

# Healthy Habits for Using Technology to Aid Our Ministry

TEASA 2024 Breakout Session

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## Part 1 (Sichone) - Healthy Habits for Individuals: Digital Wellbeing

The words 'digital' and 'wellbeing' deserve careful consideration because what they mean or imply has been changing over time, given the novel nature of these dynamics. The word 'digital' refers to intangible elements of our existence that manifests in connective devices. Rather than being hard copy, intangible software that makes things run is alluded to here. This 'digital' element refers to a reality and being, meaning that humans now exist in the digital age and are immersed in it. As for 'wellbeing', it has to do with how satisfied one is about all spheres of life while living in a digital ecosystem. Well being generally refers to a state of being well, healthy, fulfilled, and happy.

Positives of a digital lifestyle:	Negatives of a digital lifestyle:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Efficient: makes life easier</li> <li>● Large amounts of data easily transmittable</li> <li>● Health helps (monitoring, operations etc.)</li> <li>● Makes data review and upgrade/update easier/quicker</li> <li>● Connections and linkages</li> <li>● Wider and easier global reach</li> <li>● E-commerce, business opportunities, job search etc.</li> <li>● Shrinks the world into a global village. 'Time and distance are collapsed' (Hill 2003).</li> <li>● Enables distributed and disparate virtual networks and work spaces</li> <li>● Less carbon footprint leading to paperless offices etc. Potentially environmentally friendly</li> <li>● Enabling to efficiently execute complex operations including multitasking</li> <li>● Creates or preserves physical space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can be addictive (Nao Hanrahan 2023)</li> <li>● Digital identities can lead to extremes.</li> <li>● No rest, always connected to the world.</li> <li>● Privacy redefined.</li> <li>● Adverse affects on personal relationships</li> <li>● Could easily be misled, due to fake news.</li> <li>● Digital overload (Caroline Nabb 2023)</li> <li>● Decrease in deep learning, low mental processing. Brain structure and processing altered (Carr 2010).</li> <li>● Kills or adversely affects reading culture.</li> <li>● Long screen time affects eyes and health</li> <li>● Fewer interpersonal interactions</li> <li>● Lower productivity due to distractions.</li> <li>● 24/7 tracking via your device, habits, places and what sites visited etc. Privacy lost (Dr D Beer, York University).</li> <li>● Data can be sold, leading to digital exploitation, privacy breach, etc.</li> <li>● Sleep depth, rhythm and soundness affected</li> </ul>

Other positives:

Other Negatives:

### *Suggestions Towards Digital Wellbeing*

Martin Jeligman (2011) developed a 5 point model with which to manage and handle Digital wellbeing. It is encased in the acronym PERMA and broken down as below:

Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement

Reflect on your daily habits and ask several questions like:

- How much time do I spend daily on devices? In Britain, it was found that on average adults spend at least 28 hours per week. That is more than a whole day in a week, meaning we seriously have only 6 days to do other life's work and chores.
- How much daily screen time? Is it 4 hours, more or less?
- How frequently do I check my phone within an hour?
- How do I react if I accidentally forget my phone at home?
- What is my feeling towards technology and why?
- Can I go through a day without my device?

Ways to make positive improvements around your use of technology:

- Track your screen time for a week using the template here embedded.
- Avoid a sedentary lifestyle.
- Walk around or take your eyes off the screen every 30 or 40 minutes, look around and return.
- Ensure your lenses have a blue light filter.
- Minimize screen time.
- Declare voluntary and occasional personal 'digital sabbaths' to have time to refresh, reflect and recharge. Some even decide to live off the grid, away from social media or simply use the phone only for the intended purpose-verbal communication.
- Be careful over the source of your information.

## **Part 2 (Straub) - Healthy Habits for Institutions (CABU Case Studies and Discussion)**

### *Evaluating New Technologies for Your Students or Team*

Factors to Consider

- A) Cost
- B) Scope (what needs will it address?)
- C) Features (essential vs. helpful)
- D) Ethics of use
- E) Tech Support (internal vs. external)
- F) Onboarding and Data Migration
- G) User Training (internal vs. external)
- H) User Interface ease-of-use
- I) User Learning Curve
- J) User Time Burden

K) \_\_\_\_\_

Errors to Avoid

- A) Tech optimism vs. tech pessimism
- B) Piecemeal/patchwork solutions
- C) Ready-Fire-Aim
- D) Money solves everything
- E) Automation vs. human skill
- F) If you build it they will come
- G) \_\_\_\_\_
- H) \_\_\_\_\_
- I) \_\_\_\_\_
- J) \_\_\_\_\_
- K) \_\_\_\_\_

### *Foundational Principles to Keep Coming Back To*

1. Your technology must serve your team, your team does NOT serve your technology! We must always value people above processes, relationships above performance, and formation above information.
2. Be cautious of mission drift! Just because a software or hardware tool CAN add a feature or process to your ministry does not mean it SHOULD! Always evaluate the use of technology against your mission and other foundational statements.
3. FACE TIME cannot be replaced by Facetime (or WhatsApp, or Zoom, or anything else)! Whether with our team or with our students, the strategic use of video meetings can make us more efficient, but it should never fully replace regular human interactions.
4. It is impossible to offer too much training to your team and your students. When launching a new software or hardware tool, onboarding training BEFORE rollout is essential, and ongoing skills training after rollout will be the key to maximum benefit from the new technology.

### CABU's Process for Technology Tools Evaluation and Integration

(Time scales for each of the steps are completely dependent on the size of the team, the scope of the tool, the gap between current practice and desired performance, and the importance for success of the tool! Always give more time than you think is necessary for evaluation, testing, training, and rollout.)

- A) Survey available options
- B) Evaluation and Selection
- C) Testing and Piloting
- D) User Training
- E) Adoption and Roll-out
- F) Evaluation and Refinement

### CABU Technology Resource Adoption Case Studies

- A) Google Classroom
- B) InOneAccord
- C) TurnItIn

### Group Discussion

1. What lessons has your institution learned the hard way about mistakes to avoid when adopting new technologies?
2. What success stories can you share from your institution regarding a specific adoption of a new technology that has strengthened relationships and/or lightened loads, rather than increasing disconnectedness or adding burdens?
3. What is the ONE most beneficial new technology that your institution has adopted in recent years, and what specific positive impact has it had on the efficiency, effectiveness, spiritual vitality, or relational connectedness of your students or team?

4. Does anyone have a story of a time your institution had to abandon a recently adopted technology tool, because it had an unintended negative impact on your students or team?

*Resources to Evaluate Technology from a Biblical Worldview*

Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Baker, 2017).

John Dyer, *From the Garden to the City: The Place of Technology in the Story of God* (Kregel, 2022).

Samuel D. James, *Digital Liturgies: Rediscovering Christian Wisdom in an Online Age* (Crossway, 2023).

Brett McCracken, *The Wisdom Pyramid: Feeding Your Soul in a Post-Truth World* (Crossway, 2017).

The Gospel Coalition. *Digital Discipleship: Faithful Christian Living in the Internet Age* (TGC, 2022).

Tony Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You* (Crossway, 2017).

Tony Reinke, *Competing Spectacles: Treasuring Christ in the Media Age* (Crossway, 2019).

Tony Reinke, *God, Technology, and the Christian Life* (Crossway, 2022).

Derek Schuurman. *Shaping a Digital World: Faith, Culture, and Computer Technology* (IVP, 2013).