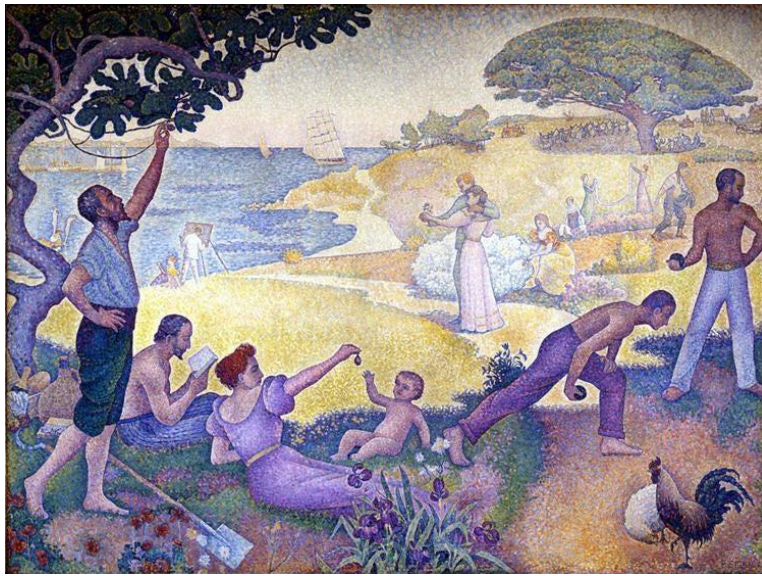


Sacred Synchronies: How to Restore Rhythms that Make us Human

Beyond digital fasting, resurrecting reality, and a way forward



Au temps d'harmonie (In the Time of Harmony) by Paul Signac, 1893-95

I have found the liturgical season of Lent to be a fruitful time to examine my online habits and habitations more carefully and to seek better rhythms to carry forward. -Emma Stewart

After taking eight weeks of strictly limited screen time, I not only found myself feeling less stressed but also more alive. I never truly realized how much time I, and others, spend their lives in a world that isn't real. -Helen Browne

The motivation to join in was spurred on by the realization that I was more interested in scrolling Instagram than playing with my daughter. I was also consuming so much content, podcasts in particular, and it was great content, but I was often feeling anxious, agitated, unsettled, and restless. - Tyler Goens

Part I: Sacred Synchronies (by Peco)

Sleep and wake. Inhale and exhale. Pump blood in and pump it out. These bodily rhythms originate in one of the oldest parts of the human brain – the brainstem, which is ironically shaped like a joystick – and suggest something fundamental about our nature. We are creatures of synchrony.

While these are biological synchronies, we also experience interweaving rhythms in our mental and social lives. We work and we rest; we talk and we listen; we are active and we are still.

If our nature was purely biological, we wouldn't have to worry about our rhythms, since they would be automatic. But God did not say, "Let us make humans in the image of an automaton." We think. We choose. We are pattern breakers who can disrupt our rhythms.

Our technologies can disrupt them too. In the case of sleep, the [blue light](#) emitted by screens can interfere with our circadian rhythm. Using devices toward bedtime can also wind up our thoughts, making it harder to fall asleep.

It doesn't end with sleep, of course. Being tethered to our phones and devices for hours each day means we've added an extra body part to our body. But this digital organ isn't synched with the biological clock ticking inside us, or with the lifestyle patterns that keep us attuned to the world around us.

If anything, this digital organ is "synched" with other devices – which only adds to the de-synching we actually experience. Our "smart" devices are dumbly unaware of just how much they disrupt our biological, social, and emotional lives.

Beyond digital fasting



Bowl of Goldfish by Childe Hassam, 1912

How do we protect our core rhythms against the disruptive stimulation that surrounds us? We aren't the first people to ask this question. In the third century AD, [Saint Anthony the Great](#) gave away his enormous wealth, left the city, and went off to live in the desert. He once said that "whoever sits in solitude and is quiet has escaped from three wars: hearing, speaking, and seeing."¹

Saint Anthony here is referring to very basic forms of stimulation: the noise of human activity. Almost two thousand years later nothing has changed, and everything has changed, as the three wars of "speaking, hearing, and seeing" are raging constantly around our fingertips, ears, and eyeballs in the form of notifications, pictures, video clips, films, podcasts, songs, emails, posts – or even in our thoughts about these things. Our device-conditioned minds can salivate with pings of dopamine simply in the anticipation of using our devices or just knowing they're nearby. The three wars have thoroughly encircled us, inside and out.

