

OUTSMART YOUR SMARTPHONE

Guide For Starting Your Own
OUTSMART YOUR **SMARTPHONE**
Activity Group



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Do You Have Smartphone Syndrome?

The more I became an expert at the intersection of happiness and technology, the more I started to see a giant problem—a problem that can prevent you from increasing your happiness.

This problem is “smartphone syndrome.”

In our technology-obsessed world, we now rely on our smartphones and other devices for work, information, and entertainment. As a result, we have developed a new set of emotional and behavioral patterns—patterns that can make us feel unhappy, unbalanced, and unconnected.

How Do You Outsmart Your Smartphone?

So what can we do? How do we outsmart our smartphones?

As an expert smack-dab in the middle of the happiness and technology industries, I knew I was the right person to answer this question. So I started researching, testing, and reflecting on the different strategies we can use to outsmart our smartphones. This research led to the development of the Outsmart Your Smartphone book and program.

In the book and program, you’ll discover seven steps that will help you learn how to use technology in healthier ways, limit your use of technology in the ways that promote happiness, and finally find happiness, balance, and true connection... in spite of your technology.

By the end of the program, you’ll be equipped with skills you need to overcome many of the new challenges we face in the technology age. And you won’t even have to throw out your phone!

What You'll Need:

First, you'll need the Outsmart Your Smartphone book. It has all the information and activities you need to find happiness, balance, and connection IRL. You can get the book from most any book retailer.

Second, you may also want to get the Outsmart Your Smartphone Notebook. The Notebook provides you a dedicated space to write your responses to questions, engage in thought experiments, and do the activities that help you develop a healthier relationship with your phone and other devices. You can find this workbook at Berkeleywellbeing.com or at Amazon.com.

Third, you may want to get the free 28 Day Challenge to Outsmart Your Smartphone. It's a collection of 28 simple tricks for outsmarting your smartphone. You can get it at berkeleywellbeing.com/smartphone-challenge.

Now, you are ready to start your own Outsmart Your Smartphone Activity Group. Use this free guide for tips on how to start your own activity group.

Starting an Outsmart Your Smartphone Activity Group

We tend to have greater success reaching our goals when we pursue these goals with others. Why? Because the added accountability, social support, and perspective sharing enhance learning. So if you want to make the most of the Outsmart Your Smartphone book and program, you may want to start your own Outsmart Your Smartphone activity group. Here's how:

How to Lead an Activity Group

Invite friends, family, coworkers, or people in your community to meet IRL for 1-2 hours once per week for seven weeks (one week per step in the program). Prior to each week's meeting, each person in the group should complete the step for that week and do all the activities in that step.

Once you get together IRL, discuss your experiences with each step. One way to do this is to encourage each person in the group to share what they did that week to outsmart their smartphones, discuss what was the most challenging for them, and have the group brainstorm ways to overcome these challenges.

If you want **more structure** in your activity group, you can use the deeper insight questions provided in this free guide. For example, you could ask these questions one at a time, letting each person answer before moving on to the next question.

If you want **less structure** in your activity group, just let the people in the group decide what they want to talk about each week and let to conversation go wherever it goes naturally.

Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong way to run your activity group—the goal is to make it an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The more people enjoy and participate in the group, the more they are likely to benefit.

How to Create a Successful Activity Group

Here are some additional (optional) tips that can help you create a successful activity group.

- **Offer snacks.** Any food is good, but the more your snacks can start conversations the better. Check out my "Fun Snacks" Pinterest page for inspiration. pinterest.com/tchiki/fun-snacks
- **Enhance social connection.** We benefit more from participating in social groups that we feel connected to. So it's key to help people feel connected to each other right from the start. Consider using this science-based connection exercise with your group: ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/36_questions_for_increasing_closeness
- **Make space for the quieter, more introverted people to contribute.** Some folks are less likely to yell out or share their experiences. It can be helpful to provide some time where you go around the group letting everyone contribute so that these people can share too.

What To Do Each Week in Your Activity Group

Week One/Step One: Build Foundational Skills

In this step, you'll set up systems for success, develop a growth mindset, and find balance. These foundational skills will help you start your journey on the right foot.

Week Two/Step Two: Stay Present

In this step, you'll learn how to deal with your fear of missing out, create mindful moments, and take small but intentional breaks from technology. This can help you gain clarity about what you're really missing when you give all your attention to technology.

