

Work/Life Balance Webinar – November 2022 – Transcript

Carys: Good afternoon and welcome to the Heales Medical Work/Life Balance Webinar.

My name is Carys Swanton. I am the Heales Medical Health and Wellbeing Coordinator.

And joining me today is Elise De Fusco, who is our in-house counsellor.

Okay. So just before we start, we're going to start with a little bit of housekeeping.

So firstly, please be mindful and make sure that we're practicing respectful, listening.

So for example, if you've got your microphone on, if you can, if you wiggle your mouse, you can see a little toolbar that comes up at the bottom and there's a little microphone on the left hand side that can mute and unmute yourself.

If you could mute yourself, that would be very helpful, so we don't get any kind of random noises during the presentation.

Just also as a reminder, we are recording. If you didn't see that in the previous slide on the kind of free screen side, so please make sure that you are respecting confidentiality.

If you're going to be talking about anyone else in the workplace, please try not to mention any names and also make sure you're only sharing what you're comfortable with and that you're also in a space where you are comfortable in sharing anything you choose to do.

It's up to you whether you have your camera on or off during the session, but again, we are recording. So if you choose that off, that's absolutely fine.

Please also ensure that as well as being on mute, that your phone and email alerts are on silent just in case anything comes through, and we don't get random beep bops all the way through.

And again, if you wiggle your mouse, you'll see the toolbar come up at the bottom of the screen, and you will see that there is a little speech bubble and that will bring up the chat.

So if you did want to ask any questions or share any thoughts, if you click on that, you can type a message into the chat and we will definitely get to you.

There's also a little hand and if you click that, that notifies us that you want to raise or lower your hand.

So when it comes to any questions or discussions that we might have, if you could click on the little hand button, and that alerts us to the fact that you want to share

and we can call upon you by name, which will just ensure that we've got a nice, easy and efficient discussion going on.

So. First things first.

What are we going to cover in this session today?

So we're going to be talking about the meaning of the term work/life balance.

We're also going to be talking about overworking, burnout, what a good work life balance might look like.

Setting boundaries, prioritising. And then also some practical steps to work towards a good work life balance.

So firstly, what do we mean by work life balance?

This isn't just a case of making sure that our lives are kind of 50% work and 50% personal life.

This is making sure that we feel both fulfilled and content in both of these areas and making sure that we're feeling happy and satisfied, and we're working towards setting goals, or we're making sure that we are ticking certain things and that we are feeling happy and satisfied about that.

Back in 2020, obviously with the pandemic, we found that working from home became a necessity, and it has since changed and we've been able to go back into the office and things like that.

But many people are still flexibly working both at the office and from home, and this means that separating work and personal lives can be a little bit more difficult.

So achieving this consistent balance will help to avoid burning out.

It'll also help to reduce any stress, and it will also help to fulfil career and personal goals.

So I'm going to pass over to Elise now.

Elise: Hi everyone. So as I said, my name is Elise and I'm the therapist here at Heales.

And I also just want to apologise in advance if you hear any loud jackhammering sounds in the background.

I have a construction zone pretty much right outside my window, so apologies for any distractions along those lines.

So, okay, so what actually is overworking?

So the very literal definition defines overwork as the act of working too hard or too much.

Now, as Carys mentioned, this isn't necessarily a 50/50.

So what overworking might be for one person is not necessarily the same as someone else.

So we all have different limits, we all have different capabilities.

And it's about understanding what working too hard or too much looks like for us.

That can mean extended or prolonged periods spent working beyond contracted hours.

So someone was already mentioning that it feels like work needs to be done in the evening and on weekends.

It might mean not taking breaks, which again has already been mentioned and not taking sick days when needed,

not taking your annual leave, or taking on extra tasks and projects outside of your remit when you are already overextended.

So these can be some of the indicators that we might be overworking.

So it feels very clear already that for at least some people here today, this is already happening, so you are already overworking.

So what can happen when we are overworked for a prolonged period of time as we enter into a state of burnout?

So often when we are overworking, it means that our stress and anxiety levels are going to be massively elevated.

And when we sit in a state of stress for prolonged periods of time, we become burnt out.

