

SPECIAL
EDITION
April 2019

THE EPOCH TIMES

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REAL LIFE IN A DIGITAL AGE

How to reclaim balance in your life

FROM THE EDITOR



Convenience and connection are some of the benefits we've come to experience through apps, social media, and other digital tools.

But there is a dark side to these. Having an overwhelming amount of information at our fingertips may give rise to anxiety. Spending time on social media, with its often carefully curated posts, can cause envy and low self-esteem. And one of the potential pitfalls of playing video games is addiction.

In this special edition, we explore some of the challenges of our digital age and how you can stay healthy and find balance



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Taking the time to unplug and enjoy nature from time to time is beneficial in our modern times.

in these times.

We also look at topics such as wireless radiation and what you can do to protect yourself; how you can help loved ones who may be experiencing a gaming disorder; why a simple digital detox might not be enough and what

you can do to reclaim your time; and how to foster a healthy tech environment for your children.

We hope it will prove useful to you.

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-Chief

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About Us

The Epoch Times is a media organization dedicated to seeking the truth through insightful and independent journalism.

Standing outside of political interests and the pursuit of profit, our starting point and our goal is to create a media for the public benefit, to be truly responsible to society.

We endeavor to educate readers about today's most important topics, seeking to broaden and uplift minds. We believe that rational, balanced debate is key

for fostering a healthy democracy and a compassionate society.

As an independent media outlet, we use our freedom to investigate issues overlooked—or avoided—by other media outlets. We seek to highlight solutions and what's good in society rather than what divides us.

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

We stand against the destruction wrought by communism, including the harm done to cultures around the world.

We are inspired in this by our own experience. The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to bring honest and uncensored news to people oppressed by the lies and violence in communist China.

We still believe journalism is a noble vocation, but only when it genuinely seeks to serve its communities and help them to flourish. In all that we do, we will hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity.

This is our promise to you.

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THE
EPOCH
TIMES

TRUTH *and* TRADITION

A CURE FOR FAKE NEWS SYNDROME

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SJOUKJE VAN DE KOLK

When we consume less—not just fewer tangible things but less news and chatter—and don’t try to figure out every detail ahead of time, we are able to listen to our instincts more. Three philosophers talk about the benefits of this.

‘Less information means more wisdom.’—Alain de Botton

Alain de Botton is a British philosopher who advocates for less information, fewer books, and less news. He believes we should return to and reread centuries-old books and texts, for example, with great ideas: quality over quantity.

“We pay a price for all the information we consume these days: We know less. We are constantly distracted by our phones, and it is nearly impossible to concentrate anymore, sit still, and think without the urge to reach for our phone.

“Beneath this urge to constantly check for updates lies a deeper layer that is so defining for our lives these days: the feeling that we always have to be up-to-date on the latest news. We have the feeling that something is always happening somewhere in the world that we need to know about. And if we don’t know it, we think we are missing something important and won’t be capable of understanding ourselves and the world around us.”

Book Diet

“This is a new concept, historically speaking. For centuries, the things we found important were written in—often religious—books. The great truths and the indispensable insights were on parchment or paper, or were even carved in stone. For Buddhists, nearly nothing has changed since 500 BCE, when Buddha was alive. The same applies to Christian, Jewish, or other sources of wisdom which were often recorded around (or before) the beginning of our era.

“Religious books are thought to contain eternal wisdom and truths which we are continually reminded of by an array of rituals. How different this is from today’s society, where we have to find our way around all the information that comes at us from so many sources. We have to filter the ideas that matter. Because the quantity of information is so overwhelming, we are not capable of making sense of it all. A wealthy family in England in 1250 might have had three books in its possession: a Bible, a collection of prayers, and another of lives of the saints. These books were cherished and reread over and over.

“An average student today reads 800 books before graduating from college. I am in favor of an information diet: fewer books, and less news. Instead, we should buy a few nice, high-quality books that we



Trusting Your Instincts

can reread. We may end up consuming less but will amass more wisdom than when we sit and stare at a screen all day, waiting for more news.”

‘We know so much we’re afraid to do it wrong.’—Coen Simon

Philosopher Coen Simon sees life as an unchoreographed dance: We don’t have to think about the exact moves we’re going to make ahead of time. We should more often try to trust what will come in our daily lives.

“People have the tendency to order the world according to their own interpretations, impressions, and wishes. Thinking lends itself extremely well to this. These days, we give a great deal of thought to who we are. We can’t find out what we really want and ‘go for it’ until we have thought about who we are at our core. This isn’t how life works, though; the world doesn’t adapt to our thoughts. It just does its own thing.”

“
We have to filter the ideas that matter. Because the quantity of information is so overwhelming, we are not capable of making sense of it all.

Alain de Botton, philosopher

Not the World Itself

“Our preference for thinking is actually quite logical. After all, thinking is safer than doing, to a certain extent. Doing always requires a risk. We can know everything, but if we really want to do something, we have to take a leap into the unknown. We like to trust knowing and thinking, and don’t really have many direct experiences.

“An example of this is childrearing. We read everything we can about what makes children tick, and scientific theories about what’s good for them are published in rapid succession. We know so much to the point where we have become overly cautious and are afraid of doing it wrong, even though doing it is the only way to find out how something really works. Thinking, in this way, is fooling us. We imagine the world in a certain way, and this is how we make it comprehensible, but it is important to realize that this is just our personal take on it.

“Language is also just a way of portraying

“We have almost forgotten how to just do something, be free and spontaneous, enjoy the moment and immerse ourselves in the present,” says philosopher Roman Krznaric.

TANANYAA PITHI/SHUTTERSTOCK



the world, painting a picture of a world that is simpler than it actually is. On one hand, this is useful because this enables us to talk and think about it. However, we mustn't forget that our impression of the world is not the world itself. We can't keep track of life, and we can't really truly know it.

"We would be better off thinking less and just being, and being more open. Try to see life as a free-form dance. The dance floor is constantly changing. Our movements depend on the rhythm, the people, and the space. All of these elements push our thinking to the background. Then something happens, and we react. If we could approach life the same way, we don't have to (over)think so much and we can have more trust in what will come."

'We may end up knowing less, but we'll be living that much more.'
—Roman Krznaric

Australian-born British philosopher Roman



We know so much to the point where we have become overly cautious and are afraid of doing it wrong, even though doing it is the only way to find out how something really works.

Coen Simon,
philosopher

Excerpted from
"The Big Book of Less:
Finding Joy In Living
Lighter" by Irene Smit
and Astrid van der
Hulst (Workman).
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Krznaric suggests that if we stop permitting ourselves to be constantly distracted and focus—really focus—on the here and now, things will start to affect us again.

"We are so inundated by digital information these days that we attempt to invent efficient systems to deal with it all: smart ways of filtering our email or rationing our social media time, apps that help us tag and organize articles we want to read, or catching up on podcasts while jogging or checking newsfeeds while on the toilet.

"As we strive to schedule our time even more meticulously, and tick items off our to-do lists, we keep planning and planning and looking ahead while continuing to fall behind. New information presents itself constantly and we can't keep up. We have almost forgotten how to just do something, be free and spontaneous, enjoy the moment and immerse ourselves in the present. After all, our idea of 'now' is constantly interrupted by the lives and information of

the potentially millions of other people all over the world who are all fighting for our limited amount of attention."

Back in the Now

"So how do we reclaim the present? Through mindfulness, by paying attention to what is there. We can direct our full attention to what is happening in the here and now. Whether this is a text message from a friend, the street we're walking down, or the child that is trying to tell us something.

"Mindfulness prevents us from getting caught up in the flow of information we are constantly being bombarded with. When we do this, the thing we are focusing on really does touch or influence us. We may end up knowing less, but we'll be living that much more. Who knows? Maybe we'll hear real birds singing again instead of allowing ourselves to get distracted by a 280-character tweet."



◀ Perhaps a book diet—less news, and fewer but high-quality books—would be fitting for our times.

◀ Parenting theories abound, but actually getting out there and parenting is how we find out what actually works.

DEREK OWENS/UNSPLASH

The Dangers of **WIRELESS RADIATION**

and How to Protect Yourself

— A CONVERSATION WITH PETER SULLIVAN —



Symptoms of
electrosensitivity
are caused by exposure
to wireless radiation.

CONAN MILNER

Silicon Valley is probably the last place you'd expect to hear health warnings related to your cellphone. But that's where you'll find Peter Sullivan, a man with a mission to help the public understand how their devices cause real harm.

Sullivan started out as one of the biggest fans of a technology he now does his best to avoid. He attended graduate school at Stanford University in Silicon Valley, and later worked as a software designer, rubbing shoulders with people who would go on to design the devices that shape our wireless world. Living on the cutting edge, Sullivan became one of the earliest adopters of wireless technology, but he also got sick from it long before most people knew it was possible.

His illness—now known as electrosensitivity—and the realization that it was caused by wireless radiation exposure, pushed Sullivan to find answers. While government regulators and the telecom industry insisted that the level of microwave radiation flowing from his phone was safe, Sullivan talked to several top scientists who found strong evidence showing otherwise.

Some of these scientists can be seen in a film Sullivan produced in 2017 called “Generation Zapped.” This eye-opening documentary tells of the manipulative tactics the telecom industry uses to sell the public a technology despite overwhelming evidence that it was harmful.

Today, Sullivan's full-time job is spreading the word about the dangers related to electromagnetic frequency (EMF) radiation, urging people to keep their devices off or at a distance whenever possible. He also funds research at Harvard, Stanford, University of California–Berkeley, and several leading environmental health nonprofits in an effort to provide a better picture of a technology we all use because most of us assume it's safe.

The Epoch Times talked to Sullivan about the problems associated with wireless radiation exposure, and what we can do to protect ourselves from it. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

THE EPOCH TIMES: It seems like people are just starting to realize the dangers related to wireless technology, but you've been looking at this for the past 10 years. What gave you a head start?

PETER SULLIVAN: I basically got to experience what people are experiencing now about 10 or 15 years ago, because we were on the cutting edge in Silicon Valley, and getting a lot of different exposures.

