

THE SLG ADVISOR

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CUTTING DOWN ON SCREEN TIME

During the National Day of Unplugging

What's the first thing you do when you wake up in the morning? Over a decade ago, most of us would have said we checked our alarm clocks before rising and getting ready for the day. Now, almost everyone reaches for their phone first thing in the morning to check the time, weather, and other notifications that appeared overnight. This is the reality we live in today. Our smartphones dominate nearly every aspect of our lives, which is not necessarily good for us. On March 3, we get an opportunity to set our phones down and experience the world around us when we recognize the National Day of Unplugging.

We often don't realize how important our phones have become. I recently took a trip to Washington, D.C. I woke up on the morning of my flight to find that my phone would not turn on. It was 5 in the morning, and my flight was at 2:30 p.m. I began to panic and look for solutions, but nothing was working. I went to the Apple Store and thought about what my trip would look like without a cellphone. Could I survive the whole trip without one? Would I be able to book a taxi or get around the area without my phone? These thoughts stressed me out so much that I considered canceling the trip altogether. I've taken trips without a cellphone before, but my life has transformed over the past decade, and I'm now paralyzed without one. Thankfully, it started working before my flight.

At times, it's embarrassing how dependent I feel on my cellphone. There are moments when my children have to tell me to put down my phone because I've been on it for so long. My kids are guilty of the same behavior, though. Sometimes, when the whole family is together, everyone is focused solely on their phones.

While smartphones have brought plenty of convenience into our lives, such as making communication easier, they've also brought many negatives. Spending too much time on our cellphones can lead to symptoms of depression and anxiety as well as sleep problems. It can also contribute to poor posture and hand and eye strain. Additionally, excessive phone use can interfere with our ability to focus and be productive or engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions with others. But putting our cellphones down has become difficult. We're connected to them and feel like we need to be on them constantly, or we'll miss out on some big news.

So, how do we break the addiction so we can reconnect with those around us? There's no tried-and-true solution that will work for everyone, but there are a handful of strategies you can utilize to cut down on screen time. To start, create specific times during each day to look at your email or social media accounts. Set a couple of alarms to

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Keeping the Roads Safe for All

Tips for Cyclists and Motorists

The weather is starting to warm up, which means cyclists and motorcyclists are preparing to hit the road for their first spring rides. It's vital that everyone who uses the road takes necessary precautions to ensure that everyone stays safe while driving. Accidents involving cyclists and motorcyclists are much more likely to be fatal than accidents solely involving motor vehicles. This is why everyone should keep safety in mind whenever they hit the road.

There are several things that cyclists and motorcyclists can do before leaving the house to ensure their ride is as safe as possible. First, you should check the weather forecast to know what to wear and determine if the weather is appropriate for a ride. Wear bright and reflective clothing to increase visibility, and use lights and reflectors on your bike so cars can spot you. If you're a cyclist, you should check your brakes, tires, and chains before every ride.

Once you're on the road, you must continue riding as safely as possible. Try to avoid roads with heavy traffic or poor driving conditions. Plan your route beforehand if possible. Take extra caution when approaching and going through intersections. Watch for ice and other dangerous obstacles during your first few rides of the season, as we'll still be fighting through cold weather for another month or so. You should also bring a whistle with you, as it will be easy to use if you get into an accident, and the sound can bring further attention to you if you're injured or need help. And always wear a helmet!

However, responsibility does not fall solely on the cyclists and motorcyclists on the road. Motorists also need to take necessary safety precautions. We need to be aware that more cyclists and motorcyclists will be on the road starting this month and that they are less visible than other cars. Give them extra room when passing, and do not tailgate.

Cyclists, motorcyclists, and motorists should practice these safety measures to keep the roads safe for all. Contact us today if you need more information or require professional help.

An Act to Reduce

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

A bill was recently signed into law that aims to make the streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists. An Act to Reduce Traffic Fatalities seeks to lessen the frequency and severity of vehicular accidents.

"With more of our residents utilizing cleaner forms of mobility such as traditional and electric bicycles, these bills make necessary changes to better protect all users of our public ways," said Representative William M. Straus (D-Mattapoisett), House Chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation.

So, how will this affect you? There are some changes that you'll notice and others you may not. The bill expands on the definition of the term "vulnerable road user" to include roadworkers and anyone walking, biking, skateboarding, roller skating, and more. These groups will be included in future legislation. This change makes it easier for "vulnerable road users" to seek compensation if they're involved in an accident.