In the struggle to survive the three wars, hermits and monks enjoy a couple of advantages. One is they can remove themselves from unwanted stimulation by cloistering themselves from the outside world. Caves, cathedrals, and monasteries are anti-technologies of silence.

A second advantage is that the lives of monks and hermits are structured according to a specific pattern of daily activity. In the case of communities of monks living together, everybody participates in regular prayers, work, and contemplation, and in a coordinated way that keeps the community operating in synchrony.

Most of us will never be monks, but we too are creatures of synchrony. We each have patterns in how and when we sleep, work, play, pray, eat. And yet, for the structure to hold together, to acquire a stable

and energized rhythm, it must be attuned to certain aspects of our own nature and situation, while minimizing the disruptions of digital stimulation.

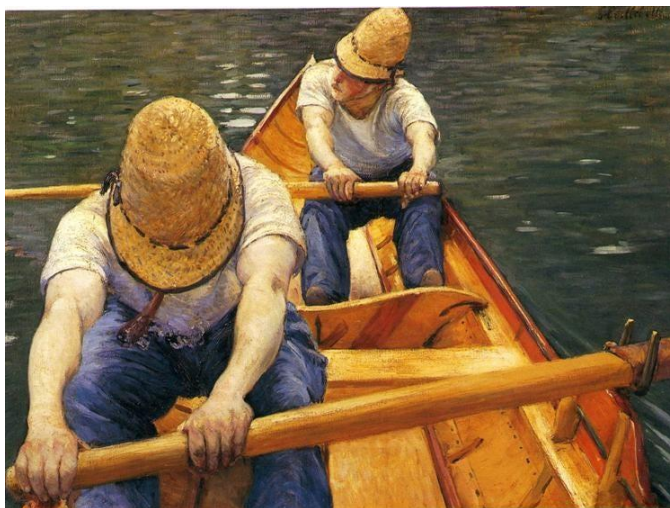
Many of our readers recently completed a digital fast during the Western Lenten period, while our Orthodox subscribers are still fasting according to the Julian calendar (see Part II of this post below). Although fasting from devices and certain forms of online activity are often experienced as beneficial, one of the downsides of digital fasting is that the benefits often don't last beyond the fast. As observed by Adam Gazzaley and Larry D. Rosen in [The Distracted Mind](#):

...there is no evidence that extended tech detoxes actually work. Sure, you might feel better for an evening, a day, or even a weekend, but when that detox time is over you are right back to your information-foraging behavior, frantically dividing your attention to catch up with all that you missed out on while technologically disconnected. Just like short-term diets and drug or alcohol detox programs, unless you work to change your environment and routines, it won't be long before you return to the same old habits.

And not only that. The authors point out that digital detoxing can lead to digital splurging as we try and catch up on everything that we missed during the fast.

If we want to maintain our fast for the long term, then we need more than a rule about what we *don't* want to do. As Gazzaley and Rosen point out, we must **work to change our environment and routines**. Like monks and hermits, we need a new structure for how to live, one that replaces what has been removed with a pattern of life that accords with our nature as creatures of synchrony.

Cultivating synchrony



Boaters Rowing on the Yerres by Gustave Caillebotte, c.1877

In [The Anxious Generation](#), Jonathan Haidt observes that a vital part of human development is our ability to be attuned to other people. From the earliest stages of life, we learn to mirror one another's emotions and movements, and to turn-take during social communications. "Synchronous, face-to-face, physical interactions and rituals," he writes, "are a deep, ancient, and underappreciated part of human evolution."

According to Haidt, social synchrony fosters connection between people, while synchronized behaviors during childhood play—singing together, skipping rope, clapping games between partners—is essential not only for social but also physical development.

Synchrony can also be found in our lifestyle patterns. Most of us tend to have habitual rhythms in terms of when we work and when we play, when and how much we sleep, exercise (active versus sedentary), need for cognitive stimulation (high versus low), social activity (being with others versus being alone), eating (when, what, and how much), stress management practices (present versus absent)—among many other activities that form our overall way of living.

Some of these things—like sleep, physical activity, stress, and healthy diet—[have been found](#) to be major determinants in our health and longevity. To that extent, we all share commonalities in important areas of lifestyle.

At the individual level, our daily patterns are driven by personal preferences, our beliefs and values about how to live, external factors such as where we live and who we live with, and even our biology. Leonardo da Vinci needed just two hours of sleep per day², but another genius, Einstein, needed ten. Each of us is unique in the activities and patterns that make our lives coherent and creative as opposed to scattered and unsatisfying.

At one level, then, developing synchrony in our lives is an individual effort at figuring out the pattern of living that “fits” with our intrinsic needs and context. But, unless we are hermits, we usually can’t live by our own rhythms alone.