My brain was saying, “All this stuff is good,” but my body was having some really serious problems. I had to learn the hard way on this one that our assumptions about the safety were just totally false.

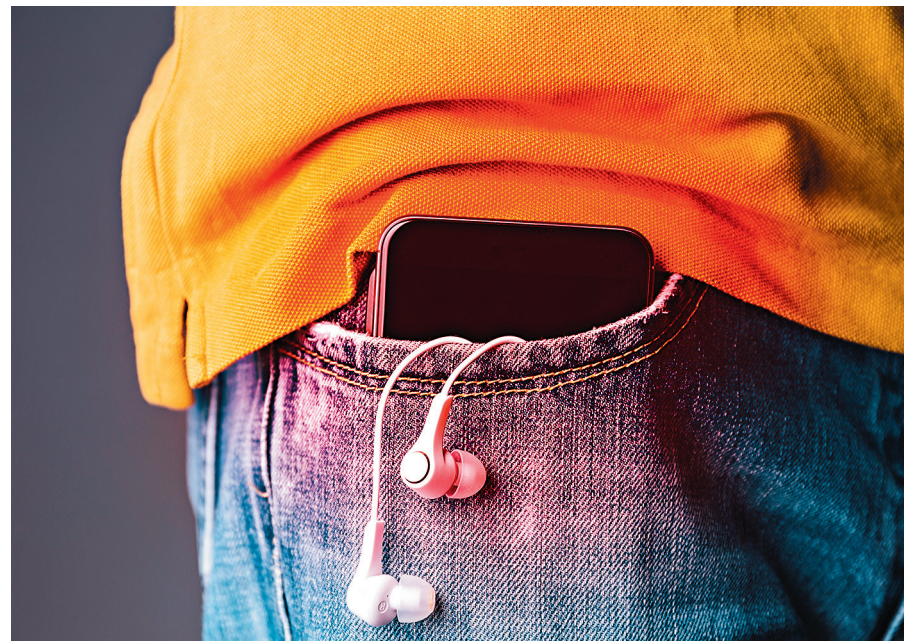
At first, I thought I had food allergies. Then

“A cellphone in a pocket of a man who is about to become a father is a major concern that needs to be investigated,” Peter Sullivan said.



Peter Sullivan
COURTESY OF PETER SULLIVAN

Living on the cutting edge, Sullivan became one of the earliest adopters of wireless, but he also got sick from it long before most people knew it was possible.



I determined I had high levels of mercury. But even after detoxifying myself, cleaning up my diet, and doing all these things, my health just kept going down. I got really skinny. My teeth were cracking. My body was demineralizing. I felt spacey and weak, and I'm not a weak person. I was a Navy pilot. I ran marathons. I did triathlons, so I'm not used to being weak, but I got physically and mentally weak.

I got to where if I put a cellphone next to my head, I could feel it, and it didn't feel good.

I didn't think there was any research out there about this, but I got invited to a session at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco where there were some scientists talking about wireless exposure. So I started looking at the research. Thousands of these studies show harm.

The Silicon Valley folks aren't clued into this, but the telecom industry, the FCC, and U.S. government really know about this issue, but they've sold the spectrum anyway. They're basically using tobacco tactics. Did you read the article from The Nation about this? They did a six-month investigation about how the industry has been covering it up.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How does wireless radiation impact our bodies?

MR. SULLIVAN: I think the most important thing people should know is Dr. Martin Pall's work on the calcium channel. He has shown that these frequencies and fields can impact the calcium channel in our cells. Calcium channels are really fundamental to brain development, the immune system, T-cell function, the blood-brain barrier, the gut-brain barrier—they're really a central factor.

The number one risk factor for autism is a calcium channel variation. From twin studies we know that the genetic component of autism is only about 38 percent. The rest is

environmental, so we're looking for environmental factors that can have an impact on the calcium channel. Dr. Pall has spoken about this at autism conferences.

Variations in calcium channel functioning are associated not just with autism, but with ADHD, depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia. People with these variations are at a higher risk.

Calcium channel variations also increase the risk factor for electrosensitivity. But even if you have very normal calcium channel function, you can become electrosensitive with a high exposure. It still gets overloaded at some point, and especially as we add in more things like 5G.

So some people can get completely overloaded by wireless, but it's not just the wireless. It's really a combination of multiple things in the environment. Dr. Lisa Nagy says that people will frequently have mold exposures that can damage the calcium channel, and then that makes them more susceptible. Some people have toxic exposures. Some people have dental risk factors, like mercury fillings or infected root canals that also make them more susceptible. So you really have to lighten the load of all of these factors to stay ahead of the game right now.

THE EPOCH TIMES: We live in a world where lots of factors conspire against us.

MR. SULLIVAN: And that's what we're looking at with autism. We went in thinking it was just going to be one gene, and one environmental factor. But it turns out it's multiple genes but along the same pathway, and multiple environmental factors that are affecting that single pathway.

Of course, that pathway is also a target for drugs. So if folks are taking calcium channel blockers for their heart or their mental health, EMFs are working against those drugs. At some point you're going to start having to control these

exposures, and having a reality check on this whole thing. Some problems are not going to be solved by adding more drugs. We need to start removing interference factors to really restore our health.

THE EPOCH TIMES: I've read that supplementing with magnesium can help with the disruption of the calcium channel.

MR. SULLIVAN: Dr. Pall and others have found that magnesium is a natural calcium blocker. It downregulates the calcium channel. If you are low in magnesium, your calcium channel becomes hyperactive. When the calcium channel gets excited, it's telling your nervous system that something important is going on so we should stay alert.

The problem is, we're not meant to be in that state all the time. It's a very stressful state to be in. You can think of it like a cell danger-mode state. It consumes a lot of energy, and it's exhausting. The body is not meant to stay in this fight-or-flight state all the time.

Many of the doctors that I've talked to have been recommending a certain form of magnesium that gets into the brainstem and the brain more directly. It's called magnesium threonate. It's been shown to really help with brain connections.

THE EPOCH TIMES: It's amazing that the disruption of this tiny cellular mechanism can result in all these different problems.

MR. SULLIVAN: Dr. Pall says the calcium channels are most dense in the heart, the nervous system, and brain. We are starting to see the effects on both mental health and physical health.

People need to understand that the primary symptom of EMF exposure is sleep disturbance. Next is headaches, attention issues, anxiety, and memory issues.

The one that blows my mind the most is sperm damage. Dozens of studies show that these frequencies and fields can damage sperm. So a cellphone in a pocket of a man who is about to become a father is a major concern that needs to be investigated. People need to understand that when they put a cellphone in their pocket they're playing genetic Russian roulette. They're taking all these good genes that have gone through the test of time and they just randomly flip them. That's going to be really challenging to reverse.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What should people do to reduce their exposure to wireless radiation?

MR. SULLIVAN: The first thing is to clear out devices close to you in your sleep environment. These exposures undermine sleep, and they undermine your melatonin production and your depth of sleep.

It's very common right now for people to use their cellphone as their alarm clock and they're charging it and having it right next to them all night.



“
People need to understand that when they put a cellphone in their pocket they're playing genetic Russian roulette.”

*Peter Sullivan, founder,
Clear Light Ventures*

“
People should never, under any circumstances, touch the cellphone to their head when they're talking on it. The FCC has never tested that configuration.”

*Peter Sullivan, founder,
Clear Light Ventures*

Some people are even using fitness trackers that have a constant wireless exposure, like a Fitbit, to track their sleep. We also tell people to turn off their Wi-Fi at night, or turn off their cordless phone base station. Don't have a tablet or modem anywhere near you at night. These will all disrupt sleep.

Sleep is really fundamental to your health and mental health, and of course child development.

An important one for children: We tell parents to turn off the baby monitor at night. At minimum, move it across the room.

In general, create space around your sleep environment and your work environment. The strategy should either be to turn it off, or move it away. If you can't turn off the device, move the device away from you. If the device can't move, like a smart meter, you move away from the device.

Distance makes our exposure signal rapidly drop off. Every time you double the distance, the exposure drops off by 75 percent.

People should never, under any circumstances, touch the cellphone to their head when they're talking on it. The FCC has never tested that configuration. Every phone has a warning which says that it's tested with a space between itself and the body. They are not tested directly next to the body as most people are using them. Even if they're just close, there is a risk of them going over the FCC limit, which is already not a biologically based safety limit.

I also have a wireless safety card on my website ClearLightVentures.com. This card shows you some basic solutions for some of the most common sources of wireless radia-

tion. It has a little bit of the science, and a little bit of the health effects on one card. I give these away to parents. When people see this in writing and they see that there is science there and see that there are solutions in place, then they start taking action.

THE EPOCH TIMES: I think a big reason people don't take wireless radiation seriously is because they can't see it.

MR. SULLIVAN: That's right. It's invisible so it's hard for people to get a sense of it. One of my jobs is to make the invisible visible for people. We've gone to a couple of autism conferences where we've given people an experience. We set up a 10 foot by 10 foot canopy, kind of like a farmers market tent, but the sides are covered. It's basically a wireless clean room. We tell people who enter it to turn off their phones, their Apple watches, or whatever you've got that's emitting a wireless signal, then you go into this room.

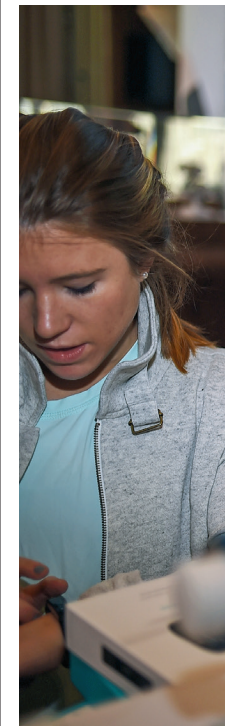
On average, between 85 to 95 percent of the people will feel a difference when they step into that room. The most common thing they report is feeling calmer. This calcium channel interference stops and the body starts unloading.

We've had some people who have had so much exposure for so long that they get a little nauseated when they step into this environment.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What is this tent made out of?