Review of the Month



"I used Spada Law group because of the great reviews I've heard from friends and family. Robyn was a pleasure to work with and was always readily available whenever I called and had a question. She made this process pain free. I highly recommend them to anybody who needs assistance when it comes to being compensated for injuries caused by others."

-Kevin K.

Reduce Traffic Fatalities

Additionally, the “safe passing distance” is now considered to be 4 feet in Massachusetts. We were one of the last states to identify a safe passing distance, so this is a necessary step in making the roads safer. Speed limits in highly populated areas have also been lowered from 30 mph to 25 mph, as slower speeds reduce the risk of fatal accidents. State-contracted trucks must now be equipped with safety side guards, mirrors, and backup cameras.

One of the more interesting aspects of the bill relates to cyclists, especially those who ride at night. The legislation requires all cyclists to use rear red lights after sunset. This means you must have front and rear lights on your bike if you go out for a night ride. Motor vehicles will have an easier time spotting cyclists, reducing the risk of fatal accidents.

An Act to Reduce Traffic Fatalities will go a long way toward making our streets safer for everyone, especially pedestrians and cyclists. Keep this new legislation in mind whenever you go out for a drive or ride on your bike.



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check your email and set aside an hour or less at night to look at social media. This will help break the harmful habit of constantly checking your phone.

Additionally, you can utilize an accountability partner. Find someone, preferably who lives in your house, who can hold you accountable to your screen time goals. They'll tell you when it's time to put the phone down, and you can do the same for them. If you're not sure if you're using your cellphone too often, download an app that tells you how much you use it daily or weekly. Most Apple devices already have this feature pre-installed. Experts at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute state that our total screen time should be two hours or less per day. If you're using your cellphone for three or four hours each day, it's time to cut back.

It's not easy to do, but reducing screen time can bring many physical and mental benefits to our lives.

- Len Spada



Green Machine Oatmeal

I've been on a healthy eating kick for over half a year, and I don't plan to stop anytime soon! I feel great physically, and some of the dishes I've tried recently have been amazing. One of my favorite ways to start each day is with a bowl of amazing Green Machine Oatmeal.

INGREDIENTS

- 2/3 cup steel-cut oats
- Salt
- 1 3/4 cups water
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp matcha powder
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- 2 tbsp shredded coconut
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 cup chopped pineapple
- 1/4 cup chopped pistachios

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine oats, pinch of salt, and water.
2. Bring the water to a simmer before removing from heat. Cover, refrigerate, and let the oats soak overnight.
3. In the morning, stir in milk, matcha powder, protein powder, coconut, and ginger.
4. Heat over medium-low for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Top with pineapple and pistachios.

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The Olympics Used to Have a Fine Arts Category!?



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Fine Arts: The Forgotten Olympic Event

We know the Olympics as one of the most popular sporting events in the world, if not the most popular. With competitions like track and field, figure skating, gymnastics, Ping-Pong, and volleyball, there is an athletic event for almost everyone.

But once upon a time, Olympians used to compete in the fine arts. That's right – in the early 1900s, the Olympics held competitions in painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, and music!

Initiated in 1896 by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the modern Olympics we know today struggled to adopt the arts into their competing categories. This worldwide event was stressful for the cities that hosted it, and local organizers had no interest in putting together competitions for writing and music, let alone finding people to compete in such categories.

However, as the 1800s rolled into the 20th century, Baron Pierre de Coubertin finally got his wish, and at the 1912 Stockholm Games, arts became an Olympic category. However, there was one caveat. All art submissions had to be about sports. Participants submitted works like a modernized stadium blueprint in the architecture category, a song for Olympic winners in the music category, a painting of the different winter Olympic sports in the painting category, and a poem to celebrate sports in the literature category.

Competitions in these art categories thrived until the 1940s when the Olympics was put on hold due to World War II. And when the Olympics returned, the International Olympics Committee had a new president, Avery Brundage.

Brundage wanted the Olympics to represent "amateur athletics," or sports

HOW THIS OLYMPIC CATEGORY CAME TO BE FORGOTTEN

without the influence of money or power. And to him, the arts could be bought. Brundage said that since artists naturally rely on selling their creations for money, a gold medal from the Olympics could majorly inflate the value of their work, and these competitors could begin to get rich just by competing. This, in turn, would bring money into the games – artists would no longer be competing for the enjoyment of sports or pride in their country but out of a desire to strike it rich.

After much debate on the committee, it was agreed that the art categories would be removed to preserve the event's integrity. However, from this removal, the Cultural Olympiad was created, a noncompetitive version of the Olympic arts. So, next time you tune in to the Olympics, check out the many artists representing their countries at the Cultural Olympiad!