So chronic overwork, as it says just here, will result in burnout almost inevitably.

And what burnout is, is a clinically diagnosable state of deep physical and emotional fatigue.

So you can actually get diagnosed with burnout. Now, it is a clinical diagnosis.

What it means in a biological sense is the inability of your sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system to regulate your stress, hormones and responses.

So when your nervous system is functioning as it should, you will enter states of stress when you have a stressor present.

Once the stressor is absent, your body will be able to regulate back into a state of essentially stasis, where you are not feeling stressed out, where you are able to relax.

What happens when those stress responses are elevated for prolonged periods of time, is you will either enter a state where you are stressed 24/7 or your body loses the ability to come back down and reach that state of rest,

reach that state of stasis, or the total opposite will happen and your stress system will essentially collapse.

It will no longer be functioning. You'll find yourself unable to motivate, unable to get out of bed, unable to essentially get anything done.

So the more that we are overworking, the more we increase our risk of entering burnout.

And once you have entered burnout, it will require a long time essentially to be able to get yourself back out of burnout.

It will require a lot of work towards your own health and wellbeing, and most likely will mean that you're going to have to come out of that workplace for an extended amount of time so that you can manage that burnout.

So some of the symptoms of burnout might include anxiety and stress or depression and low mood.

Sometimes, these can meet clinical criteria, but other times it might just be around stress and low mood.

You will find yourself exhausted and you also might not be sleeping well.

So a lot of people who are in burnout find it very difficult to get to sleep because they're so stressed and anxious all the time.

You may find yourself irritable, unable to both perform your job, but sometimes unable to just perform tasks and chores around your house as well.

So that's why I said difficulty getting out of bed can be one big sign of burnout, when it just feels like you wake up in the morning and you can't face the day.

A lack of motivation and feelings of powerlessness.

So these are all some of the warning signs and indicators to look out for when you are entering a state of burnout.

So as I mentioned, this occurs over an extended period of time with gradual increase in symptoms.

And so what that might mean is kind of like the frog and hot water analogy where you've got a frog sitting in cold water that you're slowly turning up to boiling,

and the frog ends up dead because it doesn't realise the water is boiling until it's too late.

This is what tends to happen with burnout, so it becomes very easy to ignore a lot of the warning signs and symptoms that mean we are reaching a point of burnout.

So oftentimes you don't know you are burnt out until it's too late.

And that is, again, going to result in needing to take time off sick, you know, potentially coming to therapy, having to really engage with a lot of things around your health and wellbeing to get back to a place where you are able to actually complete your job.

Now burnout is massively contributed to by structural and organisational problems, so high caseloads, poor management, lack of support in the workplace, demanding deadlines.

These are all of the circumstances that will contribute to burnout.

So burnout typically doesn't have to do with the job itself.

It has to do with the type of work, the type of support that you are receiving around that work.

So are your case-loads manageable? Are the tasks you're being asked to do reasonable in the time you're being asked to do them?

Do you feel you have adequate support? Are you able to lean on your colleagues?

So the less support that is around you in the workplace again, the higher your chances of overwork and the higher your chances of burnout as well.

So what would a good work life balance look like?

So a good work life balance looks like being able to finish most or all of your work within the allotted hours.

So a lot of this is related to being productive and alert at work, that second bullet point.

So when you have a good work life balance, it means that you are able to be productive in the workplace, you are able to prioritise tasks well, and it means that to the best of your ability, a large bulk of your work is getting done.

Now, that's not always possible, but we can go into that a little bit later in terms of prioritising and task management.

But in an ideal world, this is what it would look like.

It also means having positive relationships with your colleagues, not doing work out of hours or on weekends.

So I can hear that this is a particular challenge. I also know that for some people who are working in teaching environments,

there is an expectation that certain things like lesson plans, grading papers, are going to have to happen outside of the workplace.

So if it is a role like that, it means setting aside a very specific amount of time, considering that as part of your workday and making sure that that boundary is still being put in place.

So if you have to do work out of hours, for example, that will be an hour of your out of hours time, and then you are going to take the rest of your time for yourself.

It also means not worrying about work and tasks that have not been completed in your time off.

