

Podcast - Content Addiction - Nov 2023

Tue, Nov 28, 2023 1:17PM 56:15

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

addiction, phone, feel, life, coping, addicted, people, content, social media, year, live, video games, numb, hurry, dave, soul, replenishing, fasting, process, pressure

SPEAKERS

Dave Leake, Jeff Leake

D Dave Leake 00:02
Everybody, welcome to the Allison Park leadership podcast. My name is Dave

J Jeff Leake 00:06
in my name is Jeff. And of course we're glad you're with us today. So, Allison Park Church, the lead pastor Dave's the campus pastor at the north side. And we're glad you're with us today. Do we have any five star reviews to look at today? No

D Dave Leake 00:19
reviews today? No, no gratitudes. But gratitude to anybody who is who has been a faithful listener for a while, you know, maybe you're listening to this right after Thanksgiving. We're recording the day before. So we are very thankful for you and this season. So thanks for being a part of the show. We always appreciate your ideas that you suggest for us. And you know, again, if you have the chance, maybe you have not had a chance to leave a five star review on either Spotify or Apple podcasts. Just you want to take a quick second while you wait with some family and over the holiday. It was a shout out, give us a shout out it'd be super helpful. Appreciate it. So alright, let's get into it.

J Jeff Leake 00:53
Yep. So that's our topic for today.


D Dave Leake 00:55
I don't know that we have a title yet. We'll figure that out. I love I

J Jeff Leake 01:00
love titles. You're gonna give me a thought.

D Dave Leake 01:01
Yeah, give me okay.

J Jeff Leake 01:02
So how about we say content addiction, hurry sickness, and other things that destroy your soul?

D Dave Leake 01:08
You have the triple?

 01:11
Yeah, yeah.

J Jeff Leake 01:12
I could just call it content addiction. Actually, this is kind of a new term to me. I forget what conversation we were having Dave, where this came up. And and in somebody, I think it was Josh, my son, Dave's brother, right said, Oh, they definitely have content addiction. And I was like, what is that? And they were like, you don't know what content content addiction is? So I think there's a l

D Dave Leake 01:36
don't know, it's a term that's popularized yet. Okay.

J Jeff Leake 01:39
We're providing our own little terminology spin on something that's out there.

D Dave Leake 01:44
So I mean, like, Forbes, I'm looking online right now Forbes has they talk about device and content addiction, okay. So, but it can be so that can be you know, whether you're talking

content addiction, okay. So, but it can be so that can be you know, whether you're talking about computer, TV, phone, video games, that sort of that idea. It's media, digital media addiction, sort of the idea. Okay,

J Jeff Leake 02:01

so, so I was actually. So I'm a lead team member for an organization called church multiplication network, which is focused on church planting. And so I was teaching for two days, a couple weeks ago in Dallas, Texas, about how to become a multi site church. And the host pastor, there was Brian Jarrett. We were at North place church in Dallas, which is a multi site church. Brian is one of the great preachers I've ever heard honestly, just an amazing communicator. And even though he's in Dallas, he's a Steelers fan. Oh, wow. Anyway, Brian was challenging the pastor's there. He said, I made up my mind to eliminate some things from my life, and it has benefited my soul. He said, I am no longer I don't have social media on my phone. So he said I, I would I took off Instagram and Facebook and everything. So he said, now for the first little bit, I would pick up my phone to get ready to look at something and then what think, Why do I have this phone like there was nothing to actually see, because all the things I would scroll through, I had eliminated off there. So he said, I recognize how many times in the day I picked up my phone to scroll through stuff that really had no priority or value in my life. Then the second thing he said is I shut off the news. He said I have sources to get the news in a non nerve wracking way. That's my word, not his. But he said I still am up to date on what's happening in the world. But I'm not wasting time watching news broadcast all the time. And so that sort of reinforced that now I know that's true for you, Dave. Right. You. you've eliminated a lot of apps, social media from your phone. Is that true? Yeah,

D Dave Leake 03:41

I just I mean, I deleted all my social media. Okay, so altogether altogether,

J Jeff Leake 03:46

so you're not even on Facebook or Instagram or Twitter? ocher. Yeah,

D Dave Leake 03:50

they're done on tick tock. But yeah, I think it's a little bit like, I missed that wave with. Yeah, but no, I decided a couple of months ago, just to just so I almost never used Facebook ever. I mean, I hadn't used it a year. So I used it a lot in the early 2010s When I was in college, okay, and in high

