

Technology and the Family Dynamic...

Do I need to UNPLUG???

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**“Thank you for asking, but I’m
already married to my phone.”**

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Technology and the Family Dynamic-Unplug a little!!! (OUTLINE)

Developed and presented by Janet Allen and Bonnie Teeples-2017 Oregon Annual FCE Conference

Program Blurb: Our daily lives have so many advantages due to improved technology, but along with that come the possibilities of harmful effects from the over use of electronic devices. This class will give you some great ideas to help you “unplug a little” but still enjoy the benefits of technology!

Items needed for Presentation:

Leader Guide

Hearth Fire #65 (available from National FCE Headquarters)

Computer, Projector and electric cords if you use the PowerPoint

Flip chart for Discussion (Optional)

Quiz-provided with the Leader Guide—Pages 9 and 10

Quotes for Ice Breaker or closing discussion- provided with the Leader Guide—Pages 11-14

Lesson Outline:

Bonding: Class members will read some of the quotes

Discussion about the positive aspects of technology in our lives: (List these on flip chart or white board if you are not using the PowerPoint)

Discussion about the negative effects of too much technology: From the Hearth Fire (List these on flip chart or white board if you are not using the PowerPoint)

Isolation:

Lack of social skills

Obesity:

Depression:

Increased bullying:

Lack of privacy:

Lack of social bonds:

Lack of empathy:

More violence:

Developmental issues in children:

Addiction:

Quiz and Discussion- Do I need to UNPLUG?

Discussion on creative ways to UNPLUG



Technology and the Family Dynamic-Unplug a little!!!

Janet Allen and Bonnie Teeples

DISCLAIMER: this is not intended to be a discussion on bashing technology. We hope to make this a class where we can understand that while there may be negative aspects in the over use, or abuse, of technology, there are ways we can combat and overcome those.

Our daily lives have so many advantages due to improved technology, but along with that come the possibilities of harmful effects from the over use of electronic devices. This class will give you some great ideas to help you “unplug a little” but still enjoy the benefits of technology.

With the help of mobile technology we can talk to those who are living far from us, find childhood friends and relatives we have lost touch with, learn new things and share information in a millisecond.

Bonding: Share some funny quotes about Technology.

Discussion about the positive aspects of technology in our lives:

Take some time to list several ways we use technology in a positive manner in our lives. How has each one benefited or changes our lives for the better?

Using all of the technology we have at our fingertips isn't all bad; it's the overuse of it, or when we let it rule our lives that it becomes a problem.

If you and I stop for a second and realize that even now, as we are interacting with each other, in this class, we are using technology. Now, we could have developed a class format where you would have just walked into this room, sat down, somebody would start a machine and all of the information we are going to give you today would have been on a screen. That to me would have been an abuse of technology because we would be missing an important tool in teaching and that is “human interaction”. You could get all of the information we are giving you today on the internet, but what would be the fun in that?

And as time progresses, we come to realize that instead of being less dependent on technology, we are in fact becoming more and more so. There was a lot of technology used in the preparing of this workshop. We used computers, the internet, cell phones, printers and email. BUT, there was also a human element involved. It was humans that did the research, humans that sent it back and forth, humans that edited the content, humans that developed the PowerPoint, humans that are delivering the message and humans that are interacting in this class teaching each other with comments and insight.

Could we have developed this class without so much technology? Yes, but at what cost in time and money?

Fire has the capacity to cook your food, heat your home and light the way. But the same fire can destroy your home and the world around you. Technology can be our friend and help make our lives easier, or IF we let it enslave us, it can destroy lives.

I do understand that there can be abuse of technology, and that there are some very negative aspects to too much technology. Where is the end of the road? When can we say that we are using **too much technology**? When does the use of too much technology become more than just an irritant in our life and start become harmful to our physical and environmental health?

DISCUSSION: These discussion points are taken from the Hearth Fire Booklet.

Let's take a look at some of the negative effects of too much technology, and talk about ways we can overcome each one:

Isolation:

Lack of social skills:

Obesity:

Depression:

Increased bullying:

Lack of privacy:

Lack of social bonds:

Lack of empathy:

More violence:

Developmental issues in children:

Addiction:

Do we rely too much on technology?

