



If you have a solo worker in your life...

- Don't behave as though their work is less important than your work, because it takes place out of a traditional setting or during non-traditional hours.
- Do not assume they are enjoying the sunshine if it's sunny. We are working, just like you.
- Do not assume they can take in that parcel, drop off that dry cleaning, pick up that thing, that child, those groceries.
- Don't assume that because they work flexibly, they can also bend those hours around you. Chances are, they are already struggling to put their own work first, to give it the weight it deserves.
- Don't assume they should be the ones to do any school holiday childcare or to deal with elderly relatives, dinner reservations, other people's doctors/dentists/ hair appointments, or parent-teacher meetings.
- (Maybe) don't buy biscuits for the house in which they live.
- If they consistently work crazy hours, challenge them.
- Celebrate their successes. Mark the things they've achieved – you don't have to buy them presents, but show pride in what they've done, because many solo workers won't get it from anyone else.
- Let them talk. Even if you've just come in from a busy day at the office, understand that it is vital for them, perhaps alone all day, to shore up their mental health by talking to you, even if you feel like you need it to be quiet. (Don't make them feel silly for needing this.)
- Take them out occasionally, even if you don't really want to go out because you've been out all day. They've been in, and alone, all day.
- Don't assume that they have no boss. Most likely, they feel like they have dozens – maybe hundreds – of bosses.

Extracted from SOLO: How to Work Alone (And Not Lose Your Mind) by Rebecca Seal, published by Profile Books/Souvenir Press

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