MR. SULLIVAN: It's made of a shielding material that blocks and reflects wireless radiation. And shielding is one of the strategies people can do to limit their exposure, but I

▲
Digital devices interfere with a good night's sleep.



recommend people do all the free and easy stuff first before they buy anything new.

THE EPOCH TIMES: So shielding is a more advanced level.

MR. SULLIVAN: Yes, and to do it right you may need a professional to help you so that it doesn't reflect it back and make your environment worse. People should put most of their attention on exposure reduction.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Is testing your environment important? And if so, how do you do it?

MR. SULLIVAN: You can buy a consumer level meter from companies like LessEMF or Safe Living Technologies. I actually recommend a couple of meters on my website.

You can also get people who will measure this for you. Search for EMF experts. Sometimes they're called building biologists or environmental consultants. They are trained in this and they will come in and give you a one-time assessment.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are some other things people should know about wireless radiation?

MR. SULLIVAN: People should also know that it has failed safety testing many times at various levels. Of course, the newest level, 5G, is not being tested again. So people should demand that these devices be tested before they use them and before their children use them.

Wireless safety needs to be a market requirement just like automotive safety. People should start actually looking at science and not just taking industry talking points at face value.

Conan Milner is a health reporter at The Epoch Times.

5 TIPS

FOR MINIMIZING YOUR EXPOSURE TO WIRELESS RADIATION

CONAN MILNER

Wireless technology is a fundamental part of our modern world, but it may be causing more harm than we realize.

As of Jan. 1, 2019, an appeal letter sent to the United Nations signed by more than 250 scientists from a group called International EMF Scientist wrote that the radiation emitting from our phones and other wireless devices is "proven to be harmful to humans and the environment." They pointed to effects such as cancer risk, a rise in harmful free radicals, genetic damage, structural and functional changes to the reproductive system, learning and memory deficits, neurological disorders, and a negative impact on our general well-being.

In 2018, the U.S. government released a report from its 16-year, \$25 million study examining the health impacts of wireless radiation. The study was designed to give a conclusive answer as to whether the radiation emitted from cellphones can cause cancer. Researchers concluded that there is "clear evidence" that the frequencies such as what's used for 2G and 3G mobile phones caused cancerous tumors in male rats.

In 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified radiofrequency electromagnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans. In light of research that has emerged since then, the WHO announced in 2019 that it will reevaluate its assessment.

In a world with more cellphones than people, where Wi-Fi routers are found in so many of our homes, schools, and workplaces, and with all the antennae and satellites needed to create the highly anticipated 5G network, wireless radiation seems impossible to avoid. But experts say the most effective way to reduce the harm associated with this technology is to reduce our exposure to it. Here are five tips you can use to minimize your daily dose of microwave radiation.

1. GET A WIRED INTERNET CONNECTION. The frequencies that make our wireless world run are called microwaves. Cellphone towers and



Wi-Fi routers broadcast these microwaves to provide the medium to which our smartphones and laptops connect. Studies from as far back as the 1970s show that the microwave radiation that causes the most harm is a modulated signal, and Wi-Fi has the most problematic modulation. It's great for broadcasting data, but not for our biology. For those not ready to give up your Wi-Fi, consider turning off your router at night so you're not constantly bathing in this field.

2. KEEP YOUR DISTANCE. Despite our habits, the manual for your cellphone actually says not to have the device against your head when it's on. To get some distance from the signal, use it on speakerphone. Likewise, don't use your laptop on your lap.

3. TURN OFF FUNCTIONS YOU DON'T NEED. Most of the radiation flowing from your cellphone is due to applications that constantly transmit to the nearest cell tower so that you can receive updates every few seconds. On your phone, go to settings, and turn off "cellular data." You can still send and receive texts and calls, but not updates to things like Twitter and Facebook. When you want to check your updates, simply switch on cellular data, and switch it off when you're done. Do the same with your Bluetooth and Wi-Fi settings.

4. DON'T USE WIRELESS HEADPHONES. These emit radiation that's delivered directly into your brain.

5. DITCH THE 'SMART' DEVICES. An increasing number of devices in our homes are built with an antenna that connects wirelessly. These can include smart wiring, smart appliances, smart meters, RF emanating lightbulbs, your Wi-Fi router, streaming sticks (Apple TV, Roku, Xbox, Wii), anything Bluetooth, wireless security camera systems, and more. The more smart devices in your vicinity, the more radiation you're being exposed to.

TIMOTHY BUCK/UNSPLASH

FOCUS AND BURB/SHUTTERSTOCK

◀ If you use a fitness tracker, you are constantly exposed to wireless radiation.

ANTONIO GUILLEM/SHUTTERSTOCK



The Dark Side of Social Media:

How It Affects Self-Esteem

▲ JUNE FAKKERT

Social media can be an emotional roller coaster.

Social media is enjoyable to us, partly for reasons that are genuinely human, such as sharing ideas, finding inspiration, being entertained, learning new things, and, of course, connecting with other people.

Getting likes and positive feedback online can also make us feel good about ourselves, increasing what we might call a sense of self-esteem.

But social media also has a shadow side. Because it's so enjoyable, social media can easily, and without our even realizing it, start to consume us—our time, focus, and emotional energy.

Social media can be an emotional roller coaster, making us feel terrible. It can make

us envious of a friend's vacation, car, family gadget, or work opportunity; hopeless and angry about the state of the world; or depressed about ourselves. And this can happen in the time it takes to scroll to a new post on Facebook.

To employ social media to our best advantage, we need to use it with wisdom and know that it can amplify our own shadow side.

Addiction

Social media is also enjoyable because platforms are designed for maximum attractiveness.

"It's a social-validation feedback loop. ... It's exploiting a vulnerability in human psychology," former Facebook President Sean Parker said about the social media

giant he helped create.

According to a report by Engineering and Tech magazine, Parker, who also co-founded Napster, said in a speech in 2017 that this exploitation was intentional.

"The thought process that went into building these [social networks]—Facebook being the first of them to really understand it—that thought process was all about: How do we consume as much of your time and conscious attention as possible?" he said.

"And that means that we need to sort of give you a little dopamine hit every once in a while, because someone liked or commented on a photo or a post or whatever. And that's going to get you to contribute more content, and that's going to get you more likes and comments."

These little dopamine rushes can add up to an addiction.

According to an article by researchers at Harvard University, "Platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram leverage the very same neural circuitry used by slot machines and cocaine to keep us using their products as much as possible."

And doctors have started to express concerns.

"It has taken the medical establishment a long time to recognize nonsubstance addictions, including relentless and uncontrollable use of digital media as an 'addiction,'" wrote Dr. Paul Thomas and Jennifer Margulis in their book, "The Addiction Spectrum," which includes a chapter on digital addiction.

It was only last year that the World Health Organization recognized "gaming disorder" as a mental health condition, Thomas and Margulis noted.

Self-esteem certainly plays a role in any addiction, but the relationship is not always straightforward. Drug addiction often correlates with low self-esteem, while people addicted to gambling may initially have high self-esteem. This can flip, though, as gamblers become increasingly unable to control their behavior and fall into debt.

Similar to gambling, the "wins" on social media—when people like posts or write glowing comments—can raise self-esteem. But this is not stable ground on which to base a sense of self-worth.

Getting likes and accumulating a vast social following are not genuine indicators of our worth as human beings.

In an interview, Margulis said that social media can give us a false sense of being social.

"It's isolating. Teenagers and adults don't spend time talking on the phone, going for walks, going to parties, being together. They spend their time on their devices," she said.

She pointed out that eye contact and physical touch, which are important to healthy relationships, are completely lacking in social media interactions, and this is "having a huge negative impact on young people's self-esteem."

Getting likes and accumulating a vast social following are not genuine indicators of our worth as human beings.

In some cases, the impact is devastating. “We’ve seen a statistically significant uptick in suicide rates among young adults and I personally know of two young men who committed suicide in the last two months. Both of those young men were struggling with overuse of gaming and of social media,” she said.

Envy

Besides addiction, social media use has been correlated with more loneliness, anxiety, depression, and narcissism, as well as a relatively new condition, FOMO (fear of missing out).

It also creates the perfect storm for an age-old vice: envy.

One of the seven deadly sins, envy is warned against by every major religion, but in today’s culture, envy is not the taboo it was in the past, and social media brings it out more frequently and with surprising strength.

“We live in the age of envy. Career envy, kitchen envy, children envy, food envy, upper arm envy, holiday envy. You name it, there’s an envy for it,” writer Moya Sarnier said in an article about envy and social media, published by The Guardian.

Envy is defined as a painful desire to have what someone else possesses, whether in terms of material possessions, accomplishments, or opportunities. Envy can also manifest as wanting someone else to be stripped of something that is theirs. (Jealousy is often defined a bit differently, as it relates to not wanting to lose something one currently possesses—often a romantic relationship).

Envy also has an illogical characteristic: We generally feel it in regard to those close to us. For example, we don’t envy the wealth of Bill Gates, but we might envy the money or possessions of a friend or neighbor.

Social media offers unprecedented and abundant opportunities to be envious by exposing us to a wider segment of our peers and often only the highlights of their lives.

“Our age of equality and mass media encourages us to compare ourselves to anyone and everyone, fanning the flames of our envy,” psychologist Neel Burton wrote in *Psychology Today*.

Burton, author of several books including “Hide and Seek: The Psychology of Self-Deception,” said our culture of materialism is partly at fault.

“By emphasizing the material and tangible over the spiritual and invisible, our culture of empiricism and consumerism has removed the one countervailing force capable of smothering those flames,” Burton said.

In the book “Envy in Everyday Life,” forensic psychotherapist Patricia Polledri said envy is not something people are born

with, but that takes root in early childhood if children fail to bond with their mothers and subsequently don’t develop good self-esteem.

Burton pointed out that envy is at the root of many other woes, including relationship issues, and mental and physical health problems.

