

Working from home was the dream but is it turning into a nightmare?

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Remember when it was so exciting to be able to WFH – work from home? No more dispiriting 90-minute commutes, for example. Suddenly, extra hours were added to your day. A better work-life balance **beckoned (1)**, because we had developed a technological infrastructure that had made distance **irrelevant (2)**.

5 Of course there were **glitches (3)**. Childcare, for example, became a nightmare when schools and nurseries closed. Not everyone had good, reliable broadband. And it turned out that not every household had multiple laptops either. Likewise, many people lived in small apartments where the choice of workspace **boiled down to (4)** either the kitchen table or the cubbyhole. And there were still large numbers of “critical” workers whose work couldn’t be done from
10 home.

But still, wasn’t it wonderful that so many of us could?

I’m picking up a distinct impression that the novelty of WFH has begun to wear thin as we realise that the pandemic might turn out to be a very long **haul (5)** indeed. And the more we are obliged to interact with the technology at home, the more acute our perceptions of its
15 implications and downsides are becoming.

Take, for example, that perennial question of work-life balance. It has definitely shifted during the lockdown – but in favour of the office. We may be physically at home but many of us are working harder than we did when we were, physically, on corporate premises. What’s basically happened is that the office has invaded the home.

20 (1) beckoned = called

(2) irrelevant = not pertinent

(3) glitches = computer bugs

(4) to boil down to = be essentially

(5) a haul = a catch

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