7 Rituals To End The Workday When You Work From Home
Tips on how to shut down for the evening when you’re working from home instead of the office.

Pre-pandemic, I often bemoaned my daily commute to and from the office. It wasn’t terribly long, fortunately, but I felt like that time in the car could be better spent doing something else. Now, after working from home for eight months and counting, I sometimes miss having that 40 minutes in the evening to listen to music, catch up with loved ones on the phone or just zone out. That built-in part of my routine physically and mentally separated my workday from my off-hours.

But when your living room or kitchen table has become your office — as is the case for many who are WFH long-term — the line between work and downtime becomes increasingly blurred.

“While some commutes can be grueling, the benefit it provides us is transition time between work and nonwork time,” clinical psychologist Jessica DiVento — mental health program manager at Google — told HuffPost. “It signals to our brain that we are shifting into another part of our day, and helps our brains orient towards thinking about what’s to come — like what to cook for dinner, time with our families, social events or that TV show we look forward to watching. This transition can help us be more present with our lives outside of work.”

So how can you create that boundary for yourself when you’re working remotely? We asked DiVento and other experts to share some rituals to help mark the end of the workday.

1. Make a list of any outstanding tasks.
When working from home, it’s easy to fall into the trap of trying to finish one more thing before you finally power down for the night. That one small task soon bleeds into another and next thing you know, it’s almost 8 p.m. and you haven’t eaten dinner yet. To remedy this, finish only what you absolutely need to get done in a given day. Then jot down any lingering tasks so you won’t forget about them and address them in the morning with fresh eyes.

“To help limit the desire to keep going until you are completely burned out for the night, try making a list at the end of your workday to help get you started tomorrow,” said Jesse Kahn, director at the Gender & Sexuality Therapy Center in New York City. “What are the things that need wrapping up that you weren’t able to get to today? What are things you want to remember to check on? This can help ease the worry over things not getting done or falling through the cracks, as well as signal to you that this is the end of work time.”
2. Put away your computer and other work stuff.
When your devices are within reach, it can be tempting to log back on after work hours. Instead, store your laptop, work phone and any papers or files where you can’t see them. Out of sight, out of mind.

“For example, you could be watching your favorite TV show and mindlessly grab your phone or laptop to answer emails,” DiVento said. “Or, as you’re sitting down to eat, you might be tempted to respond to a ping from a colleague, despite wanting to be present for your family while at the dinner table.”

Creating some physical distance from your work materials will allow you to more fully wind down and recharge.

“Clearer boundaries in this way also helps reduce work-related stress, which in turn has positive effects on our mental and physical health,” DiVento added.

3. Take a walk around the block.
Step away from your designated work area and get some fresh air. When Lee Chambers, an environmental psychologist and well-being consultant in the U.K., leaves for his evening stroll, he’s literally and metaphorically shutting the door on his professional responsibilities for the night.

“I look around my neighborhood and feel the wind hitting my face, my feet pushing off the ground, the decreasing light shining in my eyes,” he said. “With all my senses ignited and a clearer mind, I unlock my door, walking into my home, and ask my children and wife how their day was. This anchors me psychologically into family time, which lasts until I have put the children in bed.”

Instead of exercising in the morning, you could save your workout for this transition time, said Katharine Agostino, owner of Silicon Valley Executive Coaching.

“Many clients are utilizing Peloton or other online fitness solutions from home and find that working out from 5 to 6 p.m. helps them destress from the day and approach the evening with renewed energy,” she said.

Naz Beheshti — owner of Prananaz Corporate Wellness Solutions — rolls out her yoga mat for some post-workday movement.

“I like to combine yoga, pilates and barre for anywhere from 5 to 30 minutes while listening to my favorite playlist,” she said. “No matter what type of day I’ve had, movement combined with music is the quickest and surest way to elevate my mood.”
5. Call or FaceTime a loved one.
Seeing a friend or relative’s face after a long day of work, albeit virtually, can change your whole mood and help take your mind off work matters. If you’re not up for more screen time, a phone call works too — just hearing their voice can be comforting.

