

Welcome & introduction – Meg Community Librarian at the JPL branch

Welcome To EPL's online Digital Detox class, a part of our Reclaiming Happiness series.

If you would like a copy of the slides and notes as well as handouts and the list of resources they are all available online.

By the end of our time together I hope you will leave with info on different ways to detox from technology all together or to set firmer boundaries for specific uses of technology that are interfering with your enjoyment of your life.

- A plan for your own personal detox
- Further Resources you can access for more details on the research behind limiting technology and the benefits it can have as well as skills you can use.

Tonight when I'm talking about doing a digital detox it can include a lot of things:

Cell phones  
Tablets, laptops  
Televisions  
Video games  
Social media

Or work emails/texts

You know which of these are causing the most disruption to your life and when I speak of any of them it could be all of them. Or whichever one you want to decrease in your life. So please don't get caught up on which specific item I'm talking about in the moment.



So why do a digital detox at all?

Technology can be a huge benefit in keeping us connected and informed but it can also be a part of unhealthy habits.

When I talk about detoxing from technology it is not to ignore the benefits of keeping connected that technology can bring but to focus on when technology begins to interfere with or actively make our lives harder.

When you notice that pattern of wanting to disconnect or take some space and not being able to that is the time to consider a digital detox.



There are some key benefits to a digital detox and (this infographic and many of the other strategies I'll be sharing come from a variety of sources, if you're interested the citations and resources are available for you with the handouts and slide notes online) This study in particular was done in the States but the percentages in Canada are likely similar.

For many of us cell phones began as a great way to stay connected and build relationships can in fact become damaging to relationships when they are used in ways that keep us from connecting with those we are with in real time. Another issue can come around our hyper connectedness and a lack of work life balance that comes from the expectation that we will always be reachable. Citation: <https://getvoip.com/blog/2017/05/15/digital-detox/>



Another aspect can be how easy it is to lose time to digital time wasters. How many of us have hobbies or tasks that we would love to find the time to do but they always seem to be unfinished.

Decreasing time spent on social media or time wasting games can both help us to be more productive as well as creative as we engage different parts of our brain through boredom

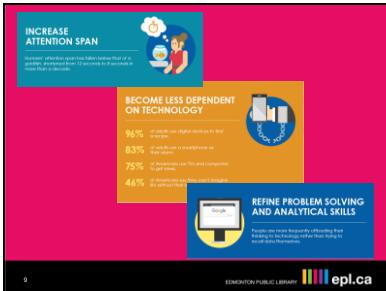


I know of very few people who say they get enough sleep or enough good sleep so cutting off screen time before bed can be a great way to ensure your melatonin production stays correct.

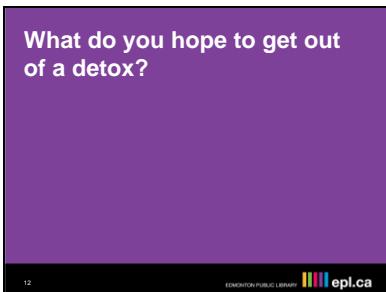


As well, scrolling through pictures of other people's carefully curated lives can lead us to compare ourselves, usually unfavorably with unattainable standards, this can lead to depression, increased loneliness, shyness and less engagement at work. The opposite can also be true and in difficult times seeing a never ending stream of bad news can have it's own disastrous results

There are purely physical ramifications as well. 65% of Americans experience digital eye strain and neck pain from looking down at devices. Not to mention a more sedentary life as we spend more time indoors or on the couch.



Taking a step away from our digital devices can increase our attention span and ability to think and solve problems.



Now that I've talked about some of the reasons that we might want to take on a Digital Detox, it's time to think about what you want out of a digital detox.

To totally cut out tech? cut down on social media?

Take a break to reset?

Find time for a hobby

Take a moment to pause the class and use your handout to reflect on what you want from your detox. When you are ready to continue you can press play. \*Pause\*



Okay so we've decided that we want to detox from our devices or social media and that it will be good for us but it's not as easy as just stepping away and turning things off, or we just would have done it already! And you wouldn't be watching this class.

So how are you going to make this detox happen?

Are you going to go cold turkey?

How long are you going to stay unplugged?

There are a lot of decisions to make, to make this really work I have some tips and ideas on how to make a detox work for you.

