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21st January, 2016

The 24-hour media blackout was a unsettling experience for me. I am not exxagerating when I say I feel agitated and uncomfortable with the absense of connectivity with the world. I gave up Facebook, Messenger, Whatsapp, as well as Putlocker which is where I watch shows a lot. I didn’t expect myself to have a huge problem because I often gave up new media when I am on holiday with my family and friends. However, this was much harder because I was alone for most of the day and it made it difficult to supress the desire to reach out others online.

I started 12 at midnight so most of the time will be spent sleeping. I tried to keep myself busy with various events planned during the day. Strangely, when I was in church, I couldn’t stop fiddling my phone even though I usually don’t look at it during church time. I usually wait until the service is over to check my messages. However, it was difficult for me to keep focus on the lecture knowing that I cannot access new media until 12 midnight. I then went downtown for a hair appointment, which I thought would keep my thoughts away from new media. However, when I was commuting to my destination, I kept thinking how much better this trip would be if I could listen to music. Its strange because I usually don’t listen to music while I am commuting. I suppose I have grown to have a strange reliance on new media without realizing it.

Instead of new media, I focused on using old media. It was quite fortunate that I had quite a bit of reading to do for the upcoming classes. I tried to focus on doing that whenever I had free time for the whole day. It was definitely a challenge having that as my sole means of entertainment. I would get bored very easily and start figiting my phone. I had no intention of using it but I just felt unsafe without it. I find it quite pathetic actually. Not too long ago, I used to go to school without my phone. That means no new media for probably 8 hours. I commuted to school so back and forth it would be 10 hours in total. I’ve been reliant on my smart phone since grade 11. I was basically forced into it when my father got angry at me because I went out at night without my phone turned on. He said I needed to “move along with the society” and start accepting our reliance on technology. Thus, my parents got me an iPhone 5c, that was when I became inseparable with my phone.

I felt completely disconnected with the world for those 24 hours. I was used to messaging my closest friends and family in Australia, England, United States, and Hong Kong all at the same time. Without new media, I realised none of this would be possible. I felt particularly emotional when I couldn’t talk to my boyfriend in Australia. We have been doing long distance for about 2 years and 3 months now. Not that I think I am going to lose him from these 24 hours, but the thought that our whole relationship is reliant on such a fluctuating medium of internet made me felt very insecure. I subconsciously rely on social media to keep me connected with these people. In those 24 hours, I was scared of losing everyone whom I cared about if the internet ceased to exist.

I had two insights after conducting this exercise. Firstly, we’ve becomeundeniably addicted to new media. Second, without new media, we wouldn’t be as hyper-connected to our friends and family all over the world. Moreover, where is this going to lead the interaction of human race? With the development of Nervegear, we can eventually full dive into virtual realities that allow us to interact in virtual space. Will the world turn into a society like *Matrix*, *Surrogate,* or *Sword Art Online*? At this rate, it is totally possible we would evolve into this codependent relationship with technology. At that point, what is left that defines our humanity?

17th January, 2016

* 7:30am – Went on Facebook as I woke up
* 8:09am – reading news on Facebook
* 8:50am – messaging on my way to class
* 9:10am – Looking at class article on laptop
* 10:02am – looking at Powerpoint in JRNL100
* 11:15am – Watching “Friends” on laptop
* 1:00pm – Checking Facebook on phone
* 1:15pm – Watching “Friends” on laptop for half an hour
* 4:30pm – Watching “Friends” on laptop
* 8:00pm – messaging my friends
* 12:00pm – messaging my friends
* 2:28am – messaging my friends
* 5:09am – messaging my friends