We all have our own standards. ***What is too much technology for me may not necessarily be the same for you.***

Maybe you like trusting your smartphone with every little thing you do through the day. Maybe I like keeping contact with people only via screen. So when we try and set the bar low or high, we can only agree to disagree. Everyone will have a different limit!

But in the end it all boils down to whether or not you can keep the same rhythm in which you are living now, with the tendency of technology becoming more and more present in your life.

One person said “I for instance don’t like being awakened by my alarm clock, but I head straight towards the laptop in order to check what is going on with my job and colleagues, what my friends are up to on Facebook, what is new in the world. Sometimes, it stresses me to the point where I resent opening my laptop at all. But here is where you realize how dependent we are actually becoming. So even not wanting too, I still go through the same things each and every day, only placing couple more from time to time in my bookmark bar, to add them to the routine.” Close Quote

Quiz: Do you need to unplug???

After the quiz, discuss the information on the sheet.

Discussion on creative ways to UNPLUG: from Hearth Fire Booklet

Too much technology? – Here is how to limit it

All of us can successfully detach from technology if we like. The thing though, is that we can never stop using it whenever we like. Like anything else, it has to become a habit.

We have to start doing things more without technology, we have to learn how to enjoy our spare time without it; we have to learn to do things by ourselves.

Here are a couple of things you can try in order to set limits to using technology too much, and finally have the control over when, and how much you decide to use it.

Limit checking your mail and your Facebook account to only one or two times per day. If you think about it, that’s even more than you need. Stop worrying over whether or not you will miss something important. No one is obligated to act like a secretary all day long.

Turn your phone off from time to time. Like you can do when you go for a walk; it will free your mind just knowing that you are not going to be interrupted. Also, if you are having an interesting conversation with someone, turn off that phone.

Sure, it can be one of those moments when you simply cannot afford turning it off since there is something very important happening; but otherwise if there is no emergency or something you are deeply involved in, then don’t allow a call to interfere with what you are doing.

Stop using too much technology even in your spare time. Leave your spare time scheduled for activities that are as far from technology as it can get.

Some things are better off without it. You will have more fun, be more relaxed, and be able to drift away from everyday worries.

We aim to avoid the clutter, free our mind from routine, trivial matters, and yet by relying too much on technology, we find ourselves going against our goals, creating more of the clutter, imprisoning ourselves deeper into the routine, stacking our mind with trivial matters more so than before.

Detaching from technology is possible if done one step at a time, and by doing it you will find yourself better off, while enjoying things with less of a distraction, and more freedom.

Technology has had a dramatic influence on our daily lives. We depend on technology in our professional lives to complete essential job functions and rely on digital devices in our personal lives to stay connected with the outside world.

Our constant use of technology has inadvertently created a digital dependency. We have major fear of missing out and experience physical, emotional and psychological stress about being left behind.

The incessant need to access information, communicate and engage is nothing new. Author Henry David Thoreau once commented about people having an addiction to the post office. He said, "As our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post office."

We can observe the same dependencies today, when you replace the post offices of Thoreau's time with our email inboxes and social media. Technology provides a quick and easy distraction from the present.

While technology has its place, it's important to set boundaries to ensure you're living in the moment. Here are several more ways you can disconnect and declutter your digital life.

1. Clean Up Your Email Inbox

Delete old inbox messages and create folders to keep important email items organized. Unsubscribe from newsletters or email notifications that are no longer relevant to you.

Only keep two email accounts—one for personal use and one for work. If you have more than two emails you're likely spending too much time online toggling between different email services.

2. Organize Your Desktop

Sort through documents on your laptop or desktop computer and remove items you don't need anymore, like old icons or shortcuts. For everything else, create an organized filing system to make documents easier to find.

Simplifying your desktop by ridding it of clutter will make it less overwhelming to find folders or documents and launch programs.

