



Zoom Exhaustion & Fatigue Scale

Answer the following questions below where:

- 1 = not at all
- 2 = slightly
- 3 = moderately
- 4 = very
- 5 = extremely

General Fatigue					
Refers to the general experience of feeling tired					
	Not at all				Extremely
How tired do you feel after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How exhausted do you feel after videoconferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How mentally drained do you feel after videoconferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL SCORE: _____/15					
As percentage (your score / 15 x 100): _____					
Visual Fatigue					
Any subjective visual symptom or distress from using your eyes					
	Not at all				Extremely
How blurred does your vision get after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How irritated do your eyes feel after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How much do your eyes hurt after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL SCORE: _____/15

As percentage (your score / 15 x 100): _____

Social Fatigue

The degree to which you want to be alone after interactions with others

	1	2	3	4	5
How much do you tend to avoid social situations after video conferencing?					
How much do you want to be alone after video conferencing?					
How much do you need time by yourself after?					

TOTAL SCORE: _____/15

As percentage (your score / 15 x 100): _____

Emotional Fatigue

State of feeling overwhelmed, drained, or "used up"

	Not at all				Extremely
How emotionally drained do you feel after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How irritable do you feel after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5
How moody do you feel after video conferencing?	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL SCORE: _____/15

As percentage (your score / 15 x 100): _____

Motivational Fatigue

Relates to the motivation to start an activity and feel active

How much do you dread having to do things after video conferencing? Circle the best answer below:

1 (not at all) 2 (slightly) 3 (moderately) 4 (very) 5 (extremely)

How much do you feel like doing nothing after video conferencing? Circle the best answer below:

1 (never) 2 (rarely) 3 (sometimes) 4 (often) 5 (always)

How often do you feel too tired to do other things after video conferencing? Circle the best answer below:

1 (never) 2 (rarely) 3 (sometimes) 4 (often) 5 (always)

TOTAL SCORE: _____/15

As percentage (your score / 15 x 100): _____

Symptoms of Physical Fatigue

- My back hurts
- My neck hurts
- My body feels tired

Symptoms of Mental Fatigue

- I feel mentally drained
- It takes a lot of effort to concentrate on my next tasks
- My thoughts easily wander
- I am not able to think clearly

Symptoms of Visual & Vocal Fatigue

- I often get a headache
- My vision gets blurred
- My eyes feel irritated
- I experience pain around my eyes
- I experience a burning or prickling sensation in the eyes
- My voice feels tired
- I tend to generally hit my limit talking
- My throat aches with voice use
- My voice gets hoarse
- It feels like work to use my voice

Symptoms of Social Fatigue

- I avoid social situations
- I just want to be alone
- I need time by myself
- I feel like engaging with other people is effortful

Symptoms of Motivation Fatigue & Reduced Activity

- I get little done
- I need to take a break
- I often feel too tired to do other things
- I dread having to do things
- I don't feel like making plans
- I don't feel like doing anything

Symptoms of Emotional Fatigue

- I feel emotionally drained
- I feel irritable
- I feel moody

NEXT STEPS

Now that you're aware of the areas in which you're experiencing Zoom-related fatigue, come up with a plan of how you will address these symptoms in the space below:

Countering General Fatigue

Refers to the general experience of feeling tired

Examples: moving more, scheduling less meetings, turning your camera off for some meetings

Your ideas:

Countering Visual Fatigue

Any subjective visual symptom or distress from using your eyes

Examples: moving further away from screen in meetings, buying blue-light blocking glasses, taking notes using pen & paper rather than iPad

Your ideas:

Countering Social Fatigue

The degree to which you want to be alone after interactions with others

Examples: decreasing number of video meetings, being more intentional about scheduling down-time for myself, meeting up with friends in person only rather than virtually

Your ideas:

Countering Emotional Fatigue

State of feeling overwhelmed, drained, or "used up"

Examples: decreasing number of video meetings, taking breaks more frequently, stretching between calls

Your ideas:

Countering Motivational Fatigue

Relates to the motivation to start an activity and feel active

Examples: making to-do lists, rewarding myself for completing tasks, scheduling meetings at optimal time of day, taking more frequently breaks

Your ideas:



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Creating a Moment of Physical Relaxation

