УДК 001.124.4

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THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMANITY

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Abstract

This article describes the issues of technology impact on our lives. It stresses effect on you all those hours you spend staring at your smartphone, tablet, or computer and what you can do about it.
Keywords: *technology, screen, dependence on technology, spend time, unhappy, continuous signal.*

Анотація

Дана стаття описує питання впливу технологій на наше життя. У ній підкреслюється ефект на вас тих годин, які ви витрачаєте, дивлячись на ваш смартфон, планшет або комп'ютер, і що ви можете зробити з цим.
Ключові слова: *технології, екран, залежність від технології витрачати час, нещасний, безперервний сигнал.*

Technology made the world smaller by providing communication tools. It explored the solar system and the universe, and proved that technology is truly significant in human advancement. In order to facilitate himself and his fellows, the man has converted all raw material into usable resources. So, we became too dependent on technology.

You cannot live for a minute without checking messages on iMessages, you want to constantly track who among your friends put "Like" and check who liked your tweet about the grandmother and the dog you met on the way to work this morning. Especially interesting is that you cannot even remember where this dependence came from.

This dependence has not only made human beings life so facilitated, comforted and luxurious but also this dependence has made him lazy, sluggish and somewhat weak and feverish physically. Though technology proved itself as a friend, facilitator, and comforter, its destructive capabilities in warfare have proved to be more deleterious rather than to be constructive. There is no question that such high-tech devices have enriched our lives and made everything easy. So, it is a natural thing for man to become dependent on technology [1].

The usage of technology has also increased the level of crimes and criminals. Its improper use or misuse makes mankind fearful and increases the suffering of mankind. In this age, most of the kids play video games and stay indoors. This way, most of their time is wasted in using these technologies. Nowadays, we cannot survive without internet and smartphones. Walking through public places, we notice people standing right next to each other but don't say a word to each other. They are holding a conversation on internet or phone. One day breakdown of the internet can create a massive disaster in different spheres of the life. Even little things can cause stress for us [2].

In 2010, Steve Jobs, when he was releasing the iPad, described the iPad as a device that was "extraordinary", "the best browsing experience you've ever had, better than a laptop, better than a smartphone, it's an incredible experience." A couple of months later, he was approached by a New York Times journalist, and they had a long phone call. At the end of the call, the journalist threw in a question that seemed like a kind of softball. He told him, "Your kids must love the iPad." There's an obvious answer to this, but what Jobs has really impressed on the journalist. He was very surprised, because he said, "They have not used it. We limit how much technology our kids use at home."

So for the last five years, as a professor of business and psychology, Adam Alter's been studying the effects of screens in our lives. He spoke at the TED Talks conference on this topic in April 2017. There he showed a chart with the average 24-hour workday (shown in Figure 1) at three different points in the history: 2007, 2015 and then data that he collected in 2017. And a lot of things have not changed that much. We sleep roughly seven-and-a-half to eight hours a day; Some people say that's declined slightly, but it has not changed much.
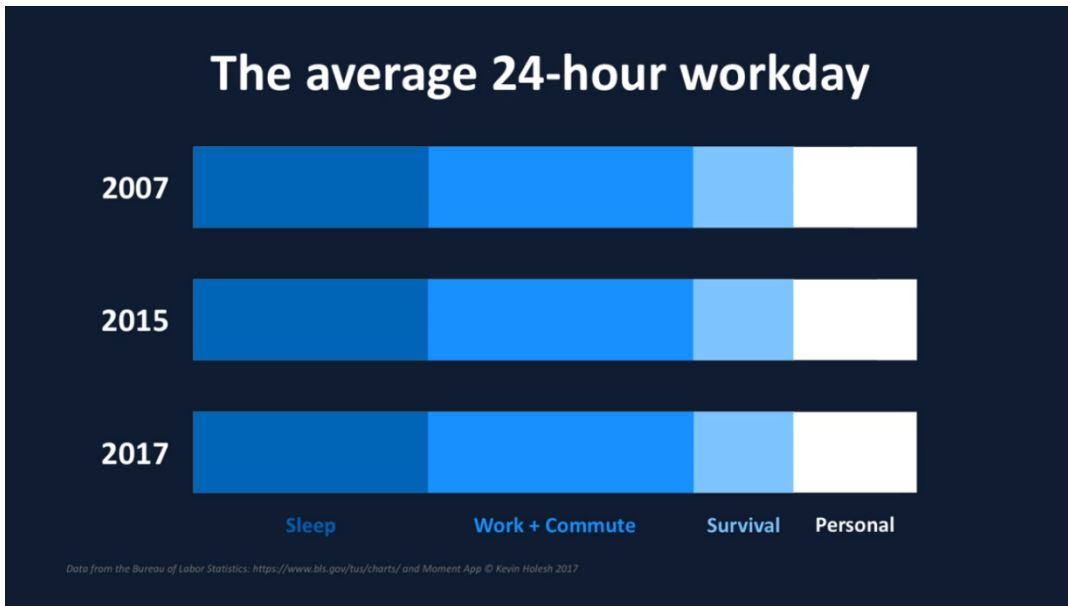
Figure 1: The average 24-hour workday

We work eight-and-a-half to nine hours a day. We engage in survival activities - these are things like eating and bathing and looking after children - about three hours a day [3].