Within a household, each person must to some extent adjust their own rhythms to the other members of the household. When are meals eaten, so that people can eat together when possible, and what’s the diet that works for everybody? When is sleep time, so that nobody is doing aerobics after midnight and waking everybody else up? When is the time for prayer, for ritual, for conversations, for shared activities?

So it’s not enough that we each enjoy our own personal synchrony, isolated from others. Although a home can’t function with the orderliness of a monastery (at least, not if there are kids!), some shared coherence is needed among the different members of the household, a degree of synchrony between the individual variations of life. This synchrony will never be perfect, and trying to force perfection will almost certainly backfire. We don’t want to be like the cogs in a timepiece, ticking in rigid unison, but more like geese flying in a flexible formation.

Part of this gooselike synchrony will include shared rules around device use. Are there certain times when devices must be set aside (like mealtime, bedtime, prayer time, conversation time)? Where are they set aside (a box, a shelf, a cabinet)? Does everybody follow the same rules, or are there exceptions? Is more conversation needed as members of the household grow older (as in the case of children) or as life situations change (like starting college or a new job)?

Anybody who’s asked these questions knows how challenging it can be to establish agreed-on patterns of living in a household that accommodate everybody from the middle-aged father who wants nothing but quiet to the energetic teens who want nothing but stimulation.

Still, if we can arrive at a synchrony in how we live, and where devices fit within that pattern, we'll have a shared sense of accountability about our device use, which can lower our chances of relapse into old habits.

A kind of [social facilitation](#) might be partly at work here. Individual effort is strengthened by the awareness of others participating in the same effort. Cyclists cycle faster in a group than alone. Weightlifters can lift heavier weights when they have an audience.

Social facilitation can work even when the people around us are merely imagined or virtual. So, just by reading an article like this one, knowing that people around the world are looking for ways to reduce their device use and restore synchrony to their lives, can give us a boost of inspiration and added commitment.

Of wayward hearts and geese



Geese in Wetlands by Bruno Liljefors, (1921)

Living in synchrony with others means making adjustments to our personal rhythms. Flying in formation with the other geese might require efforts we didn't expect – like leading when we're feeling too tired to lead, or having to follow when we'd rather go our own way. If the formation is flexible enough, it might be able to accommodate much of our uniqueness, weakness, and quirks. But if it's excessively focused on our individual needs, the formation won't hold.

One of the peculiarities of Western society, and which has been aggravated by our device use, is our drive toward more and more individuality. In our experience as part of a family, the effort to synchronize the personal rhythms between husband and wife, and then between parents and children (including teenagers), is a constant work-in-progress. Funnily, our last name, *Gaskovski*, is derived from the southern Slavic word for *goose* (*guska*), yet that hasn't given us any special advantage. Our geese regularly drift out of formation.

We pretty sure we aren't alone in this. Much as we try to synchronize our lives with each other and the environment around us, the attunement can be tenuous, and asynchronies can break in easily – a petty argument at the supper table, a lost night of sleep, days that pass sitting in a chair doing work without any exercise, days that pass without deep prayer. Suddenly our lives become discordant.

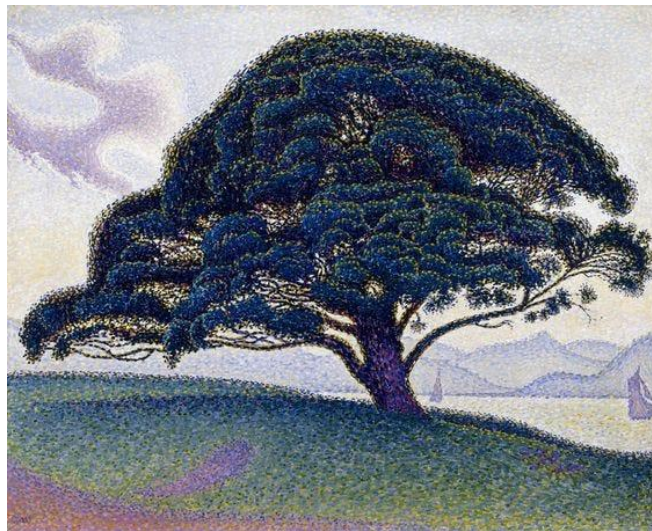
Some might say an element of discord is fundamentally always with us. According to Saint Anthony, “whoever sits in solitude and is quiet has escaped from three wars: hearing, speaking, and seeing,” but then Anthony added: “Yet against one thing he must constantly battle: his own heart.”