So this is around prioritising. If you recognise that no matter how hard you are working and you cannot get everything done in a work day, it's building up that boundary and resilience to be able to leave that at work,

to be able to recognise there are some things that you will not be able to get to in that eight hour shift and they will have to just stay there.

When you don't have that good work life balance, it means you're going to be worrying about everything you have to do,

you're going to be thinking about all of those tasks you need to complete, which means that any of your relax hours in the evening,

the time for your personal life is still just going to be taken up by thinking about work.

So when you have a good work life balance, it means you have enough time for your family, for your friends, for taking care of yourself.

It means that you'll take time off when you are ill, having enough time to sleep, to exercise, to eat well, and feeling able to complete chores and tasks outside of work.

So again, being able to recognise. And really being able to recognise where areas of your personal life might be suffering

because you are working too much and it means that you aren't able to take care of yourself, to take time for yourself, to get enough sleep, to spend time with friends.

That's when you can start to notice that your work life balance is not balanced.

Setting boundaries. So a boundary is a rule that you set for yourself and that you commit to sticking to.

So everybody's boundaries are going to be different.

Now there are some in the workplace that are going to be in common, for example, taking breaks or leaving on time.

But other boundaries are down to us to determine. So boundaries are about your behaviour.

What are your limits, capacities and abilities and how do you communicate that to others?

So boundaries can be communicated both verbally and non-verbally.

So, for example, I set boundaries for myself that I don't like to work past 5:30.

A non-verbal way that I set that boundary is if I get an email that comes in past 5:30, I don't respond to that email.

If someone calls me outside of 5:30, I will not pick up the call.

So that is sending a non-verbal boundary that I am not available after 5:30.

Boundaries can also be verbal, so someone mentions being able to say no to new projects.

Sometimes we actually have to verbalise those boundaries and say no.

So as you can see just there, in many ways, setting boundaries is about learning to say no.

And this can be incredibly hard, particularly when you are in a workplace where if you've become the yes person,

you know, the person that everybody knows they can turn to and you'll take on new projects.

It can feel very unfamiliar and hard to say no. It might feel rude.

It might feel as though you are disappointing people or letting them down.

But it's really about recognising that you have to be working in a way that is sustainable.

And it's better to disappoint someone in the short term by saying no, as opposed to ending up out of work because you've taken on way too many things and then you're not able to work at all.

Once you've determined a boundary, it's then down to you to act accordingly.

So an important part of that boundary is that you are committing to stick to it.

So if you verbalise a boundary, but then you behave in contrast, it's going to open you up to others pushing those limits and to increase the risk of overwork and burnout.

So particularly in some work environments, there is often a lot that is expected of employees outside the scope of their role.

So if you sort of verbalise that, you know, you're not going to take on new projects, but then you take on a little one here or you say yes to one other person, what's going to happen is that people are going to keep asking.

People are going to push your boundaries.

So it's really down to you to set those boundaries and commit to sticking to them for your own health.

So what can that look like? Setting boundaries.

So in the workplace, I would say the first step is making sure that your job role and expectations are clear.

So making sure you have a clear cut job description. Making sure that both your expectations of the role have been verbalised to your manager, and making sure that they have also verbalised their expectations of you.

So understanding what that job is going to look like.

It can be about identifying priorities, which we're going to go through what's called the Eisenhower Matrix in a couple of slides, which will help you with prioritising taking your breaks.

So you can see, I put three exclamation points next to that one because if there's one thing I see time and time again with the clients who come to me who are struggling with burnout, they are not taking their breaks or they have not been taking their breaks.

I know this can be a particularly challenging one. It can be hard to put aside all of the tasks that you were doing, but even taking 20 minutes to yourself to rest and have a cup of tea or have a bite to eat.

It gives your brain a much needed moment to breathe and relax.

We need that throughout the day.

So when you are just pushing through your work days and you're not setting aside time for breaks and I mean like, lock your door, put a sign up that you're in a meeting.

Whatever you need to do to create that space for yourself.

It's very important that you are taking your breaks. There's a reason why.

There's a reason why we harp on about it.

And it's because when you get to the end of a work day and you've taken no breaks, you are going to feel absolutely knackered.

Your brain needs that time to rest. You need to be able to nourish yourself.