That leaves this white space. That's our personal time. That space is incredibly important to us. That's the space where we do things that make us individuals. That's where hobbies happen, where we have close relationships, where we really think about our lives, where we get creative, where we zoom in and try to work out whether our lives have been meaningful.

We get some of that from work as well, but when people look back at their lives and wonder what their lives have been like at the end of their lives, you look at the last things they say - they are talking about those moments that happen in that white personal space. So it's sacred; it's important to us.

That's how much of that space is taken up by screens over time. In 2007, that was the year that Apple introduced the first iPhone. That's how much time we spend that free time in front of our screens. This yellow area (shown in Figure 1), this thin sliver, is where the magic happens. That's where your humanity lives. And right now, it's in a very small box.
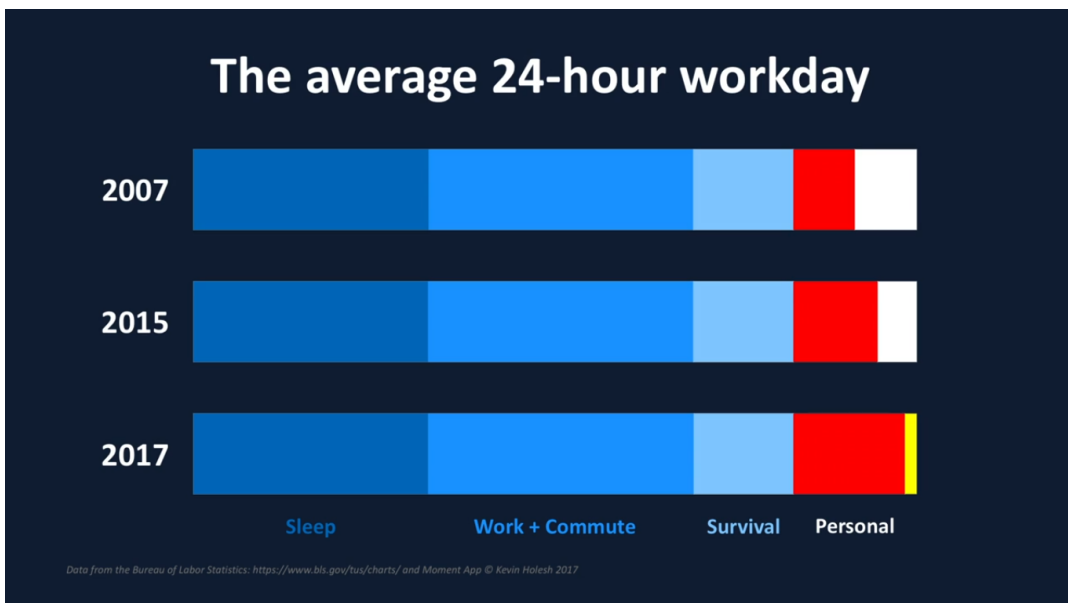

Figure 2: The average 24-hour workday (personal time)

One thing you can do is ask yourself: What's going on during that time? How are the apps that we are using enriching? And some are enriching. If you stop people while they're using them and say "Tell us how you feel right now," they say they feel pretty good about these apps - those that focus on relaxation, exercise, weather, reading, education and health. They spend an average of nine minutes a day on each of these. These apps make them much less happy. About half the people, when you interrupt them and say, "How do you feel?" say they do not feel good about using them. What's interesting about these - dating, social networking, gaming, entertainment, news, web browsing - people spend 27 minutes per day on each of these. We're spending three times longer on apps that do not make us happy. That does not seem very wise.

One of the reasons we spend so much time on these apps that make us unhappy is they rob us of stopping the cues. Stopping cues were everywhere in the 20th century. They were baked into everything we did. A stopping cue is basically a signal that it's time to move on, to do something new, to do something different. And - think about newspapers; eventually you get to the end, you fold the newspaper away, you put it aside. The same with magazines, books - you get to the end of a chapter, prompting you to consider whether you want to continue. You watched a show on TV, eventually the show would end, and then you'd have a week until the next one came. There were stopping cues everywhere. But the way we consume today is such that there are no stopping signals. The news feed is just rolls, and everything's bottomless: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, email, text messaging, the news. And when you do check all sorts of other sources, you can just keep going on and on and on [4].

The cost of becoming dependent on technology, at its most extreme, is our mental health, our cognitive capabilities, and the future of innovation. So what can we do to mitigate our dependence on technology, both individuals and as groups? [5]

We do not need to outlaw technology, or deliberately limit our use of new technologies that have the potential to significantly improve our lives. But we need to find a balance.

As an individual, that means limiting the time you spend engaging with technology, and relying on your own cognitive capabilities as much as possible. In a group context, it means resisting the temptation to accept any technology as a given, or as the new norm.

We need to acknowledge the destructive and limiting potential of technological dependence without demonizing technology altogether, and we need to work together to accomplish this.

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