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With lockdown imposed on the UK over 12 weeks ago, and a directive from the government to 'stay at home' we all find ourselves in a new reality with a new workspace - our own homes.

While the prospect of working from home seems idyllic, the reality of juggling work commitments and family life has been challenging.



Here's a few snippets of my experience of working from home during Covid-19:

Good /best bits

I really haven't missed the hour commute into the centre of Hull and back each day. The dreaded traffic jams on Beverley Road now seem like a distant memory. There's no worry of "I'm going to be late for work". This has freed up time meaning I can get my indoor exercise complete before 9am (on the days I've felt motivated enough to do this 😊).

I have more flexibility to get mundane tasks completed throughout the day e.g. load washing machine, hang out washing, prep up meals etc... When I take breaks I'm able to sit in the garden and don't have far to walk to get a cuppa when I want one.

I have discovered new technology and new ways of doing things quickly and efficiently e.g. holding a face to face HR meeting with two different Managers on Microsoft Teams. This software has enabled us to hold the same HR meetings that we would have done in the office without having to travel across the East Riding or Doncaster therefore freeing up all of our valuable time whilst also cutting the cost of fuel. We have some interviews for our current vacancies booked on Teams in the coming weeks, also our Employee Forum.

I'm in for any amazon deliveries that arrive (although generally husbands endless orders of cycle gear! 😞)

I get to be with my kids all day (this also appears in bad/mad/worst bits section too! 😊) with a highlight of each day being our daily walk/cycle.

Bad/mad/worst bits

I get to be with my kids all day every day, I will say no more.....! 😊

Juggling home working whilst trying to home school two boys (age 8 & 11 years) and trying to motivate them to do their school work has been a challenge. On a positive note I have

been getting to grips with long division and fractions, I knew that GCSE maths would come in useful one day! Thank god for google and youtube.

My husband has still been going out to work everyday (lucky escape for him is all I can say! Of course he disagrees)

As the weeks have gone by we've all adapted and have tried to stick to a daily routine as much as we can. I've learnt to lower my expectations in regards to home schooling and not to be so hard on myself and on them when it all goes wrong! It's funny though, they never seem to know what day it is but always remember when it's the school holidays and remind me that that means no school work!

I'm also continuing to complete my HR CIPD course which was at college one night per week with lessons now on Teams each week. This has worked well, however sometimes technology goes wrong and one week I unknowingly managed to take over control of the tutors presentation for the whole group and the only way to rectify this was for me to leave the group call. Luckily it was recorded so I could watch and catch up in my own time.

If I'm honest juggling work and family life has been challenging and we have good days and bad days but I know that I'm not alone in this new normal and parents all over the world are tackling this every day. My manager has been very understanding and I feel supported with my work and enjoy our weekly catch up calls.

Funny tales

There's something about a video call on Teams that reminds me of the TV Programme "Through The Key Hole" as you manage to catch a glimpse into peoples homes. It's interesting to see which room people choose for their backgrounds and for those that don't want to show they can add a standard 'Teams' background. I generally choose my room carefully!

I was finishing up my weekly update call with Jayne when suddenly there was a loud shout to which Jayne asked "What's that noise?", the shout then proceeded to become a full on screaming match in which there was no covering up the fact that the boys were having a full on physical fight about who's turn it was on the playstation. Needless to say there were very stern words had after the call.

The kids have also become very savvy to the fact that if I'm on a call or on Teams that they can get away with murder, generally they will walk in front of me doing sign language that they're hungry, then proceed to raid the biscuit barrel knowing that I can do nothing to stop them!

However, I haven't yet resorted to the reactions as per writer Ivor Baddiel whilst being interviewed by the BBC. Follow the link to the hilarious spoof

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5gHePpVSQA>