3. Delete Old Media on Your Devices

We shouldn't have to tell you that media on your phone and computer takes up space and is distracting. Go through your pictures, music and videos and delete any items lacking real meaning.

After you do that, go in your web browser, remove old bookmarks and unsubscribe from RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feeds. Spend less time being distracted by online content and more time living in the present.

4. Remove Distracting Apps and Turn off Notifications

Check your phone's settings to see which apps take up the most space and which apps you don't need anymore. Turn off app notifications and uninstall the apps from your phone that are too distracting or take up lots of space.

Organize your apps according to use. Your smartphone has multiple home screens—consider the following organization for each:

- 1st screen is for apps you use most frequently at home
- 2nd screen is reserved for apps you use when you're at work or away from the house
- 3rd screen is for anything else

Also, make sure you use uplifting apps that inspire and motivate you throughout the day.

5. Organize Passwords and Login Information

It's nearly impossible to remember your password and login information for every digital account. Deactivate accounts you no longer use and keep track of relevant login information in a password database, on a spreadsheet or in a notebook.

6. Weekly Digital Cleanups

Simplifying your digital life is an on-going process. You can't just do it once a year or even just once a month. Make time each week to stay organized by deleting old media or emails.

7. Disconnect Weekly

It's too easy to become consumed by media. How often do you see people on dates or families out to dinner sitting at the same table not talking because their phones are in their faces? Too often!

Spend time away from the digital world. Unplug for one day each week. Choose to have face-to-face time with your family and friends rather than with your phone, tablet or computer. Engage in activities that reinforce your values, help you build relationships and create memories.

“It is apparent that technology has the potential to harm or enhance your social skills and social life. The key is to analyze how technology affects you socially. Do technologies help you build positive, meaningful relationships, or do technologies hinder this process? Are you better able to communicate, listen, and share because of the technologies in your life? Do you use technologies to improve your relationships and build new ones? Are you letting a few choice people know who you are and what you contribute to this world, or are you merely distracting yourself with shallow pursuits? Does technology increase or decrease your concern for others, your compassion for others, and your desire to serve them? Such are the critical questions regarding technology and social development.” **This is an excerpt from Dimensions of Leisure for Life by Human Kinetics**

Remind yourself of what are the most important things in your life and work toward living a life that reflects your choices, and make technology fit into your life to enhance those choices.

Technology and the Family Dynamic- Do I need to UNPLUG?

(The following information and quiz was adapted from "WIKI-how")

The Internet can be a valuable resource for education and fun, but how much is too much? Why can't people stop? Here are some tips to help you quit staring at the computer screen and get out and do something productive offline as well as online.

- 1. Figure out how bad it really is.** Take the quiz on the back, adding up every time you answered "yes". Tally up your points and evaluate:
 - 0-5: Great information coping skills. What's your secret? Please share some tips.
 - 6-10: You have some good skills and a few bad habits. Analyze what's working and not working and fix it.
 - 11-15: You need help. You need to change your mindset and acquire some more information skills.
 - 16-21: It may be too late. Turn off the computer now!
- 2. Do not feel bad about not reading the digital avalanche of email, blog posts, or web content.** You'll never be "caught up" and that's okay. Get what you can get in a reasonable amount of time and don't worry about the rest. The important information will rise to the top. Don't feel guilty about marking everything as read or using the delete button. It can be your best friend.
- 3. Don't read everything word for word.** Scanning and pattern recognition is a really important skill to have when you need to look at a lot of information. Don't feel that you have to read every blog post of the blogs you're tracking. It helps if you identify what you need to know before drinking from the fire hydrant.
- 4. Set time limits.** Determine the appropriate amount of online time.
 - Set a frequency for answering blog comments via email, doing outreach, reading blogs, writing posts and other tasks. Set the time of day to check in and a time limit - this is called time boxing. Stick to it; ignore your blog, email, or Twitter until those magic times. The idea is that you don't have to check your email or respond to Twitter or blog posts in real time. Remember to sort and prioritize what is urgent and what is not.
 - Some parental control software includes time-control functions that empower you to set the amount of time that a person may spend accessing the Internet or playing games or other computer activities. With programs like TimeUpKidz, you can easily enforce time limits.
- 5. Know when to turn the computer off and take a walk.** It is important to carve out patches of time to allow for understanding and processing the information you have consumed. This might mean disconnecting electronically on purpose. A scary thought to some, but yes, power down your computer and gadgets and go for a walk. If you feel you have lost your concentration and productivity, it may be due to the stress that you give yourself by staring at a monitor for too long.

