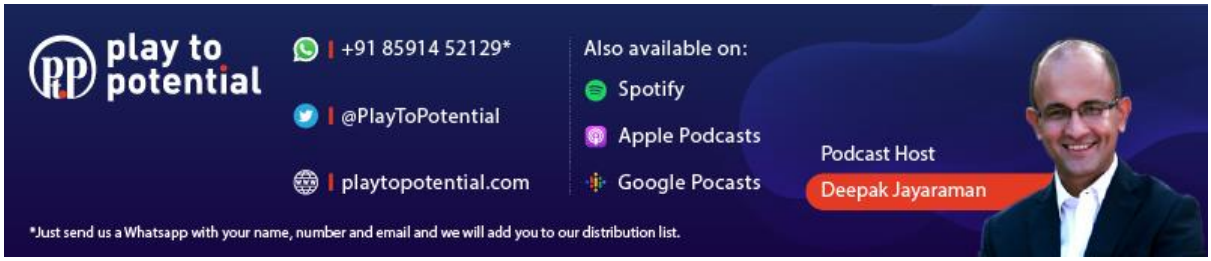

Context to the nugget

BJ speaks about some thoughts around how we can battle screen addiction both when we are by ourselves and when we are with others. He recommends screentime.standford.edu where there is an automated AI based system that asks for your objectives and understands your usage patterns and suggests a few simple things you could do to grapple with Tech addiction.

Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And talking about phones BJ maybe to pick another use case given the digital distraction that we face given the phones we have. Any commentary around how we can begin to entangle sort of untangle…

BJ Fogg (BJ): Do we have… Deepak. You know at Stanford… Stanford is a wonderful institution and at least for me a very flexible. So, I get to teach as much as I want or as little as I want and so on. So, I have chosen to teach once a year and I can teach anything for any much. So, every year I come up with a new course and it always has to be with behaviour change. So, I always look at what's the most important thing we can be doing. Well this year it is behaviour design for coronavirus challenges. That's what we are doing right now in my class at Stanford, that's the most important thing we could be doing. It was going to be behaviour design for climate action because it was like, oh my gosh, this climate let's… but with the coronavirus thing then it was like no, no, no, this is more urgent, so that will be later, the climate action. But last year the focus was on screen time. So, let's use what we know about behaviour design to help people reduce screen time or have a healthier relationship with technology. So we did a lot of work there and there was… it's a problem that has lots of facets to it, like who's doing what and so on and we have a tool that anyone can use at screentime.stanford.edu that can connect you to our database of over a 150 different ways to reduce screen time. You answer a few questions to this genie character and then the genie has some AI and then says here are the three solutions you should try. But let me give some really simple… you can actually go to screen time genie and do that but some simple examples, for example before I started talking to you, so I have this habit it's very simple I just turn my watch over, I scroll up, I push on the little moon sign and I go on, I don't even know what it's called and how to do it. It's called Do Not Disturb. So, I do that for one hour simple, simple, simple and it means I am not checking my phone and I am not being interrupted while I am talking to you. So, you can just create these habits of going on Do Not Disturb. Maybe it's a habit of turning off the internet router at night. So, after I lock the door, I will turn off the internet router. Maybe it's not a habit but a policy of everybody at our family dinner table no mobile phones allowed. I know in my own life at parties that I host I don't let people use their phones. So, you have come to my party your phone you are not using and the same thing with dinners that I am hosting. It's like, no you are not going to be on your phone at my dinner because I am paying for it and I am hosting you and that means you are going to be present.

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So sometimes it's habits that you can form other times and I think we're going to go this year as a culture and even more globally is that understand there's etiquette around these things and if you are at somebody's dinner or somebody's party you do not pull out your phone and disconnect. Last year I was in-charge of my family reunion and as a Mormon family, it's a big family and we get together once a year on an island in Idaho. So, we have a cabin on this island and I was in charge. The leadership rotates among the siblings so every six years I am in-charge and I had oh what theme, we always have a theme. It could be Olympics, it could be cowboys, it could be pioneers and that theme is going to be airplane mode this reunion. All about not using our screens but instead actually being present with each other because what typically happens and drove me crazy is, we would come from all over the place to this little island and then people would be texting their friends in Las Vegas or wherever they are from. So, I thought I would have a big rebellion on my hands with my family, but they loved it, they loved it. So, we had very specific rules set up about how you could use your devices and how you can't use them. And it really led to a wonderful reunion where we were there and we just really talked more, we played more games, people were a hundred percent present and so I do think that's coming that we will get out of our awkward adolescent inappropriate use of technologies both when we are alone and with others and we will have a more mature approach and etiquette around it and will understand that you simply don't sit at a restaurant at a business dinner or a party and pull out your phone and check messages. That would be like farting at the table or that would be like pulling out cigarettes and starting smoking in somebody's home, you just don't do it. So, I think we will get there.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I did try screentime.stanford.edu and it was pretty straightforward and simple. It asked me for which Tech platforms I use and what my objectives were. It gave me some simple tactical suggestions that I could use. The one thing I have learnt is that in the way we deal with devices, we are battling with forces that are much bigger than us and our will power. With some of the companies like Facebook, Google and Amazon spending millions employing people from places like Las Vegas Casinos to understand how to create addictive experiences, we fighting them are a bit like fighting with a sword against an Army Tank! So, the best bet we have is to ensure that we solve for the environment and not leave it to our will power. Like BJ says, turning on DND is a better strategy than getting the call and choosing not to pick it up.

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End of nugget transcription

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BJ Fogg - Nuggets

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- 58.01 BJ Fogg - The ABC of tiny habits
- 58.02 BJ Fogg - The MAP of behaviour change
- 58.03 BJ Fogg - Prompts - the low hanging fruit of change
- 58.04 BJ Fogg - Action versus Context Prompt
- 58.05 BJ Fogg - Build ability to beat motivation cycles
- 58.06 BJ Fogg - Celebrating to wire in a habit
- 58.07 BJ Fogg - Tiny habits to big change
- 58.08 BJ Fogg - Untangle (not break) bad habits
- 58.09 BJ Fogg - Getting out of screen addiction
- 58.10 BJ Fogg - The knowing-doing gap

About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock human potential of senior executive's / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work here.

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