Perhaps that’s part of the reason why we’re so tempted by devices. The entrancing flow of stimulation doesn’t just distract us from the outer discord, but the inner discord. But that distraction is only temporarily effective, and the feeling of flow is really a [digital dark flow](#) that isolates us from real life rather than synchronizing us with it.

The way forward is to embrace the struggle for synchrony. We need to embrace any discord we encounter too, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the patience we develop as we work through it.

More than that, we struggle for the sake of our heart. Devices and emerging technologies often find their way into our lives first by capturing our attention, then by selling us a story about why they’re so essential, and then by creating a compulsive dependence on them. All this happens through the mind. But the mind is just the entry point. The heart is the ultimate prize.

The monks and hermits have always known this. We forget it at our peril.



The Bonaventure Pine by Paul Signac, 1893

Part II: Resurrecting Reality (by Ruth)

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.”

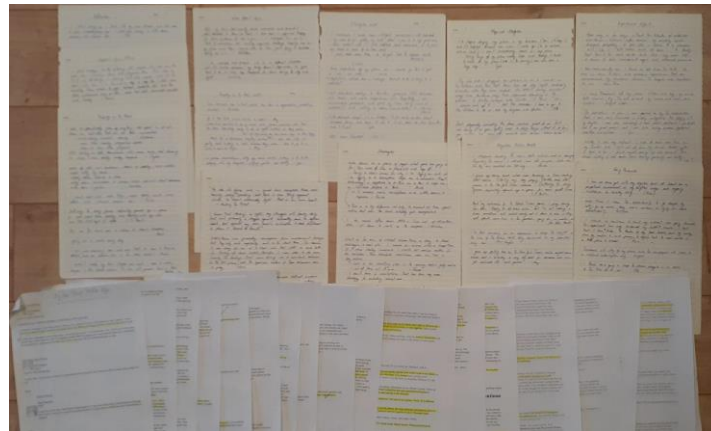
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Harnessing the power of synchrony, Peco and I invited readers to join our [Communal Digital Fast](#) at the beginning of Lent. We had a tremendous response, with individuals, families, and even whole communities committing to join in this endeavour. Before embarking on this common effort, we encouraged participants to develop a “[game plan](#)” that would help to specify usage rules. For us, this meant that Peco hardly made any changes to his already ascetic tech habits at all, only using online time to check media sites once on Fridays and once on Saturdays. I admire (and envy) his self-control.

My own rules included using the computer for a slice of time before breakfast to check e-mail, read some Substack articles, and respond to messages. Having this activity focused into a single sitting was extremely helpful and saved me from frittering time away on limitless distractions. I don't own a cell phone, so this thankfully made my task a lot easier. The largest challenge was ironically posed when publishing an article on Substack, which apart from the many hours composing the piece, also entailed interactions with reader comments that simply did not fit into my hoped-for schedule.

At the end of the fast we invited participants to [share their experiences](#) which you can [read here in full](#) (as well as in reader's personal S

ubstack posts listed at the end of the article). These I printed out to highlight relevant observations which I then copied out by hand. You may wonder why in the world one would go through this trouble, but for me this helps to somewhat "unmachine" the interactions with our readers, as I not only pay closer attention to their words, but also deeply reflect on their thoughts as I re-write them in my own hand.



Long I've had a dream to throw my phone out my window one day in a fit of righteous indignation - maybe this will set me closer to this goal. - Coldest Mountain

Drawing the Line

The usage rules that participants decided to follow differed somewhat, but had large areas of overlap. Many included deleting social media: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, Pinterest, Reddit, Substack Notes, etc.; limiting number of e-mail checks; using the internet during one specific time during the day etc. Here are some specific examples readers shared:

Rosie Whinray - "I initially set a limit of 20 minutes of Internet access twice a day. That seemed like enough time to check messages, emails, etc. I used an alarm to keep to time. If I was really immersed in something, I could hit the snooze button for ten more minutes: thus the absolute maximum was an hour a day online. I also made a rule that I had to do something else in the morning before going online-going outside, doing tasks etc., and set a cut-off time of 8 p.m.

I don't have a smartphone...that has been my main strategy for controlling internet use."

Annelise Roberts - "Keeping Safari off my phone is a helpful boundary and results in me using my nursing time to pray or read more often. I also don't google things when I'm anxious. This is a keeper.

I have realized I need some more stringent guidelines with Substack...my rule of not getting on until after 1 pm is a very good one. I had to do this with Instagram as well when I was on. And while content wise, I find Substack more wholesome, it's just as much or more of a time suck. So I think I'm going to experiment with taking 2 days off entirely...I just need more time to forget that the Internet exists."

