

Breaking the Electronic Leash

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Background That Led to Your Inquiry:

After hearing many concerns from my family about bringing my work home with me and always being on my phone. I wanted to look to see if doing this work at home and not being engaged with my family during the peak hours of the evening are really that productive. Therefore the purpose of my action research was to see if people would really even notice that responses were delayed.

Statement of Your Wondering:

With this purpose, I wondered what the effects would be on my personal and professional life if I limited the amount of social media, email, text messages, and phone calls I took after school hours. The results were surprising!

Methods/Procedures:

I decided that my electronic addiction had to be broken or at least tamed so I incorporated the following rules for myself for using my phone at home.

1. No business phone calls, texts, or email between 5 pm-9:30 pm
2. No Twitter until everyone in the house was in bed.
3. Don't look at Facebook until everyone in the house was in bed
4. Unfriend or unfollow anyone who took joy from my life.
5. Don't look at any emails after 9:30 pm. Nothing good comes that late and I wouldn't go to bed angry!

The data collected for this project was more qualitative than quantitative. I was keeping track if I was following the set rules. I was also tracking any complaints from the stakeholders at school about a delay in responding to them. I started this routine in January of 2017 and I am still following these rules.

Stating Your Learning and Supporting it with Data:

As a result of analyzing my data, here are six things I learned while conducting this research project:

1. I have not had one parent, teacher, or boss complaint about not responding in a timely manner.
2. I have played many board games, video games and played outside with my sons.
3. My wife has noticed my effort to be more present and engaged.
4. I have been less stressed.
5. I have been in a better mood.
6. I am sleeping better.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

During this project I learned that sometimes we put undo pressure on ourselves. We believe in these unwritten rules that we contrive and the outcome of these thoughts is stress. Additionally, I learned that if you are consistent with how you behave those become the new normal and the expectations of others will change. Lastly, I have found that with the reduction of stress and pressure I have put on myself I am just as productive but find I am enjoying work and home a whole lot more.

I plan to continue the behaviors I adopted for this study into the future. I may even analyze some other behaviors that I have to see if similar modifications could be made to enhance other areas of my life. The great thing about action research is that it really never ends because you always have another wondering so it is a great model for continuous improvement.

References:

N/A