QUIZ:

1. When you open your email, do you feel anxious about the work you don't have time to do?
2. Do you open your email in the morning before making a prioritized to do list and several hours later forget what it was in the first place you wanted to accomplish today?
3. Do you frequently forget information you need to know?
4. Do you ever wish the web or social media would just go away?
5. Do you have email messages sitting in your inbox more than 6 months old that are "pending" further action or unread?
6. Do you sometimes wish you could read or type faster?
7. Do you experience frustration at the amount of electronic information you need to process daily?
8. Do you sit at your computer for longer than an hour at a time without getting up to take a break?
9. Do you constantly check (even in the bathroom) your email, Twitter or Facebook because you are afraid that if you don't, you will become so far behind that you will never catch up?
10. Is the only time you're off line is when you are sleeping?
11. Do you feel that you often cannot concentrate?
12. Do you feel that you have to read word for word all information that comes into your email box?
13. Are you always seeking out additional information from the Internet or friends online to support a decision or complete a project but never processing it all?
14. Do you get anxious if you are away from the Internet for too long?
15. Do you open up multiple tabs in your browser and then forget what you were going to do?
16. Are you afraid to delete email or old files because you're afraid you might just need it someday?
17. Are you unable to locate electronic documents, blog posts, email messages or other online information that you need in the moment without wasting time playing "find the file"?
18. Do you find yourself easily distracted by online resources that allow you to avoid other, pending work?

Quotes on Technology

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man. ~Elbert Hubbard

Modern technology; Owes ecology; An apology. ~Alan M. Eddison

If it keeps up, man will atrophy all his limbs but the push-button finger. ~Frank Lloyd Wright

Technology: "the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it." ~Max Frisch, c.1960s

Do you realize if it weren't for Edison we'd be watching TV by candlelight? ~Al Boliska

Technology... is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts with one hand, and it stabs you in the back with the other. ~C.P. Snow, *New York Times*, 15 March 1971

It is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome. ~T.S. Eliot, about radio

All of the biggest technological inventions created by man - the airplane, the automobile, the computer - says little about his intelligence, but speaks volumes about his laziness. ~Mark Kennedy

The drive toward complex technical achievement offers a clue to why the U.S. is good at space gadgetry and bad at slum problems. ~John Kenneth Galbraith

The system of nature, of which man is a part, tends to be self-balancing, self-adjusting, self-cleansing. Not so with technology. ~E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*, 1973

I am sorry to say that there is too much point to the wisecrack that life is extinct on other planets because their scientists were more advanced than ours. ~John F. Kennedy

Inventor: A person who makes an ingenious arrangement of wheels, levers and springs, and believes it civilization. ~Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*

It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity. ~Albert Einstein

For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for Nature cannot be fooled. ~Richard P. Feynman

Technological progress has merely provided us with more efficient means for going backwards. ~Aldous Huxley

This is perhaps the most beautiful time in human history; it is really pregnant with all kinds of creative possibilities made possible by science and technology which now constitute the slave of man - if man is not enslaved by it. ~Jonas Salk

Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain. ~J.K. Rowling

I like my new telephone, my computer works just fine, my calculator is perfect, but Lord, I miss my mind! ~Author Unknown

The production of too many useful things results in too many useless people. ~Karl Marx

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom. ~Isaac Asimov, *Isaac Asimov's Book of Science and Nature Quotations*, 1988

When a machine begins to run without human aid, it is time to scrap it - whether it be a factory or a government. ~Alexander Chase, *Perspectives*, 1966

We are becoming the servants in thought, as in action, of the machine we have created to serve us. ~John Kenneth Galbraith