“The distraction of envy and the dread of arousing it in others paradoxically holds us back from achieving our fullest potential. Envy also costs relationships,” he said. “In some cases, it can even lead to acts of sabotage, as with the child who breaks the toy that he knows he cannot have. Over time, our anguish and bitterness can lead to physical health problems such as infections, cardiovascular diseases, and cancers; and mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and insomnia. We are, quite literally, consumed by envy.”

Maybe this is why it was considered a deadly sin.

And the root of envy? Low self-esteem. “Envy is the reaction of the many with low self-esteem. And thus that self-esteem is the key to self-improvement,” Burton wrote.

Healthy Social Media Use

Social media use is a very personal decision, but one that can have a big impact on your well-being. This can be as subtle as staying up a bit too late, or using it to procrastinate.

If you are concerned that you or a loved one might be addicted or on the verge of addiction to social media, there are online questionnaires that can help bring more certainty. “The Addiction Spectrum” also has a self-quiz to help you see where you fall on the digital addiction spectrum.

Even if you’re not addicted, being disciplined about social media is important.

Some ways to be more discipline include periodically doing a digital detox; using social media actively to connect instead of passively to see what others are posting; setting time limits; and only checking it at certain times.

You can also turn off your notifications



JULISS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Social media offers unprecedented and abundant opportunities to be envious by exposing us to a wider segment of our peers and often only the highlights of their lives.

so you’re not tempted to check frequently, and curate your Facebook feed so you see what’s important to you. And for an additional check on yourself, ask the important people in your life how they perceive your social media use and ask yourself if how you are using social media is bettering your life (not just making you feel happy).

Also, be aware that if you use social media as a pick-me-up, it may have the opposite effect, said Ana Jovanovic, a psychologist and life coach at Parenting Pod.

“It is important to note that we usually consume more social media content when we feel lonely or down. It is then that we are particularly vulnerable to the effect of social comparison,” Jovanovic said in an email.

When it comes to teens, limiting social media use is important, said Dr. Dominic Gaziano, director of Mind and Body Wellness Clinic in Chicago.

“The less our teenagers are bombarded with these images, and the more they interact with the outside world (more importantly, the real world) the more they will realize their self-worth is in their relationships with family and friends, not the influencer living in LA,” he said in an email.

Self-Esteem and Happiness

Self-esteem is a complex, individual, and ever-changing thing. While there are myriad experiences that make us feel happy, excited, relaxed, amused, or otherwise content in the moment, a deep abiding sense of self-worth comes from something else.

It is partly rooted in childhood but also partly constructed as adults. And we construct it daily by reflecting and making choices that better us.

Aristotle said that one cannot love others if one does not love oneself. To love oneself in the right way—which is not narcissistic—one must strive to act nobly.

He said, “Those, then, who busy themselves in an exceptional degree with noble actions all men approve and praise; and if all were to strive towards what is noble and strain every nerve to do the noblest deeds, everything would be as it should be ... and every one would secure for himself the goods that are greatest, since virtue is the greatest of goods.”

June Fakkert is a health reporter at *The Epoch Times*.



GURUXOV/SHUTTERSTOCK

◀ Social media use has been correlated with more loneliness, anxiety, depression, and narcissism, as well as a relatively new condition, FOMO (fear of missing out).

BEARINMIND/SHUTTERSTOCK



◀ If you have a rule that no one in the family can use their devices during mealtime, then you can instill that boundary in your child.

CREATING A Healthy Tech Environment

Fostering a positive relationship between your kids and their devices

WILL GEDDES

How many times do you look down at your phone every day, even when you haven't received an alert? According to a 2017 survey, the average American checks their phone 80 times a day—that's every 12 minutes!

Receiving text messages, comments on your social media posts, and emails often build a sense of self-esteem, with each message alert triggering a short burst of happiness and even excitement. This leads to ad-

diction, as people find themselves constantly returning to their devices to see if they'll get the next burst of positivity from someone making contact with them. Soon they crave this feeling and become depressed without it.

Every parent faces the same dilemma: You want your child to be a sociable, informed, and confident user of technology, but you don't want them to develop an unhealthy relationship with their devices and neglect the real world around them.

Texting after lights out (even once a week) dramatically increases reported daytime sleepiness among teens.

What Are the Potential Problems?

One or more of these issues could occur if your child has an unhealthy relationship with technology:

- **Distraction**—Various studies have found that children who frequently check their phones are more likely to become poor students. Even without their phones to attract their attention, many of the students in the study were constantly preoccupied by whether anyone was trying to contact them.
- **Impatience**—As technology gets faster, our patience gets shorter. We expect instant gratification all the time. A child who doesn't immediately get a lot of likes on social media might get agitated and check their page more frequently. The danger is that this impatience also manifests itself offline.
- **Self-esteem**—Social media often paints everyone else's lives as perfect, and your child may feel other people are always getting more likes than them. This can lead to a damaging obsession about their online appearance and popularity.
- **Isolation**—Some children find that they have more in common with their online friends than the children they meet in the real world. It's important that your child

doesn't become so wrapped up in their online social life that they neglect their offline friends and find themselves isolated in the real world.

- **Underdeveloped social skills**—Communication via the Internet can be very different from speaking face to face. Children need enough offline communication to be able to develop those skills and recognize body language effectively.
- **Empathy**—Some people regularly insult or bully others online. If this is the majority of the social interaction your child encounters, they might think it is acceptable behavior.
- **Vision and hearing problems**—Excessive screen time can cause eyestrain, blurred vision, and dry eyes; while regularly listening to loud music can cause hearing problems, such as tinnitus (constant ringing in the ears) and hearing loss.
- **Neck and joint issues**—When you stand or sit upright, your head is supported by your spine. If you are tilting forward to look at a device, you're putting extra strain on your neck muscles. This can lead to upper back pain and headaches. Gamers are also at risk of discomfort in their thumbs and wrists due to repetitive actions straining their tendons.

How Can I Cut My Kids' Screen Time?

I'm as bad as anyone when it comes to being distracted by my phone, so I've come up with four top tips to avoid being distracted. Encourage your kids to use them, as well as using them yourself:

- **Block more notifications.** There are many things your device will alert you to, but do you need to know about all of them immediately? I allow notifications to appear only when a person is communicating with me directly. For example, I allow text messages to appear but not social media posts.
- **Turn on 'Do not disturb.'** There are very few people who need to be contactable at all times—and your child certainly doesn't. Most connected devices have a "Do not disturb" mode that silences all incoming communications. In most cases, you can allow certain things to overrule this mode so your child doesn't miss a really important call. Turn this setting on overnight, and ensure that your child's phone isn't kept in their room while they're asleep—it's just too tempting!
- **Use the 30:60 rule.** Ideally, don't let your child use their device for longer than 30 minutes at a time. After 30 minutes, they should then spend 60 minutes doing something else—perhaps something active, such as going outside, doing chores, or having a face-to-face conversation. This will help avoid eye problems and repetitive strain injuries. Unless they're playing video games, watching television, or doing homework, there's probably not much they need to do online that takes more



SIZANNE TUCKER/SHUTTERSTOCK

▲
Don't let your child use their device for longer than 30 minutes at a time. After 30 minutes, they should then spend 60 minutes doing something else—perhaps something active, such as doing chores.

91%
OF YOUNG PEOPLE
think they have a
healthy relationship
with their devices.

**9
HOURS**

Teenagers in the United States spend nearly **9 hours a day** using entertainment media, including the internet. Tweens (aged 8–12) spend nearly **6 hours a day** on similar screen time.

79%
OF YOUNG PEOPLE
keep their phone nearby
when they sleep.

than 30 minutes. If they are gaming, try using a 60:60 minutes on:off ratio instead.

- **Turn on gray-scale mode.** Devices often have vivid color displays, and color can have a strong effect on your brain. If you remove the color, you may find that you check your phone much less frequently. The method of turning on gray-scale mode varies from phone to phone, so do an Internet search to find specific instructions for your model.

Is There Anything Else I Can Do?

Yes, these are all more general strategies that will help ensure that your child has a healthy relationship with technology and that they are safe when using their device(s).

Stay Safe When Out and About

When you're out and about, you need to be aware of your surroundings. You have five senses, and if your child is using a device with headphones, they are limiting two important senses: vision and hearing. A good rule of thumb is for your child to use devices only when standing still and not while walking or running.

In addition to limiting awareness, using a device while out and about makes your child a target—criminals could see a distracted child with a valuable device in their hand as an opportunity.

Set Tech Areas and Enforce Tech-Free Time

I'm a strong advocate of tech areas and tech-free time for a number of reasons. First, it's important for children to separate where is and isn't appropriate for them to use devices. If, for example, you have a rule that no one in the family can use their devices during dinnertime, then you can instill that boundary in your child.

Second, when children use their devices hidden away in their bedrooms or take their devices to the bathroom with them, you can't keep an eye on what they are doing and how

long they are doing it for. This can become a big issue if your child spends a lot of time gaming alone in their room. If you do move your child's computer or game console to a family room, you can always get them headphones so that the rest of the family doesn't have to listen in to their game.

Finally, ensure that your child has a tech-free period of time before they go to bed. There's a growing body of research indicating that the blue light from devices' screens can affect our sleep and sleeping patterns. The current guidance is to avoid screen time for at least 1 hour before bedtime.