J Jeff Leake 04:10

school. So you would be for your age unusual to delete all social media. Oh, absolutely. Right. Or is that now a trend? No, I

D Dave Leake 04:17

think it's unusual. But I think a lot of people are thinking about it. Like I think it's like a like it's life consuming and it's stupid and who even needs it but then it's like, yeah, I don't know. Like, it feels like there might be potential loss. I've talked to a lot of people that have thought about like, oh, you know if I miss it, yeah, well, not even I miss it because they haven't deleted it but I thought about it like eight times but I'm thinking like I would be able to talk to my friends from afar and it's good

J Jeff Leake 04:41

for that. Like okay, I I am able to go to this conference in Dallas and I know what's sort of going on in some people's lives because I follow them on social media and I'm gonna like say I was that mission stripper. Oh man, I saw you baptize people or a man your grandkids are cute. You know those kinds of things right? That Part of it probably is nice. And then of course, being a voice in the world on social media, like I actually had somebody recently say to me, you guys should be your podcast should be on tick tock. Is that possible for podcasts to be on? Tiktok? Or at least probably maybe like clip snippets? We did. Yeah, the clips. So I have stuff on my phone, although after this episode, and after hearing people like Brian, and you talk about I don't know, I'm gonna reevaluate that, especially. So I think we're doing this episode at this particular time. So we're at the end of 2023. If you're listening to this, it's the day before Thanksgiving, this has been broadcast sometime after so we're in December, typically, you go into a brand new year, and you try to establish some, some health in your life, right. So I think from a long term perspective, a lot of people would go into a brand new year, setting some new year's resolutions, well, how I want things to be different in my life, I want to lose weight or an exercise. I want to read my Bible, all of that good stuff. I actually in this coming year, my thought is to not emphasize resolutions, although typically we really don't because I don't know the resolutions really work for anybody. I think what what I'm interested in is establishing healthy rhythms. Yeah. disciplines and habits. Yeah. So what are the rhythms in my life that are out of whack? And where do I need to come back into alignment? And one of these rhythms to evaluate as we're getting ready to go into a brand new year is to evaluate, do I have a social media addiction? Do I have an addiction to my device, my phone? And do I have a content addiction? And does that overall contribute to this problem of hurry sickness or feeling cluttered and stressed all the time? And is there a better way to do life so that I live in a healthier way? Going into my future? I

D Dave Leake 06:52

think in my mind, I think you're maybe even underselling the problem a little bit. Okay.

J Jeff Leake 06:59

Paint the picture? What is content addiction?

D Dave Leake 07:02

So so any with any kind of, like, coping mechanism, so this would be drug use? This could be, you know, alcoholism, this could be sexual activity. There's a lot of ways people cope or things right. Yeah, porn, overeating. Ah, yep,

J Jeff Leake 07:20

there's a lot of things, nicotine.

D Dave Leake 07:23

All of these are mechanisms that often people get addicted to, because they're used to cope with life. So you know, you get you get ahead of something, doesn't have to be a drug, you just, you know, you start to feel upset. And so, you know, you eat a piece of chocolate cake, which I can relate to. That's what rhythm does in my life, that I'm trying to readjust it. So it's

J Jeff Leake 07:43

a way to provide comfort or distraction for yourself, to make yourself temporarily feel better, so that you don't have to focus on Yes, and nagging issues that are in your life and

D Dave Leake 07:52

the reality is it okay, there becomes a point with any of these types of addictive behaviors with these coping mechanisms where your life becomes totally unmanageable. So much so that it's obvious to everybody and you it's so unhealthy, you know, you've been in jail because of your addiction or, but but there's a level of trying

J Jeff Leake 08:13

your right ruining your relationships, your body's unhealthy or in in and out of the hospital. Yeah, it can get really extreme, there's

