



## Mindfulness: Reducing Screen Time

01

### Show Your Smartphone Who's the Boss

It's easy to become overwhelmed when you're constantly plugged in to the outside world. With emails, texts, Facebook messages, Instagram posts and the rest of the internet right in your pocket, there's always something new (and probably unproductive) to check out.

#### Monthly Activity

##### *Limiting Screen Time*

Time to turn these ideas into action. Use this activity to set a smartphone routine, limit your screen time during the day and live in the present moment!



**Smart phones, and the distractions that come with them, are here to stay.** But it's important to remember that you control how much digital media you let in to your life. Put in a little effort and a lot of willpower, and you can reduce your dependency on your phone! Here are a few techniques that can help:

#### **Out of Sight, Out of Mind**

Working on a deadline or need to focus on a project? Silence your phone (or shut it off), and keep it out of sight until you decide to take a break. If you're worried about missing something important, set a recurring alarm and briefly check your phone for notifications every 30-45 minutes.

#### **Adjust or Mute Specific Notifications**

Go to your phone's Settings and shut off notifications for any non-essential apps: games, podcasts, shopping apps, etc. You don't need to interrupt your day with push notifications that you forget about right after you read them.

#### **Delete Apps and Unsubscribe from Emails**

Next, take it a step further and "de-app" your phone and your inbox like you might de-clutter your room. It's easy to get in the habit of checking certain sites and receiving emails or newsletters without really questioning why. If something has become a chore you don't even enjoy, liberate yourself and delete the app or unsubscribe!

#### **Set Some Rules and Log Off for Real**

Unless you must be available for a specific emergency or important event, it's okay to step away from your phone and focus on the here and now. It also helps to start with a few specific rules, such as eliminating screens:

- Two hours before bedtime.
- When spending time with friends and family.
- For specific blocks of time during the weekend.





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# Meaningful Connections

02

## 5 Ways to Break Through the Superficial and Make Meaningful Connections

1

### Common ground = better convos.

If it's appropriate, one positive use of social media is finding out about new people before you meet them. If you know you're meeting up with someone, check their public profiles to see if you have any common ground to explore—just make sure you don't overstep any boundaries. If that's not an option, start a conversation with some general small talk until you discover a topic that interests both of you.



2

### Don't dominate the conversation or be a one-upper.

This doesn't mean you should stay silent or that you can't tell a funny story from last weekend. It just means you should actively listen to the person who is talking and not just wait for your turn to speak. When you do chime in, try to add to the existing conversation or ask a question that helps you learn more about the person you're talking to.

3

### Be yourself.

It's a cliché for a reason. Don't try to fake it 'till you make it! If you have different interests than the person you're talking to, ask thoughtful questions and listen to learn more. That will make a better impression than feigning knowledge or pretending you're something you're not.



4

### Put away your phone.

Referencing your phone will grind conversation to a halt, even if you're using it to answer a question that arises in conversation. Keep your attention focused on others and let random trivial details, like the year the first Toy Story came out, go unanswered. (It was 1995.)



5

### Be an active listener.

Show the other person that you're really listening with nonverbal cues (nodding, eye contact), verbal affirmation ("I see," "yes," etc.) and by occasionally paraphrasing things they say to confirm you understand what they mean. While you're at it, mentally flag important information—upcoming plans, family health issues, favorite hobbies or TV shows—and follow up later for an easy way to start another conversation.



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# How to Connect Outside of Technology

03

## Get Out and Get Social

It's simple, but it's true: caring companionship just makes people feel better. It doesn't matter what phase of life you're in, whether you're hoping to meet new people or striving to find more time with your spouse and kids. Being with people you care about, and who care about you in return, will boost your happiness, discourage unhealthy lifestyle habits and help you cope with traumatic events in your life.

**So how can you stay in touch with your family and friends while still taking care of your responsibilities and finding time for rest?**

### Get in the habit of making specific plans:

Adult life is hectic, so "let's hang out sometime" will probably get lost in the shuffle. Confirming plans for a specific date in advance makes it easier to get everyone involved and helps reduce the stress of a busy schedule.

### Find cheap or free activities so money isn't an issue:

Don't cancel plans because you can't splurge on sushi! The time you spend with people close to you is most important, so instead, find thrifty ways to socialize: cook a simple meal at home, take a walk or hike, find another activity to occupy your time.

