

**“Why Can’t You Put Down that Phone?”**  
**Discussion Booklet for Young Adults**  
**Facilitator’s Guide Book**

<https://youtu.be/Thkl8-q2pYc>



<https://www.cathmed.org/media/> - public service videos

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## Group Facilitator's Guide

### Tips to help you plan

- A group facilitator does not have to be an expert in neurophysiology or psychology. Rather, a facilitator makes others feel welcome and is able to draw out those who need a little extra encouragement; and reins in the more exuberant participants.
- Familiarize yourself with the video, questions, exercises and suggested resources before your meeting. Spend time considering how people may respond to them. This will help you to be prepared for some directions the discussion might take.
- Schedule a 60-minute discussion session for your particular group as far in advance as possible and publicize it to your target audience. Because there is more material in the booklet than can be covered in an hour, you might select questions you want your group to focus on during the hour. Let participants know that also listed in the booklet are helpful tips and suggestions are that they can consider on their own.
- Some groups might want to meet two or three times.
  - During the first session, participants can focus on questions of interest.
  - For the second session, invite participants to share some tips or recommendations that they implemented.
  - If a third discussion session is desired, focus on particular areas of interest and encourage ongoing implementation of tips, recommendations or other helpful ideas that emerged during the group discussion.
- Arrange for an appropriate meeting space and for A/V equipment to play the video "Why can't you put down that phone?"
- Once you know how many people will be attending the discussion, make copies of the discussion booklet.
- Consider a hospitality table with simple refreshments, which may help to break the ice and foster discussion within the group.
- Arrive early to the session to set up the registration table and hospitality area; arrange the gathering space for the video presentation and discussion.
- Consider praying for God's blessing upon all those who will participate in your discussions.
- Consider choosing a prayer to begin each discussion session.
- The most important preparation for you as a facilitator is to go through the questions yourself. Your personal participation in the study will help you relate to and understand the experiences of your group members.

- Remember, it is not the facilitator's job to answer every question that comes up. Whenever possible, ask the participant what he or she thinks first. If appropriate, engage the others present for their thoughts.
- Stay on time and on topic. Some persons find it helpful to have a second person in the group who is responsible for giving a ten minute "warning" signal to allow ample time to finish the discussion and perhaps close with a prayer. Finishing the discussion period promptly is essential and shows respect for the participants.
- The group will expect you to keep the discussion moving.
  - Watch for clues that a timid person has something to say and encourage that person without putting him or her on the spot.
  - Kindly "rein in" participants who dominate the group. If they continue, ask them privately to help you get others to participate.
  - Gently redirect tangential remarks or questions.
- Don't share confidences outside the group.
- Enjoy yourself!

### **How to structure each discussion session**

Here is a simple agenda:

- Introduction (5–10 minutes) for gathering and opening remarks
- View video "Why Can't You Put Down that Phone?" (5 ½ minutes)
- Group discussion (30 minutes) engaging participants using the booklet with its discussion questions, tips and suggestions and resources
- Closing remarks and possible prayer (5–10 minutes)

## **Section 1**

### **Video Review Questions**

1. Did you hear anything that surprised you in the video?
  2. What does Marshall McLuhan mean when he says: “It’s the medium more than the content that is the message”?
  3. Why is *unpredictability* so powerful in stimulating desire and craving?
  4. How does *operant conditioning* or *cueing* make you want to check your cell phone?
  5. Persons who excessively engage in online gaming, for example, *World of Warcraft* or *Minecraft*, can have trouble stopping. Describe why this happens.
  6. What is your response to hearing that: Steve Jobs, founder of the iPhone, never permitted his kids to use an iPhone and that Evan Williams, founder of Blogger, Twitter and Medium, refused to give his two young sons an iPad and instead bought them hundreds of books?\*
- (\*<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/11/fashion/steve-jobs-apple-was-a-low-tech-parent.html>)

## Group Discussion Questions

The following questions are intended to help you reflect on your use of screen media.

1. In what ways do social media platforms and texting benefit you, your family, and friends?
2. What is your reaction when you pick up your phone to see if you have any messages or “likes” and there aren’t any? How does this make you feel?
3. Do you catch yourself accessing social media when you should be doing something else?
4. How much time do you spend with friends online as compared with friends in real life?
5. In what situations do you interrupt a conversation you are having with someone face-to-face to check a message you received?
6. Do you multi-task when using your screens? What do you choose to do when multi-tasking?
7. Have you ever experienced FOMO? In what situations?
8. How much personal time do you daily spend on your electronic device(s)?
9. Are there triggers for when you use your electronic device? When bored? When alone? When you first awake? When waiting in line? Others?
10. How does your use of electronic devices affect your mood?
11. When you use your electronic device, how often do you have a clear purpose in mind?
12. Do you take your phone to bed? How has this affected the amount of sleep you get at night?
13. What times or situations would you think it is inappropriate to engage in social media?
14. What would concern you if you were asked to turn off your devices for a day?
15. What skills or talents could you develop if you were spending an hour less on social media each day?