So take your breaks, avoiding taking on responsibilities outside the scope of your role, which we already spoke about.

So that's why understanding your job role and those expectations is so important. And really recognising, is this my responsibility?

Does this need to be my responsibility? Is there somebody else who can do this task? And saying no to things that really are not part of your job.

It can mean speaking to your manager if you feel overloaded or have concerns, there's an unfair division of labour.

So if you feel that you're doing much more than your colleagues, or you feel that your colleagues are asking things of you that are not part of your remit, verbalising that to your manager.

Making sure that you are getting support from your manager if you feel overloaded. And another one can be arriving and leaving work on time, not early or late.

Now I know some people might like to come in a little bit early to get themselves settled.

That's one thing. But when you're coming in hours early or staying hours late, trying to get work done again, you are not setting that boundary for a healthy work life balance.

A few more can be around how you are managing relationships with your colleagues.

So learning to say no to colleagues and this can be hard, particularly if you feel you have good relationships with them.

If they feel like friends again, it can be very hard to say no when they're asking something of you.

But even for things like a shared lunch, if you prefer to eat alone.

So sometimes people want a lunch break where they truly have a break from everything.

They don't want to talk about work, you know, you don't want to be talking to a colleague.

Sometimes it's okay to go sit in your car or go to a cafe.

Or again, like I said, go sit in an office and lock the door, whatever you need to do to get some space for yourself.

It is all right to say no and to put those boundaries in place. You're not doing anything wrong or being a rude person for doing so.

Shutting off your laptop or phone at the end of the day or leaving it at the office where possible.

So just making sure that not only are, you know, notification silence, but that it's actually shut off so that you're not tempted to just pick up those emails or have a look at your phone.

If you have to do lists, leaving those lists at the workplace. Or if you are someone who works from home, putting them away somewhere so that they're not visible.

If you have that to do list out, you're going to find yourself glancing at it, thinking about it.

Oh, I could just do this. I could just do that. Make sure that it is out of sight, out of mind.

If you are working from home, create some clear physical boundaries.

So that could be a separate room or an office that you're working from and you only do your work in that room and the door is shut the rest of the time.

Or for myself, for example, I have a writing desk that I work from.

So at the end of the day, I fold my desktop, I put my laptop away.

That's how I create that physical boundary between my work day and my personal time.

And another way that you can set a boundary is also turning your camera off, which I can see everybody here is very familiar with.

Or we can use backgrounds during video calls such as I'm doing.

It can feel quite invasive sometimes for colleagues to be able to look into your home.

It can feel sometimes like work is literally invading your space.

So yeah, not having the camera on where possible, or just popping that background up can really help create that boundary between work and home life.

Now in your personal life, this is also important.

So to have a good work life balance, you also have to be thinking about boundaries in your personal life.

And again, a lot of this is about learning to say no to things that you don't feel able to complete or activities you don't want to do.

Now, I'm aware that we all sometimes have to do things we don't want to do.

We have obligations that we need to take care of.

But recognising there are some activities, events, things that we almost feel pressured into doing, we find it hard to set boundaries with friends, families, loved ones.

We end up doing things we really don't have the energy or the time to do.

We end up taking on tasks that are asked of us because we feel that we should have to do that.

So really kind of recognising whether there's a balance there as well.

Are you taking on too much? It's sometimes about setting aside private time for yourself once a week.

This can be particularly challenging. If you have a family, it might feel like you have literally no moments to yourself, and a lot of setting boundaries is about you creating that for yourself.

You know, the opportunities often will not just arise out of nowhere.

You're not just going to have this moment where everything falls off your plate and you have time to yourself.

You have to be committed to making that time.

So even, I'm talking like 20, 30 minutes, this doesn't have to be hours of your day, but taking 30 minutes to, you know, have a bath or go for a walk or read a book.

Something that is just private time for you to sit with yourself, reflect and just have a moment of peace.

Boundaries can also look like examining close relationships and identifying which ones drain you versus which ones nourish.

You know, we all have some relationships in our life that will drain us, and you'll recognise what those relationships are like based on how you feel after.