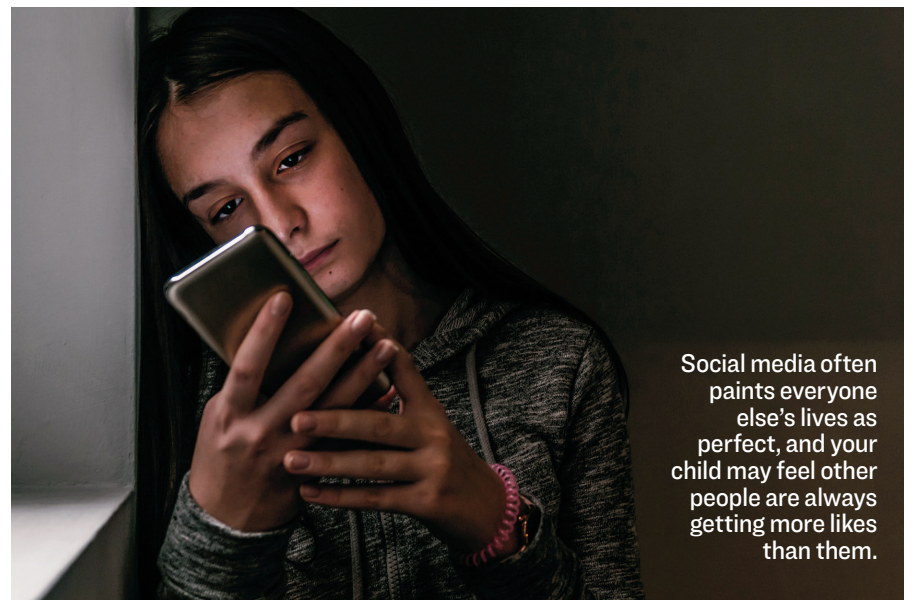
Set a Good Example

Make sure that you aren't doing any of the things that you encourage your kids not to do. This includes the advice in this chapter as well as that across the entire book. Children have a strong sense of fairness. If the rules apply to everybody, they'll be much easier to enforce.

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With more than 25 years' experience, Will Geddes is recognized as a leading specialist security adviser. He has worked for royal families, former heads of state, and Hollywood celebrities, as well as FTSE 100 and Fortune 500 companies. Beginning his professional career in human threat management, Geddes has operated around the world, including in hostile and high-risk environments, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, and has been strategically and tactically involved in cybersecurity, counterterrorism, extortion management, emergency extractions, intelligence gathering, and investigations. He also is a regular keynote speaker and an adviser to The International Press and Media Group.

DRAGANA GORDIC/SHUTTERSTOCK



Social media often paints everyone else's lives as perfect, and your child may feel other people are always getting more likes than them.



Why
**VIDEO
GAMES**
are so addictive

CATHERINE YANG

Stories from recovering and former gaming addicts reveal their struggles: friends who tell them it's not a real addiction; parents who aren't sure there's anything they can do, or think that because their grades are good, the problem isn't serious; recovering drug addicts in support groups who can't sympathize; or experts who tell them it's an exaggeration.

Sometimes the gamers themselves aren't aware they have a problem, until one day they notice they've been depressed to the point of suicidal thoughts and haven't left their room for who knows how long.

Video game "addiction" has long been used in a colloquial sense. But it wasn't until 2018 that the World Health Organization (WHO) included "gaming disorder" in the International Classification of Diseases, after four years of active study. This came after a slew of high-level Silicon Valley developers and executives confessed that they limit access to devices in their own homes, and revealed the persuasion tactics built into tech. Around the same time, the tremendous popularity of the online game "Fortnite" made headlines, followed by stories of supposed addicts ruining their lives.

Interest in the dangers of such entertainment has been piqued, but some researchers are worried studies aren't comprehensive enough, and healthy people who enjoy video games counter it's all fearmongering or moral panic. But while we debate, people who say they need real help can fall through the cracks.

What Constitutes a Disorder?

Dr. Vladimir Poznyak, who works in the mental health and substance abuse department of WHO, explained in a video that there are very specific guidelines to determine what constitutes an actual addiction to video games.

According to WHO's guidelines, a person is considered to be addicted if he or she experiences "impaired control over gaming," meaning that even if the person wants to stop, he or she can't seem to do it. Additionally, these people find that gaming takes precedence over other daily activities and interests, to the point where they are distressed and not completely functional, and yet they still can't change their behavior.

This might mean they've dropped other hobbies and interests to make more time for gaming, damaged their relationships, regularly skipped meals, slept sporadically, and continued these behaviors even when they've realize their physical and mental health was suffering—typically resorting to deceit to do so.

WHO states that, in most cases, this behavior should be observed for 12 months before a diagnosis can be made, and such a diagnosis should only be made by a health



professional with relevant expertise.

The majority of people who use the internet or play games likely are not addicts, but dismissing it as not being a "real" problem doesn't help. The WHO designation was made so that those seeking help can find it and get treatment through their health insurance, and so that more research in this field would be done.

Designed for Addiction

People tend to play video games for the social connection and measurable progress that satisfy our innate need for competition, and to create a sense of purpose. These call all be good things—except games exploit this human need as a vulnerability to keep you coming back for more. If someone doesn't have other outlets to meet these needs, he or she might turn to the attractive immediacy of games, until eventually the overstimulation renders real life too unexciting, erodes willpower, and creates a compulsive habit.

In 2013, anthropologist and author Natasha Dow Schüll's book "Addiction by Design" revealed the manipulative, dark side of how machine gambling in Las Vegas is designed, and how models are constantly refined to maximize their impact on behavior, the goal being to get gamblers to spend more than they originally planned to.

Not long after Schull received acclaim for the exposé, she began receiving invitations to speak on the topic, especially to marketers and entrepreneurs who were interested in adopting these approaches for their products, to nudge users to certain

Adair has found that many gamers may feel trapped and unhappy, but also feel like they need permission to quit.

behaviors. Whether it's a tech giant like Google, or a small, independent educational app developer, their goal is to attract users' attention and then keep it. Behavior design has become the norm.

Advertising and propaganda have existed long before the internet, but this school of "behavior design"—creating machine-compelled habits—is usually credited to B.J. Fogg, the founder and director of the Behavior Design Lab at Stanford University. In an interview with *The Economist*, Fogg said that during his graduate studies, he discovered the classics and had an epiphany while reading Aristotle's "Rhetoric"—he realized that the art of persuasion would one day be implemented in technology.

He has been presenting his findings since the late 1990s, and his former students include Nir Eyal, who wrote the popular book "Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products" and gives seminars on the same topic, and Mike Krieger, who went on to co-found Instagram. Another is Tristan Harris, who eventually founded the Center for Humane Technology to spread awareness about behavior design, after he gained little traction in trying to implement design ethics in his former position at Google.

If even the most utilitarian of programs and platforms now implement such design, you can imagine how the effect is multiplied when applied to entertainment such as games—miniature worlds where you can see measurable and immediate progress for your efforts, where you can win, where it's safe to fail because there are seemingly no real repercussions, and where the program

▲ A UK divorce service reported petitions increasingly citing the video game Fortnite as a reason for the end of marriages—200 in 2017.



feeds you “random” bonuses to keep you feeling lucky after a losing streak.

Think, for instance, about the fact that the average American checks his or her phone 80 times a day, or an even more often in the case of teens. Is the slot machine-like action of pull-to-refresh something we really want to be doing a hundred times a day?

The vast majority of teens have smartphones now, and in a 2016 survey of 620 families by Common Sense Media, more than 50 percent of teens said they felt addicted and almost 80 percent said they felt the need to respond instantly to messages.

A 2010 survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation found children aged 8 to 18 spent 7 1/2 hours in front of a screen each day, up 20 percent from five years prior. That data is now nearly a decade old—2007 was the year the iPhone came out, and 2016 was the year device use in the United States hit a peak and started to plateau.

People with fulfilling hobbies, jobs, and relationships aren't immune. “Fortnite,” for instance, proved so distracting that some pro-athletes had to institute a ban. A UK divorce service reported petitions increasingly citing the game as a reason for the end of marriages—200 in 2017.

Cam Adair is the founder of Game Quitters, the world's largest support community of its kind, which he began in 2014 to help others struggling with what he went through himself. He estimates the average gaming addict spends at least 25 hours per week on gaming, and another 25 hours on other internet activities, which can have a similar pull.

It may be worth noting that using social media, which has been gamified for teens, can lead to similar negative symptoms. Experts have said that gaming addiction overwhelmingly affects males, but the suicide rate for teen girls—the main demographic on Snapchat and Instagram—has spiked, tripling for girls aged 12 to 14 from 2007 to 2015.

Inoculating oneself by being aware of such manipulation may only go so far.

Venture capitalist and former Mozilla CEO John Lilly told The New York Times that he's explained to his son how technology influences behavior.

“I try to tell him somebody wrote code to make you feel this way—I'm trying to help him understand how things are made, the values that are going into things and what people are doing to create that feeling,” Lilly told the newspaper. “And he's like, ‘I just want to spend my 20 bucks to get my Fortnite skins.’”

What Can People Do to Help?

Compulsive checking of your phone is one thing, but it becomes a disorder when someone has fallen into depression and maybe even desperately wants to stop, but can't muster up the wherewithal to begin. Rehab centers are popping up specifically



There have been rehab centers popping up specifically for gaming disorder or internet addiction.

for gaming disorder or internet addiction, and some therapists may specialize in this, but the vast majority of people will probably not start there.

“Most people aren't going to go to professional health, even if that's what we encourage,” Adair said on the Canadian program “Breakfast Television.” “A lot of people are going to be more comfortable watching a video on YouTube or finding help online.”

For many people looking to quit, it's hard to tell whether their depression caused the addiction or the other way around, and both issues deserve treatment. Some people seek out therapy first, and some come to use therapy later.

In either case, they should define why it is they are gaming in the first place, and then find things they can do in place of video games to meet those needs. It may help to document the reasons clearly, as a reminder when motivation for staying the course is necessary.

It's also necessary to find an immersive

hobby to keep active and not struggle with boredom. This could be learning a new skill or committing to a job to challenge yourself and as a way to see measurable improvement.

Some recovering and former gaming addicts turn the lessons they've learned about games into methods for breaking the habit, gamifying the recovery process by scheduling, organizing, and breaking down goals until they can set higher levels of achievement.

Adair has found that many gamers may feel trapped and unhappy, but also feel like they somehow need permission to quit—from, say, a parent or an authority figure. But really, they can give themselves permission, and with that realization comes the understanding that they have the power to motivate themselves to continue to quit, as well.

For Parents

Adair, who has gotten thousands of mes-

Studies have shown that for babies and toddlers, there's no measurable benefit to any screen use.

sages daily since he first opened up about his story in a blog post in 2011, says there's a reason so many of these people are young men in their late 20s and 30s.

