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Levin has been in the long term care industry since 1999, during which time he has been an award-winning agent, district manager, regional sales manager, marketing director, associate general agent, general agent, and divisional vice president. Levin is also a former practicing Attorney-at-Law, court-appointed arbitrator and is a retired U.S. Army officer.

In addition to his various law and life and health insurance licenses, and the above designations, Levin has also earned Green Belt certification through GE's Six Sigma program, and is a graduate of GAMA International's Essentials of Leadership and Management. He has also taught Managing Goal Achievement®, Integrity Selling® and The Way to Wealth® to hundreds of leaders and salespeople over the past fifteen years

He previously possessed FINRA Series 7, 24, and 66 licenses. Levin earned his Juris Doctor from The John Marshall Law School, his MPA, from the University of Oklahoma, and his BA from the University of Illinois-Chicago. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Defense Strategy Course, U.S. Army War College.

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The New Now

Last week I wrote about the New Normal that has been inflicted on all of us as we deal with the Coronavirus as a global pandemic. Quite a bit has changed in a week. Now, over half of the population of the United States is under one form or another of a governmental or voluntary lockdown. Over 53 million kids are home from school, prompting parents from all walks of life to joke about “family distancing” in addition to social distancing.

In the past week, our carrier partners have been active in reaching out to us at the BGA level to determine what they can do to assist us as we assist you to maintain some form of New Normalcy as we collectively strive to serve our clients.

We know that this situation is not permanent, and that gradually we will return to the Old Normal where we will be free to congregate in groups of more than two, actually consume dinners in a restaurant, attend sporting events, movie theatres, and

send our children back to school. But what do we do until the country does “re-open for business?”

Fortunately, we have a product that lends itself to being offered to clients over the phone and virtually by sharing our computer screen. For a good number of you it really has been “business as usual” as we continue to call leads, referrals, and continue our networking and prospecting activities via the phone.

Because our target market is **not** the hourly worker who is concerned about the loss of employment or how they are going to make ends meet this month, but rather the salaried middle class Baby Boomer/Gen-Xer who is now working from home, this is an opportune time to reach them, more often than not with time on their hands, as well as a desire to speak with us about something that they have knowingly been procrastinating.

I want to make sure that you don't squan-

der this *opportunity* and understand what it means to work from home. As more and more of my personal and work friends have begun the drudgery or challenge of working from home, I have been saying in a joking manner that the New Normal is pretty much my Old Normal of the past four years at least. As more and more carriers gave up their career sales forces and closed regional offices, for most long term care insurance producers working from home is nothing new. For our financial advisor, attorney, and other insurance producer partners, this might be something dramatically new to you. For all of you I want to share some of the things that I have learned over the past 40 years, half of which I have spent working from home.

- If you are an early bird, start work early. I started writing this piece at about 5:30 a.m., thought about it as I worked out, and then decided *not* to even check my email until I had captured these thoughts before they leaked out of my ears.
- Get your workout in. Even if you are a “gym rat” and cannot go to the gym or YMCA because it is closed, find something to do at home—elliptical, treadmill, walking, biking, or even an old workout video. Getting the blood circulating and shaking the cobwebs loose is critical. I always feel better prepared for my business day once my workout is checked off the list.
- Get showered and get dressed. It is hard to be taken seriously if you are sitting in a video conference in your pajamas and a bathrobe or you look like you just got home from the bar. For years I have known that when I dress for success, I feel more successful, and I *am* more successful. I am not advocating a suit and tie, but business casual attire is enough for me to know that I am supposed to be in work mode, though summertime still means a pair of shorts but a nice shirt.
- Keep to a definitive schedule. If you start early and log your eight hours, hey, you’re done for the day. Go do something for yourself or with your family. Do something creative and take

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advantage of this “found” time.

- Take breaks every hour. I only recently started doing this mainly to improve my overall health and to feel better. Now I make a point of getting up from behind my desk and computer, walking around the house—inside or even better outside—and make the conscious effort to check my Fitbit for the extra steps I can put in. If I don’t have to be in front of my computer I am walking around and, as my neighbors can attest, it is not unusual to see me out on the driveway or walking laps around the backyard while on conference calls. Last Monday was a beautiful day here in Boise and, with about five hours of phone time, it was easy to log more than 25,000 steps on my Fitbit literally without breaking a sweat.
- Keep track of your time—billable hours if you will. From the time I was an attorney, and keenly aware that “billable hours” were the fruit of my labors with which I fed my family, I have always kept tabs on my work hours. It is how you know that you are not cheating yourself or employer and that you are achieving balance in your life.
- Finally, when you are done working, leave the work at the desk and leave the room so that you can “go home.” Without the “decompression” time in the car, be mindful of switching from work mode to family mode, especially if you have younger children or grandchildren in the vicinity.
- As we have said each year in our annual holiday selling tips, it is imperative that you know when you are working, and when you are playing. Set expectations for yourself, and boundaries for yourself and your family to be respected. It has been entertaining to watch late

night host Jimmy Fallon attempt to do the Tonight Show from home as his young daughters interrupt the monologue or other guest interviews. He is one of the proponents of family distancing.

- Look for the bright side of things:
 - No commute and its accompanying frustrations. I jokingly say to my wife each morning, “Going to the office,” and close the door to my study as I enter the work world. She humors me.
 - No wasted time in the car. I love the fact that I am no longer commuting up Washington State Route 167, burning anywhere between 45 minutes and two hours to transit the 24 miles to my office twice daily. It is amazing how much happier and less frustrated I am by only having to transit 24 *steps* to complete my commute.
 - Extra time to do something you want to do. As some of you know, I am a closet author and genealogist. I love the fact that I can carve out time each day to follow these pursuits with no accompanying guilt.

Remember, this New Normal is not going to last forever. We will resume life as we knew it before this horrible sickness began to spread around the world. In the meantime, practice common sense and follow the guidelines about social distancing, washing your hands, and not taking unnecessary chances, and talk to your clients, other professionals, and centers of influence. More than ever before we all can live that Life of Significance as we have been challenged to do by Joe Jordan and others who have learned from bitter experience the impact of not having a plan for the future. 🌍