

Google wants to cure your smartphone addiction

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Google has some ideas to make your phone a little more humane(see Fig.1). It introduced features for its coming Android P operating system designed to help consumers and parents curb smartphone addiction and detox from our beloved glowing screens.

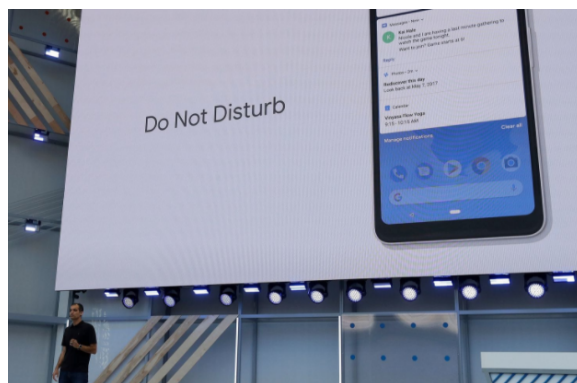


Figure 1: Sameer Samat speaks at the Google

The new Android features, which probably won't come as an update to your phone for months, are focused on making it easier to activate no-distraction modes[1] and get feedback about how we're using our phones. Among the highlights:

“Wind down” mode —When it's getting time for you to go to bed, your phone will now fade to gray, which will make apps become a lot less interesting without color.

Turn your phone face down to “shush”—Flipping your phone onto its face will turn on “do not disturb” mode, which silences calls, buzzes and other visual notifications.

“Time spent” dashboard —You can also set time limits for apps, after which their app icons will appear gray on your screen (but still work).

Watch your kids —An app called Family Link will allow parents to control their kids' devices.

The changes are welcome, but there's more the tech companies could do, especially given how much data they collect about us. Android update is the part of a broader new digital well-being initiative that's just beginning.

References

- [1] Elbialy *et al.* [5], “Effects of ultrasound modes on mandibular osteodistracton.,” *Journal of Dental Research*, vol. 87, no. 10, pp. 953–957, 2008.