Most of the gamers he's talked to actually started gaming at age 9—and today he's seeing them start as toddlers. Gaming can then become an ingrained habit or dependency, but because of the structure of school and home life, one may not experience a downward spiral until he becomes a young adult and starts to live on his own.

About 80 percent of college students are gaming, but those who go on to develop a disorder usually don't notice it until they're out of college and suddenly realize how far behind in life they are compared to their peers.

Adair thinks it's important that young gamers understand addiction can become a real thing.

Studies have shown that for babies and toddlers, there's no measurable benefit to any screen use, and it's likely to have negative effects. For older children and teens, many studies show that there aren't any effects from having an hour per day of screen time, and the negative effects really only start to show up after around the

two-hour mark.

Many parents may want to curb digital device use in general for younger children, in which case experts across the board recommend setting very clear boundaries: when and where it's okay to use devices, and for how long.

Parents need to be firm in any rules they've set, because if children realize one hour can be negotiated to two, they will try for more. And if they realize there are no consequences for breaking the rules, the rules don't matter. In some cases, children who feel like they have a problem may volunteer to cut down on phone time or go without it for a period, but they are very much relying on the parent to help enforce those boundaries. The developing mind has less impulse control than the adult mind, and the temptation doesn't necessarily reflect bad intentions on the children's part.

If a parent catches a child stealing devices or lying about use, this may be a different kind of conversation.

In any case, the reason for setting the boundaries should be explained, as well. This may also open the way to examining why the child is playing games in the first place, and whether there are unhealthy rea-

Many people play video games—roughly 2.3 billion worldwide.

sons that can be mitigated. The solution for boredom, or not feeling good at anything else, may be to try out other hobbies.

Loneliness may be another big factor, or fear of missing out, because these games tend to be social, multiplayer games. Parents can help children realize this may be an opportunity to be the one to invite others out to things, rather than feeling anxious about possibly not getting invited somewhere and playing games to deal with that anxiety.

Adair also cautions parents not to make accusations like “those aren't your real friends,” because in many cases the gamer is playing because they don't have other friends. They may have also suffered from bullying, and the relationships they've made online are the most meaningful ones they have.

For some kids, not playing video games means a sudden and giant void appears in their lives. They will be scared, act out, and need the parents' support to navigate this great unknown and form some structure.

Adair also cautions parents about the emotional strain it can bring on themselves while dealing with, perhaps, an emotionally volatile teenager who is struggling to stop playing video games. It's important that the adults have a support system, too. Some experts recommend telling a number of people in their lives about what is going on before they begin to tackle it, so they have people to talk to. Adair also recommends joining an online forum and community of other parents going through the same thing.

Screen Free

Electronic fasts, internet detoxes, or going screen-free completely for some extended amount of time is recommended when the problem is severe. The more difficult it seems to stop playing (or the bigger a meltdown the child has), the bigger the dependency and the more reason there is to work on it.

Psychiatrist Victoria Dunckley, who has done extensive research on how screens overstimulate the mind, has written a “reset” guide for four weeks, which provides enough time for the mind to calm down, re-regulate, and stabilize. In more complex cases, the reset period needs to be longer, sometimes in order to clarify diagnoses with a medical professional.

When it comes to addiction, Adair recommends a 90-day detox, based on detachment theories that hold that this is the appropriate amount of time to spend letting go, creating a very evident contrast (life with gaming versus life without), and forming new habits. It's also to provide enough time to reset one's dopamine levels, which have likely become numbed to real life after extensive periods of acclimating to video games.

Catherine Yang is an arts and culture reporter at The Epoch Times.

For some kids, not playing video games means a sudden and giant void appears in their lives.

DARREN BAKER/SHUTTERSTOCK



Modern Technology and the God of Communications

Greek mythology offers insight into our love of technology

JAMES SALE

We love our technology, and not surprisingly, for it appears to make our lives easier, more productive, and more secure. But with every advance in human “progress,” we find that things come with a cost, sometimes a steep one—and sometimes one we refuse to acknowledge until it’s too late.

Using digital devices now seems disconnected from the consideration that the 20th century was the bloodiest in human history. Yet for that scale of bloodshed to have occurred, we needed the scientific advances that have led to the technological revolution we are currently experiencing.

As weird as it seems in this context, psychiatrist Carl Jung suggested that a neurosis is like an offended or neglected god, according to Jungian analyst James Hollis. Surely one must ask then, when we see people wandering down the street talking into mobile devices, driving while chatting into a cell-phone, or being unable to switch off their phones, tablets, and laptops, whether there must be an “offended god,” for this is neurotic behavior, as it is certainly not healthy, psychologically or physically.

The Offended God

But which god is offended? Who is upset? And why? There are 12 gods on Mount Olympus to whom the ancient Greeks told us to pay special attention. Alongside these 12, there is also one other vitally important, powerful, and wealthy god who is not numbered in the 12 because he does not live on Olympus with them: Hades (or, in Latin, Pluto, who was also the god of wealth).

Hades’s name has also been extended to mean his kingdom where he lives—generally called the underworld as it’s below ground. Hades is wealthy because all the minerals of the world are below the Earth’s surface where his kingdom is, and because he gets to possess all who live—hence the word “plutocrat,” the very rich. The more popular word for Hades in English is “Hell.” Keep that in mind when we get to the relationships between the gods—and when we consider how wealthy the originators of this mobile and internet technology have become: truly the plutocrats of the modern world.

There are two gods of technology. The first,



Surrounded by the pantheon of Greek gods and the Muses, Apollo, god of the sun and of music, displays his skill at the lyre.

Hephaistos (or Vulcan in Latin), we can dismiss as irrelevant here. He is old-school technology: At his forge, hammering out metal weapons, he represents, perhaps, the sort of manufacturing industries that we are familiar with in the West that now seem to be in decline.

But the second god is the one in whom we find a curious set of parallels to our own modern technology, communications, and even mobile devices. I refer, of course, to the god Hermes (or Mercury in Latin). And while we are on the meaning of words, mercury as an element is sometimes called “quicksilver,” which, as we will see, is also significant.

With every advance in human ‘progress,’ we find that things come with a cost, sometimes a steep one.

Hermes and Hermeneutics

Hermes is the god that the modern Western world—and possibly all the world—now worships, and for good reason. “The Penguin Book of Classical Myths” describes him as “a mobile divinity.”

Consider his attributes: He is the god of “ready speech” (of communications, per se); his winged cap signified he was a traveler (in other words, he crossed boundaries); his staff indicated he was a herald (so a bearer of news); and his golden sandals had wings, which meant he could fly across lands and seas with astonishing rapidity. The sandals also erased footprints, so nobody would

know of his presence.

What does this all sound like? The god of our modern world in which we can communicate with anyone, anywhere, anytime. We can have news 24/7 and break through even national boundaries and borders, and we can circle the world with instant communications. Plus, we can electronically cover our tracks in all sorts of ingenious ways.

This last point leads on to the word Hermes itself, from which we get phrases such as “hermetically sealed”—suggesting secrets that cannot be uncovered and discovered—and also the word “hermeneutics”—meaning the art of interpretation of what is subtle, obscure, arcane, and difficult.

All this sounds good and useful, but sadly there are two other sides to Hermes that we must draw into this discussion. First, Hermes is often depicted as having a bag of money—he is the trickster god, the god of luck, and the god of fraud, merchants, and thieves.

Moreover, he is the god of perjury: The day he was born, he stole Apollo’s cattle and denied it to Apollo’s face. Keep in mind, Apollo was not only a powerful god, but also Hermes’s half-brother. It was only when Apollo hauled him before Zeus, the king of the gods, that Hermes was forced to confess his lies—even he dared not take on the lord of the universe.

The God of Fake News

These negative traits of Hermes seem relevant to the internet of things, the mobile devices, and the purposes to which we find they are being put. Increasingly, we’re becoming aware of the frauds, thieves, and general perjury (“fake news”) that this communications revolution is promoting, as well as the opening up of some deep and dark areas—gambling, pornography, terrorism, and violence—even to children barely out of their diapers. This is Hermes in action.

Here we might comment on the Roman name, Quicksilver. However useful it might be, quicksilver is not gold. It’s not the real, solid thing of value that gold is; it’s a cunning counterfeit whose speed astonishes and attracts us. In the past, we have taken quicksilver, or mercury, as medicine, especially to treat syphilis, but it’s ultimately deadly and induces madness.

This leads to the second side of Hermes, namely, his other title. He was known as Psychopompos because he was the guide of dead souls to Hades.

We have to understand something important to get the full picture of what this means. The kingdom of Hades—of Hell—was just as out of bounds to the other gods as Olympus was to Hades. Hades was a hateful place; the Greeks themselves detested it. Achilles was virtually inconsolable there when Odysseus met him on his “living” trip to hell. The gods on Olympus equally had a hatred and horror of the place and never went there. Why exchange their light and immortal ambrosia for the world of darkness and shadows?

A statue of
Hermes,
considered the
trickster god, the
god of luck, and
the god of fraud,
merchants, and
thieves.

Hermes was the one god permitted to visit Hades. ... He alone could navigate its dangers and illusions and madness—perhaps because he was as tricky as death itself and could not be caught or trapped there.

IGOR SAMOILUK/SHUTTERSTOCK



Who Can Go to Hell?

Hermes was the one god permitted to visit Hades. He was the intermediary between the king of the gods, Zeus, on Olympus, and the king of hell in Hades. He alone could navigate its dangers and illusions and madness—perhaps because he was as tricky as death itself and could not be caught or trapped there.

But, as Jung wrote, “To journey to Hell means to become Hell oneself.” The danger of worshipping Hermes potentially leads us—our souls—to Hell itself; only, unlike the god Hermes, once we are there, we invariably cannot come back.

This seems to me to be where the modern world is now: Hermes has not been offended or neglected, but on the contrary, has been worshipped to such an extent that the human race is in danger of disappearing into an apocalyptic, technological hell that will make the bloodshed of the past century seem mild. How can it be that the last thing people now want to do at the point of death is not pray but check their phone one more time?

