

Technology can be amazing, but it can also take over

Take back control!

Mindfulness

Advice you've probably seen

1. Avoid blue light at bedtime
2. Take regular breaks
3. Check your posture

Is it any good?

We can spend hours looking at screens every day, and many of us check their smartphone before going to bed. Looking at a bright blue light can interfere with our natural biorhythm and reduce the quality of our sleep, and many devices now offer filters to reduce the amount of blue light they emit, or have “dark mode” options. Try to use them!

We all know we should take regular breaks, but if we're in the middle of something, we may not want to stop. Breaks are important: eye strain can be an issue when our eyes are constantly fixed on objects at the same distance, our body might become cramped after long periods with minimal movement, and we can forget to have enough to drink too!

Our posture also matters when we use computers and phones. Make sure you are in a neutral posture and not twisting or reaching and you will help avoid problems of back and neck pain. If your wrists hurt from typing or using a mouse, look at options to keep your hands aligned with your forearm and your thumb pointing towards the ceiling.

Regain Control

Do we really know how much time we spend using technology – looking at a phone, computer, or television? It can be interesting to track this over a day by noting the time when we start and stop using a particular device. If you think you are spending too long using a particular device, think about why you do so, and what alternatives you may have available to you. Plan to take breaks if you have particularly long periods of technology use: stretch, take a walk, have a drink of water, stare at something far away for a minute to rest your eyes, and so on.

Parental controls can also help to manage our use of technology, not just that of children! You can restrict access to some services or devices based on the time of day to limit your own use of technology, smartphones can show you how long you spend using different apps, and it can be very useful to also review how much access you give your apps by reviewing the permissions they have and whether they are really necessary.

Technology can be very helpful, but it sometimes asks for much more access than it needs, and it is important to make sure you are happy with the access you currently have granted.

Don't forget

Reviewing your privacy settings is worth doing, and doing periodically. This means that you are in control of how much access you give to your own life, and don't end up sharing much more than you intend to.

Don't forget that apps that you stop using but haven't removed still can access your information, so it is worth removing them if you don't want to use them anymore.

