



Notifications are killing you

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It is hard to make a distance from technology in our day and age where we are completely swamped into its daily usage. From hustling and grinding at work to organizing events to even going on dates, our worlds of complete and utter spontaneity seem to be enmeshed with the world of technology, especially, in this case, social media.

The constant ping-pongs and pop-ups have become deeply embedded into our everyday mode of living causing a flow of untrammelled daily minute by minute reminders of various sorts from messages from friends, family, work, and the bank to update notifications to reminders by the apps to use them. Overall, all this seems to be overwhelming at times leading to the loss of energy and direction amid pandemonium and chaos looming large.

Becoming a screen slave

There needs to be the gateway to channel the proper energies in the direction needed. The gradual effect of consecutive notifications does not only act as an instrument of distraction but also affects focus and performance and puts an extra layer of pressure to act upon all the notifications (At times, looking at it simply does not suffice).

Atoshie, a student of Business

Administration at BRAC University, calls notifications, "a nuisance and constant distraction that veer a person away from the balancing of work". Social media is an integral part of the workplace and in some instances, she allows selective notification detox with muting off friends and family off to clear some space to concentrate or ponder the new train of work she wants to channel her full energy into. Furthermore, notifications are a constant hurdle to honing one's skills in a particular hobby. It swaps the attention away and nudges in between deep moments of concentration.

While it is generally difficult to keep away from social media as important work and familial transactions of conversations and duty calls take place, notification detox is easier. Some do it selectively. Some go all the way muting all notifications, just keeping a watchful eye on their space. Khalid, a recent graduate working in an MNC, says, "During all the chaos running in life, social media makes it worse and more stressful. There is no need for needless chatter. Notification detox ultimately helps me to bring a bit of order to my chaotic world".

Digitising the detox

The solutions of the problems posed

by social media at times are found within the annals of social media itself. Apps like Space and Freedom can be downloaded on the phone as an aid to personalize and customize your relationship with your phone's apps allowing a more balanced composure. A balanced lifestyle is in all of our favours with limited and necessary interaction with the phone and its numerous beguiling apps, rather than crippling addiction now and then. Freedom helps to block websites and apps that constantly badger you with notifications and updates allowing space to focus. Space allows a replacement icon for the apps you need a break from paving the way for a change in habit with fewer notification distractions and managed screen time.

There is often a lot of email clutter from places which we do not want to have any further affiliation with, those can easily be unsubscribed. Apps like Spark come in handy to keep zero emails unread and remove the unnecessary email clutter by combining all the email accounts in one place. It notifies you with emails from people you know.

Finding new hobbies

Fast forward to the era of the pandemic

where work from home has largely become the norm, notification detox has become largely impossible with constant reliance on social media platforms for work updates and communication. In such times, it is important to have a mental demarcation of important and unimportant screen time and one way to do this to shut notifications off from apps that are not needed using the apps mentioned above. Customize them according to schedule and place. One other route to get away from a barrage of notifications is to have calls rather than have a slew of notifications piled up. An important part of notification detox is to read books and thus reduce screen time as well as the anxiety induced by notifications.

There are reminders which can be set on the phone as well to remind us of taking a break to immerse ourselves in other leisure activities be it cooking to spending some quality time with the family to just in general giving time to yourself. One can manually turn off notifications from the apps themselves to set them on a break. Such micro scheduling during the day acts as boosts and relaxation periods for all of us.