

UNPLUG and Get Your Life Back

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How to Fight TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION

Don't laugh.

Technology addiction is very real and very harmful.

It consumes thousands of people from every walk of life - even lawyers. Tech addicts report being **RESTLESS** when they're not sitting at a keyboard or holding their smart phones. And, when they're at the computer, they **lose all sense of time**. Their family and friends are often **NEGLECTED**.

Technology addiction is such a growing problem that experts have opened up the [first residential treatment center](#) in the United States. A \$14,000 45-day stay at ReStart in Seattle can help people kick the habit of pathological computer and smart phone use.

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Addiction Warning Signs

If you feel you have a handle on your technology use - think again. Just look at the **TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION WARNING SIGNS:**

- **Preoccupation with thoughts of the Internet.**
- **Using the computer or smart phone longer than intended for increasing amounts of time.**
- **Repeatedly making unsuccessful efforts to control use.**
- **Putting time online before school or work.**

Think about people - lawyers especially - who take calls, send text messages, or obsessively check their emails throughout the day and night. Maybe I'm describing you!

If you're **teched-out lifestyle** is wreaking havoc on your work-life balance, here are some ways to **UNPLUG**.

1. Restrictions

Put some restrictions on yourself when it comes to handing out your cell phone number. Give the number out to the most important clients and colleagues. This will cut down on the number of calls you receive, especially at night or during vacation.

2. Turn the smart phone OFF at home!

Emails come in on smart phones day and night. You **DO NOT** have to check them from home at 11 o'clock at night. Those emails will still be there in the morning.

Turn off your iPhone or BlackBerry at a set time every night. Remember, **your nights belong to you - not your clients!**

3. Set realistic email expectations.

You should not have to respond to client emails immediately. Instead, have your retainer agreement state that client emails will be responded to within "x" amount of time, unless the sender receives an "away" message. That message, in turn, should indicate how long you will be out of reach and whom to contact in an emergency.

These types of provisions will allow you to **carve out more private time**.

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4. Unplug at work.

Many people get sidelined while preparing for important presentations or cases because they feel the need to respond to emails or browse the Internet.

Stop!

If there is a project that has to get done, **turn off the email notification sound and pop-up window**. Or, better yet, close Outlook so you aren't even tempted to wander from the task at hand. The same applies to smart phones.

Don't be chained to technology! Break the chains by setting your own hard and fast rules.

UNWIRE today before you become UNGLUED!

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