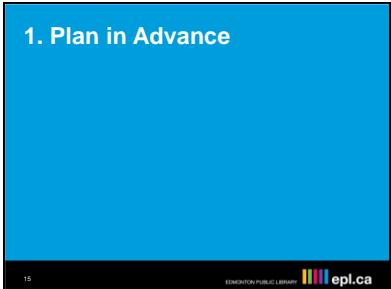


5 tips for how to start your own Digital Detox

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<https://onlinesense.org/digital-detox/>



1. Plan in Advance

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Keith Ferrazzi (CEO of the research and consulting firm Ferrazzi Greenlight) came up with 5 tips on how to do a digital detox in your own home.

**1. Plan in Advance**

When is a good time to do your detox

you can Pick a couple days when you'll be occupied with friends, family, other activities. You could do it during a long weekend in the summer when people are more understanding about delayed responses to emails. Get your kids to follow in your footsteps, as well, to help benefit from the digital detox together.

This transitions to the second point:

## 2. Spread the Word

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## 2. Spread the Word

Hold yourself accountable by letting people know that you're trying out this digital detox to see how well it works for you., "Get yourself psyched up and tell everyone – post it on social media, make an email alert, change your voicemail." By letting other people know you can help to manage their expectations, maybe you are answering emails every night really late and won't be now, or you post pictures online every day and plan to take a week off, by telling your community that you won't be around you manage the expectations of family/friends or work in advance and by telling others you hold yourself accountable and you don't have the excuse to go back to bad habits because others will know Basically, do anything to make you remember that you're doing the digital detox and you're doing it for a good reason.

## 3. Add something fun to your life

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## 3. Add Something Fun into Your Life

Getting away from your mobile, computer, and television will probably mean that you'll have a lot of spare time to do other things. You might even get bored at some point. To make it easier to resist checking your email the first time you get bored, add in something exciting for you to do instead.

This could mean setting a list of items like going for a walk, starting a meditation practice, or reading a book. Ferrazzi says you can "take your detox to another level by doing something for your health that you may have been thinking about," like quitting smoking or eating better. A lot of people say they want to detox from technology to find time for other activities think about what those activities are for you.

Maybe it's finally time to learn to play guitar or reorganize the basement

#### 4. Remove Temptations

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#### 4. Remove Temptations

Compulsively checking your phone for updates has become second nature for most of us, and one of the first things we do once we get out of bed is check our phone. Ferrazzi suggests to remove technology from the bedroom completely. This may mean finding a different alarm clock or moving your charger away from the bedside table.

With regards to the family room, make sure that computers and remote controls are far away from you. He makes this interesting analogy: “If you’re going on a diet you don’t want a chocolate cake sitting in your kitchen. It’s the same thing with this.”

There may also be time of day that you want to be more aware of or specific triggers, do you check your phone before bed or when you go walk the dog? When are there times you could put your devices down to be more aware of what you are doing in the moment.

#### 5. Re-entering the Digital World

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#### 5. Strategically Re-Enter the World of Digital Connection

A digital detox is pretty extreme. It might be overwhelming going back to read a hundred emails and go through thousands of social media updates and videos you missed. Ferrazzi reminds us to stick to our new mindset.

Prioritize and think about how you want to go back into the online world. Do you want to change how often or if you get notifications for certain things?

Remember that the Internet doesn’t control you. You control your online behavior. You have the power, and you are no longer a slave to your electronic devices.

#### Conclusion (Are You Ready for a Digital Detox This Weekend?)

Connection is a basic need... and we’re not talking about a connection to your WiFi. A digital detox will help strengthen *human* connections, clear your mind, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

You will feel more energized and find it easier to do things like going to sleep.

## Making your own Plan

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One of the key tips was about making a plan and next I'm going to introduce a variety of plans and ways to do a digital detox and at the end we can each make our own detox plan. Please use the note paper to jot down any ideas or suggestions you want to remember for your own planning and of course you can always come back and listen to them again if you need a reminder.

## What kind of detox is right for you?

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In the tips they just talked about doing a detox for a long weekend, and so one way to do a detox is that take a time when you will be off work or with family on vacation etc and add an additional detox to that time away. Or to a staycation at home.

But what if you aren't going to be able to get away though? Or want to make a bigger change?

Another type of detox is the 30 day challenge, in this challenge instead of going cold turkey on all technology, each day you try a different limit or boundary on your technology use so that you can reflect at the end what worked best for you and apply that new boundary to your life as an on going way to have more balance in your relationship with technology or social media.

This is a great sampler pack and some of these may not work for you but I think it's a good example of the kind of thing you can do for yourself.



So the 2<sup>nd</sup> detox will be looking at is a 30 day plan

<https://getvoip.com/blog/2017/05/15/digital-detox/>



The first few days of this detox are about starting to be aware of how you are using technology.