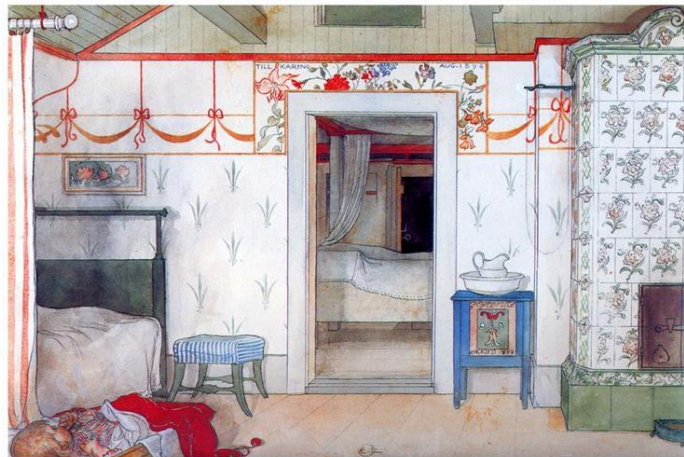
Tyler Goens - "...my digital fast included: 1) No podcasts except 1-2 on Sundays. 2) No social media except Facebook during work hours. 3) No tv. 4) no phone use from 9pm-10am and 4-8pm."

Dwight Gibson

"I took Facebook off my phone. Within one day, my mind felt cleaner. By the end of Lent, my mind and my soul were cleaner."

Joseph - "Gave up Youtube and social media videos in general. It was incredibly painful in the short term but I was delighted that a mere 10 days in and the sense of brain rot mostly reversed."

Diana Bailey - "For Lent, I cut my Substack reading to my favorites, ignored the NYT, television, and radio, and read magazines more thoughtfully. I also eliminated podcasts and spent my time driving (not so pleasant) and walking in nature (much better) in silence."



Brita's Forty Winks by Carl Larsson, 1895

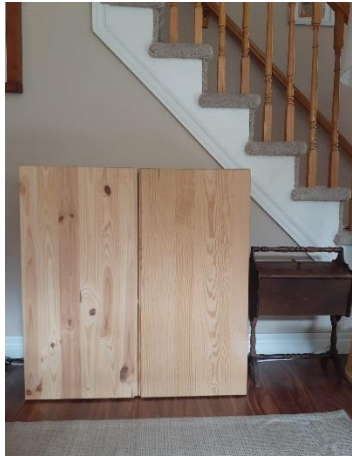
Physical Removal Practices

"What worked for me was a spiritual conviction to bettering myself by maintaining presence and staying in the moment. I suppose also putting my phone away helped too. Not just in my pocket. Away. In a different room. In a drawer. I think the more actions you must take to use the phone, the more precious seconds you have to put a small amount of distance between yourself and the impetus to use it. Seconds count. - Coldest Mountain

In an earlier article on "[How to Make Home for Humans](#)", I related that [polling of 2,000 adults](#) in the U.S. found more than 6,259 hours a year are spent tethered to gadgets such as phones, laptops and televisions³ (to put this into perspective: this translates to a stunning 44 years of life spent staring at a screen). Importantly, if your phone is visible, even if you are not actively engaged with it, it negatively affects relationships with others. It keeps the mind divided and signals that the conversation could get interrupted at any moment. In a [study conducted by researchers](#) at the University of Essex, "the mere

presence of phones inhibited the interpersonal closeness and trust, and reduced the extent to which individuals felt empathy and understanding from their partners.”

One of the simplest and most effective strategies to reduce screen distraction, is to remove them from your immediate environment. Within our main living area, tech is stored in a wooden cabinet by the stairwell when not in use, away from the center of attention. Having it enclosed has the added benefit of reducing temptation to quickly check something online.



Another excellent strategy is separating the different uses of your smartphone and going “retro-tech”, for example:

- Use a simple phone to make calls when at home.
- Use an alarm clock (this one has a silent sweep second hand).
- Use a high-quality CD player as a great audiobook solution for younger children.



Daniel Joseph Petty - “The answer for me is using older, perfectly adequate technology that does not remove my physical or mental presence. The best example for me is as simple as wearing a watch...The problem is when we check the clock on our “smart” phones, we inevitably see a notification or an email and before we know it we are wasting our time checking social media when we just needed to check the time.”

