



## Health Advice

# Digital Detox – Simply Switch Off

It's with us wherever we go: in the office, in the bedroom, in the car – our smartphone beeps, rings and vibrates around the clock to get our attention. Something might be important. At this very moment. But at this very moment we might be talking to someone, on the go or eating. Nevertheless, the temptation to quickly check our mobile phone is strong – and “quickly” sometimes turns into quite a long time. On average, we spend around 65 hours a week on the internet, and a third of this time online is spent on smartphones alone. That's no small amount. But there is a counter-trend: digital detoxing. The aim behind this is to surf the internet less, to switch off devices now and then, to take a little time out from being constantly online – to have more of the here and now. That doesn't mean giving up media entirely, but consciously going offline for a defined amount of time. This is not so easy, as a study shows: 42 percent of Germans have already tried a digital detox, but only 4 percent regularly manage a few hours. 10 percent can last for one or more days. Behind this is also the fear of missing out (“FOMO”) on something on the internet and social media. 14 percent feel emotionally stressed by this. Which is all the more reason to try a digital detox!

### How a digital detox works

#### A digital detox is individual

Doing without smartphones and so on all of a sudden is difficult. Take it slowly. Think about what you really need the device for: to maintain social contacts, for work, for entertainment? Find out how much of which media you need to feel comfortable.

#### Set fixed times

Don't worry, you can surf the internet during a digital detox, but not endlessly: set a specific time and duration every day to consciously go online – and then switch your device off again.

#### Use your offline time consciously

Smartphone off – now what? To make sure that boredom doesn't lure you back in front of the screen, during your offline time do things that you enjoy, be it sport, cooking, crafts or spending time with family or friends.

#### Be mindful with yourself

Sometimes we go online absent-mindedly to simply wind down. What matters is how you feel afterwards: Are you more relaxed than before? Then you've found the right balance. If not, continue to reduce your media consumption.

#### Change your smartphone settings

Most smartphones show how long they've been used for under “Screen Time”. If you find it difficult to switch off your phone, set yourself a reminder. Configure your apps and phone settings so that you don't get any more push notifications or beeps. This way, you decide for yourself when you want to receive and read messages.

#### Create media-free zones

Ban all devices from certain private spaces, such as the dining table or bedroom. This way, you can enjoy your meals more consciously and you are more aware of the pleasant feeling of being full. In the morning, instead of using your smartphone to wake you up, set a classic alarm clock. Use a wristwatch again instead of your smart watch. A consistent change will probably take some time and practice, but you will usually benefit from the positive effects right away. Enjoy your digital time-out!