



mindful hub

well-being, right now.

## ***Using Technology Mindfully***

Used properly, technology can help us live simpler lives with less cluttered minds. Too often, however, we are taken over by technology, becoming less aware of the here and now. Use these tips to balance your relationship with your hi-tech gadgets:

**Don't multitask** - Try to use one piece of technology at a time. Don't watch your TV while surfing the web. Avoid listening to phone messages and checking email at the same time. The idea that multitasking saves time is a myth. It only adds wear and tear on your nervous system.

**Designate time** - have designated times throughout the day for returning phone calls, and checking emails. Try once in the morning, and once late afternoon. Let friends and colleagues know that this is your policy so they won't expect you to respond on demand.

**Download "time out" software** - Check out the great smart phone applications and meditation software programs that can be set at intervals throughout the day to remind you to take a break. Dejal.com makes shareware for mac users. The Peace Alarm Clock is an inexpensive iPhone application. Many others are available for different types of phones and computers.

**Try a day off once-a-week, or at least once-a-month** - Have a tech-free day. It's okay if you slip and check you texts. The idea is to remember what it's like to live without being bombarded with the distraction of technology. Does the thought of this make your skin crawl? Start with half a day.

**Facebook-free day** - if you can't take an entire day away from your computer, take the facebook-free day challenge. Is it difficult for you to be out of the loop in this way? Notice what comes up for you when you resist logging in. Use mindfulness techniques to handle this discomfort.

**Monitor your kids** - Children and young adults have unfinished brains that are vulnerable to developing bad habits. Limit your child's time on the computer. Ask yourself, do I want to raise kids who are super web surfers or super compassionate. In order to foster kindness in our kids we need to be good communicators. Make sure your child spends more time with family and friends than with technology.

**Use technology to foster gratitude** - Email or text a good friend every day, express gratitude for having them in your life.

**Don't use technology as a sleeping pill** - the light from your TV, lap-top or cell phone sends a message to your brain that it's not time for bed. Turn all technology off at least an hour before bedtime.

Be mindful of your mood as you change your technology habits. It takes persistence to change habits. Be gentle with yourself if you "relapse." It can help to make a list of the pros and cons of using and overusing technology. It can also help to notice your stress level after a few days of cutting back on technology.

For more information on mindfulness, habits, and moods, visit [mindfulhub.com](http://mindfulhub.com)

***We wish you twenty minutes of mindfulness every day!***