So if you've been spending time with the person and you come out of it and think, gosh, I just feel exhausted, versus some of those friends that you hang out with, or loved ones that you're with,

and you come away from those interactions feeling energised, feeling excited, feeling like you just had a wonderful moment with someone.

That's a good way to really look at which relationships are draining me and which ones are nourishing me.

And it's not saying you have to cut off those relationships that drain you.

Sometimes you don't want to, sometimes you're not able to, but it's about taking care and limiting when engaging with people who drain you.

So if you know you have a friend who can be a bit draining, maybe puts a lot on you or asks a lot of you, thinking about what kind of activities are we doing?

Maybe we could go see a film. We're actually not going to have to talk very much, but we're still spending that time together versus going over to their home for 4 hours where you're going to end up pulled into a conversation that is going to sap all of your energy.

So really just thinking about the time you're spending with those people and the way that you are spending that time.

It's also about remembering you can't do everything for everyone. So this is a huge contributor to burnout at work and in personal life as well.

We just want to be yes people. We want to make people happy. We don't want to disappoint anyone.

And you have to remember that you're only human. You can only do so much. You can't be everything for everyone.

Another important boundary is limiting social media and news consumption.

So social media and the news at the moment are absolute cesspools for just making us feel terrible about ourselves, making us feel like we are not doing enough.

And they also really limit us from being present in the moment, which I'll go over in the next slide, but really looking at how much time we're engaging with social media and the news and really thinking about limiting that as well.

So putting your phone on silent or turning it off and doing other activities relates to the above point as well.

So we often get very caught up in our phones, which means we're not actually in the present moment.

So when we are in our personal lives and doing self-care activities or spending time with loved ones, we're not always fully present in that moment, which means we're not going to get that same nourishment out of it.

So trying to put your phone on silent or turn it off when you're doing activities or spending time with people, just to create that boundary with your phone.

Actually taking time to reflect on your emotions and needs, working to communicate them clearly to others, much like you would do in the workplace.

So really thinking about what do I feel capable of?

How can I communicate my boundaries? What feels comfortable for me? Where possible, try to set those boundaries early in a relationship.

This isn't always possible but where you can, if you set those boundaries earlier, they are a lot easier to maintain, as opposed to establishing new boundaries in an existing relationship.

So you might have a relationship in your life where someone asks a lot of you and you're very used to saying yes, and they're very used to you saying yes.

So it can then feel really hard to suddenly start saying no to them because it's just habitual at that point.

Now it's still very important to do so, but just recognising sometimes conflict can arise from that.

Sometimes, it will really rely on you communicating that you feel overextended, that you're not able to always be there for them in that way.

You know that you love them very much, but you can't be doing everything for them.

So if you're able to set those boundaries early. If not, just be prepared that it might require a higher level of communication.

And if it feels hard to know what your boundaries and limits are, sometimes it can help to look at other people.

Do you have someone in your life who you feel is very good at establishing boundaries and limits?

Talking to them about how they do it, how they feel about it, essentially using them as a template to set your own.

So we don't always inherently know what we need or how to set those boundaries, but we do sometimes have the ability to recognise those traits in other people.

So don't feel embarrassed or ashamed to actually ask someone, you know, how do you do it? Because I don't know.

So yeah, being able to reach out for the support of the others around you as well.

So now we'll come back to this prioritising because this was a big part of setting boundaries, particularly in the workplace, and this is something that can be really tangible to you.

So this is called the Eisenhower Matrix. This is just a way, and you can use this at work and you can use this in your personal life as well, this is just a way for you to organise tasks into things that you need to do,

things that you have to decide when to do, when you need to delegate tasks to others and things that can be deleted.

So as you can see, this is just a very simple grid here. So if you have something that is urgent and important, then you need to do it.

Now that becomes the top of the to do list, it's important.

If you have something that's not urgent, but it is important you can decide when to do it later.

So schedule a time, you know, a day later, a few days down the line, a week down the line, you know, depending on the level of urgency or non-urgency, you decide to do it later.

If it is urgent but it's not important, figure out if there's somebody else that you can delegate that task to.

So that might be another colleague who doesn't have as much work on. It might be someone who works beneath you.

It might be something you could speak to your manager about.