Man is a slow, sloppy and brilliant thinker; the machine is fast, accurate and stupid. ~William M. Kelly

I'm struck by the insidious, computer-driven tendency to take things out of the domain of muscular activity and put them into the domain of mental activity. The transfer is not paying off. Sure, muscles are unreliable, but they represent several million years of accumulated finesse. ~Brian Eno, *Wired*, January 1999

When your inner man complains and wants to put his trust in something, there is nothing quite as suitable as a gadget. The gadget will presumably work, while the same thing cannot always be said of one's intelligence or of one's own nerve. ~Wolfgang Langewiesche (1907–2002), "Knapsack of Salvation," *I'll Take the High Road*, 1939 [*a little altered; in this case, the gadget is a parachute —tεRRi·g*]

Use of advanced messaging technology does not imply an endorsement of western industrial civilization. ~Anonymous email sig line

Once upon a time we were just plain people. But that was before we began having relationships with mechanical systems. Get involved with a machine and sooner or later you are reduced to a factor. ~Ellen Goodman, "The Human Factor," *The Washington Post*, January 1987

I think I should not go far wrong if I asserted that the amount of genuine leisure available in a society is generally in inverse proportion to the amount of labor-saving machinery it employs. ~E.F. Schumacher

The telegraph has conquered time. ~S.F.B. Morse

By means of the magnetic telegraph the people of our country are holding a continuous mass-meeting. ~Wendell Phillips

Technology presumes there's just one right way to do things and there never is. ~Robert M. Pirsig

It is difficult not to wonder whether that combination of elements which produces a machine for labor does not create also a soul of sorts, a dull resentful metallic will, which can rebel at times. ~Pearl S. Buck

When I Was Your Age: We had to open all doors by ourselves. None of them knew we were coming. ~Neil deGrasse Tyson, 2014

The real problem is not whether machines think but whether men do. ~B.F. Skinner, *Contingencies of Reinforcement*, 1969

The machine does not isolate man from the great problems of nature but plunges him more deeply into them. ~Saint-Exupéry, *Wind, Sand, and Stars*, 1939

What the country needs are a few labor-making inventions. ~Arnold Glasow

Humanity is acquiring all the right technology for all the wrong reasons. ~R. Buckminster Fuller

Imagine that the telegraph is an immense long dog — so long that its head is at Vienna and its tail is at Paris. Well, tread on its tail, which is at Paris, and it will bark at Vienna. ~Author unknown, published in *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1866 August 28th (*Thanks, Garson O'Toole of quoteinvestigator.com!*)

The greatest task before civilization at present is to make machines what they ought to be, the slaves, instead of the masters of men. ~Havelock Ellis

The factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to keep the man from touching the equipment. ~Warren G. Bennis

It is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being. ~John Stuart Mill

You cannot endow even the best machine with initiative; the jolliest steam-roller will not plant flowers. ~Walter Lippmann

Where there is the necessary technical skill to move mountains, there is no need for the faith that moves mountains. ~Eric Hoffer

Especially, in the country

Was the backhouse used by all;
For they had no city plumbing
In those days beyond recall...

When 'twas dark, we'd light the lantern,
And go forth upon our quest
For the book of Sears & Roebuck;
And then sit, and groan and rest...

But this backhouse, dark and gloomy,
With its seats so cold and damp,
Was the bane of my existence
When I'd visit dear old Gramps!...

Gone are all those days of privies
And of each backhouse, so plain;
Now, we pull the chain, and presto!
All is sweet and clean, again.

~Gertrude Tooley Buckingham (b.1880), "The Old Time Backhouse" #outhouses #toilets

Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking of them. ~Alfred North Whitehead

Education makes machines which act like men and produces men who act like machines.
~Erich Fromm

Some people worry that artificial intelligence will make us feel inferior, but then, anybody in his right mind should have an inferiority complex every time he looks at a flower. ~Alan C. Kay

Lo! Men have become the tools of their tools. ~Henry David Thoreau

For a list of all the ways technology has failed to improve the quality of life, please press 3.
~Alice Kahn

The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers. ~Sydney J. Harris