Week Three/Step Three: Make Meaningful Connections

In this step, you'll learn how to strengthen relationships, focus on others, and communicate kindly. These skills help you create a more meaningful relationships both on- and offline.

Week Four/Step Four: Manage Your Emotions

In this step you'll build three emotional skills that are strongly linked to happiness in the technology age: self-compassion, positivity, and resilience. Building these skills helps you overcome some of the most common causes of unhappiness in the technology age: feeling bad about yourself, feeling bad about your life, and feeling bad about the things that happen to you.

Week Five/Step Five: Practice Kindness

In this step, you'll explore your values, find your purpose, and apply these insights to make positive impacts both on- and offline. These skills help you practice kindness in ways that bring more meaning and happiness into your life.

Week Six/Step Six: Be True to Yourself

In this step, you'll work on building some of the more challenging skills to build in the technology age—skills like being yourself, speaking up for yourself, and opening yourself up to others. With these skills, finally you can live your life authentically, both on- and offline.

Week Seven/Step Seven: Beat the Hedonic Treadmill

In this chapter, we'll talk about how to beat the hedonic treadmill (that feeling of running in place) by pursuing happiness in more social ways, getting out of your comfort zone, and making happiness a part of your daily routine.

Measure Your Starting Point

When you are ready to start your Outsmart Your Smartphone activity group, the first thing for everyone to do is measure their starting point. You have scales to tell you if you are overweight, and you have exams to tell you which academic skills to study more. The Outsmart Your Smartphone quiz (in the next section) can help people discover which skills they most need to build to outsmart their smartphones and find happiness.

Ideally, each person should take this quiz before starting the program and take the quiz again to see their progress at the end of the program.

Outsmart Your Smartphone Quiz Results

Add up your scores from the seven steps above:

_____ /210

Take a moment to review your scores.

If a few questions or steps received high scores, pay especial attention to those skills or steps—do the activities several times, and push yourself to apply those skills in your daily life.

If all of your scores on the quiz are about the same, choose one or two skills that seem most important or most enjoyable to you to pay especial attention to.

Your goal here is to put extra effort into building just a few skills so you can outsmart your smartphone more quickly and easily.

Don't worry if you're not exactly sure what to focus on—just keep going, and do what you can.

Step 1: Build Foundational Skills

The foundational skills are the prerequisites—the skills that can make it easier to progress successfully through the other Outsmart Your Smartphone steps.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Set up systems for success
- Build a growth mindset
- Find balance

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Setting Up Systems For Success

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 1 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you set up systems for success? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when setting up systems for success?

How will you use your phone to create systems for success? (i.e., how will you stick to goals like outsmarting your smartphone)?

Deeper Insight Questions

Building A Growth Mindset

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 1 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on building a growth mindset? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when building a growth mindset?

How will you remind yourself that creating a better relationship with your phone is a skill that you can learn?

Deeper Insight Questions

Finding Balance

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 1 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on finding balance? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when trying to find balance?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to create a more balanced life?

Step 2: Stay Present

In this step, you'll learn how to limit your technology use in small ways at first then in larger ways. These small moments of disconnection from technology give you increasingly more opportunities to be fully present in the moment and uncover some of the true causes of your unhappiness.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Overcome fear of missing out (FOMO)
- Take technology timeouts
- Practice being more mindful

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Deeper Insight Questions

Overcome Fear of Missing Out

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 2 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on overcoming your fear of missing out? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when overcoming fear of missing out?

How will you change your relationship with your phone to overcome fear of missing out?

Deeper Insight Questions

Take Technology Timeouts

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 2 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you take technology timeouts? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when taking technology timeouts?

How will you ensure you take technology timeouts in the future?

Deeper Insight Questions

Practice Being More Mindful

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 2 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you practice being more mindful? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when you practiced being more mindful?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to be more mindful?

Step 3: Make Meaningful Connections

Because so many of our social connections are now mediated by technology (messaging, social media, and email), we need to devote extra time and energy to creating healthy relationships both online and offline if we want to create a happier and more satisfying life.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Strengthen relationships
- Focus on others
- Communicate kindly in text

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Strengthening Relationships

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 3 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on strengthening relationships? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when strengthening relationships?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to strengthen your relationships?

Deeper Insight Questions

Focusing On Others

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 3 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on focusing on others? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when focusing on others?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to focus more on others?

