

# How to integrate work, home life during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are working from home than ever before. As physical boundaries between work and personal life blur, it can become difficult to manage the two worlds.

Dr. Adam Perlman, director of Integrative Health and Well-Being at

Mayo Clinic in Florida, says instead of separating your professional and [personal lives](#), focus on ways to effectively integrate them.

"I'm going to say [work-life balance](#) is not necessarily what we should focus on, but work-life integration is. The concept has been out there now in the literature—this concept of work-life integration—and that's always resonated more with me. Part of the argument is that balance implies this sort of 50-50 (balance), and even prior to this moment, most of us weren't typically working 50% of the time, not being with our family, and then spending the other 50% focused on our [home](#) lives," says Dr. Perlman.

Dr. Perlman says those who don't effectively integrate, or find the right blend of work and personal life, tend to sacrifice self-care, which can lead to burnout.

Dr. Perlman offers these tips on integrating work and home lives during the pandemic:

## **Create and maintain a routine**

A crucial step in achieving good work-life integration is to create and maintain a routine, according to Dr. Perlman.

"One of the things that is critically important in this moment is to keep a routine. Whereas you might have gotten up in the morning and maybe you went to the gym first thing and showered, and went to work. It's easy to now to get up and immediately start working from home. So how do we create a routine that allows us to know when work begins, when we can integrate activities that are important to us, and find that right sort of mix or right integration of all that we want to do in our home and personal lives, as well as our work lives? A routine can be really critical to that," says Dr. Perlman.

## 'Delegate, delete and do'

Another strategy that can help someone better achieve good work-life integration is to adopt a concept Dr. Perlman calls "delegate, delete and do."

If feelings of anxiousness or being overwhelmed start to set in, Dr. Perlman says to try pausing and taking inventory of all the things on your plate, whether they are work-related or not. Often, he says, people find there are things that could be delegated. Other things can simply be deleted or taken off of the priority list, he says.

"Sometimes when we look at that list, simply keeping things on the list can build anxiety for us, and sometimes we can say, 'All right, let's just take that off the list so we don't have to think about it now. I can always bring it back later,'" Dr. Perlman says.

Finally, there's "do," which is really about understanding what has to get done, Dr. Perlman says.

"That can be tricky when we're working from home because there's a number of other distractions going on. This idea of looking at that list and saying, 'All right, no matter what's going on, let me get these one or two things done first thing.' That can be a very helpful strategy to help manage being overwhelmed, and allow a better [integration](#) of our work and our personal lives," says Dr. Perlman.

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