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# Healthy Social Media Habits

### QuikRisk™ Assessment:

## Are You Hooked on Social Media?



Whether or not people can be addicted to social media is debatable. However, research shows that using online social networks may interfere with some people's lives.

Scientists believe the irresistibility of social media is rooted in the brain. A Harvard University study suggests that sharing information on social media activates pleasure centers in the brain, just like eating or social acceptance.

### What role does social media play in your life?

1. When you are in a gathering, such as dining out or in a meeting, is it difficult for you to resist checking on social media?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Do you frequently disengage from real life events to share photos or posts on social media?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Do you feel like something didn't happen until you shared it on social media?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Do you wake up to check social media in the middle of the night or log on first thing upon waking up?

☐ Yes ☐ No

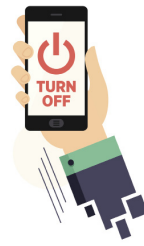
5. Has someone you are close to expressed concern about your social media use?

☐ Yes ☐ No

The more **yes** answers you have, the more closely you should examine your social media use and how it makes you feel.

If disengaging from social media causes you to feel anxious, sad and irritable, try unplugging and enjoying real-world activities, such as going out to eat or to the movies — or talking to a friend in person.

# Digital Fasting



A **digital fast** or **digital detox** is unplugging from all screens and connected devices for a defined amount of time, anywhere from a few hours to several days. A digital fast can happen once, weekly or monthly.

People may choose a digital fast for several reasons:

- To connect with family and friends more deeply.
- To work creatively with fewer distractions.
- To take a break from work during a vacation or day off.
- To cut back on connected activities such as gaming, using social media, or texting.

Research has shown that a digital fast may provide some **benefits**. In 1 experiment where people were taken to the Moroccan desert for a digital-free retreat, neuroscientists found people slept better, had more engaging and prolonged conversations, and made more positive changes and commitments when they were unplugged from their devices.

If you find yourself often staring down at a smart device, power off, and discover where the world takes you without digital distractions.

*There's a fine line between usefulness and distraction. Remember that life's most valuable moments usually happen when you're away from the screen.*

## Unplug, Reconnect

**Have you tried digital fasting?** The point is to disconnect from the artificial world of social media, electronic communication, the internet and TV — and reconnect with the world around you and your own inner voice and thoughts. Unplugging for a day or more may benefit you in these ways:

**Improved posture:** You will sit and stand up straighter, rather than hunched over a device, becoming cranky, stiff and achy.



**More personal connections:** You will make more eye contact with people and appear more friendly and approachable. You may lose that sense of loneliness and disconnect from spending hours and days attached to your devices.

**Better conversation and collaboration:** Instead of turning to your device for every answer and suggestion, you may enjoy more meaningful conversations, ask more questions, and come to more shared solutions.

**Fantastic focus:** Without the distraction of mobile devices, you may find yourself more aware, observant and able to remember details.

**Improved sleep:** The blue light emitted by some electronic devices, such as phones and tablets, has been proven to disrupt sleep patterns. You might not sleep longer after you unplug, but you could improve sleep quality and feel more rested.



## How to Survive the 24/7 World

Today, nearly everyone has a mobile device that connects them to people and information anytime, anywhere. This 24-hour connectivity can boost work productivity and save time on the job in many cases, by allowing you to quickly communicate with coworkers by email and attend meetings away from the workplace.

However, a risk with constant connectivity is that you never disconnect from work. Even after you call it quits for the day or when you are on vacation, it might be tough to resist checking in.

Working on a mobile device 24/7 can make it harder to separate your job from your personal and family time, and may disrupt sleep.

It's up to you to set healthy boundaries for connection and communication. Here's how:

- Work efficiently and stick to your scheduled job hours.
- Put your device on silent, so you are less tempted to reach for it every time it sounds an alert.
- On vacations, holidays and days off, set aside device-free hours to relax, rest and connect with others face-to-face.
- Avoid using electronics in bed. Make your first and last activities of the day something that doesn't involve a smart device
- Put your device away during meals, attending an event such as movie or play, or having an important face-to-face conversation.

