WELLNESS 162
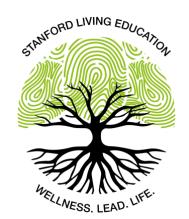
Digital Wellbeing:
Creating Healthy Relationships with Technology (Summer 2024)

Instructor Information

Instructor(s):	Caitlin Krause
Office Hours:	by appointment
E-mail:	ckrause@stanford.edu

Course Information

Day(s):	Tuesdays
Dates:	**June 24 - July 16, 2024**
Time:	4:30-7:20pm
Location:	**McMurtry ART 350**
Canvas site:	canvas.stanford.edu

Terms: Summer | Units: 1 | Grading: S/NC

Course Description

We live in a brave new world where technology is layered into almost every aspect of daily living, which has benefits and drawbacks. A creative approach to designing a mindful, healthy integration of technology with lifestyle can influence flourishing and wellbeing, as well as provide an avenue for creative self-expression, reflection, community sharing and collaboration. Explore how technology provides opportunities to optimize health, performance, relationships, and purpose. Examine challenges associated with technology usage including loneliness, addiction, attention splitting, and negative social comparison. Review current research exploring how to effectively integrate social media, digital media (audio, video, gaming), XR (including augmented and virtual reality), messaging, digital dating, privacy, and personal/professional identity and branding in a way that supports overall life design and values. Study the most effective technologies in these spaces. Design, experiment with, and implement a personalized plan for optimizing your day-to-day technology use with an intention for increasing connection, joy, and flourishing.

Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to align intention and attention as we approach designing human-centered lives that thrive with technology.

Learning Goals

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain understanding of major technology lifestyle trends and evaluate how they relate to relationships and wellbeing.

- Discuss complex considerations as well as benefits and drawbacks of different technologies.

- Design models and frameworks to guide a new approach to their own relationships with technology.

- Practice exercises that encourage a healthy relationship with technology, drawing from a wide range of practices backed by current research.

- Document and express the story of their personal research and findings in a way that becomes a creative product, as a map of a lifestyle approach that reflects their wellbeing values and actionable beliefs.

- Form relationships with technology that reflect a curious and open outlook, with varied considerations about how to cultivate a lifelong flourishing in worlds that continually ask for healthy integration of technology in day-to-day life.

Highly Suggested or Required Text(s)

All Required Text(s) & Digital Readings will Be Posted on Canvas and Accompany Each Week's Work and Discussion

Recommended Core Texts:

Benjamin, Ruha. (2019). *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*. Polity.

Clear, James. (2018). *Atomic Habits*. Avery.

Crook, Christina. (2021). *Good Burdens: How to Live Joyfully in the Digital Age*. Nimbus Publishing.

Easter, Michael. (2021). *The Comfort Crisis*. Rodale Books.

Haidt, Jonathan. (2024). *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness.* Penguin Press.

Recommended Optional Additional Texts:

Alter, Adam. (2018). *Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked*. Penguin.

Brown, Brene. (2021). *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience*. Random House.

Crook, Christina. (2015). *The Joy of Missing Out: Finding Balance in a Wired World*. New Society.

Diamandis, Peter H. and Kotler, Steven. (2020). *The Future is Faster than You Think*. Simon & Schuster.

Fogg, B.J. (2021). *Tiny Habits*. Avery.

Zuboff, Shoshana (2020). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. NewFrontier.

Note: Additional reading materials will be posted. Most of these will be selections of articles and book chapters from scholarly and peer-reviewed sources. It is essential that students read all assigned material for class. Even if not explicitly discussed, lectures, discussion, and class exercises will assume your knowledge of reading material, as listed in the Course Calendar and/or on Canvas.

Course Expectations/Requirements/Assignments

This course is organized around class readings and discussions, experiential activities, written assignments, journal questions/reflections, and a practical application of skills to your life. You are responsible for completing each assignment on time and will be given credit based upon a point value for each assignment. **Attending at least 75% of classes AND earning at least 70% of total points is required to pass the class.**

All of the class assignments have a specific due date, as listed in syllabus/Canvas, so pay attention, set notifications appropriately, and log in to Canvas to keep up/reminded of course content (read it and refer to it often). The student will be responsible for completing each assignment and will be given a grade based upon a point value for each assignment.

Attendance and Participation

Stanford Living Education courses are hands-on, inclusive, and often class meetings are an important part of a progression. Attendance and participation is crucial, as is doing all reading and assignments in order to be able to participate in discussion and the experiential nature of this course. This course is designed to be highly interdisciplinary, personal, hands-on and inclusive. Our live class sessions are an important part of your process in this course. Attendance and participation is crucial, as is doing all reading and assignments in order to be able to participate in discussion and the experiential nature of this course. A tremendous amount of learning in this course happens in real time, during class.

