The routines you’ve established over time in your office are pretty familiar to you. However, with a change of environment you’ll find yourself needing to establish some new ones. Routines provide the structure that helps your day run smoothly in order to get everything done without wasting time and still have a life. Here are some things to consider.

Your routine

- **The definition of routine.** ‘A sequence of actions regularly followed; a fixed program’. Yup. To work out of your home, you need to develop a routine right out the gate...

- I began working from home when it was an unusual thing to do! One thing I learned very quickly on was if I didn’t have ‘start and stop time’, ‘office hours’, a ‘lunch break’ and a couple minutes of symbolic ‘water cooler’ chat with a friend, I did a lot of physical and mental wandering. I wasted time, effort and energy…not to mention outcomes that were less than stellar. It may take a couple days but try and nail down some type of structure and adjust it as you see fit. Whatever else you decide to do, don’t skip this step!

- Another thing…get up, take a shower, get dressed, have breakfast, check your phone and THEN go to your office…even if it’s across the room. The routine you practice for getting ready to GO to work should be the same as if you’re actually getting in your car to drive to the office.

Your space

- **If you’re single.** You can probably set up workspace pretty easily. Just try to dedicate that space to work and put the laptop away ‘after hours’.

- **If you have a family.** You need to remember this is a change for everyone and finding separate, dedicated workspace might be more of a challenge. Just remember to try and set up ‘work hours’ and communicate this to your family members. If you have a small corner, then use a prop of some kind---a hat, a plant, a small statue…something to let others know when you have ‘open’ office hours and they can visit. Not sure what you do about the dog.

Your office

- **Gather all the tools or supplies you might need.** Otherwise you’ll be getting up and down on a regular basis interrupting yourself and your workflow. This includes paper, pens, stapler, trashcan…all those things you might take for granted because technology doesn’t care about these things. But you might…some time…for a reason you have yet to know. And please don’t forget a decent chair. Nothing can make you more tired or more sore than the wrong chair.

Your health

- **Your body.** It’s easy…oh so easy…to sit in a home office all day and never get up from your desk. Why? Because if you follow these types of guidelines, there may be less interruptions and distractions that enable you to focus better and longer than you have been in the past. I had to literally put a timer on myself to stand up from my chair once/hour and look away from my screen every 20 minutes or so because I’d get so engrossed in what I was doing.

Your strategy

- **Your G.P.S.** Last but not least remember your time management GPS...
  - What’s your goal or objective for the day?
  - What’s your priority for working towards that goal?
  - What’s your schedule and plan for the day?

Something that might help

Years ago I created an eguide to help home-based business owners and employees set up a permanent home office. This guide is normally found in my ‘Get Organized’ online class.

Meanwhile…stay safe, healthy and…productive!!!

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