A lot of us don't realize how much time we've been on our phone or iPad or just watching tv so this detox starts with a list of the things that you are concerned about and tracking how much time you are using technology recreationally for the day.

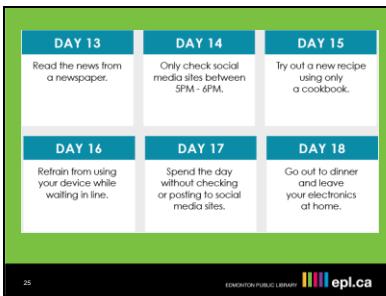
The next step is to stop having your phone or device beeping at you constantly. There is a great deal of research that has been done by tech companies to make those notification sounds appealing and have them keep us coming back for more! You can still check in on your texts or emails without the alerts when you want to.

The next three days are about different ways of decreasing your technology use at the beginning of your day. I am definitely guilty of this one as I use my phone as an alarm clock and then end up scrolling through email instead of using my morning in a relaxing way.



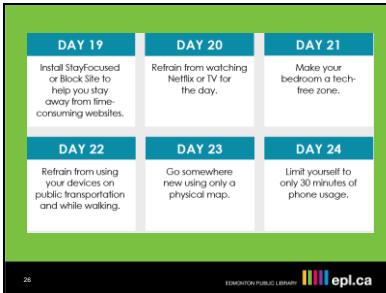
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the next set of days is about trying out different ways to push back at being online at all times from limiting the number of times you check your devices to doing other tasks for recreation and spending time connecting with people face to face instead.

Again these are some different ways to limit your online intake like only checking social media sites for a limited time period during the day or not posting for a day and. If going out for dinner isn't an option you can go for a walk or sit in your backyard. These suggestions are ways to get you using your technology more mindfully so you can pick different challenges that work for you.

day 19 talks about stayFocused & block site which are apps that can help you to enforce time limits on particular websites, are you spending too much time on WebMD or Facebook?

As well there are other apps like Space - another app that helps you to set goals and be more mindful of screen usage and tracks your screen time

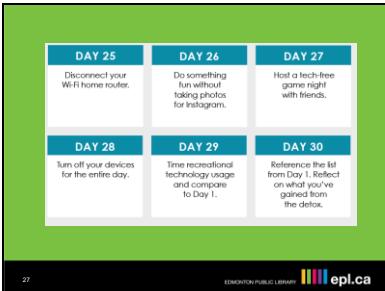
App Detox – create rules to limit access to certain apps, including an option that allows you to walk to earn screen time

Off the Grid – completely blocks your phone for the length of time you determine and if you get the urge to end your block early it charges you \$1

There are a lot of ways to use technology to give you those reminders you need to disconnect just as much as they find ways pull you in. SO that is something you can look into to see what might work for you.

Not watching tv or Netflix and finding a different way to relax is another great goal.

<https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/best-apps-for-limiting-your-screen-time/>



Finally at the end of the 30 days there are a couple bigger challenges around shutting off wifi for the whole day or turning off your devices for the whole day

And then returning to using your technology and comparing your use to the beginning of the detox to see if anything has changed and looking back at the concerns you had at the beginning.

This is obviously an example and as I said soon we'll spend some time thinking about what kind of detox would work for you soon.

But first impressions having seen this list of the kinds of ways you can detox

Take a minute to think about

- What strikes you as a really great idea you want to try?
- Which would be the hardest?
- Did this list make you think of other ideas you would want to try?



As good as a detox is most of us can't give up on the digital world all together we have jobs and lives that require us to use technology to some degree and not be a hermit in the woods.

So, after you reset and see how much better things would be with a detox how do you continue that pattern in your regular every day life.

First you need to set boundaries that will keep you from being overwhelmed again.

So how can you set boundaries for your Digital Life going forward to get what you need to done but also not get pulled in too much?

If you didn't get a chance to at the beginning please take a moment to grab a paper for taking notes and making your digital plan.

From "Off: your Digital Detox for a Better Life" by Tanya Goodin

## Regaining Balance

### by Setting Boundaries

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Regaining balance is what we are trying to get from our digital detox, it's not that we are using technology that is the problem

It's that we use it without limits, here are some ideas of ways you can limit technology after your detox (or as a part of your detox plan) to have better boundaries in your life going forward

The simplest boundaries are related to time and place

- ie no phones at the dinner table or in bed
- or no screens after dinner,
- Your boundary could be as simple as setting screen times ie no screens after 10 pm
- or more specific no work emails after supper,
- but whatever it is needs to fit with your life.

