NYC Digital Safety
Privacy & Security

Technology Mindfulness
Facilitation Guide

Equip learners with the skills and knowledge they need to reflect on their technology usage and to become more mindful about their technology choices.

Overview

This module equips learners with skills and techniques that they can use to become more reflective, critical, and mindful users of technology. In this module, learners will have the opportunity to discuss, explore, and develop strategies to help them reflect on the choices they make around technology.

For more information, be sure to watch Series 4 training videos from NYC Digital Safety.

Outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Define technology mindfulness
- Describe issues and challenges surrounding the use and consumption of technology
- Identify approaches for being a reflective and mindful user of technology

Format + Time Frame

This module provides an overview of some of the major issues surrounding the ways in which we use technology and the effects that technology can have on people. This module will share strategies for becoming a more reflective and mindful user of technology.

This module will take approximately 55 to 60 minutes to complete. While this module tackles some fairly complex and weighty issues, it can also be broken out and combined with other modules for different kinds of learning experiences. See more suggestions below.

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Materials

- Slide deck
- Facilitation guide
- Handout

Lesson Plan

Activity	Materials	Time Needed
Introduction and welcome Greet learners and review the plan for this module.	Slides 1 and 2	2 minutes
Defining technology mindfulness Start by defining technology mindfulness. Pause here to make sure everyone understands the terms. You might also consider asking if people are familiar with the term mindfulness more generally and what that means to them.	Slide 3	3 minutes
Activity: Technology habits Divide participants into small groups. Have them discuss the questions listed here about their technology habits and routines. Have the small groups report back out about their conversations.	Slide 4	10 minutes
Technology and daily lives Share the information here about how technology is a huge part of our daily	Slide 5	5 minutes

lives, and how it has many effects we are only just now starting to understand.		
Discussion: Issues and challenges with our technology habits Ask learners to share what issues they may have experienced with technology, if they feel comfortable, or what issues they have heard or read about. You might consider sharing some of your own issues and observations as well to help further the discussion.	Slide 6	10 minutes
Issues with technology use Review the slides that cover different issues with technology use, including physical and mental health, social issues, and information consumption. Conclude with a final slide that covers technology benefits. Consider pausing after each new slide to see if anyone has anything else to add.	Slides 7 through 11	5 minutes
Technology mindfulness strategies Review different approaches and questions people can ask about their technology habits. Pause to see if your learners have additional thoughts or questions to share.	Slides 12 through 15	5 minutes
Activity: Reflection on technology habits	Slides 16	10 minutes

Have your learners use the handout to reflect on their technology habits. Have them discuss their observations with others in small groups.		
Wrap up, final tips, and final questions Review the closing thoughts and best practices and share the suggested resources. See if anyone has any final questions.	Slides 17 through 21	5 minutes

Considerations

Technology mindfulness might be a new concept for people and one of the best ways to learn about it is to actually get some practice doing it. As such, this module features a number of places for reflection, discussion, and individual and group activity. Since this module encourages reflection activities, you should feel free to adapt or adjust the content as you like and as you feel best suits your audience. You can bring in some of your own examples, encourage your learners to share their examples and experiences, and otherwise tailor the content here accordingly.

Additionally, you can run this module in many ways and the reflection activities included here could work well with another module from one of the other modules. You could even include one or more of these reflection activities as a recurring activity for an entire workshop series.

Options and Variations

This module is designed to be more conceptual and reflective in nature and can be paired with other modules, such as ones that focus more on building a specific skill, for a rich learning experience. Additionally, this module could work well as part of a longer workshop series on various digital safety topics. The content here is designed to be flexible and you can either run this module as is, make it part of a series, or take portions of this module to use with another digital safety module of your choosing.

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Note that this module contains numerous places for discussion, individual reflection, and/or small group activity. If you are looking to add more discussion elements or reflection opportunities to another digital safety workshop, you could consider utilizing the prompts and/or activities from this module.

This content here works best when introduced in a workshop setting where there can be a chance for questions and guided discussions. However, you can provide the handout to patrons at a service point for a more self-guided reflection experience, or pair this content with handouts from other digital safety modules as needed.

Assessment

The following are some suggested assessment questions that you can use and adapt for your own purposes. These questions can help you assess various things, including knowledge retention, personal views and preferences, and concept application.

You might consider asking these as a pre or post test, or you can have learners answer these as part of an exit survey or a follow-up survey. Keep reading for suggested questions and an answer key with further details and explanations.

Questions for Participants

What is technology mindfulness?

    A. Checking for good deals on technology and not overpaying

    B. Finding the appropriate technology for a given need

    C. Using a meditation app

    D. Reflecting on your personal technology usage

How many hours do you think you spend using technology devices, such as a laptop or phone?

    [Free text response]

Overall, how do you feel about your current technology usage? Do you have things you feel good about or things that concern you?

> [Free text response]

Answer Key

What is technology mindfulness?

> *Answer: D, Reflecting on your personal technology usage*

> Technology mindfulness refers to being more reflective and thoughtful about your own personal technology usage.

How many hours do you think you spend using technology devices, such as a laptop or phone?

> *Answer: Free text response*

> This question encourages learners to consider their technology usage and consumption. The reason is that technology mindfulness overlaps in many ways with conversations around screen time.

Overall, how do you feel about your current technology usage? Do you have things you feel good about or things that concern you?

> *Answer: Free text response*

> You might consider using this as a pre-test question as well as a way to guide discussion during the module and to get a sense of what your learners might be interested in discussing during the workshop.

Connections to Other Modules

This module connects to many other modules. The following suggestions provide opportunities for exploration, connection, and potential programming. However, feel free to explore and make connections between other modules not listed here as well!

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This module in particular can connect with nearly every other module here, given the foundational and conceptual nature of the content included. While we have listed a few suggested ones, note that this module can really connect with all other modules.

1.1 Data Generation Online

1.2 Data Minimization

2.1 Algorithms
2.1 Targeted Advertising

2.2 Doxing
2.2 Data Brokers

4.1 Avoiding Social Engineering

4.3 Thinking Critically

These and other modules can be found at this project's website, nycdigitalsafety.org.

About This Project

These materials were released in October 2022 as part of NYC Digital Safety: Privacy & Security.

NYC Digital Safety: Privacy & Security is a partnership between New York City's three library systems — Brooklyn Public Library, The New York Public Library, and Queens Library — and METRO Library Council. With support from the New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, this project ensures that NYC residents can rely on public libraries for their questions about internet privacy and security.

Visit nycdigitalsafety.org for more information.