1. Start by closing your eyes and doing a body scan from head to toe and just notice any physical sensations. Is there anywhere where you feel tension? Tightness? Fatigue?
2. Focus on how your eyes feel. Maybe they feel tired or dry. Using your thumb and index fingers, gently pinch your eye brows. You may also choose to put your index fingers on your eyelids and gently massage the area.
3. Open your eyes and focus on something far away that's pleasant to you. This could include looking at a tree outside your window or simply letting your eyes glaze over as you look at something across the room. Check in with how your eyes feel now.
4. Take a moment to open your mouth as wide as you can to loosen the jaw. Focus on unclenching your teeth and consider massaging your jaw with your fingers with a decent amount of pressure. Check in with how your jaw feels now.
5. Stand up and check in about if there's any movement that your body feels compelled to do. You may choose to stretch certain areas or crack certain joints—whatever feels right for you. As you're allowing your body to do what it wants to do, expand the breath to promote more relaxation in the body. Deepen your inhales, extend your exhales.
6. Stand up if you aren't already and bend at the waist so that your fingertips are reaching towards the floor. (This has nothing to do with flexibility so don't worry about that!) Relax your neck completely and let your head hang heavy. Nod your head 'yes' and shake your head 'no.'
7. Stand up straight again and shake out your legs, your hands, your arms, and any other body part.

What has shifted in your body when you compare how you felt at the beginning of this exercise to now?



Your Emotional Fuel Tank

Using the mood and energy “battery” diagrams below, rate your average mood and energy levels from 0 - 8 over the past two weeks by drawing a line across the batteries. For mood: 0 = suicidal, 8 = ultimate happiness. For energy: 0 = unable to function, 8 = energetic and positive.



Date:
Scores & average:

Throughout our days, we engage in both energizing and de-energizing activities (defined below). When we perform a surplus of de-energizing activities, our batteries can “go dead.” We experience a type of **emotional fever** with symptoms similar to that of a physical fever—lethargy, shut-down, low motivation, and more. Given that **motivation usually only occurs when we are at a 5.5 - 6**, it’s no wonder that people find it hard to engage in healthy activities when they’re so depleted.

ENERGIZING ACTIVITIES	DE-ENERGIZING ACTIVITIES
These are activities that create an “inner lifting” experience that makes you feel good, happy, or energized. Each qualifying energizer must be positive, healthy and balanced. If the activity does not qualify, it becomes a de-energizer.	These are life activities that create an “inner pulling down” experience making you feel sad, angry, or drained. Each qualifying de-energizing activity is an item that is negative, unhealthy, and unbalanced.
Energizing and de-energizing activities are not just observable behaviours; they can also be things we do mentally (i.e. negative self-talk, judging others internally, etc.)	

DETACHING FROM EMOTIONAL PAIN (GROUNDING)

Lisa Najavits, PhD

WHAT IS GROUNDING?

Grounding is a set of simple strategies to **detach from emotional pain** (for example, drug cravings, self-harm impulses, anger, sadness). Distraction works by focusing outward on the external world—rather than inward toward the self. You can also think of it as “distraction”, centering,” “a safe place,” looking “outward,” or “healthy detachment.”

WHY DO GROUNDING?

When you are overwhelmed with emotional pain, you need a way to detach so that you can gain control over your feelings and stay safe. As long as you are grounding, you cannot possibly use substances or hurt yourself. Grounding ‘anchors’ you to the present and to reality.

Many people with PTSD and substance abuse struggle with either feeling too much (overwhelming emotions and memories) or too little (numbing and dissociation). In grounding, you attain balance between the two—conscious of reality and able to tolerate it.

GUIDELINES

- Grounding can be done **any time, any place, anywhere** and no one has to know.
- Use grounding when you are: **faced with a trigger, having a flashback, dissociating, having a substance craving, or when your emotional pain goes above 6 (on a 0-10 scale)**. Grounding puts healthy distance between you and these negative feelings.
- **Keep your eyes open, scan the room, and turn the light on** to stay in touch with the present.
- **Rate your mood before and after** to test whether it worked. Before grounding, rate your level of emotional pain (0-10, where 10 means “extreme pain”). Then re-rate it afterwards. Has it gone down?
- **No talking about negative feelings or journal writing.** You want to distract away from negative feelings, not get in touch with them.
- **Stay neutral**—no judgments of “good” and “bad”. For example, “The walls are blue; I dislike blue because it reminds me of depression.” Simply say “The walls are blue” and move on.
- **Focus on the present, not the past or future.**
- **Note that grounding is not the same as relaxation training.** Grounding is much more active, focuses on distraction strategies, and is intended to help extreme negative feelings. It is believed to be more effective for PTSD than relaxation training.