### Take turns making plans:

This creates a healthy mix of sharing things you love with other people while still remaining open to new, exciting experiences.



*The time you spend with people close to you is most important.*





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# Recipe

04

## Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie

*Comfort food without the extra calories.*

### INGREDIENTS

#### Sweet potato/cauliflower layer:

- 1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- ½ pound cauliflower florets, chopped
- ¼ cup chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper



#### Ground beef layer:

- 2 tablespoons light olive oil
- 2 carrots, diced
- ½ onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 ½ pounds ground beef
- 2 tablespoons tapioca starch
- 1 cup chicken broth
- ½ cup peas
- ½ cup corn
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste

#### Topping:

- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cover sweet potatoes with water and bring to a boil. After 15 minutes, add cauliflower (and more water if needed). Cook another 15 minutes, until vegetables are tender.
2. Mash sweet potatoes and cauliflower with ¼ cup broth, butter, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon black pepper. Set aside.
3. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the carrots and onion, sautéing about 5 minutes or until softened.
4. Add garlic, 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon of black pepper, and cook 5 minutes more.
5. Add beef and cook until it is browned and crumbling, about 5-10 minutes. Stir often.
6. Sprinkle tapioca starch over the beef mixture in the skillet and add 1 cup broth, peas, corn and tomato paste. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
7. Spread the beef mixture in a baking dish and top with the sweet potato mixture, then with Parmesan cheese.
8. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. and bake for 25 minutes. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

### Total Time (Cook and Prep):

1 hour 35 minutes

### Servings: 8



### NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

366 calories

23 g fat

69 mg cholesterol

1047 mg sodium

22 g carbohydrates

4 g fiber

19 g protein



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# Activity

## Limiting Screen Time

Reducing your daily dose of smartphone usage won't just reduce your anxiety and help you focus on the present moment—it also helps you sleep! The National Sleep Organization says that the blue light emitted by screens on cell phones, computers, tablets, and televisions can restrain the production of melatonin, the hormone that controls your sleep cycles.

Complete this activity to set some guidelines for checking your phone, then reap the benefits of better rest and enhanced wellbeing.

### Step 1: Set a Screen Schedule

Stop using screens at least 60-120 minutes before you head to bed, and not just for your phone. Laptop and TV screens also negatively impact your body's ability to rest. This can be a big change for some people, so it helps to make a list of productive tasks or relaxing hobbies you can enjoy without screens: Play board games or cards, take a walk, spend time with your kids or pet, read a book, keep a journal, create arts and crafts, whatever you enjoy.

- I will avoid using or limit my use of screens \_\_\_\_\_ minutes before bed time each day.
- Ideas for spending my screen-free time:

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### Step 2: "De-app" and Unsubscribe

As mentioned in your newsletter, it's easy to get in the habit of checking certain sites and receiving emails or newsletters without really questioning why. Take an hour or two to **delete apps you no longer use**, or no longer wish to use, and to **unsubscribe from emails and newsletters that you either don't check or don't need** to receive.

*There are obvious benefits to a digital life, specifically sharing memories, photos and stories with friends who are busy and/or far away. This activity isn't about taking away these benefits. Instead, you'll find that limiting your unnecessary smartphone usage will help you take charge of your personal time and enjoy the advantages of being online even more when you are in front of a screen!*



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# Employer Activity Tracking

I, \_\_\_\_\_, successfully completed the Limiting Screen Time 2019 Wellbeing Activity:  
Print Name Here

☐ **Step One:** I limited my use of TV, cell phone and laptop screens 60-120 minutes before bed each day for at least 2-4 weeks.

☐ **Step Two:** I deleted unnecessary apps and unsubscribed from unnecessary emails/newsletters in an effort to reduce the number of times I check my phone during the day.

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_



# Show Your Smartphone Who's the Boss

**Smart phones, and the distractions that come with them, are here to stay. But remember that you control how much digital media you let in to your life and you can reduce your dependency with a little effort! A few tips to get started:**

- Keep your phone out of sight and out of mind when you don't need it
- Adjust or mute unnecessary notifications
- Delete old apps and unsubscribe from emails you don't read
- Set personal guidelines and log off each day

## YOUR WELLBEING ACTIVITY

### LIMITING SCREEN TIME

Use the activity to set a smartphone routine, limit your screen time during the day and live in the present moment!.