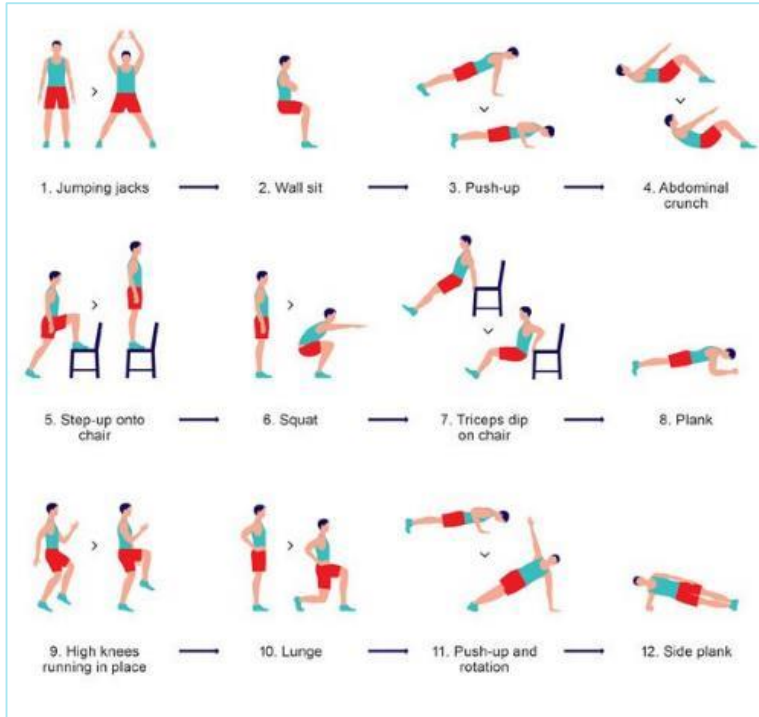
8: Physical exercise: Stretching regularly helps you to maintain your flexibility and has a positive impact on your performance and energy/stress levels



- **Stretch regularly** at your desk/ in the office
- Get up **once per hour** and run through the **stretching routine**
- Stretching **increases your overall energy level**, **reduces stress** and **remain agile** over longer periods of time
- **Make it a team effort** – jointly stretch and remind your colleagues to do so
- On top – Stretching after a workout **helps relax the muscles** and **promotes fast regeneration** after sport

8: Physical exercise: High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) Guide

12 minutes with lasting impact



The **HIIT¹** concept is **perfect for busy individuals**

- Give it **all you have...**
- ...in a very **short timeframe...**
- ...with **active rests...**
- ...and **no gym needed**

Complete the cycle on the left once

- Beginner: 40 sec exercise, 20 sec rest
- Intermediate: 45 sec exercise, 15 sec rest
- Advanced: 50 sec exercise, 10 sec rest
- Pro: Repeat



1 – Get yourself an Interval Timer App² which will tell you when to exercise/rest

2 – Remotely pair up with your teammate(s) to power through these 12 minutes together

Physical exercise should be done at your own fitness level and if it causes you pain you should stop

¹ High Intensity Interval Training | ² e.g., Runtastic Timer App

8: Physical exercise: Short stretching exercises

Why it matters

Low-intensity exercise has been shown to **increase energy levels by 20%** & decrease feelings of fatigue by up to 65%¹

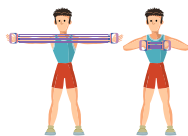
Exercise during the day has also been conclusively linked to **better same-day academic performance**²

Sports and exercise lead to **beneficial changes in hormones**, neurotransmitters, and endorphins³

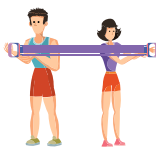
What you can do

(5 min exercises to do in your home office with an elastic band)