Deeper Insight Questions

Communicating Kindly in Text

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 3 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on communicating kindly in text? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when communicating kindly in text?

How will you communicate kindly when you text, message, or share?

Step 4: Manage Your Emotions

When we manage our emotions effectively, we no longer need to rely on our smartphones (or other technology) to boost positive or minimize negative emotions. And the three emotional management skills that seem to have the strongest links to happiness in the technology age are: self-compassion, positivity, and resilience.

So to find happiness in the technology age, we now need to focus on building these three emotional management skills.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Cultivate self-compassion
- Practice positivity
- Build resilience

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Cultivating Self-Compassion

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 4 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you set work on cultivating self-compassion? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when cultivating self-compassion?

How will you use your phone (or other devices) to cultivate more self-compassion?

Deeper Insight Questions

Practicing Positivity

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 4 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you practice positivity? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when practicing positivity?

How will you use your phone (or other devices) to practice more positivity?

Deeper Insight Questions

Building Resilience

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 4 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on building resilience? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when building resilience?

How will you use your phone (or other devices) to build your resilience?

Step 5: Practice Kindness

Our social media pages link us to people who are similar to us, we see content that we are most likely to click on, and we read news that confirms beliefs we already have. As a result, we all now live in our own bubbles—bubbles that can lead us to be less kind and empathetic. Well, it turns out that kindness is like rocket fuel for happiness—the kinder we are, the happier we become. So, the next step to building happiness in the digital age is to explore kindness and find the types of kindness that feel best to you.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Live your values
- Find your purpose
- Make positive impacts

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Living Your Values

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 5 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on living your values? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when living your values?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to better live your values?

Deeper Insight Questions

Finding Your Purpose

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 5 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on finding your purpose? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when trying to find your purpose?

How might you use technology to ensure you keep looking for and then pursuing your purpose?

Deeper Insight Questions

Making Positive Impacts

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 5 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you try to make any positive impacts? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when you worked on making positive impacts?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to make more positive impacts in the world?

Step 6: Be True To Yourself

When you are building new skills, you can't just keep doing the exact same things over and over again and expect to improve. You have to challenge yourself. So, once you've built some of your happiness skills, you'll need to push yourself to build harder skills if you want to keep improving. That's why the next step is to build some of the more challenging skills to build in the technology age.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Be yourself
- Speak up for yourself
- Open yourself to others

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Being Yourself

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 6 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on being yourself online or offline? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when being yourself?

How will you be yourself more often online and IRL?

Deeper Insight Questions

Speaking Up For Yourself

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 6 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on speaking up for yourself? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when speaking up for yourself?

How will you use your phone (or other devices) to speak up for yourself more often?

Deeper Insight Questions

Opening Yourself To Others

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 6 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you practice opening yourself to others? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when opening yourself to others?

How will you use your phone (or other devices) to practice being more open to others?

Step 7: Beat The Hedonic Treadmill

If you simply continue using the same happiness-boosting strategies over and over, they'll eventually lose their effectiveness. It can feel like you are on a "hedonic treadmill", forever running and not getting anywhere. That's why the next step to building happiness in the technology age is learning how to beat the hedonic treadmill. By implementing these strategies, you'll set yourself up for ongoing success that will persist long after you've completely abandoned this book. As a result, the journey we've taken here together won't be forgotten; it'll be integrated into your life in ways that benefit you permanently.

In this step, you'll do activities to:

- Build happiness with others
- Get out of your comfort zone
- Make happiness a part of your daily routine

Join in the fun: Share what you're doing to outsmart your smartphone using the #OutsmartYourSmartphone hash tag.

Deeper Insight Questions

Building Happiness With Others

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 7 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on building happiness with others? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when attempting to build happiness with others?

How will you build happiness with others online or IRL?

Deeper Insight Questions

Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 7 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you try getting out of your comfort zone? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when getting out of your comfort zone?

How will you get out of your comfort zone online and IRL?

Deeper Insight Questions

Making Happiness a Part of Your Daily Routine

Use the questions below to transform activities from Step 7 into actionable insights. Answer these questions on your own, with a friend, or with a group.

Did you work on making happiness a part of your daily routine? If so, what was this experience like for you? If not, why not?

What challenges did you face (if any) when making happiness a part of your daily routine?

How will you use your phone (or not use your phone) to make happiness a part of your daily routine?