Dillon Bolding

English 149

March 18, 2019

Audio Essay: Screen Time Addiction

[Notification sounds (e.g. snapchat, text messages)]

86% of Americans check their email and social media *constantly.*1 And 89% of college students report phantom phone vibrations1. They’re imagining their phone is buzzing when it’s not buzzing at all.

We are constantly on our phones, scrolling through our feed, checking our notifications.

We spend nearly half of our waking lives looking at a screen.2 That’s 7 hours each day behind a screen. And that totals tjust about 8000 days of our lives.2

What is that doing to us? What is it doing to our brains?

[Sound clip from “Crazy affects of screen time on your Brain]

These are just some of the adverse effects that screen time has on our brains. But just how unhappy are screens making us?

[Sound clip from TED Talk: Why our screens make us less happy. Beginning around 3 min. mark]

Magazines have an end. Books have an end. TV shows have endings. And games eventually have an end. These were once our stopping cues, to move on and do something else. Smart phones have changed that. Social media allows us to endlessly scroll through feed. There is no definite end to that feed. The same goes for subscription services like Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon. You don’t have to wait until next week for the next episode. You can watch endlessly.

[Sound clip from “It’s not you. Phones are designed to be addicting (from end of clip)]

Clearly, we are addicted, because smart phone apps were designed to be that way. What is this endless feed of information doing to our attention spans? What is that doing to our ability to focus? To think?

[Sound clip from “Is The Internet Really Ruining Your Attention Span?”]

It is clear we are addicted to our phones, to social media, to the screen. And it is making us unhappy. It is making us stressed. It is making us sicker. And it’s weakening the power of our minds. But what steps can we take to use screens less? Is there hope?

[Sound clip from “New series, Pay Attention, looks at how technology impacts our ability to focus”]

And what about some practical steps to reduce our urge to check our phones, to calm our brains?

[Sound clip again from the middle of “It’s not you. Phones are designed to be addicting (from beginning and middle of clip).]

Our time behind screens has only ever increased. But we do not have to be forever trapped behind our screens. We have a choice: we will be trapped if we don’t change. The hole will only get deeper, and the hours spent behind a screen excessively longer. Or we can put them down, go outside and do something, anything, and experience the world. Screens will probably be around forever, but you won’t be. You’ve got about 27,000 days total, and do you really want 8000 of those days behind a screen?

[Maybe sounds of notifications again – over taken by sounds of nature (water, trees rustling, birds)]

Articles:

1<https://www.businessinsider.com/what-your-smartphone-is-doing-to-your-brain-and-it-isnt-good-2018-3>

2<https://nypost.com/2018/08/13/americans-spend-half-their-lives-in-front-of-screens/>

Clips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0K5OO2ybueM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsNNcdDWW3I>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13Y2fdyVb44>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_ZpgP_kFDg>