Mills, Archetroness of Oblivia - “My wife and I plugged our phones in on a counter in the kitchen and left them there all day / night, excluding errands where they were needed. We didn't closely monitor usage time, because using them required standing in the kitchen: a pretty natural rate-limiter. I'd think:

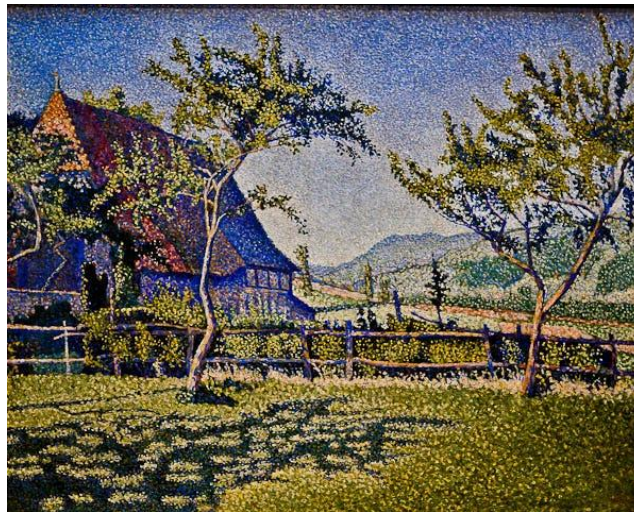
"Oh, I should look up X..." but then remember I had to go to the kitchen to do so, and my laziness was effective.

Just physically relocating the phone worked great for us. Just not having it on you, getting used to doing things without it, is fun; you realize how many little moments have become "phone usage" moments in your day. Finishing a task always makes me want to check my phone, for example!"

Taylor Epperson - "I've stopped charging my phone in my bedroom (this I'll keep!) and it's helpful because now when I wake up (to an actual alarm clock) I don't immediately reach for my phone to scroll on Substack or through emails. I think I'll also be going back to using social media via my computer and not on my phone all the time, as well as time off on the weekends."

Jared Wyllys - "Write down on a piece of paper what your are going online for; then cross off like a checklist and log off...having a clear sense for why I'm logging on and what I'm logging on to accomplish helps me to remember the technology is supposed to be there as a tool to help me with an intended purpose or task.

When I'm good about doing it, there is a big difference. Not only in how much time I spend on the internet, but in how much actually gets accomplished."



Comblat Castle, The Pre by Paul Signac, 1887

Feasting on the Real

"The sugar high of convenience is fleeting and the sting of missing out dulls rapidly, but the meaningful glow that comes from taking charge of what claims your time and attention is something that persists."

from Digital Minimalism by Cal Newport

The Communal Digital Fast included suggestions for "feasting on the real" that would help ground participants more firmly in reality such as meeting with friends / family / neighbours for face-to-face conversations, walking, reading, creating beautiful things, cooking etc.

[Simple Acts of Sanity: A Seed Catalogue](#) in which we had compiled readers' [anachronistic practices](#), provided a rich cornucopia of practical ideas to encourage and inspire participants to engage with their immediate surroundings.

Initially it was very difficult. I had so much more time on my hands and I felt cut off from my friends. However, after a week or two, I found myself picking up other pursuits. More actual reading of real books, more baking, gardening and knitting. - Lisa Tuckett

*I didn't specifically give up anything for a digital fast...What I did do was spend a lot of time on activities that are not tech-connected, like hand-sewing, crochet, dancing. It was an add in rather than a take-away.
- Síochána Arandomhan*

These are some of my "feast on the real" projects: A wrap that I knitted from llama and alpaca wool my friend had made (thus for the first time I knew the actual name of one of the animals who produced the wool, in this case "Mr. Brown"); reading [Middlemarch](#)⁴ (just finished it today!), and baking traditional Swiss buns for Easter.



Coldest Mountain - "Well I made art. Made Ziti. Made bread. Baked poems. Slug good times at friends. That works.

Helen Browne - "I've read a lot of 'bucket list' books...I've worked out more, gotten more school done, connected better with my family, played piano more, and cleaned up more."

