



PETRA PEOPLE

DO YOU NEED A 'DEVICE DETOX'?
LEARN HOW TO DISCONNECT IN ORDER TO CONNECT



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If you're reading this, you're probably "all business." Me too. Most of the time. I spend months out of the year traveling and coaching business owners all around the country on how to improve themselves, grow their businesses, and grow as human beings as well.

I've got a tight schedule, which requires me to keep all my mobile devices charged and ready for the day. You know the feeling, I'm sure. We've got to stay connected in order to get our work done. But what happens when those habits make their way into our personal lives? Is that call or email really so important that you miss out on what's right in front of you?

Everyone Needs to Disconnect

Well, recently I got a reminder of what's really important. And, whether you're a stressed out CEO of a startup or a seasoned executive at a Fortune 500 firm, learning to disconnect in order to connect has never been more important.

I have two daughters, and one of the ways I stay engaged with them outside of work is to schedule yearly trips with each of them separately, so we get to enjoy each other's undivided attention. The other week I went on my tenth annual trip with my oldest, Madison. One morning after a short, sweaty run in Central Park, we sat down at a café for some breakfast and some cool air. As we sat and talked, neither of us reached for our phones. We talked about how difficult the run was, what we had done the day before, and what we might do during the rest of our trip. You know, we just talked.

Then we saw it.

Seated right next to us was another father and his daughter. They were not talking. Instead, they were both heads down in their phones. For the entire meal (or at least until we finished up and paid the check), these two just scrolled through their phones as if the other was not even there. Now, I don't know who they were or what they might have been facing that morning, but it was a big reminder for me, nonetheless, to be present and to take advantage of the time I have with the people I love.

If you're a parent, remember that we only have our kids for a little while. My daughter is 18 and leaving for college in a short time. In every moment I get with my kids, I seriously do my best to focus on just them. It makes a difference—for them and for me. The same goes for our aging parents and our dearest friends.

If you're in business, you already know the value of time. You know how to squeeze the last bit out of yourself to get the job done, and you've (smartly) made technology a trusted tool in your mission. Unfortunately, too many of us keep our heads buried in technology so long that we miss out on what's right in front of us.

Here are four ways to make sure you unplug, and get the most out of your most important relationships:

1. LIMIT SCREEN TIME AND SCHEDULE A DEVICE DETOX.

There's no reason that you need to be connected to your phone, laptop, or tablet 24 hours a day. You just don't. In fact, I'd say if you're checking more than a few times a day—especially when you're not at the office—you're checking too much. Focus on the people in your life and be intentional about spending time with them. Schedule a "device detox," a longer period of time where you unplug. If you think a detox sounds impossible, then you've already lost balance and definitely need one.

2. MAKE EYE CONTACT.

It goes without saying that you can't hold a real conversation when you're staring into your phone. Put the phone away and look into the eyes of the other person. You'll find that you listen more attentively and will be able to follow nonverbal cues more easily. Becoming a more sensitive listener will benefit you in all areas of your life and force you to slow down and really hear people.

3. ASK HOW THE OTHER PERSON "FEELS."

In business, you want to hear what people think—it's only natural. You're paying your employees for their ideas. However, if you're with your child, spouse, parent, or best friend, it's not enough to ask them what they think. Make sure to find out how they feel. What are their hopes and dreams? What brings them joy, and what might they be feeling vulnerable about in that moment? These are the questions that start real conversations. Share your own feelings as well, and your relationships will deepen.

4. BE THE EXAMPLE.

As my daughters get older, it becomes clearer that they truly have been watching me and learning from my example. They do what I do. They say what I have said. They act like I have acted. As a parent this is an incredible responsibility, and also empowering and reassuring. But, this is more than just parenting. It speaks to leadership, and the fact that all of us have the ability to have a positive impact on others, in every moment of every day.

I am not perfect by far, but I work very hard to create purposeful moments with the people I care about. It's worth the time. The same way you show up early, leave late, and live out the core values of your organization, be the example to others in your off time. Demonstrate what it means to maintain meaningful relationships and take time for those who are most important. Put away the cell phone; shut down the email for a while. What may feel urgent at the time is not that important, and the people closest to you are watching.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at www.petracoach.com for more business and leadership insight.

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