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Digital detox: Reconnect the Disconnected

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Abstract

Human life on earth is rapidly moving towards digital world rather than eco-friendly one. By addicting to the digital objects, people are feeling themselves lost in the real world. This is because everything is tied up with the digital technologies right from the morning to evening in the human life and digital objects become a part of normal life of the human beings. In this digital world humans are spending much time with their electronic gadgets such as mobiles, laptops, smart watches rather than the friends, family, nature and surrounding environment. The present study aims at knowing about digital detox, how to do the digital detox, advantages and disadvantages of the digital detox. There are six steps to do the digital detox. Advantages like productive usage of available time, reduced stress, good sleep, good relationships with each other, improved communication skills, living in the real world and accepting the reality arise out of digital detox. Though there are many such advantages, there are few disadvantages of digital detox such as work related or professional problems, inability to access the important information whenever it is needed. So, there should be a balance between the two sides of detox so that the connections whichever we were losing can be reconnected to a maximum extent.

Keywords: Digital detox, electronic gadgets, human beings

Introduction

Our life on the earth going towards digital life and moving away from eco-friendly life. On an average, people spending nearly three hours per day in using smart phones (Markowitz, 2015) [20]. "Look away from our screens and enter the physical world we are in" (Colier, 2016) [8], is a unique call for action in contemporary self-help literature. Digital detox is a new term (Syvertsen, 2020) [34]. We are often coming across the advices on stop alcohol consumption, stop smoking, maintain good food habits and etc. likewise digital detox is also an emerging popular self-help genre. This digital detox is emerged out of the criticisms over new technologies and media around us. According to oxford word reference, digital detox is a timeframe in which an individual stops from using electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, computers, which is projected as a chance to reduce pressure or which promotes a friendly environment in the real world. Through clinical cycles, digital gadgets detoxing is less harmful when compared to alcoholic detoxing and other comparative strategies. When compared to the advanced detox like alcoholic detox, digital detox will take less timeframe to purify. Advanced digital detox will best suited inside the practice of corporate self-improvement where individuals are encourages to increase effectiveness using innovation and programming, including to restrict computerized obstacles (Guyard, 2018) [17]. So digital detox, is to give people time to experience the real life without distractions and to reconnect with others in person.

When it comes to not using electronics, the scientific community and the general population have distinct terminology. Usually, terms like abstinence, break, disconnection, detox, timeout, or unplugging are used (Brown & Kuss, 2020) [5]. The key similarity between these words is that they all refer to a time when using digital devices like tablets is prohibited. Throughout our review, we combined all these various terms under one heading: "digital detox." The term was introduced for the first time around 2012 (Felix & Dean, 2012) [14]. Digital detox is defined as a "period of time during which a person refrains from using their electronic devices, such as smartphones, regarded as an opportunity to reduce stress or

focus on social interaction in the physical world” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2019) [25]. According to this description, a digital detox involves temporarily giving up electronic gadgets in order to purify oneself, much like fasting. Therefore, digital detox is not the same as detoxification programs that involve quitting alcohol or illegal narcotics permanently. (Syvertsen & Enli, 2019) [35].

Restricting the digital life and living in the real world:

The study of not using and disconnecting is an emerging as a wing of social and online media research. Studies explore mixed feelings to withdrawal from services such as Twitter, Facebook, and the dating app Grinder, Online news, and in general, social networking sites (Baumer *et al.*, 2013; Schoenebeck, 2014; Brubaker *et al.*, 2016; Wood stock, 2013; Dremljuga, 2018) [3, 30, 6, 40, 10].

The concept of authenticity has various meanings, in which three aspects are embedded. The first aspect that is quality of being real, genuine and as opposed to be fake, untrust worthy. Second is being true to one's inner self rather than compromising one's behaviour to the social norms. This dimension pinpoints that mutuality between performing role in day-to-day life, such as in online self- presentations and being true to himself or oneself in the real world (Berman, 2009) [4]. In the era of constant connectivity, a vital question in media research is that to what extent the real and authentic communication is possible online and to what extent only inter personal interactions are to be considered as authentic. A vital argument in the recent contributions is that digital communication should be conceived as authentic, and just as meaningful as its offline versions (Baym 2010) [2]. The third aspect of authenticity is that sometimes used as synonym of originality, and nostalgia for a historic past before commercialisation and mass production culture.

How to do the digital detox

- 1. Decide on behaviour to change:** First, we have to focus on the issue, for example, Am I constantly connected with Instagram? Is it wasting my time? Am I sparing much time on social media? We have to pick out the activities which we want to eradicate.
- 2. Create goals:** Setting goals for oneself depends on if one willingness to reduce or eliminate the use of particular device or the media type. For example, if we decided to use Instagram only for 15 minutes a day, keep the mobile in the other room and sleep in the other room which will restrict you from using the mobile.
- 3. Make a commitment regarding time:** One should compromise with the phrase that it takes much time to break the digital connections. One should plan to commit to at least two weeks. We want get the point where it feels like we have broken the habit.
- 4. Gather support:** It is much needed to have a life partner, a loved family members or close friend to encourage us and provide accountability. We can even ask them for ideas on how to stop our targeted behaviour.
- 5. Assessing the progress:** After some days of our digital detox, we have to check in with ourself on how it is going on. We should not swap one digital habit for the other one. For example, if we are spending more time on Instagram now that we are off Facebook, we may need to take in to consideration of eliminating social media entirely
- 6. Considering the long-term changes:** We have to point out the advantages and disadvantages we experienced during

the digital detox. For example, what happened if we were not using Instagram for an entire day? How do we feel its absence? Was it easier than we thought or was it tough to do? For example, making it a household rule that no one should use Instagram during family diner time.