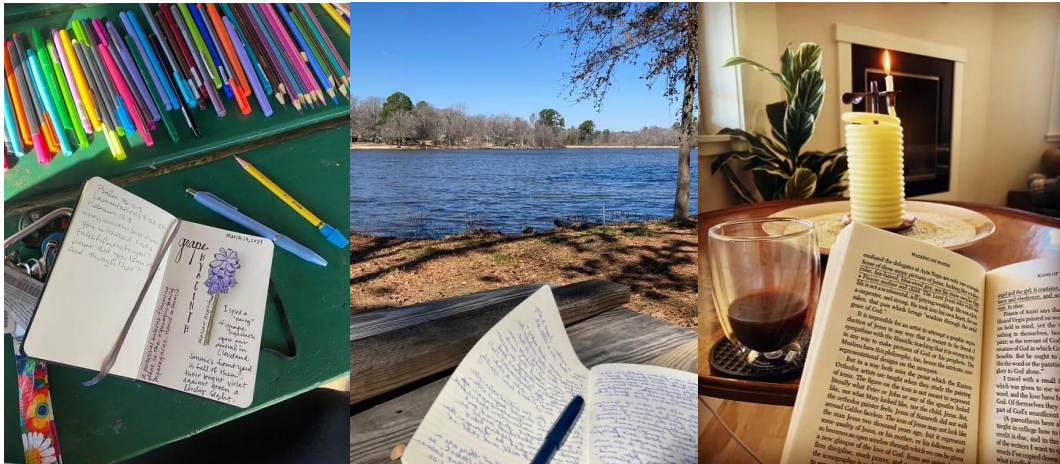
Rosie Whinray - "It felt like a return to a previous self / life. I felt calm and at ease... I got a feeling I sometimes get at folk festivals or in the wild- a feeling that this is the real world and I am my real self, a sense of both immanent magic and relaxed presence."

Taylor Epperson - "I added more time to read physical books and worked on a massive cross-stitch project that my husband bought for me. I'm still working on better boundaries with some tech, but focusing on what I was adding really helped!"

Kristine Neeley - "In moments of boredom or margin, I was much more apt to pick up my pen, an art medium, a book of poetry, or any of the multitude of books I've got in process. I went for more walks, went outside on the front porch for breathers, and found myself noticing the emergence of spring at such a level of intensity it poured forth in other ways. I wrote poems for the first time in a long while, drafted the majority of my write by hand, created new-to-me art forms, and read more books aloud to my children than I had in the previous year."

T. F. Austin - "Jettisoning the daily games definitely opened up a space for more quiet time, reading and talking with my wife over that first cup of coffee."

Kerri Christopher - "For me this Lent was a return to classic literature."



Kristine Neely's journal and Elizabeth Wickland's writing and reading practices

Bohdanna Diduch has learned how to knit which has been a "generative, meditative process".

Elizabeth Wickland - "Mend and make your own clothes - What I make isn't the most fashionable, but it brings me a fair amount of joy to wear what I've made and to know that I'm actively choosing to circumvent fast fashion practices with my own wardrobe."



Tyler Goens - "The "feasting on the real," included in-person conversations, letting my mind wander, listening to the birds, playing with my daughter, playing guitar, and reading."

Amy From Michigan has been going to one extra church service each week. "I bought a bunch of crossword puzzles to do by hand and jigsaw puzzles and that has been absolutely lovely to do at night instead of being online. One of the most telling and fruitful things is that I vowed to not purchase anything online. I'm that person who gets 3 to 4 packages a day to their door from laundry detergent to a new dress. This not only has shown me how much crap I've been buying but I also feel like it's getting back to being a real human being, where I have to go to a store and look for things."

John Astrino - "I began reading "Breath for the Bones" by Luci Shaw in place of TV/internet; then journaling at the end of the chapter...The deer often come to the yard and always draw me out to nature."



Photos shared by readers Elizabeth Wickland and John Astrino

Caroline Ross - "Each day I would go to my drawing desk and sit until a word jumped into my head about something I was grateful for. Then I would draw something simple to illustrate it. I rarely sit and draw 'things', let alone choose a word and consider it all day. So this has been a rewarding process for me, as well as some of you who messaged to say you enjoyed reading them each day in [my Notes](#)."



Continuing the Fast

The Communal Digital Fast produced much fruit and has sown seeds of more permanent change for many participants. It also came with challenges and struggles. Some readers related how they had to abandon their plans because of physical pain that kept them bed-bound; some missed not interacting as much with their online friends; others struggled with tripping into rabbit-holes; some faltered because they did not have a plan in place. Many of us will relate to Anneliese's and Elizabeth's observations:

Annelise Roberts - "And, overall I have again observed the pattern that when things are difficult emotionally, or my kids are especially needy (or both), I tend to reach for escapism, and while it makes me feel a little better it worsens the overall tenor of things considerably."

Elizabeth Wickland - "...my struggle with fasting during Lent isn't primarily a struggle against unhealthy food or digital habits, but against my own heart's inclination to seek fulfillment in places it cannot be found...I am not done yet with my digital fast, at least as a perpetual assessment of my digital usage and ongoing invitation to analog living...I wish that I could say that I've gotten myself all sorted out and am living in a digital paradise now, all garden and no wilderness. But I've still got work to do."

Yet there remained a fervent commitment to set failures aside, make adjustments, and continue steadfastly onward.