You are expected to <u>attend 75+% of the classes</u> (3+ out of 4) in order to receive credit. If you must miss a class, please contact me prior to the class by email. ***Attendance will be taken***.

Learning in this course often involves being driven by curiosity, and also reflecting upon our own personal experiences with a spirit of openness and non-judgment. We welcome and invite an atmosphere that allows us to question and uncover our assumptions and grow in our understanding. Just as elements of mindfulness involve encouraging awareness, advancing beyond comfort zones, and showing up in an authentic way, we will practice these elements together throughout this course.

Assignments, Submission Policies, Evaluation and Grading Criteria

1. **Digital Wellbeing Weekly Scholarly Integration Reflections (20 points each)   60 Points**

You will keep a journal for this course, which can be digital or handwritten.

Each week for the first 3 weeks of the course, you will write a weekly 1-2 page reflection about your process with relationships to technology (if typed: double-spaced, 12-pt font, Times New Roman). You are encouraged to include wonderings, experiences, reflections, and goals you have to change approaches to tech. The journal responses each week will be aligned with the readings and topics for the week, and might also include sketches and individual investigations. Please specifically cite and credit the scholarly work you are referencing, using it as a lens to investigate your own life design. Prompts will be given through Canvas after each class, and your reflections will be due (either typed or as a screenshot) by Sunday, in time for review before Tuesday's class.

2. **Creative Expression – Portfolio Project Reflecting Healthy Relationships With Technology   40 Points**

This assignment is your chance to creatively express your story of digital wellbeing over the quarter, which may include a solution (or solutions) for wellbeing incorporating technology. You will also share your findings with our group in a 7-minute presentation about the project, which can include time for audience interaction and dialogue/questions.

This Creative Expression portfolio project is your chance to tell your story of digital wellbeing over the quarter, including any format you feel drawn to. You might choose to represent this journey in a piece of art, a poem, audio/visual/digital narrative or other. If you have any questions about this project, our 1:1 session time is a great chance to workshop ideas.

This creative expression project is a process piece that encourages you to creatively express your ideas in the format you like, focusing on themes that matter to you. You will share your portfolio during the last class meeting, and you will upload your piece as an assignment on Canvas by the Monday before our last class.

**Assignments total 100 points. You must earn 70% of points available.

**Attendance at 75%+ is also required to pass the course.

Community Standards, Collective Norms, and Principles to Work With:

The following standards and norms are created for our **Digital Wellbeing Co-Lab (collaborative, and operating like a Lab, with experiences in our lives) community** that complement each other, and can play a part in grounding this community in principles of ethics and engagement. The Collective Norms and Community Standards draw inspiration from the "Principles of Ethical and Effective Service" (link below) shared during the Stanford experience "Contemplation by Design" in 2019.

Community Standards:
Community Standards Caitlin Krause: Stanford Wellness 162

Collective Norms for Digital Wellbeing Course:
Digital Wellbeing Standards & Weekly Flow

Principles of Ethical and Effective Service (Stanford):
https://haas.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj10391/f/principlesofethicalandeffectiveservice2019.pdf

Office Hours, Email/Communication & Canvas

Please reach out to your instructor to make an appointment if you have questions or concerns about the course.

Students are expected to have access to email and to check it frequently. Instructors will use Canvas to send announcements as needed. The syllabus, lecture slides, some of the readings and other pertinent information will be stored on the Canvas website. Please notify the CAs or instructor if there are technical problems with the materials on the website/Canvas. Otherwise, it is assumed that all students have access to readings and other course materials.

Course Outline

Course Outline

Week / Date	Topic	Readings (**before this week's session**)	Assignments (**after this week's session**)
Week 1 - June 24	Digital Wellbeing Overview **Orientation** **Course Norms and Introductions** **Digital Wellbeing: A Dynamic Construct**	Pre-Readings (read/watch before first class): Digital Wellbeing as Dynamic Construct (.pdf) in Pages, Readings on Canvas Technology of the Future Should Care for our wellbeing (Richie Davidson, GGSC) The Future of Wellbeing in a Tech-Saturated World, PEW Research Center (2018) The Anxious Generation: May 27, 2024 Forum with Jonathan Haidt, Scott Galloway, and Emma Lembke (Log Off Movement)	Please arrive having read this week's readings, ready to share and discuss in class. Scholarly Integration **Reflection Journal 1**: Entry **based on Weeks 1 and Week 2 class readings**

| Week 2 - July 2 | **Themes: Wellbeing, Tech & Media Mindfulness and technology**

Share Reflections from Journal 1

How are wellbeing and tech in relationship? In what ways do we talk about tech?

How does media play a part in forming the "Social Dilemma"?

How can we approach mindfulness in the process of talking about tech and wellbeing?

Approaches to mindfulness, wellbeing and tech: Individual and Collective approaches. Relationships in General and how we talk about Tech. Digital safety and privacy.