If you have a job where you need to know about work issues or as a parent you may not be able to turn off your phone to receive calls but could you stop checking emails? Or maybe you need to be available but you could stop using social media at dinner or before bed.

Consider your lifestyle, what times and places do screens not belong?

Take a minute or two to think about the times where technology is interfering in your life and connecting with others.

## Regaining Balance

### Unplugged Time

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Another way to set a boundary is to set regular unplugged time, go for without your phone or any technology, this can be tough at first so you might start small and increase the amount of time you go unplugged as it becomes more comfortable

A way to do this at home without going outside could be setting up a basket or box to put all the phones and tablets in the house for the duration of unplugged time

## Regaining Balance

### Replacing Tech

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As I talked about in the very beginning of the session today finding things you enjoy to replace your tech time with is a great way to set a boundary.

Maybe you set a no screens after 10 pm rule and that's when you break out a book to read or do a puzzle  
But other than reading this could be time to break out a puzzle, keep a journal and reflect on your day, a few years ago I taught myself to knit and that's a great way to relax and do something with your hands but not a screen, going for a walk or bike or just moving is another great way to replace the time you've been spending on technology.

## Regaining Balance

### Getting back to Nature

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Replacing tech with getting back to nature is another way to reconnect to the world outside of our screens,  
Another suggestion is to Plant something, go for a walk in your community, go sit in a green space or even your backyard.

Often we go from work to home and are on screens the whole time, finding a way to be connected to the real world outside our doors is a great way to reconnect and take a break from technology.

## Regaining Balance

### Tame your Triggers

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Technology is designed to be hard to ignore, notifications noises , alerts, likes etc are all designed to give us a pleasurable boost to keep us engaging with an app.

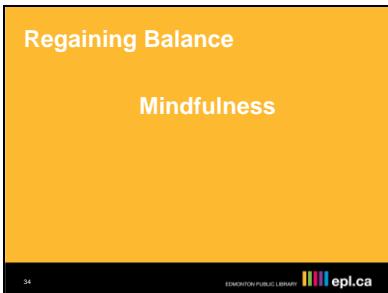
One of the main triggers for us to pick up our devices are these notifications so one kind of boundary you can set is to mute those notifications,  
Marie Kondo is big and many of us have decluttered our houses but have you decluttered your digital life?

try getting rid of apps you don't use, clearing out old emails from your email inbox, by deleting or creating folders to get them out of your inbox, clean out your social media, do you need to use all of the platforms? If you do clean out who you follow so you are aren't engaging with content that drains your energy  
Delay your responses – a recent study found that most emails are responded to in 2 minutes! That speedy

response doesn't leave us any time to think. Instead of responding immediately to every email you can set up one or two times per day that you answer emails and even set up an email responder with that information so that people know when they can expect to hear back from you.

I've done this in my work by only responding to urgent emails when I get in, in the morning and then setting aside time to work on more detailed tasks when my energy and focus are best at the beginning of my day. I now respond to most of my emails in the afternoon and I'm getting a lot more done this way and no one has noticed the slight increase in response time.

Another one is to shut down your phone simply can be to go into airplane mode, this will shut off most of the notifications I mentioned before but you can still use your phone if you have an emergency



From what I've been saying it seems like all technology is designed to be terrible and draining but Not all uses of technology are bad or distracting in a couple of the examples we've talked about setting limits, so maybe you go on that walk in nature and bring your phone but only to listen to music or a podcast and you turn on airplane mode so that you aren't getting distracted by notifications

For many of us family or friends can be far away so using technology to skype can be a great way to connect and keep relationships going as long as it is being used in a mindful way that isn't just procrastination or lack of balance

Many of these suggestions came from Tanya Goodin's book "Off" if you are looking for ideas for how to do a Digital Detox for the whole family she has another book called "Stop Staring at Screens: a Digital Detox for the whole family" that uses many of the same principles but applies them to parenting, modeling a good relationship with technology for kids and family life.

**What did you like from these plans?**

**Would they work for you?**

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**Activity**

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**Resources**

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**Thank you!**

**Questions?**

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\*Discussion of 30 day detox, boundaries 48 hour detox\*

Now that we've talked about the ideas behind a digital detox it's time for you to plan your own. On one of your handouts there are some questions to help you get started please take a minute pause the video and think about what are you going to do and how are you going to hold yourself accountable.

I've made a list of resources for people who want to learn more and it's available on the EPL website

Thank you for coming to this class and please check out the other EPL courses and content you may be interested in (just not while you're doing your detox!)

Goodbye!