Assignment 1: Let’s Disconnect For a Day!

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Cyberpsychology: Self and Others

LIBS1970 Section 3

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**Part 1**

1. **What are you doing to prepare for disconnecting?**

To prepare for disconnecting, I have had to plan to avoid my phone. I am setting strict boundaries around its usage, so that I will not be tempted to access social media through it. I am also signing out of all my accounts on my PC to make it more difficult for me to access social media.

1. **What do you think will be the most challenging aspect of disconnecting? The easiest?**

I think one of the most challenging parts of disconnecting will be ignoring the urge to check my phone. I am so used to checking my phone every minute or two, even if it’ just to look at the time, that it will be a major challenge.

1. **Are you excited about this assignment? Why or why not?**

Excitement might be a bit of a strong word for how I feel about the assignment. I am certainly interested in how it is going to go, and I’m certainly interested in how it will change how my day is spent. I think I enjoy spending time on YouTube too much to say that I am excited.

**Part 2**

1. **What ended up being the most challenging aspect of disconnect?**

I think the most challenging aspect of disconnect was keeping myself away from social media. I would often open Twitter or Instagram before realising what I was doing, and immediately closing the app before anything had loaded. I seemed to have an almost compulsive urge to open these apps in certain situations, like waiting in line, or on my way to the kitchen. The other highly challenging area was not accessing YouTube. I realised that I spend a lot of time on YouTube, either consuming entertainment, watching a tutorial for something technical, or even just playing music in the background.

1. **What ended up being the easiest (how was this different from your expectations)?**

I was surprised at how quickly I felt at ease about not having access to most of my social media. I was not really concerned with what was happening on Facebook, or what new drama was blowing up on my Twitter feed. While I seemed to have a problem keeping myself from opening the apps, I did not miss having access to that information at all.

1. **Did the disconnection have an impact on how you view yourself and your behaviours in general? (e.g., did you act differently, did you feel any different)? Why or why not?**

I think the disconnection has raised a lot of questions about the actual value of social media in my life. It seems to me that I use it mostly to stave off the fear of boredom, rather than using it to expand my knowledge, or for other useful purposes. I felt much more at ease not having a steady drip of real-time information, and I felt that I could be more present when I was not constantly checking Instagram to see what new climbing pictures had been posted. I think I also spent less time worrying about where my phone was. It was either in my pocket or on my desk for most of the day, and I did not worry about taking it with me if I was going somewhere.

1. **Did this assignment change the way you view your own use of social media? Why or why not? In what ways?**

I believe that this assignment has made me view social media as a much more negative presence in my life. I think I was much more relaxed, a better husband and a better student when I was not constantly feeding my brain a slow drip of pictures and text. I was more easily able to focus, and I was less anxious to have that next hit of information. I think I also realised that almost all my friends do not use social media unless it is to message me directly. For instance, it is rare that I would receive an invitation to an event over social media without a direct invitation from the host.

1. **Was your disconnection difficult for others in your life? Who? Why? In what ways?**

Due to the pandemic, I do not have standing plans with anyone, nor can I really try to make plans with anyone that I would have contact with via social media. Everyone that I interacted with that day, either while I was shopping or at home, were people that could reach me regardless of my usage of social media. Long term, I think being disconnected from most of the social media I refrained from in this period would have relatively minimal impact on my life. Some of my friends would need to learn to text me, rather than reaching me over Facebook, but beyond a few people, I really do not interact a lot with other people directly on social media.

**Field Notes**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME:** | **Timothy Nigh** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **DISCONNECTED TECHNOLOGY (what did you give up?)** | **Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **What time is it?** | **Where are you?** | **What are you doing?** | **Who are you with?** | **Have you been tempted to use your disconnected technology?** | **If so, why?** | **Other details** |
| **8pm** | **At home** | **cleaning, prepping food for tomorrow,** | **The cat** | **Absolutely** | **I often have Youtube videos playing as I do housework** |  |
| **6am** | **at home** | **reading, doing morning chores** | **the cat, my wife** | **Yes** | **I'm used to checking my social media feeds first thing in the morning** |  |
| **9am** | **At home** | **reading, watching TV, playing with the cat, making coffee** | **the cat, my wife** | **Yes** | **I often idly browse my various feeds as we watch tv and as we eat breakfast** |  |
| **Noon** | **At home** | **Cleaning, Organizing closet, laundry, homework** | **the cat, my wife** | **No** |  | **I've noticed that even though I don't feel the need to use social media, if I'm using my phone to read, I seem to try to open the apps anyway.** |
| **3pm** | **Grocery store/home** | **shopping, cooking, cleaning** | **my wife** | **No** |  | **I have noticed that opening up my social media apps seems to just be a reaction to idleness, whether I'm actually bored or not.** |
| **6pm** | **At home** | **Eating dinner, watching TV** | **my wife and the cat** | **yes** | **I'm sorely tempted to scroll through my social media feeds as a TV show plays in the background** |  |
| **9pm** | **At home** | **Doing homework** | **the cat** | **no** |  | **I think that having a more complex task helps reduce the temptation to look at social media, as it requires as much brain power as I can handle** |