So, who is the offended or neglected god, aside from all 12 on Olympus? The answer, and the solution, is Apollo, the half-brother and best friend of Hermes.

Hermes once killed a tortoise and from its shell made the first lyre. When he played it, he mesmerized Apollo, and then gave the lyre as a gift to him. And so Apollo forgave Hermes for stealing his cattle, and they became best friends.

But notice the link: The god of communication makes the technology that generates the music—indeed, which makes art. Apollo is the god of light, reason, proportion, poetry, and healing. This is the god we have neglected and offended: Our art is not art, our music is not music, and our poetry is drivel; no wonder there is little healing in the world.

We have to return to the god Apollo in our subconscious minds if we are to rescue ourselves from the technological madness that the idolatry of Hermes has created. This is the challenge for our age now.

James Sale is an English businessman and the creator of Motivational Maps, which operates in 14 countries. He has authored more than 40 books from major international publishers, including Macmillan, Pearson, and Routledge, on management, education, and poetry. As a poet, he won first prize in The Society of Classical Poets’ 2017 competition.

How Digital Minimalism Can Help You Reclaim Your Time and Your Life

CHANNALY PHILIPP

It's old wisdom for a new world.

In his new book "Digital Minimalism," author and Georgetown professor Cal Newport cites Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor who wrote "Meditations" as his private reflections on life.

"You see how few things you have to do to live a satisfying and reverent life?" the emperor asked.

Marcus Aurelius was likely referring to physical things, but it could just as easily apply to our crammed digital life. According to a 2018 Nielsen report, U.S. adults spend more than 11 hours each day consuming media, and nearly four hours of this happens on digital devices.

The Rise of Anxiety

The effects of spending so much time being tethered to a smartphone are far-ranging. The most noticeable one may be the rise in anxiety-related disorders.

Professor Jean Twenge, who studies issues affecting young people, pinpoints the year 2012 specifically as the year anxiety disorders among teens suddenly spiked. "In all my analyses of generational data—some reaching back to the 1930s—I had never seen anything like it," she wrote in *The Atlantic*.

It was that year when the percentage of Americans who owned smartphones crossed the 50 percent mark.

Newport, during his research, looked into the specific demographic of young people born after 1995, who represented for him a sort of "canary in the mine"—the first generation to enter their preteen years with constant access to digital connectivity.

At a university where he was invited to speak, he spoke with the head of mental health services, who told him that the more common teen issues had changed "seemingly overnight"—not only was there a large influx of young people now seeking mental health counseling, but the issues had shifted, primarily to anxiety-related disorders.

This is the future that could await the rest of us; for some of us, it may already be the reality. How, then, can we remain calm and sane in the face of an age where digital technology is ubiquitous?

No doubt amidst those addictive likes and siren tweets, I'd ignored parts of my life that needed attention.

Between the likes, follows, and tweets, it can be hard to remember to stop and smell the flowers.

MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

Why a Digital Detox Alone Doesn't Work

As a solution, Newport offers a philosophy of "digital minimalism," which he defines as "a philosophy of technology use in which you focus your online time on a small number of carefully selected and optimized activities that strongly support things you value, and then happily miss out on everything else."

He explains the solution isn't found in either becoming a Luddite or in embracing digital technology unconditionally, but rather in a thoughtful, intentional middle way. (He explores the case of the Amish communities' very nuanced use of technology in his book—an unexpected example well worth looking up—where a technology is adopted after testing only if and when it is in line with community values.)

It might also be tempting to resort to a "quick fix" such as a digital detox. But one of the biggest insights I took away from Newport's book is this: A digital detox won't be effective unless you replace your digital activities with high-value, active pursuits.

That may mean something different for everyone, and Newport recommends different practices, from fixing or building something every week and learning new skills in the process, to joining organizations in your community where you can connect with others. As you might strategize the best use of your work time, the point is to do the same with your leisure time.

Rediscovering Fun

I recently got a taste of what Newport is talking about. I had noticed I was feeling more uneasy and restless after I spent time on social media apps. They had insidiously morphed from things I would check when bored while waiting in line or on my commute to things I checked first thing in the morning and late at night before bed. And I knew they were influencing my mood, and not for the better.

I ditched Instagram first, then Facebook, and then Twitter last.

Around the time I said goodbye to the last social media app on my phone, I happened to be in Southern California during a momentous "super bloom" of desert flowers, an event that normally happens every decade or so.

With my family, I took a short but adventurous hike to get there, which included crossing a small river over a couple of tree trunks. Once we got there, it was like bath-

ing in extraordinary beauty.

It was beyond compare to what you could capture in a neat Instagram square. No photo or video could capture the gentle soft touch of the breeze and the 360-degree view of golden poppies swaying in the wind, as if they were butterflies made of gold tethered on delicate stems, nor the wide expanse of the canyon hillsides, nor the mice startled out of their hiding spots.

There was a quality of warmth, and realness, to this experience, that I hadn't felt in a long time. And sharing it with family made it all the more fun.

Since I got rid of the social media apps, my phone screen time has gone down and an interesting thing has happened—I've stopped checking Instagram and Twitter on my computer entirely. I don't miss them. I still check Facebook there, but minimally.

I reclaimed not only a great deal of my free time, but regained a calmer mind, too. I also regained a sense of ownership over my life, and that has extended to other areas of my life. No doubt amidst those addictive "likes" and siren tweets, I'd ignored parts of my life that needed attention.

Everyone says there's not enough time in a day. But imagine what you could do with an extra two hours each day.

Newport looks at a community of people who have decided to live very frugal lives with the aim of retiring early—those who embrace financial independence. His question: How do people who have managed to achieve financial independence choose to spend their time?

Newport found that contrary to what many may think, they are very active and engage in strenuous activities, both mentally and physically—renovating homes, writing music, clearing trails on a homestead, and splitting wood.

Newport recalls the words of Theodore Roosevelt, who could be a poster man for such an active life. In 1899, Roosevelt said, "I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life."

We don't need to rid ourselves of digital technology, but by putting the most important,

most meaningful things first, all things can fall into their proper place. There's a terrific feeling of being alive that comes with doing so.

Channaly Philipp is a senior editor at *The Epoch Times*.



Inner Compass

Finding my way home in the age of GPS

CARDINALE MONTANO

If you run a needle through your hair 100 times, the needle will take on a magnetic charge. Then you can find a leaf, and set it gently on the surface of a pool of water. Ever more gently, so as not to sink the leaf, you can place the needle on top. In the absence of wind, the heavy end of the needle, with the eye, will align itself to the magnetic north.

From there, you can chart your course. If, that is, you find yourself lost, without a compass or a GPS.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet."

In the early 1960s, heading toward an intended destination meant using maps, or getting directions from someone via phone call and writing them out on paper.

In my mother's case, this meant anything paper-like, and at least partially blank, within reach of where she was most likely stirring something at the stove or madly sewing buttons on the dresses we were meant to wear for the occasion.

The phone would be wedged between my mother's cheek and shoulder, its cord stretched straight beyond its curls. Spoon or sewing needle in one hand, she would peg the slip of paper to the nearest available surface with the other, and while doing so, somehow manage to write down all pertinent route numbers, names of streets, and a specified number of traffic lights to go through.

Family Trip

Getting a family of seven out the door, often with the addition of our German shepherd, was a feat unto itself.

Once in the station wagon, our father took the wheel. One of us sat in the far back, the other three and our grandmother took the middle seat, and my mother sat in the front, with the dog at her knees. Here, she would excavate her hastily packed purse for the bits of scrap paper or envelope that held the clues to our destination.

My mother also had the gift of challenging the capacity of an hour well beyond its limits, so my father would have started driving while the rummaging ensued. We were generally behind schedule anywhere from a wee bit to a monumental amount. Between the searching and deciphering, she would also be putting

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet.'

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in the final stitches on a dress.

All the information was there to get us to where we had to be. We simply lacked the intricate, navigational equipment needed to connect the script, which often ran in straight lines, getting ever more condensed as it approached the very bottom of the piece of paper, where it continued in circles around its edges, traveling eventually onto the other side, leaving no area unfilled. And when that ran out, there was that other piece, which hadn't been recovered yet.

When all appeared to be found and the dress was complete, she would nod off quietly, with her chin to her chest. My father would sing his version of "MacNamara's Band" and play word games with us, while our grandmother gently laughed along. And all was well in the wagon.

Until we realized we weren't where we were meant to be at all.

My mother would be awake now, tracking through her notes from the beginning to end, in reverse and back again, to no avail. This usually marked the delicate turning point when the family trip became a somewhat combustible adventure.

Would a GPS have helped? It would have brought us from point A to B efficiently, perhaps. But even without one, we always arrived at our destination at some point, dressed in clothes handsewn with love, and, in many ways, wiser than we started out.

These excursions coursed the very real and sometimes bumpy roads of human interaction, from which we learned to draft our own internal maps, in time. Navigating avenues of communication, love, and forgiveness within the complexities of the nuclear family, we learned to find our bearings later, in the larger world.

'Sometimes you find yourself in the middle of nowhere ...'

I took a drive this morning. The sun had broken on a woken world. Its rays stretched through the window just so—its beams fell across my notebook, spreading across the few sentences that had made it to paper. The pen I held threw a distinct, dividing shadow down the page, cutting the words even further off from each other than they had been already. Words that had been pulled with ef-

fort from the tangle in my head, continued in their struggle to connect cohesively, blankly staring up from their communal sunbath.

So I left them as they were and got into the car, taking my favorite CD and leaving the phone on the shelf by the door. No direction, no plan but to clear the agenda. Because the agenda had lost sight of the goal, and the plan laid out to correct that had gotten lost in the shuffle.

"If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading," Lao Tzu said.

Heading north on NY-22, I saw a flock of Canadian geese flying with a tailwind in a purposeful "V" through the clear blue of the sky above. And from that point, whatever turn felt right, I took.

Roads became unfamiliar, distances between the houses grew. Partially tended yards gave way to fields that stretched in unfulfilled objective all the way to a tired barn, long since collapsed into itself. A random piece of farm equipment held it in a tired, defeated gaze from where it lay not far off, tilted to its side, with wheels half-sunken in a furrow.

