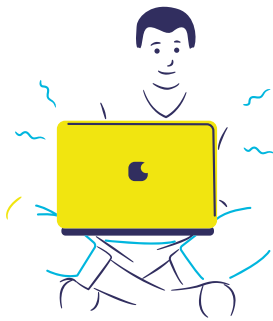


ZOOM EXHAUSTION

6 WAYS TO FIND BALANCE AND STAY CONNECTED

SETTLE AND GROUND



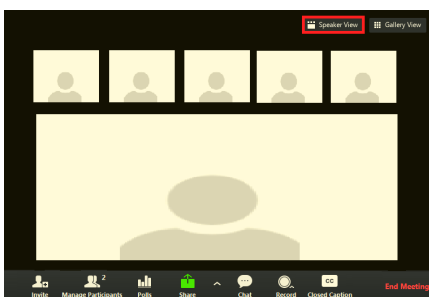
Take a few moments before clicking "Start" to settle and ground your attention. Take a few breaths, feel your body on the chair, notice whatever is present in your mind and allow yourself to arrive fully to the moment at hand. If you're feeling unsettled or preoccupied, you might place your hand on your heart in a supportive and comforting way as if to say "I'm here for you. It's ok to feel how you feel at this moment."

GREETINGS

Take the time to truly greet whoever is in the room with your full attention--offer your attention to each face that appears (if the group is not too big). Give yourself a moment for each person to make an impression on you, and "take in the good" as Rick Hanson would say. Give yourself an opportunity to feel what it feels like to be in the presence of another.



SPEAKER VIEW



Choose "speaker view". In Zoom, one can choose Speaker View or Gallery View, and I think I prefer Speaker View so that the one person who is speaking has more of my attention and others are more peripheral. This seems to be more like sitting around a conference table where we are aware of everyone there but we direct our attention primarily to whoever is speaking.

MULTITASK

Resist the urge to multitask. Not because I can't be putting additional effort into attending to anything else. If anything, I need to let go of a bit of "efforting" and let my attention rest more lightly on what (and who) is before me. I can periodically ease up my focus and look out the window, or at the knick-knacks on the shelves, or just soften my gaze to take in the array of faces on my screen (to see without looking) without having to analyze or scrutinize any of them.



BREAKS BETWEEN SESSIONS



Try to take measured breaks between sessions. Quite often my Zoom meetings run back to back and I need to take better care of my precious attention and energy, and take a refreshing pause. Stretch, rehydrate, eat, use the bathroom. Generally settle and decompress.

THIS IS A NEW PLACE

Remind yourself periodically that this is a new place between presence and absence that we will have to learn how to accommodate. It is both better than absence (imagine life in a pandemic without FaceTime, Zoom, Skype) and not quite as resonant as presence (do we know if mirror neurons still function over the internet like they do in person?). Let's see if we can simultaneously refrain from high expectations without dismissing the clear benefits of online communication.



*You will face many defeats in your life,
but never let yourself be defeated.
- Maya Angelou*