

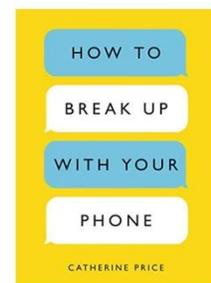
Spotlight

Friday, April 27, 2018

As a result of reading Catherine Price's book, *How To Break Up With Your Phone*, I cut my daily smart phone use in half from approximately two hours a day to one hour or less. Where I once habitually picked up my phone over fifty times a day (which equates to four times an hour or once every fifteen minutes *all day long*) I have lowered that distracting urge to around 30 times a day. I say this not to luddite brag but to draw attention to the fact that I have had a sinking feeling for quite a while that my smartphone use and the reasons why this machine dominated so many of my waking hours was a problem and was having a detrimental effect on my quality of life and relationships. I suspected I was not alone and Price's book confirmed this.

How to Break Up with your Phone is divided into two sections. The first, offers a well-researched deep dive into the critical impact phones are having on our relationships, mental health, and experience of the world. This information is directly related to the design of the devices themselves which contain apps that have proven to be more addictive than VLT's and are made with the same addictive pattern forming features and algorithms. With this book, Price is not aiming to have us all throw our phones into Great Slave Lake but instead to truly consider what role we want smart-devices to play in our society and what access they (they being companies that make incredible amounts of money harvesting our data and selling it) have to our information, our personal lives, and our time.

The second half of the book is a 30 day "break up" with daily readings, challenges, and writing prompts designed to help you redefine your relationship to your phone. I did the 30 day process and this opportunity to spend one month thinking about how I use my phone brought forth a veritable cocktail of emotions including frustration, outrage, fear, and ultimately relief. Included in the process was a full 24 hour screen fast which is one of the most rewarding things I have done in quite a while in terms of setting aside real time to consider how I want to spend my time and what I want to give my attention to. No matter where you are in your relationship to modern technology – a grumpy Luddite, an enthusiastic apologist or somewhere in between - this book will give you an opportunity to take a clear-eyed look at the role digital technology plays in your life and whether it is still a tool or has become a master.



Megan Clark
Public Services Librarian