A Reverse butterfly



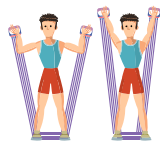
B Partner Core Twist



C Bicep Curls



D Shoulder Press



E Sit to Stand



How it helps you



Increase energy



Reduce stress



**Reduce body pain
(from sitting)**

Physical exercise should be done at your own fitness level and if it causes you pain you should stop

¹ The New York Times

² "Brain Boost: Sport and physical activity enhance children's learning" (University of Western Australia)

³ Wilmore, J.H., Costill, D.L. Physiology of Sport and Exercise (2004)

9: Physical exercise: Apps, books and other resources



Apps

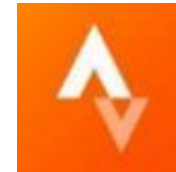
7-Minute Workout Apps

There are over 30 high intensity workout apps with 7 minutes of daily exercise



Strava Running & Cycling

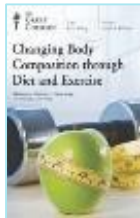
Tracking app for runners and bikers



Note: There are 100s of physical exercise apps, covering different aspects of physical exercise. It is important to find those most useful to you



Books and courses



Changing Body Composition through Diet and Exercise (course online)

by Michael Ornsbee



The Lore of Running

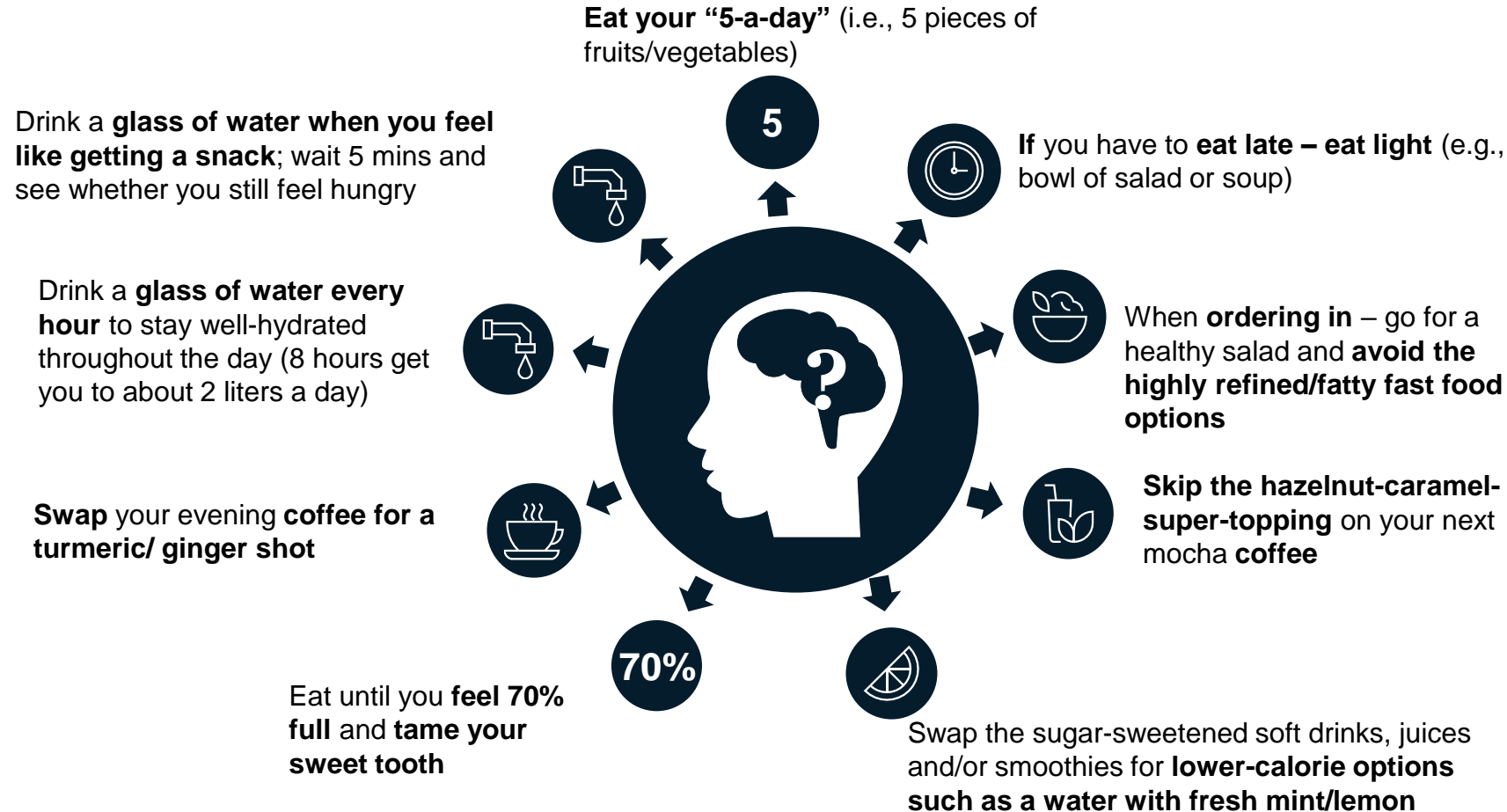
by Timothy Noakes



Bigger Leaner Stronger: (Strength Training method)

by Michael Matthews

10: Nutrition: Improve your nutrition with some simple tips ...



11: Nutrition: Apps, books and other resources



Apps

MyFitnessPal

Tracks diet and exercise to determine optimal caloric intake and nutrients for the users' goals.



Caliper

Allows you to precisely measure your body fat percentage (see right hand table)

The image shows a screenshot of the Caliper app interface. It features a table with columns for 'Age', 'Sex', 'Height', 'Weight', 'Body Fat %', and 'Calories'. The table is filled with numerical data. Above the table, there are instructions on how to use the app, including a diagram of a person standing with a caliper. The text says: 'How to measure: Stand about 1.5 m from the