D Dave Leake 08:21

a level of extreme consequences. But there's also a level before that, which I think is where maybe a lot of people, including myself have lived, which is addicted but unaware of an addiction, okay. And why that is why I think it's more destructive than the way you painted it is I think that what we tend to do, especially when it comes to things like content addiction, and I'm talking about phone, computer, TV video games, primarily is that we can numb ourselves and dollar self out from life so much, that it causes major mental health challenges, that it causes us to not hear the voice of God very clearly, that it causes our our relationships to be to be duller, that it dims our outlook on life and how good life is. And we, I mean, there's, there's it, it also tends to do something where if every time whether we are aware of it or not, when we start to feel a lot of pressure, or we start to feel anger, or sadness, any kind of extreme,

unpleasant emotion, when we have something that we tend to go just to, like, I just need to veg I just need to, like, take my mind out of the game for a little bit. It becomes the only real response that we have to deal with tough emotions. So

J Jeff Leake 09:33

So yeah, wow. So that's, that's, that's intense. And what you're saying is, a lot of people right now in our world are content addict. Absolutely. Yeah. Okay. So I don't know if it was you or Josh, when we were having this conversation, said, this happened to me early in ministry, I was in over my head. I was learning a new skill. I felt like I was letting people down. Rather than figure out why I was feeling all those things. I would come home And then I would just video game for six hours, doctor saying that I ended up and you know, one or two o'clock in the morning and then I get up the next morning and I was exhausted. And I would go back into it I was faced with the same fears and insecurities. And again, rather than dealing with those, I would end up just, you know, distracting ourselves with with entertainments, right specifically, I think gaming, which is is that like a big part of content addiction

D Dave Leake 10:28

or Yeah, isn't it? Is

J Jeff Leake 10:29

it social? I would say for hours. Yeah,

D Dave Leake 10:32

social it was not let's even broaden it. Probably for younger generations maybe older to I don't know, but I would say at least for younger generations. Phone your phone is probably the biggest risk of addiction. Okay. I have stats that I can pull up here in a second. I haven't filtered them through yet so I won't read them yet till I have better stats like a better grasp on these. But you know, everybody everybody does smartphone. Basically the percentage of people in America that don't have a smartphone is low, like most people have a smartphone. Yeah. Regardless of your economic status. America there, it's everywhere. You're right.

J Jeff Leake 11:05

I don't there's no place in the world. I've been where people don't have smart smartphones or smart devices now.

D Dave Leake 11:11

And smartphones have been specifically designed along with social media to trigger a dopamine hit every time that you look at something. And there's always a way to what is your

attention to that what is a dopamine hit? It makes it releases a chemical in your brain that feels like stimulating and makes you feel good likes on any kind of social media likes on a post messages that you get notifications all stimulate dopamine, which is a way of feeling good, that is a subtle form of addiction that it's actually been designed like that or

J Jeff Leake 11:41

you have a bodily or emotional reaction reaction. Yeah. And to your phone system becomes addicted to the next jolt of dopamine in your system. Is that right? So you know, Oh, I gotta like, and if you respond to that, you get not a high. But what would you call that? is very

i 12:01

high. Yeah. So high. It's

D Dave Leake 12:03

like, okay, you know, it boosts your mood for a second. Yeah, in fact, I don't know the stats on this. But most Americans, the first thing that they do when they wake up, is they reach for their phone. Like, we're so trained. I think that like most people touch their phone hundreds of times a day, like hundreds of times a day, which is crazy. I

J Jeff Leake 12:23

feel a little bit like that. Because you're describing me. I don't see myself as having content addiction. But I almost feel like I don't have a problem with alcohol. Why would you even say that, right? So maybe like me, you're listening this? And you're like, I don't want to I don't even want to think about this. Because yeah, so I scroll through social media. I reach for my phone. Um, I mean, I have a lot of things on here like the Bible, right? For instance. Sure. Yeah, I used the Bible. And this is not, isn't it, though, when you start to hit on something that's close to home, you feel this need to justify.

