# There's Too Much Technology, So Let's Get More Of It

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How often do we hear about the need for a digital detox? How when we are on holiday smart phones should be kept under lock and key, banished from our hands and not to be looked at, except in the most dire of situations?

But why?

Smart phones are, in effect, a near essential part of modern life. Whether we want them to be or not, for most people, the services provided by a smart phone are now all but unavoidable. Trying to not use them is the equivalent of saying, "I won't use trains." It is eminently possible to pull off - but really not worth it.

The bigger question isn't - should we be using smart phones at all times, but whether we are using them in a healthy and effective manner in the first place and how we ensure that this happens. A full and satisfactory solution to this thorny issue has yet to be developed.

Anyone who has ever walked down a busy London street will know that our reliance on smart phones extends to checking them rather than looking where we are walking, causing, inevitably, all manner of irritation to our fellow pedestrians and sometimes danger. What is the solution to this? Some have tried separate walking lanes for smart phone users, or as suggested in New

Jersey, fines. As always, the test of a reasonable response is, has this worked? Evidence from across the world suggests a resounding no.

Smart phones are all but part of us; it is not practical or even desirable to be separated from them for an arbitrary space of time like a holiday. The problem is, we are still asking the wrong question and trying to place restrictions developed for a world that no longer exists onto modern technology.

Rather than seeking to impose fines that are bound to fail, or restrictions that have no real means of enforcement, the answer instead lies in fitting technology better into our lives. Do we spend too much time looking at our smart phones and not interacting with the world? Yes. But the solution is not to go backwards. It is more technology that integrates much more effectively into our lived experiences.

For an example of how to do this, look no further than the film Her. While falling in love with an actual person is still preferable (for now), this film outlined how it is possible to integrate technology into each individual's life with minimal disruption to other people.

The simple truth is, we'd have just as much luck trying to stop the tide than we would removing smart phones from our lives. Instead of looking to King Canute for guidance, perhaps we are better served looking to our children.

My son, when he is allowed to use devices, displays a near-instinctive ability to order and sort the information presented to him. He understands, at a deep level, that with access to an immeasurably large amount of information, the trick is to only take in what is necessary and to leave the rest. He is able to do this as part of a generation raised around technology. For the rest of us, it may be too late.

Or is it?

As in many cases, the answer to a problem created by technology is more tech. We are on the verge on another leap forward in technology. Within the next 3- 4 years, smart phone technology will take its next step. From in our

hands and looked at all the time, to a proxy that we utilise to create a real augmented living experience. With voice activated technology, glasses that will enable us to control calls with just three short blinks, to interfaces in multiple areas that take us away from the phone screen and make us the UI. All these technologies currently exist in start-up world and in the minds of geeks. Soon they will be in the mainstream.

Rather than trying to force people to look up from their screens, or lock their phones away during a holiday, the answer, perhaps counter-intuitively, is in more technology, further integrated into our lives. Are we really more relaxed away from our devices? I think not, the stress comes in how they are used not in their use.

Every time humanity has had a problem with technology more technology has been the answer. The same will be true of mobile phones, we are dependent for now, dependency will not be ended by rules and arbitrary guidelines, but by new technology taking us away from the screen and into the world.

So this summer, I'll keep looking at my phone. Soon, I won't, not because of a rule but because technological advancements mean I won't have to.

Original article can be found here: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dmitry-bagrov/theres-too-much-technology_b_17796512.html