WAYS TO GROUND

Mental Grounding

- ♣ **Describe your environment in detail** using all your senses. For example, “The walls are white; there are five pink chairs, there is a wooden bookshelf against the wall...” Describe objects, sounds, textures, colors, smells, shapes, numbers and temperature. You can do this anywhere. For example, on the subway: “I’m on the subway. I’ll see the river soon. Those are the windows. This is the bench. The metal bar is silver. The subway map has four colors...”
- ♣ **Play a “categories” game** with yourself. Try to think of “types of dogs”, “jazz musicians”, “states that begin with “A”, “cars”, “TV shows”, “writers”, “sports”, “songs”, “European cities.”
- ♣ **Do an age progression.** If you have regressed to a younger age (e.g., 8 years old), you can slowly work your way back up (e.g., “I’m now 9”; “I’m now 10”; “I’m now 11”...) until you are back to your current age.
- ♣ **Describe an everyday activity in great detail.** For example, describe a meal that you cook (e.g., First I peel the potatoes and cut them into quarters, then I boil the water, I make an herb marinade of oregano, basil, garlic, and olive oil...”).
- ♣ **Imagine.** Use an image: Glide along on skates away from your pain; change the TV channel to a better show think of a wall as a buffer between you and your pain.
- ♣ **Say a safety statement.** ‘My name is _____; I am safe right now. I am in the present, not the past.

I am located in _____ the date is _____.

- ♣ **Read something, saying each word to yourself.** Or read each letter backwards so that you focus on the letters and not on the meaning of words.
- ♣ **Use humor.** Think of something funny to jolt yourself out of your mood.
- ♣ **Count to 10 or say the alphabet** very s..l..o..w..l..y.
- ♣ **Repeat a favorite saying** to yourself over and over (e.g., the Serenity Prayer).

Physical Grounding

- × **Run cool or warm water over your hands.**
- × **Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can.**
- × **Touch various objects around you:** a pen, keys, your clothing, the table, the walls. Notice textures, colors, materials, weight, temperature. Compare objects you touch: Is one colder? Lighter?
- × **Dip your heels into the floor**— literally “grounding” them! Notice the tension centered in your heels as you do this. Remind yourself that you are connected to the ground.
- × **Carry a ground object in your pocket**—a small object (a small rock, clay, ring, piece of cloth or yarn) that you can touch whenever you feel triggered.
- × **Jump up and down.**
- × **Notice your body:** The weight of your body in the chair; wiggling your toes in your socks; the feel of your back against the chair. You are connected to the world.
- × **Stretch.** Extend your fingers, arms or legs as far as you can; roll your head around.
- × **Walk slowly, noticing each footstep,** saying “left,” “right” with each step.
- × **Eat something. Describe the flavors** in detail to yourself.
- × **Focus on your breathing.** Noticing each inhale and exhale. Repeat a pleasant word to yourself on each inhale (for example, a favorite, color or a soothing word such as “safe” or “easy”).

Soothing Grounding

- ♥ **Say kind statements,** as if you were talking to a small child. E.g., “You are a good person going through a hard time. You’ll get through this.”
- ♥ **Think of favorites.** Think of your favorite color, animal, season, food, time of day, TV show.
- ♥ **Picture people you care about** (e.g., your children; and look at photographs of them).
- ♥ **Remember the words to an inspiring song, quotation or poem** that makes you feel better (e.g., the Serenity Prayer).
- ♥ **Remember a safe place.** Describe a place that you find very soothing (perhaps the beach or mountains, or a favorite room); focus on everything about that place—the sounds, colors, shapes, objects, textures.
- ♥ **Say a coping statement.** “I can handle this”, “This feeling will pass.”
- ♥ **Plan out a safe treat for yourself,** such as a piece of candy, a nice dinner, or a warm bath.
- ♥ **Think of things you are looking forward to in the next week.** Perhaps time with a friend or going to a movie.

WHAT IF GROUNDING DOESN'T WORK?

- ♠ **Practice as often as possible.** Even when you don’t “need” it, so that you’ll know it by heart.
- ♠ **Practice faster.** Speeding up the pace gets you focused on the outside world quickly.
- ♠ **Try grounding for a loooooonnnng time (20-30 minutes).** And, repeat, repeat, repeat.
- ♠ **Try to notice whether you do better with “physical” or “mental” grounding.**
- ♠ **Create your own methods of grounding.** Any method you make up may be worth much more than those you read here because it is yours.
- ♠ **Start grounding early in a negative mood cycle.** Start when the substance craving just starts or when you have just started having a flashback.

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