

BRING SUBCONSCIOUS BEHAVIOR TO THE SURFACE

Become aware of how often you are subconsciously using it just because you are in the habit. Every time your car stops, every time you need to remember something, when you wait in line for something, when you have a free moment or when the people you are with are using it. Experience discomfort and kindly encourage others to engage in face-to-face interaction. Do you think a watch might help with not needing it so much?

Resist the impulses and increase duration between the times you use it. Make conscious decisions to frequently leave it at home or in the car. Replace what you were using it for all the time. For example, a grocery list, a to do list, etc....Keep a notepad with you if you need to remember something. This helps with memory as well.

MAKE FIRM RULES FOR YOURSELF

Become accountable to yourself. Commit verbally or in writing about what changes you will make, not just want to make. Enlist your family and let them call you out. Mobilize your support group and become accountable to yourself and your family. Show them you recognize your shortcomings and grow from them. Tell them you are trying to improve and you've made mistakes. Inspire your loved ones to do the same. Start slow and increase as you succeed. For example, I will not use it in the car for any purpose. (This is conforming to the law as well). I will not walk and text. I will not use it in line. I will not eat with it. I will not use it as an alarm clock. I will not use it while engaging in conversation with others. I will wear a watch, I will not use it in the bathroom. I will decrease the need to take pictures of every moment. I won't use it for family outings. I won't have it mindlessly in my hand or in my pocket. I won't leave it on the table next to me when I am socializing. I won't try and "multitask" and use it simultaneously while doing other things (like walking down stairs and crossing the street). Don't make excuses and just because everyone else is doing it doesn't mean it's acceptable. We are all addicted and we all need to improve. Strive to be an example in your community and in your family. Stop feeling guilty that you can't be reached. Be gentle and kind to yourself. Set some boundaries with people who text or call you a lot. Let them know you are trying to decrease your dependency and will no longer be so reachable. Practice leaving the house without or at least not have it in your hand or pocket all the time. There was a time when you were able to function just fine in life (or better). There has to be times that it is not glued to your body. You can also create some family rules.

Become an active observer in the community. Make note of how many people you see walking neck down typing away. How many kids are leaving school with their faces in their phone? How many people cross the street in front of you with their phones in their face? How many people are walking around in circles while talking on the phone? What about just staring at their phone while they are walking awaiting their next move? How many one handed grasp thumbers do you see expertly walking, thumbing and clutching their phone. What about in their hands or visible in their back pockets? What feelings do these evoke in you? Does your child mimic that behavior? How do you feel when you see a group of young kids with headphones all gathered around not interacting and looking at their phones? What about walking down the stairs looking at their phone? How about at Starbucks, the library before and after school, the grocery line or a restaurant? What about your own behavior? The texting and driving, especially in front of the schools, I am sure has gotten your attention. All the kids leaving class or in the car with their devices as soon as they get out of school. Are adults doing the same? Did we teach our children that this was acceptable? Did we put too much value on this device? Is it time to scale back and find more balance? Where are there no iPhones present? Are there any spaces where it's unacceptable to be engaged with a phone? Is this how we want our children to grow up? Are these things stealing their childhood? Have you noticed any changes since your child has an iPhone? Are these changes acceptable in your family or is it time to change? Change begins with you and your family. Are you willing to be the change you want to be? Is it time? Join us in this movement.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Maybe it's time for some self examination? Maybe you are no longer aware of the reasons behind the dependency? Why exactly do you need to have it next to you all the time? Can you walk the dog without it? What about to buy groceries? What about when you sit and wait for your coffee? Do you really need to fill those 3 minutes with some digital stimulation? What do you suppose this is doing for your eyes, brain, neck, memory, attention and relationships? Is it OK for you and your meal mate to be scrolling? Can you read on actual paper? Do you consume more than you create when you

are scrolling? Have you considered how you use your social media? Have you or your child ever felt left out or bad after looking at a post where you were not included? Has anyone ever felt this way about your posts? Do you or your child compare yourself to others? If you made a conscious decision about your iPhone and app choices and you stand behind them, that is all that is important. I am sure you asked yourself the following questions. How is social media beneficial to my child? Is it healthy for them to look at these posts? Is my child just a product in the attention economy? Do you like what they look at it or is it extremely stressful? Have you added a lot of negativity in your life managing it all? Do you find yourself blaming the other parents or the schools for this stress? What was the discussion with your family on proper social media use? Did you ever consider NOT letting them use social media and establish your value system? Would you consider experimenting what some time off does for your well being? Do you criticize other people for what they post and talk about it with your friends? Are you likely to distance yourself from someone because of what they post? Are you spending more time "connecting" and "liking" your friends on Instagram more than in real life? Could you go somewhere cool and NOT post about it? Are we numbing ourselves at times? What else could you be doing with your time? Is this out of control in your life? If so, you are not alone and we can support you.

DENIAL AND GUILT

Denial is a maladaptive coping mechanism that gives you time to adjust to distressing situations — but staying in denial can interfere with treatment or your ability to overcome obstacles in your life. If you're in denial, you're trying to protect yourself by refusing to accept the truth about something that's happening in your life.

If you are in denial about your iPhone dependency or your child's iPhone dependency you will know because you feel anxious or uncomfortable, probably whenever it is around you. If you feel uncomfortable when your child is overly engaged with the iPhone you are in denial. If it is so normal that you hardly notice and you've stopped feeling uncomfortable you are in denial. You are also probably dependent as well. Usually denial is accompanied by guilt. If you justify your child's iPhone obsession because she is not as bad as that "other" kid...that is a red flag. Parenting is so challenging that we often feel guilty for a number of

reasons. Listen to your intuition. Do you feel guilty that your child is obsessed with the iPhone you gave him? Start being honest with yourself and don't lead your kids down this addictive path.

Sometimes denial is fear based. We fear that we don't have the power to implement change. When you change the rules in your house and put limits on devices it can be scary and a lot of work. You are well equipped to handle this and it will work for you and for your family. You will see that what really everyone wants is to be less dependent. We just create new healthy habits, reprogram ourselves and deprogram our kids. There is no other way and it won't fix itself. We need to do this-collectively!

Denial, fear and guilt get exasperated by dependency. When you look around and you see that your dependency or your child's dependency is shared by society it justifies your behavior because everyone else seems worse. When you are the only person in the waiting room, line, restaurant not engaged with your phone, you get permission to do the same. Everybody else is doing it so it must be OK. It does appear that people agree that we have a societal problem with this and the data confirms it to be true. We all seem to have an inner conflict about our iPhone use. Do different, stand alone and be uncomfortable. Strike up conversations with people and be an example. Replace your iPhone with something that inspires you and helps your brain. Check in with your denial, fear, guilt and inner conflict on a regular basis if you wish to decrease iPhone dependency.

More Authentic Interactions and Relationships.

Get in touch with your authentic self and reevaluate the reasons you spend time with your friends. Take a personal inventory of how you feel after you spend time with certain people. Do you feel appreciated, included and loved by your friends? Will they be there for you when you need them the most? Can you be vulnerable and ask for support? Get together with your friends and unite in setting rules and consequences. Show your kids how much you love them and will protect them. Inspire your kids to be leaders and make a difference now. We need kids who will speak up for their peers. Do you feel like your actions are going to be contributing to the well being of society? Do you want to grow and improve your life? Do you make time to reflect and connect with nature? We are positive you have people in your life that lift you. Seek these people out and be vulnerable.

They will be here for you and so will we. When you experience meaningful connections, let people know how much you love them and

appreciate them as often as possible. We can all lift each other and find self validation, compassion, empathy and love. We all deserve this.