

[IMAGE]

Happier Without Smartphones

By Editorial Staff

Think you can't live without your smartphone? For too many people, that's a constant fear. In reality, putting down your smartphone more could actually make you happier – yes, we said happier. Let's look at recent research findings that should make you put down your phone more – and enjoy your *life* more in the process.

Researchers instructed more than 600 people to go without their smartphones entirely for one week, reduce their phone use by one hour per day, or continue use as usual. Life satisfaction, depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, physical activity and smoking behavior were evaluated prior to the study, after the one-week intervention, and one and four months after the study.

Findings, which appear in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, revealed that both reducing smartphone use and eliminating use entirely for one week reduced smartphone use intensity, problematic use tendencies, and depressive and anxiety symptoms; while increasing life satisfaction and physical activity. Reducing use, rather than eliminating use altogether, exhibited stronger, more stable effects at the four-month follow-up. Daily cigarette smoking by smokers also decreased in the reduction group only. Do smartphones have value in our lives? In many ways, yes, although you can probably count just as many potential negatives as positives. Could we all stand to reduce our smartphone use – even by as little as an hour a day? Definitely. The proof is in the research.

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