wall, the corner of the right foot back (left). Place the caliper on the right thigh, about 10 cm above the knee, and push down until the skin is taut. Read the value on the scale. Repeat on the left thigh. Average the two readings. This is your body fat percentage. Repeat every 2-3 days. Note: Body fat percentage is not the same as BMI. BMI is a measure of body mass index, not body fat. BMI is calculated as weight (kg) divided by height (m) squared. BMI is a poor indicator of body fat percentage. Use the Caliper app for a more accurate measurement of body fat percentage. See the right hand table for more information on how to use the app.' Below the table, there is a barcode and the text 'www.caliperapp.com'.

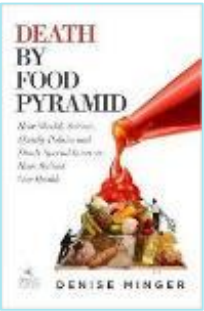


Kitchen Stories

Provides healthy and easy to cook recipes for inspiration



Books and courses



Death by food pyramid

by Denise Minger



Therapeutic Fasting - Solving the Two-Compartment Problem

by Jason Fung

12: Purpose: Apps, books and other resources



Apps



The Meaning Of Life Experiment
Helps discover life purpose for a more satisfying and fulfilled life



Life Purpose App
Powerful tool for understanding your life and the forces that shape it. Helps to find new meaning, purpose, and direction in their lives



Jool Health
JOOL's flagship mobile and web applications accelerate positive change across a range of key life factors that impact the performance



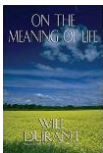
The Kindness App
Provides suggestions to help inspire – develop a routine effort to make the world nicer, ten day compassion challenge etc.



Books



Man's Search for Meaning
by Viktor Frankl



On the Meaning of Life
by Will Durant



The Last Lecture
by Randy Pausch



Dare to Be Kind: How Extraordinary Compassion Can Transform Our World
by Lizzie Velasquez



Community: The Structure of Belonging
by Peter Block



Videos



A life full of Purpose
By Rick Warren
[link](#)

McKinsey
& Company

