



# Unplug and Reconnect

Have you ever been reading a book and tried to “scroll down” with your finger at the bottom of the page instead of turning it. (Yikes.) Do you find yourself scrolling mindlessly through Facebook or Instagram, then moving on to another app and then another, and you’ve suddenly lost hours of your night?

These are just a few examples of the many ways in which we can become a little too tuned in to technology in our daily lives. And our attention spans are starting to tell the tale. A study by Microsoft found that between 2000 and 2015, the average person’s attention span decreased from 12 seconds to just eight seconds as digital and mobile technology use increased. (For comparison, a goldfish has an average attention span of *nine* seconds.)

But there are ways to regain your focus and break your digital addiction. And by making an effort to unplug from technology and plug back into real life, you’re likely to find more benefits than just better focus and attention. Want to give it a try? Here are a few ways to start:

- **Create phone-free zones** with your family, like at meal times, in the car or during the hour before bed. Use the time to chat and catch up on your day instead.
- **Visit friends and family members.** Summer is the perfect time for a road trip to visit friends or relatives who you may only otherwise communicate with via social media. Plan a reunion and make the most of it by spending time together without screens.
- **Delete that one app.** Consider deleting that one time-sucking, social media app – at least for the summer. Let your social network know that you’re taking a tech break and that they can communicate with you IRL (in real life). If you absolutely need to check in, then do it from your computer and not your phone.
- **Do some exploring.** Take an afternoon, a weekend or a weeklong vacation and dedicate it to seeing another part of your city (or the country) with minimal screen time.
- **Enjoy the silence.** Remember that it’s OK to be alone with your thoughts. Make an effort to carve out a few minutes each day to give your mind a rest. You can use the time to meditate, to think or to just let your mind wander.

However you choose to unplug, remember that you're not really missing out on anything when you digitally disconnect for a bit. In fact, you may actually miss the good stuff if you don't put down your phone every now and then.