

Ten Things to do When Dispatch is Deader than Disco (with no WiFi, absolutely no personal use of internet, AND you have a stupidphone)

For those of you who don't remember the Disco Era, "Disco" refers to the music and also to the clubs where people danced to it. It was a time of mirror balls suspended from the ceiling, music from the Bee Gees, and the movie that enshrined it all catapulting John Travolta into the spotlight with the [iconic opening sequence](#) and the [dance moves of the era](#) that swept across the country ().

"Deader Than Disco" refers to how quickly it disappeared and never, ever came back.

Official Disclaimer:

Some of these may not fly if you have other people in the comm center with you. Some may be ill-advised if there's recorded video surveillance of your comm center. All have grown out of my attempts to amuse myself over 12 hour solo shifts, especially overnights. Pursue at your own risk.

In no particular order of preference:

1. **Crochet.** Really, does anyone crochet? Well, technically, I *can* crochet. But the only thing I've ever managed to produce is a rectangle made of yarn. The more I try, the more I understand my cat's enjoyment of unraveling it all. Because for her, that's the goal. Not starting the wretched thing over again.
2. **Wash the dispatch floor.** Use some citrus spray, put a little bleach in the water...the light colored tiles look pretty good. Until "they" come back from a call in the middle of the night. Then "they," as a fellow dispatcher says, "wander around dispatch like toddlers, leaving bootprints all over the floor you just cleaned." Seriously, the place looks like one of those [Family Circus cartoons of "Billy" going *right* home](#).
3. **Get UP!** Pace the floor, bust a move, do some standing yoga postures. The more you sit, the more at risk you are for gaining weight...and the health risks associated with being overweight. Again, use caution if there's video rolling on your work space.
4. **Read.** Anything. Currently on my "night table"...a naturalist's study on octopus intelligence, a fantasy fiction novel about modern day Fae, a collection of recipes for meatless meals. And professional publications as available, of course!
5. **Write your grocery list.** What?! Did you think none of these would be boring chores?
6. **Plan meals.** For either the week or your shift rotation, whichever is easier. Then do the mental gymnastics around how you're going to accomplish putting them together with the obligations in your life. It is not easy. I work a couple hours the night before going into my shift rotation to get it done. And I plan a stop at Wendy's before I go into my second overnight. Because. I.Want.To.
7. **Bedazzle stuff.** (JUST KIDDING!)

8. **Color.** It's really soothing and calming. Get a book of mandalas and set to. But use really cool artist's pencils in case anybody "catches" you at it so you can shamelessly say you're making art. Because...you are!

9. **Make a plan to schedule some down time.** Even if it only happens once a month. Massage, movie, day on the beach, favorite exercise class, binge watching favorite "go to" movies. Something, anything. Then stick to the plan, recharge your batteries. (As best you can. I get it. Life happens and then you're on the crazy train again.)

10. **When all else fails,** brew a nice "cuppa" tea, eat some chocolate, and look forward to the rising sound of birdsong. Dawn will not be far behind.