Benefits of digital detoxing

Reduced stress

Disconnecting from the stress inducing or anxiety inducing sites, apps, information, news, stories or online relationships through the dating apps will drastically reduce our stress. Digital detox may be helpful to remind ourself about our stress, anxiety, and attention to these matters is unlikely to give a positive change. However, disconnecting and involving in the self-caring activities or achieving daily tasks will give positive impacts, decrease the stress levels, and eradicate few of the negative effects combined with the over use and dependence on the screens.

Good control over available time

It is witnessed that we are sparing more with the technological devices than at any other in our time history. It is true that our everyday lives are depend on digital world, but one should make a note that we are spending much time in front of screens than the required one. One of the major advantages of the digital detox is that identifying what amount of our technology use is vital, what amount is essential, what amount is enjoyable, and most importantly what amount is detrimental. From here, we can take the decisions which can reduce our use of technology and eventually leisure time that can be used productively in some other available ways.

Good relationships

In any relationships, time investment plays a crucial role in success of the same. Once we decided and committed to detox from the digital devices, we will find ourselves with lot of time to spend in our real-life relationships. In a nutshell, the quality of our life will improve with the digital detox.

Enhanced self-image

Major negative aspects of the digital objects are that they will show impact negatively on the psychological levels. Continuous exposure to the curated, exaggerated and even the fake images of our colleagues or friends, lives is responsible for the psychological problems called FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). This FOMO affects people deeply as it triggers feelings of anxiety, isolation, and exclusion from the real world. Possible way to avoid these unpleasant emotions is to spare more time engaged in our own real-life experiences and less in the digital enhanced experiences of our colleagues or friends.

Improved sleep

The blue light emits from the almost all the electronic objects. This blue light suppresses the secretion of a hormone called melatonin which helps in our regular health patterns. Decreasing screen time, especially in the late hours in night time can greatly enhance the quality of our sleep and our overall physical health.

Connecting with others

One of the advantages of the digital detox is the ability to reconnect with the people with and around you. Plugging off from the digital technology will gives us the chance to interact with the real world. And we can listen them being present offline. Spending time with the loved ones and family members

can help to rediscover the joy of fostering relationships and creating enduring memories.

Enhanced productivity

We might be able to increase our productivity by taking a pause from the digital devices. We can be able to concentrate very well on the work or other engagements as there will not be social media notifications remind you constantly to distract us. Disconnecting also gives us ample time for the self-care, hobbies, and neglected interests. Improving the habit of reading books, paintings, playing a musical instrument, etc. can reignite our creativity and bring the sense fulfillment.

Sharper focus

It is very easy to distract from what is going around you in the world with the continuous pop-up notifications on our mobiles, or laptops, and on any other devices. During unplugging from digital objects, we may find that we notice more in our surroundings. Our brain can focus far better on our tasks.

Disadvantages of digital detox

Inconvenience

Digital detox creates much discomfort and inconvenience in our day-to-day activities like net banking, inability to access the important and urgent information when it is needed.

Obstacles in professional life

Suppose, professionals who work very close to the digital tools and online communications may face the potential challenges because of the digital detox. It will show negative effect on their efficiency and productivity. It also affects the quick response mechanism of the professional related to his work-related matters.

Withdrawal symptoms

Digital detox is also a kind of breaking the habitual behaviour. By doing this, it can lead to the symptoms like restlessness, irritability, sleeplessness, and anxiety particularly at the initial phases of the digital detox.

Communication challenges

Digital detoxing may direct to constraints in staying connected with the others, particularly the loved ones who is very far from us and where the communication through only electronic media is possible. It results in the breaking the relations, and conflicts.

Missing opportunities

Once we disconnected digitally, it will result in the missing of some important news, events and opportunities. It restricts the access to the information available which is relevant for the personal and societal growth as well.

Conclusion

A response to feeling momentarily overburdened and encroached upon, confined to a manufactured and egocentric environment, and in need of techniques to enhance well-being and attentive awareness, is digital detoxification. The idea that life is primarily digital these days, as popularized in media studies, is refuted, as evidenced by research on digital detoxification. Real life and digital life, as well as mediated and authentic life, are still distinguished. This study drawn to the conclusion that there are various approaches to detoxification in the aforementioned scenario are decide on behaviour to change, create goal, make a commitment regarding time, gather support

and considering the long-term changes

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