And so it went, until an hour or so later, at which point the knot at my chest dissolved. A few miles further, my head was clear and I felt lighter at the center. I was ready to turn back.

'... And sometimes in the middle of nowhere, you find yourself'

This wasn't exactly the middle of nowhere, by rural standards. I was not monumentally lost. But by placing myself at any level into the unfamiliar, without the convenience of devices and their tempting stream of information telling me what to do, where to go, and how to get there, I felt my inner compass gently leading me again.

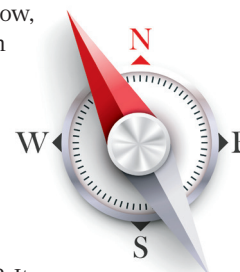
And I found my way home, both literally and figuratively.

The fact that I could only hear it by switching off all the noise of external information wasn't lost on me. It had been knocking at the door of my heart and quietly giving me directions all along.

Over the house, another flock of wild geese drew through the sky. I put my hand to the doorknob. The swelling, melodious sound of their call diminished slowly, as an invisible, primal, cord pulled them north, beyond the hill.



If you get lost, a magnetized needle can show the way north.



I'm Not Ignoring You, YOU'RE IGNORING ME

CON CHAPMAN

It's Saturday night, date night at my house. Being the thoughtful, sensitive guy I am, I leave my phone at home. I want to give my wife my full-tilt undivided attention during this, our special time together.

We get in the car—she drives because she likes to, and I save my male ego for important matters, like remembering the batting averages of the St. Louis Cardinals' "Million-Dollar Infield" of 1964.

We don't have a reservation, so we begin to cruise by the common victuallers (New England-speak for "restaurant") of our zip code until she finds one that, from the looks of the half-empty parking lot, may have a table for two available.

"Go in and see how long the wait is," she says.

"Okay," I say, and start to get out of the car.

"You brought your phone, right?"

"Of course not—I want to spend the night catching up with you."

"Then how are you going to tell me how long the wait is?"

"I'll come back out and ..."

"... and when you do, somebody else will get the table."

And so it begins. Another night of what Gregory Bateson, a multi-talented English thinker, called a "double bind": emotional stress experienced by someone who receives contradictory signals from another person. The victim is doomed to fail whichever option he—mean-

ing me—chooses. Schizophrenia is often the result.

Eventually, we find a place to eat—otherwise, I would have starved and wouldn't be writing this—but a palpable sense of disappointment hangs in the air, like the radon gas that is supposed to prefigure an imminent earthquake. I look around the room and, seeing a man checking his phone to see if his favorite team has done something really important, like win a wild-card game or waive a has-been athlete 25 years younger than me, I nod in his direction, hoping to earn some brownie points because I'm not a clod like him.

"Look at that guy over there," I say. "Totally ignoring his wife."

"Umm hmm," she says over the top of her menu. "What are sweetbreads again?"

"The pancreas of a ... you're not listening to me!" I say, noticing that she's looking down furtively the way our kids do when they hold their phones in their laps while refusing to eat stuffing at Thanksgiving.

"This is important, I'm trying to decide which rug to get for the living room."

"So you're ignoring me to check an email from"—I look around to make sure there are no Bedouins in the joint—"a rug merchant?"

"It's not ignoring you when I do it," she says in her defense. "This is for our home, the place where we live. Our biggest jointly held asset, remember?"

The victim is doomed to fail whichever option he—meaning me—chooses. Schizophrenia is often the result.

I do remember, now that she mentions it, but what it has to do with the etiquette of cellphone behavior isn't clear to me.

Checking one's hand-held device in the company of another is a field that is rife with self-serving justifications: The general consensus is it's a terrible thing to do—unless you're the one doing it.

Overlay this bed of crisp hypocrisy with a heaping scoop of solipsism—the apparently widespread belief that the existence of other people is a dubious proposition—and you get a world in which the golden rule is, shall we say, tarnished.

I've learned to live with this phenomenon because frankly, there's not that much of interest to me on my phone. Had you said 40 years ago that someday mankind could hold the world's knowledge in the palm of its collective hands, but would use it to watch cat videos and argue with strangers about politics, there would have been "Ban the Internet" demonstrations, the way people marched to Ban the Bomb.

But that's neither here nor there, as they say, when it comes to man and wife. You want to keep things on an even keel on Saturday nights, and so you swallow your hard-earned logical thinking tools and wait for your better half to finish comparing prices of household furnishings. When she finishes, she looks up with a smile, and asks sweetly, "What were you saying?"

"I was talking about the St. Louis Cardinals, and the Million-Dollar Infield," I say, a head-fake to see if she was listening, to which she replies:

"What has that got to do with rugs?"

Con Chapman is a Boston writer whose work has appeared in The Atlantic, The Christian Science Monitor, and The Boston Globe, among other publications. His biography of Johnny Hodges, Duke Ellington's alto saxophonist, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Mind Your Sleep in the DIGITAL AGE

JINGDUAN YANG & GEORGE YANG

Today, we have a digital way of life. We use digital technologies to work, manage projects, communicate, and look up anything and everything.

American adults spent an average of three hours, 35 minutes per day on mobile devices in 2018, an annual increase of more than 11 minutes. This year, mobile is expected to surpass TV as the medium attracting the most minutes in the United States.

Advanced digital technologies have brought us convenience in daily living, such as monitoring our steps, sleep time, and calorie intake, and have allowed us to work productively with people on the other side of the planet.

But what's the price of this convenience—not in the monetary sense, but in terms of our most valuable asset: our health?

Technology and Sleep Deprivation

When it comes to our health, probably the most significant effect of digital technology is on sleep. According to a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, approximately 90 percent of Americans, especially young adults, use technology before bed—talking, texting, browsing, emailing, working, playing, posting, or reading just before trying to sleep.

Furthermore, 22 percent go to sleep with cellphone ringers on in their bedroom and 10 percent report being woken up by their phones at least a few nights per week.

UCLA Chancellor Gene Block, a biobehavioral scientist, stated that “50 years ago, the average adult got 8 1/2 hours of sleep; now, we average less than seven hours a night.”

Bright light reduces levels of the hormone melatonin, which regulates sleep, and decreases the hormone leptin, which makes you feel full. At the same time, bright light increases ghrelin, which makes you feel hungry. So more time in front of computers and phones can make people gain weight, not just because they are more sedentary, but because of the effect that screens have on sleep cycles.

Sleep at the Right Time

Ancient Chinese medicine treats sleep as the best medicine to heal, restore, and rejuvenate one's body and mind. How well one sleeps at night determines how well one functions during the day, and probably how long we live.

From a Chinese medicine perspective, from

9 p.m. to 5 a.m.—the eight hours that people are supposed to sleep—one's vital energy and blood concentrates in the important organs in order to replenish them after they have worked hard during the day.

For example, from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., the three chambers of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis—known as the “triple burner” in Chinese medicine for their important metabolic functions—receive most of the vital energy and blood to support all the organs in the three chambers. The triple burner is responsible for the respiration of air, the transformation of food to energy, the distribution of the energy into all important internal organs, and the elimination of the waste from the body.

On days when a person has control of their bedtime, a 9 p.m. bedtime is equal to the best spa treatment available. People who stay up late for work using digital technologies should go to bed at this time whenever possible.

From 11 p.m. to 3 a.m., the vital energy and blood concentrates in the gallbladder and the liver. These organs are the energetic centers that achieve their critical functions through a very complicated and long network. They help store the blood at night, detoxify the body, regulate digestion, keep the vital energy and blood circulating in the right direction, and modulate one's vision, sleep, mood, and executive functions. They nurture the body's connective tissues, sinews, and ligaments, and regulate the functions of the genitals as well.

If you don't want trouble with these important mental and physical functions, you should make sure you sleep during these four hours. If a person is diagnosed with fibromyalgia, major depression, irritable bowel or bladder syndromes, insomnia, chronic fatigue, ADHD/ADD, GERD (esophagogastric acid reflux), stroke, or epilepsy, you should really protect these four hours of sleep on a daily basis because they are all related to the energetic dysfunction of the liver and gallbladder.

From 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., the vital energy and blood circulate to the lungs for two hours in great concentration to nurture these critical organs, which work constantly to sustain one's life.

Few people appreciate their lungs' steady work until they have difficulties. Chinese medicine holds that the lungs and their en-



22%
OF AMERICANS
go to sleep with
cellphone ringers on
in their bedroom.

SOURCE: 2011 SLEEP IN AMERICA
POLL CONDUCTED BY THE
NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION

**This year,
mobile is
expected to
surpass TV as
the medium
attracting
the most
minutes in the
United States.**

ergetic network do more than help take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide; they also nurture the skin, regulate mood and motor sensory functions, defend the body from infections, modulate water metabolism through modifying urination and bowel movements, and support the cardiovascular system.

The lungs also are energetically partnered with the large intestine, which is where the vital energy and blood concentrates from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. This is the best time period to have a bowel movement. Having bowel movements when one first wakes up—and then keeping the bowels clean and empty as much as possible—helps the lungs function better during the day.

If you have to stay up late, or work a night shift, and miss the right bedtime, you should find ways to take extra care of these important organs.

Dr. Jingduan Yang is a neurologist, psychiatrist, and expert in acupuncture, Chinese medicine, and integrative medicine. He founded the Yang Institute of Integrative Medicine, the Tao Clinic of Acupuncture, and the American Institute of Clinical Acupuncture. Dr. Yang co-authored two books: “Facing East: Ancient Health and Beauty Secrets for the Modern Age” and “Clinical Acupuncture and Ancient Chinese Medicine.”

Dr. Chi-Ao (George) Yang graduated from Peking University Health Science Center in Beijing. After graduation, he passed all required board exams in the United States. He's now working alongside Dr. Yang as a clinical research assistant. He would like to pursue residency training in family medicine in the near future.

▲ Ancient Chinese medicine treats sleep as the best medicine to heal, restore, and rejuvenate one's body and mind.

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