Discussion of AI and "artificial intimacy"; rises in Loneliness Among Gen Z and Gen A

Use cases for AI to make life easier and more efficient. More creativity in the Age of AI?

How we measure wellbeing. Loneliness vs/ connectedness. Digital dating. Trust.

Examine our own storytelling tools and examine how social media | When Media Was for You and Me (podcast episode), Your Undivided Attention, Tristan Harris (2021)

The Social Dilemma (documentary)

article about The Social Dilemma: What's the Solution? (2020)

Stanford's AI Index 2024 Annual Report | Scholarly Integration **Reflection Journal 2**: Entry **based on Week 3 class readings** |

	has affected our relationships as a society with expectations, rhythms and rituals, identity and branding. Cautionary tales or sense of possibility?		
Week 3 - July 9	**Review & Discuss Journal 2** **Themes:** **Emotional Experience Design, Awe and Wonder; Imagination fueled by Digital Wellbeing** How is emotion involved in relationships with tech, and with design considerations? Discussion of scholarly integration readings: Emotional UX design (Don Norman), Gamification and Gamer's Theory (Celia Hodent); (tech) addictions How are games, interactive tech, and wearables involved? Are the algorithms empowering or addictive? **Wonder, Awe and wellbeing; Virtual Reality Worlds, Sci-fi and the (Digital) Hero's Journey** VR and SCUBA methods. Playing the heroes and the mentors for others when learning in immersive environments.	Celia Hodent's talk about Emotional Design and Gaming at GDC (video, 2020) Are We Addicted to Technology? (article, 2020) Implications of VR talk with Jeremy Bailenson and Philip Rosedale (2018) Healium's AR application research study Stanford's Virtual Human Interaction Lab: https://vhil.stanford.edu/ Example of wellbeing and mindfulness group experiences in VR: https://youtu.be/ni_L6dT4VPQ Virtual reality talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIBvPRbo2bc	Scholarly Integration **Reflection Journal 3**: Entry **based on Week 4 class readings** **Creative Expression Portfolio Project Focus**

	Choice & incorporating Wonder (analog and digital): how use of tech can be more intentional, less reactionary; virtual and augmented reality, WebXR, human creativity and flourishing.		
Week 4 - July 16	**Review & Discuss Journal 3** **Themes: Digital Connectedness at Human Scale** **Integration of Themes for the Course** Revisit Intentions **Bringing it all together: Students share creative expression portfolio projects** **Closing Exercises**	[Article about tech wearables and wellbeing](#) (2020) Tech and Wearables / Apps Use Cases	Submit and Share **Creative Expression Portfolio Project Focus**

Honor Code (Revised, effective Sep 1, 2023).

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the Stanford academic community, individually and collectively. Its purpose is to uphold a culture of academic honesty. The code articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work. Examples of conduct that have been regarded as being in violation of the Honor Code (and are most relevant for this course) include copying from another's examination paper or allowing another to copy from one's own paper; unpermitted collaboration; plagiarism; revising and resubmitting a quiz or exam for regarding, without the instructor's knowledge and consent; representing as one's own work the work of another; and giving or receiving aid on an academic assignment under circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that such aid was not permitted. You can find the Honor Code here:

https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/honor-code

Access and Accommodations

Students with disabilities are a valuable and essential part of the Stanford community. We welcome you to our class, and invite you to share your accommodation letters with us. It is best if you do so as early as possible, so we may partner with you to identify barriers to access and inclusion that might be encountered in your experience of this course.

If you experience disability but do not yet have an accommodation letter: please register with the [Office of Accessible Education (OAE)](). Professional staff will evaluate your needs, recommend appropriate accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty. To get started, or to re-initiate services, please visit oae.stanford.edu

The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 650-723-1066)

Student Mental Health

Academic life, and life in general, can be stressful. Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be strictly related to your course work. If so, please speak with your instructor. Relationships, family worries, loss or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance and well-being.

In the event I suspect you need additional support, expect that I will express my concerns (and the reasons for them) to you and remind you of the resources that might be helpful. My intention is to let you know that I am concerned and that help, if needed, is available.

—

Stanford University provides counseling resources to support students, faculty and staff. Some of your options include approaching [Residence Deans](), [Confidential Support Team]() (sexual and relationship violence), [Wellbeing Coaches](), [Bridge Peer Counseling Center](), the [Office of Religious Life](), and [CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services)]() to speak with an on-call clinician at 650-723-3785 for both urgent and emergent matters.

Affordability of Course Materials

Stanford University and its instructors are committed to ensuring that all courses are financially accessible to all students. If you are an undergraduate who needs assistance with the cost of course textbooks, supplies, materials and/or fees, please note that you can work with the Financial Aid Office or the FLI office, confidentially.

https://advising.stanford.edu/current-students/advising-student-handbook/fli-students#financial