But, I also found that beating myself up and acting like it's too late is a bad strategy, if I slip up, that's okay. I recognized that, was able to forgive myself, and noticed just how ick being online made me feel again.
- Helen Browne

Kristine Neeley - "Each time I have the opportunity to go deeper by letting go of more, being more curious, or trying for more intentionality."

Dwight Gibson - "Facebook will stay off my phone and the newspapers will move to a weekend subscription only."

Mills, Archetroness of Oblivia - "I think we going to keep the phones plugged in as much of the time as we can!"

Rosie Whinray - "I intend to continue to limit my internet use going forward. This experiment has only hardened my Luddite resolve. I feel that I have broken the backs of my bad habits, put my money where my mouth is, and proven to myself that the real world is a better place to inhabit."

Daniel Joseph Petty - "We do not have to conform to the ways of the world. We are free to choose to live differently. Moving forward, I will continue my lifestyle of digital minimalism. At this point, I can gladly say this is no longer just a fast, but a way of life."

A Way Forward

Changing the pattern of our lives demands intentionality. That can take time, and stepping back, to see the ways that devices might be disrupting our daily rhythms of activity. The more common areas of disruption can include:

- **sleep**
- **mealtimes**
- **work**
- **education and learning**
- **time with family and friends**
- **time in nature**
- **time spent in physical activities**
- **time spent in spiritual practice**

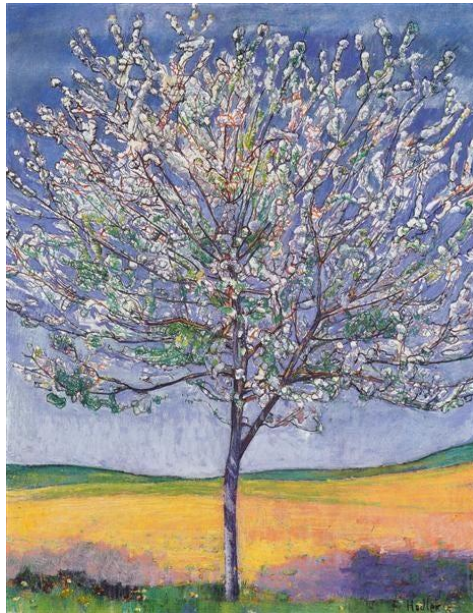
In each of these areas we can ask:

- **What is the impact of device use, if any?**

- How can I eliminate or limit device use in problem areas?

- Are there people within my household, or in my community (including my online community) that I can share this effort with on a more permanent basis?

The practices that we have discussed here may seem simple or too modest. You may wonder, will it really make a difference if we replace checking social media with reading a book, going for a walk, or spending time in quiet? Will it matter that we put our phone away while playing with our child, that we use a wristwatch, or create a screen-free living space? But we shouldn't underestimate the power of small, consistent change. And if we can make that change, we also become part of a **growing synchrony of people everywhere** who are striving in the same direction to restore the rhythms that make us human.



Cherry Tree in Bloom by Ferdinand Hodler, 1905

If you found this post helpful (or hopeful), and if you would like to support our work of putting together a book on "The Making of UnMachine Minds", please consider supporting our work by becoming a paid subscriber, or simply show your appreciation with a like, restack, or share.

Please share your questions, reflections, successes and struggles with tech use in and out of the home in the comments below.

Above all, share how you have restored important activities and rhythms in your life.

We can all benefit from hearing others' experiences, encouragement, and guidance.

Readers shared their experience of the Communal Digital Fast:

[Seeking Reality and Better Rhythms](#) by Emma Stewart

[Digital Fast: Reflections](#) and [Digital Fast Part 2/5: Music](#) by Helen Browne

[He's alive, but where is he?](#) by Elizabeth Wickland

[Forty Days at the Drawing Desk](#) by Caroline Ross

[Yet Grace Abounds - Fasts, Feasts, and Lessons Learned from Lent](#) by Daniel Joseph Petty

[Mixed Media - A digital update with an analog flair](#) by Kristine Neeley [The Entangled Christ](#) by Ragan Sutterfield

[4 lessons from our recent digital detox](#) by Roman S Shapoval

Further Reading

[Don't Just Talk About Unplugging: Actually Unplug - or, a reminder to all of us to practice what we preach](#) by Tsh Oxenreider

[How to live without your phone](#) by Sam Kriss

[An Internet Independence: An Experiment in Disconnectivity](#) by Libby Johnson

[Why I traded my smartphone for an Ax](#) by Caleb Silverberg



Peach Trees in Blossom by Vincent van Gogh, 1889