## **Section 2**

### **Be a Smarter Screen User**

We know the tricks that advertisers use to tempt us—a mouthwatering sundae or a shiny red car. Electronic design engineers also know how to get our attention. The color red in notifications on our cell phones and tablets trigger a desire to see what it is all about. Auto-play in videos can get us hooked to watching much longer than we intended. More and more cell phone and tablet functions are designed to get us to spend more time using these devices.

Here are a few suggestions to help you be more aware of your tech usage:

**Say no to notifications.** A notification is intended to let you know something important needs attention. Most phone and tablet notifications are machine-automated and do not involve people. They are intended to get you to engage with an app you might not have otherwise thought about. Set notifications only for things that are important to you.

**Put your phone on “do not disturb” mode, and allow only messages from “favorites.”** You might be surprised how much time interruptions from messages take away from what is important to you.

**No screen zones.** Use good screen etiquette. No screens at meal time will help facilitate better face-to-face conversations. Also keep your phone and tablet out of your bedroom at night. You will probably get more minutes of sleep and better quality sleep. Of course, do not read or send messages while driving.

**Use an old fashioned alarm clock.** Not using your phone or tablet as an alarm clock will prevent you from being tempted to engage in the many other functions your phone and tablet offers you at a time and place designated for rest and sleep.

#### **Utilize Apps to Help Increase Screen-free Time**

Many apps are available to help you be more mindful of your use of screens and to allow for more screen-free time. Examples include *Circle Go*, *Qustodio*, *Onward*, which are apps that help block websites and apps and track phone or tablet usage.

There are also apps that help you to designate screen-free times during the day. Some examples include:

- *Moment Family*
- *Breakfree*

Consider Internet firewalls and filtering systems for you cell phone, tablet, and computer. There are many on the market. One such app is *Covenant Eyes*.

App blocking devices to consider:

- *Freedom* for Apple and Windows products
- *Offtime* for Android products

### **Challenge yourself to reduce screen time.**

Initially, try to reduce your screen time by one hour per week.

You could also challenge yourself to a no-screen day. Giving up screens for a day is not intended to be a punishment. It is an opportunity for you to challenge yourself to interact with people in new ways.

- Get your friends on board.
- Choose a day that is realistic to be screen-free.
- Take some time to reflect on your screen-free day.
  - What did you notice?
  - How did your no-screen day compare with a day when using screens?
  - What do you notice when you were interacting face-to-face with others for a day?
  - What were you able to do because you were not engaged with your screens?

Based upon your experience with a no-screen day, consider finding an entire weekend to go screen-free.

### **Need help?**

For some persons, online gaming or other Internet activities become an irresistible obsession. Help is available. Treatment options range from limited outpatient therapy to intensive inpatient programs. Check online for treatment options that fit your needs.



## Resources

Below are suggested resources. No endorsement of all material contained therein is intended.

### Websites/Blogs/Podcasts

[www.internetlivestats.com](http://www.internetlivestats.com)

[www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)

TED Talks on Screen Use:

- “Why Screens Make Us Less Happy,” Adam Alter  
([www.ted.com/talks/adam\\_alter\\_why\\_our\\_screens\\_make\\_us\\_less\\_happy](http://www.ted.com/talks/adam_alter_why_our_screens_make_us_less_happy))
- “What You Are Missing While Being a Digital Zombie,” Patrick Wincent ([youtu.be/TAIxb42FjwE](https://youtu.be/TAIxb42FjwE))
- “Why We Should Rethink Our Relationship with the Smartphone,” Lior Frenkel  
([youtu.be/Pgo65s1R6TM](https://youtu.be/Pgo65s1R6TM))
- “How Social Media Makes Us Unsocial,” Allison Graham ([youtu.be/d5GecYjy9-Q](https://youtu.be/d5GecYjy9-Q))

The Art of Manliness podcasts ([www.artofmanliness.com/podcast](http://www.artofmanliness.com/podcast))

Ascension Press ([ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com))

Steubenville Mid-America Conference presents Paul J. Kim on elevating social media  
([steubystl365.com/paul-kim-elebate-social-media/](http://steubystl365.com/paul-kim-elebate-social-media/))

### Books

*How to Break Up with Your Phone*, Catherine Price (2018).

*Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked*, Adam Alter (2018).

*The Distracted Mind: Ancient Brains in a High-Tech World*, Adam Gassaley and Larry O. Rosen (2016).

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