If it's in your personal life, it might be something that you could get a family member to help out with.

So really just determining, when can some tasks be delegated to others, instead of feeling like you have to be the one juggling everything yourself.

If you have a task that comes your way that's not important and not urgent, think about can we just delete this? Can we eliminate this?

Does this even need to be done? So really determining whether or not this needs to be on your priority list at all.

So by using this very simple matrix, you can sort tasks that need to be done.

Make sure that in your workday or in your personal life, you are prioritising the most important and urgent tasks, and coming to accept the fact that you can't do everything.

Some things need to be delegated, some things need to be done later, and some things don't need to be done at all.

So we're just going to have a quick look at some very practical steps.

A lot of this will feel like it's replacing what Elise has just said, but it's looking at it in a very kind of practical way, especially in terms of work.

And we're going to be looking at working in the office, working from home, and hybrid working as well.

So just in that kind of view on it, of making sure that we know exactly how we can implement these things, even in baby steps.

So working in the office.

And again, like Elise said, making sure that we know exactly what our working hours are. This will be potentially part of your original contract.

It might be something you have discussed with any managers or higher-ups about.

But making sure that we know exactly what these are. These are in regards to communication as well.

So like we've talked about late night calls, or working evenings and weekends, or communications in that sense.

Again, it's putting that boundary in place and making sure that people know that if you receive these communications, you will not see them until you are next within a working time, and you will definitely not be responding to them.

And then also making sure that you are, like Elise said, setting that boundary and not looking.

And then also in terms of time and working hours, agreeing with whoever is assigning tasks or whoever you are discussing work with, is making sure that you're assessing what realistic timelines and timescales are for the work that you're doing

and making sure that any deadlines are realistic so that we're not putting added stress onto ourselves or onto anyone else for that matter.

And we're making sure that these are then being able to be stuck to, especially by using kind of those skills for prioritising.

Also making sure that if we do have to, because occasionally it does happen where the workload is high, we might have to stay late one day, we might have to take a little bit of work home.

But making sure that this is, this overtime is agreed beforehand, and making sure that it is a set kind of overtime as much as possible, and that we do get to a certain time in the day where we just say, okay, that is enough.

So, for example, if you do have to work over a little bit in the evening just to catch up with certain things, or because something has been agreed that it is urgent and important, but saying okay, but once it gets to 6, 7:00, that is absolutely it.

So maybe it also might be that you need to bring other people in to help you with that and that kind of work.

Also making sure that with the overtime, as we said, it is pre-agreed, but it's also not assumed that it's going to be done.

If you simply can't do it, if you have other plans or anything like that, you can say,

I won't be doing this overtime if it is not done by 5:00 or 5:30 or whenever your working day ends, then it will be relooked at in the morning, or whenever your next working day is.

Again looking at breaks, so making sure that we are taking our breaks.

Lunch break is a very difficult one. I know some places have half an hour.

Some places have an hour and it can feel like that time can shrink.

We might go to lunch. We might come back early. And also, a lot of people will eat their lunch at their desk.

So the best way of starting to take that little baby step into making sure that you're having your lunch is definitely not eating your lunch at your desk.

That is a sure-fire way to eliminate your lunch break all together, and your brain's not getting that rest period from your work.

And also making sure that you let people know if you are on a project or you are doing a high amount of work at any given time.

So for example, if you have organised your day and you have prioritised your work so that you have said, okay

well between this time and this time I am working on this particular project, I'm going to try and be as completely as focused as possible.

Let people know. Let people who are the most likely to contact you within that time, let them know that you are busy. Make sure people aren't scheduling meetings.

Making sure that any meetings are planned outside of that time.

Sometimes sending a simple email, like I have decided I'm doing, or I have scheduled this particular work to be done within these times today.

Please try not to contact me if at all possible within this time, or even setting an automatic reply on your emails, just nice and politely, just saying apologies, I am working on a particular thing at this time, but I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Sometimes that can take a lot of pressure off when it comes to people contacting you because everyone who contacts you will automatically feel like what they have to talk to you about is quite urgent,

and that then puts the pressure on you, making you feel like it's urgent when actually, it's not what you are focusing on at that particular time.

