

Get Unplugged!

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Ever feel like you can't get enough of your favorite digital device yet you can't get away from it either? You are not alone.

The explosion of technology into our lives has severely impacted how we live. What would have once been a trip to the library or a reach for an encyclopedia has now been replaced by an instant of Googling. Human interaction, where we look into someone's eyes and hear the sound of their voices, has now often been replaced by texting or instant messaging. We all do it. But do we need to do it all the time?

The digital world is designed to keep us absorbed. Recent studies have shown that many people spend more than eight hours a day online which means we are spending more time with technology than we are spending sleeping. It's easy to wonder, who is really in charge here?

Happily, the answer is you.

If you feel that your own habits using technology have gotten out of control or if you simply want to experiment with how it would feel to be without your devices for a time, join us for The MIIA 3-Day Digital Detox Challenge that will help you reset your energies and realign your habits.

This 3-day process will challenge you to set your own "detox" goals. All the details are included in the MIIA 3-Day Digital Detox Challenge packet included in the newsletter.

Consider this fascinating experiment. In a recent experiment run by a company called Kovert, 35 people were brought to Morocco for four days to be observed spending time without technology. The results were startling. People's postured improved, their eyes became more focused looking up and out and their general sensibility appeared more open. All of these thing encouraged people to connect with one another more openly.

Without the chance to Google up an answer, people's conversations became longer, deeper and more full of inquiry. And because people were able to have these conversations without being interrupted or distracted, they were more present. They remembered more about the conversations they had. Their memories improved. And without the constant blue light of their devices affecting their systems, their sleep improved. Ultimately, the lack of distraction allowed people to focus within and evaluate their lives in order to make positive changes.

For many of the participants, the experience was life changing.

All of these potential benefits can be within your grasp by joining us for The MIIA 3-Day Digital Detox Challenge. Here are some helpful guidelines to think about as you participate in the challenge:

Prepare – Let people know you have made this decision. If you plan on turning off all of your devices, send out an eblast in advance to let people know you will be unavailable. Arrange to have a neighbor or loved one be an emergency contact for you.

Plan – As most of us need to use our computers for work during the week, you may want to consider choosing a weekend for two of the three days. If you do, you must include the Friday before or Monday after the weekend for your third program day. Encourage your partner/spouse and kids to join you in this adventure and encourage them to turn off their devices as well. You will have more time on your hands as a result of being unplugged, so make some happy plans for yourself and your family. Head somewhere new. Spend time outdoors. If the weather is bad, pull out the board games, puzzles and books. More alternatives are included in the Challenge packet as well.

Notice – As this is an experiment, take time to notice how you are feeling. Notice the differences in your patterns of behavior. How often do you feel inclined to reach for your phone/computer/tablet? What does it feel like to realize it is not there? How has this changed your perception of time? What does it feel like to speak with your spouse or spend time with your kids knowing you won't be distracted?

Evaluate/ Celebrate – Take a moment at the end of the 3-day period to take congratulate yourself (being without technology for 3 days is no small feat) and stock in what the experience has meant for you. What has felt better or worse? Based on your observations, what would you like to change in your life?

If you find this a meaningful experience, consider implementing a technology free time for yourself every week. Embrace this new habit as an essential part of your self care, just like eating well and getting enough rest. Your entire system will thank you for it!