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Scientists explain video-conferencing fatigue – 27th February, 2021

Level 4

A new study looked at how long spells of video-conferencing affect our health. A communications expert wrote about what he called "Zoom fatigue". He said it is not restricted to just Zoom. In the past year, most of us have spent lots of time video-conferencing. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tools like Zoom has been the only way we seen loved ones. Many companies have relied heavily on Zoom for meetings, and teachers have used it for online classes.

There are many reasons why video-conferencing creates fatigue. It is not just tiredness and strained eyes. It also comes from "cognitive overload" and feeling pressure to always be online and available for family, friends, bosses or students. This can lead to burnout, stress and can even severe depression. This anxiety can negatively affect self-confidence. Many faces staring at you in online meetings is like the stress of public speaking.

Level 5

A new study has investigated the effects on our health of long spells of video-conferencing. Communications expert Jeremy Bailenson dubbed the phenomenon "Zoom fatigue," but acknowledged it is not restricted to just that platform. In the past year, most of us have spent lots of time online using an array of video-conferencing platforms. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tools like Zoom, Skype and Google Hangouts have been the only way we have been able to see loved ones. Many companies have relied heavily on Zoom for meetings, and educators have used it to teach online.

There are many factors why video-conferencing induces fatigue. It is not just tiredness and strained eyes from staring at computer screens for hours. It also comes from "cognitive overload" and feeling pressure to be perpetually online. We feel we must always be available for family, friends, bosses, customers or students. This can lead to burnout and stress and can heighten the chance of getting moderate to severe depression. This anxiety can adversely affect self-confidence. The large number of faces staring at you in online meetings is like the stress of public speaking.

Level 6

A new study from Stanford University has investigated the effects on our health of extended spells of video-conferencing. Researcher and communications expert Jeremy Bailenson dubbed the phenomenon "Zoom fatigue," but acknowledged the condition is not restricted to just that platform. In the past year, most of us have spent extended periods of time online using an array of video-conferencing platforms. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tools like Zoom, FaceTime, Skype and Google Hangouts have been the only way we have been able to see and chat to loved ones. Many companies have relied heavily on video-conferencing for meetings, and educators have used them to teach their lessons online.

Mr Bailenson outlined several factors that make video-conferencing so fatigue-inducing. He said it is not just tiredness and eye-strain from staring at a computer screen for hours and hours. It is also brought about by "cognitive overload" and feeling pressure to be perpetually switched on. We constantly feel we need to be in touch with friends or available for bosses, customers or students. Bailenson cautioned this leads to burnout and stress and can heighten your chance of developing moderate to severe depression. He said this anxiety can adversely affect your self-confidence. This is because of the large number of faces staring at you in meetings. Bailenson likens this to the stresses of public speaking.