“While you may be on several video conferences a day and screen time may be the last thing you or your eyes want more of, the opportunity to discuss personal or humorous topics with someone you’re close to rather than talking business can go a long way,” said Symonne Kennedy, psychotherapist at The Gender & Sexuality Therapy Center. “Sometimes a video call with friends or family at the end of the day can provide just the humanizing, regenerative and connective jolt we need to put the workday behind us.”

6. Light a candle and play some music.
Help your mind shift from the go-go-go work mode to the slower pace of the evening hours by creating a spa-like atmosphere.

“Light a candle and play some music for a period of ‘destressing time’ right after work,” Kahn said. “You can sit and do a few deep-breathing exercises, stretch a bit, drink a big glass of water, dance around to the music, take a shower or bath, or any other ritual that feels meaningful to you. Ultimately, it can be an opportunity to get any pent-up tension or stress out before shifting onto the rest of your day.”

7. Practice deep breathing or meditation.
Setting aside some time at the end of the day — even if it’s just a few minutes — can change your state of mind.

“I take a pause and meditate,” Beheshti said. “This is my second meditation of the day since I start each morning with my [transcendental meditation] practice for 20 minutes. Meditation calms and energizes me simultaneously. At the end of the workday, it helps me let go of the day, unwind, and become present in the moment.”

If you’re not into mediation, taking some deep, intentional breaths can be just as powerful. Try a technique called “box breathing”: Breathe in for four seconds, hold the air in your lungs for four seconds, breathe out for four seconds, and then hold your lungs empty for four seconds. Do this for five minutes.
These protein packed Chicken Parmesan Rolls (also know as chicken rolls) are wrapped in pizza dough with marinara and mozzarella cheese, so good!

**TIPS:**

Chicken Rolls or Chicken Parm Rolls are basically chicken Parmesan wrapped in pizza dough. They’re usually made with breaded fried chicken cutlets, which makes them anything but light. To make it healthier use grilled organic chicken breast and homemade yogurt pizza dough instead.

**INGREDIENTS**

**For the dough:**
1 cup all purpose or white whole wheat flour, plus more for dusting (5 oz)
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup Stonyfield non-fat Greek yogurt, not regular, drained if there’s any liquid

**For the filling:**
8 ounces organic grilled chicken breast, sliced (about 2 cups)
1/2 cup marinara sauce
3/4 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

**For the egg wash:**
1 large egg
sesame seeds

**Nutrition Information**

Serving: 1 roll, Calories: 259 kcal, Carbohydrates: 28 g, Protein: 27.5 g, Fat: 4.5 g, Saturated Fat: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 55.5 mg, Sodium: 574 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 2.5 g

Source: Skinnytaste.com
How to make:

In a medium bowl combine the flour, baking powder and salt and whisk well.
Add the yogurt and mix with a fork or spatula until well combined, it will look like small crumbles.

Lightly dust flour on a work surface and remove dough from the bowl, knead the dough a few times until smooth, not lumps. The dough will be tacky, but not sticky, about 20 turns (it should not leave dough on your hand when you pull away).

Preheat the oven 425F. Line a sheet pan with a silicone mat.

Assemble the rolls:
Divide into 4 equal balls, about 3-3/8 ounces each.

Lightly sprinkle a work surface and rolling pin with flour and roll the dough out into thin rounds, 7 inches in diameter.

Spread 1 tablespoon of marinara down the center of the circle in a strip, top with 1/2 cup of the chicken (2 oz) 1 tablespoon more marinara sauce and 3 tablespoons of cheese.

Fold the right side of the dough over the top of the chicken then repeat with the left side.
Brush the top with egg wash and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
Loop Through: ✔️

Lie flat on the ground with arms extended overhead. Fold the band in half and hold it with both hands, pulling for resistance (A). Leading with your chest, sit up, bringing your chest towards your knees and having your feet off the floor. Bring the band over your head, passing it over your feet and under your legs (B).

Keeping the band under your legs, lie back down (C). Crunch upwards again, reversing the band over your legs to return to starting position.


Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it’s been awhile since you’ve exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it’s a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.