And also again, like Elise said, making sure that you're aware of your job outline, making sure you know exactly what points are in your job role and what your exact responsibilities are, and therefore also what you can delegate and who you can delegate to.

So it's very easy over time from, you might realise now if you look back at what your exact job role was when you started this particular role, it might look very different, and it's very easy over time to accumulate extra responsibilities

and duties onto your job rather than what is actually outlined in the original contract,

especially if you've said yes to one thing one time, the next time, it might be assumed that that's something that you do.

So it's making sure that if you do say yes one time and it might be that you're being nice,

It might be that you're being polite. It might be that one time, once in a blue moon, your workload isn't as high as normal, so you said yes in order to help someone else, which is great.

But then make sure that if they come to you again, you can very clearly and again politely, say I did that in order to be helpful last time, it's not actually part of my job role.

If I find time, I might be able to do it for you, but I'm very busy at the moment, and again setting that boundary.

When it comes to working at home, again like Elise said, just going over these things in a very practical sense, making sure you have that set work space.

So whether that's in a study in your home or a spare room or even if it's at the dining table, making sure that at the end of the day you can somehow shut that away, put it aside, and you don't have to see it or think about it for the rest of the evening as much as possible.

It's not always possible. But if you can, if you have to throw a blanket over it or something like that, make sure it's not plugged in.

But if you have to do something in order to be able to close your brain from it, then please do so.

Also making sure that your morning and after work routine is maintained.

So for example, if you're going into the office one day or into the workplace one day, and that means you have to get up at 6AM, you have to get yourself ready for the day, which includes a shower, getting dressed and sorting yourself out and then walking or travelling in some way.

Then making sure that when you're working from home, you're getting up at roughly the same time.

I mean maybe not this crazy early, but getting up at a decent time, having that shower, sorting yourself out, having your breakfast before work time starts so that you are mentally prepared for your day,

and the days between working from home and working in the office aren't too different. And getting yourself kind of mentally and physically prepared for your day.

Again agreeing the clear working hours. So much like if you're working from the office, if you're working at home,

sometimes it can be assumed that because you're not having to do that kind of commuting time, that you can work a little later, which is not the case.

You shouldn't have to.

So making sure that that time is agreed and that because you've been at home all day, they don't think that they can contact you because you're in the same situation that you've been at all day.

Again, even though you're working at home, make sure you step away to have your lunch.

Making sure that you're getting that break and not just assuming or other people assuming because I'm at home, I can just, and I'm sat at the dining table as my working space,

so I can sit here and have my lunch, and people can contact me and I can keep looking and engaging with my work.

Have that break. Step away from the work space. Again, just like when you're at work, making sure that you let people know if you are busy, but still ensuring that contact throughout the rest of the day,

so when you do need to contact people, that contact is maintained. One of the things that can be very difficult with home working is isolation.

So making sure that you are still staying in contact with your co-workers, even though you're working at home, can ensure that you are still building on those work relationships.

And then also making sure that you are keeping your home tasks and your home work, for want of a better word, outside of work time

so that you're not doing bits of work and then putting a load of washing on, or you're not doing bits of work and then doing some cleaning.

So keeping those things separate even though the work at home, so the cleaning, the doing the washing, still feels like work, it is still separate to your actual work life.

And then when it comes to hybrid working, obviously all of these things still pertain, but making sure that we have an agreed number of days at the work place, and making sure that these days are specified.

So which days of the week you're going in, which you're not, so that no one can kind of turn around say, can you be in tomorrow?

Because again, that change in your organisation, that change in your plan or your schedule can throw you off a little bit.

So making sure that those days are agreed. Making sure that you've got the right equipment at home.

So for example, if you use like a laptop and a secondary screen, making sure that you've got the secondary screen both at work and at home, so you're not having to carry too many things to and from home all the time.

And then again, ensuring that you have the same amount of contact you might have on a work day in the office, obviously rather than just kind of walking past someone's desk and saying hello,

but making sure you still maintain a good amount of contact when you're at home compared to when you're in the office.

Okay. That is all from us. So thank you very much.

Thanks very much, everyone. Feel free to pop out if you've not got any questions or anything you want to say.

We appreciate your attention today.

(End of document)