D Dave Leake 13:01

I give to God on my phone? Yeah,

i 13:03

do it. Yeah, no, but I have worship music here. Yeah. And

D Dave Leake 13:07

I would say a lot of the reason why I use my phone is actually really good, healthy, you know,

edifying. It's a tool ultimately. But

J Jeff Leake 13:16

they do say even even like productivity. So they say that the most productive people don't check their email, except twice a day. Sure. Whereas a lot of times, that's what I'm doing. Anybody text me, any, anybody reach out to me on email. By the way, this is also a generational thing. Dave and I were in a fantasy football league. And there was a big dispute on our fantasy football league that went back and forth on a text message chain. I looked down at my phone, and I had 101. Notifications, like, who was assassinated what's going on in the world that really just they're just a boy? Yeah, secret. So I'm sure that for me an old guy, it's probably much worse for people who know how to use the technology well, because I'm still feeling my way. So like, you're really into the apps on your phone and how they function? Probably it grabs you even more,

D Dave Leake 14:10

right? Yeah. So let me give context just for a second, then just so we know where this is going. This is not to say like, nobody should have a smartphone. Yeah, it's not to say that nobody should have social media. But it is to say, and even beyond social media, you know that nobody should watch YouTube or play video games. It's not that any of those things should not happen. But it's

J Jeff Leake 14:34

they're not they're not soul neutral. They're they have the potential of having a really negative effect on your, on your life. And so you can't look at them as if no big deal because it it isn't that it is a big deal in and of itself, like the actual function of social media or an enjoyable time playing video games, or watching Netflix. Binging through a show. Not all that's bad, right? But It can be bad.

D Dave Leake 15:00

It can be addictive before you realize you're addicted. I would say even even more. Okay, so

J Jeff Leake 15:05

now we're not talking sin. Right, right. We're talking sneaky

D Dave Leake 15:09

patterns of control over your life. And, you know, deficiencies that you actually might have in order to cope with things because of media addiction you might have. So, yeah, so, you know, the University of Michigan says that an estimated 210 million people worldwide suffer from an

addiction to social media and the internet. So that's, and then they say about 10% of Americans are addicted to social media compared to an average person. So that like, that probably feels a little low, I guess. I would think it's low. They think so addiction, the way they're talking about, it might be like, compulsive, yeah, it controls my life. Okay, I'm suffering negative. So

J Jeff Leake 15:49

what's the level? If 10% are like compulsively driven by this addiction? What's the level above that or below that? Or however you would describe it? It's not quite that level of addiction. But it is. It is.

D Dave Leake 16:05

I so there's no way I mean, I'm just speculating. But if I could speculate, I would guess most people that have access to digital media, if they have not done a thorough search are probably coping to some degree, using digital media, I would say, especially in the younger generations,

J Jeff Leake 16:24

so copings too soft. Yeah. What what is this? What is if it's not a full blown addiction? What is it it's sort of it is a life controlling life diminishing? Habit?

D Dave Leake 16:38

Right? Yeah.

J Jeff Leake 16:40

So it's a habit that is contributing to you feeling? Anxious, anxious, depressed, malaise?

D Dave Leake 16:48

Can we can we specify what I mean by this habit,

J Jeff Leake 16:51

though? Yeah, exactly. That's what I'm asking for. Yeah. Help us. Okay. What is it? The habit is because some people are like, I'm not addicted. But the real question isn't, are you addicted? Like compulsively addicted? Need to get checked into rehab? addicted? No, not at all. So so. So what is the problem if we're going to put a description on it?

D Dave Leake 17:13

The habit that we're describing is when you feel so I'll just describe different scenarios, you come home from a horrible day at work, and you just feel mentally fatigued, the first thing you do is to start scrolling, they call it Doom scrolling, where you're just like, okay, you know what, I mean, you're upset, and you're on your phone, and you're just like, in a black hole before you know it. Three hours have gone by where you're just scrolling through YouTube shorts. Nothing. Oh,

J Jeff Leake 17:40

it's especially the time not to post something if you're actually what did you call it again, Doom scrolling

D Dave Leake 17:45

too long post.

 17:46

There's a lot of people do Doom post, I guess that's true. Other

D Dave Leake 17:51

others, you know, you get in a fight with your spouse. You have a run in with in laws, and there's family tension, somebody's sick, or there's financial stressors, or whatever. And so it's like, you think about it, and you start feeling frustrated or anxious or upset or depressed. And so what you do is like, I just can't deal with this right now.

J Jeff Leake 18:12

Yeah. And so and then a lot of the content is also inflammatory. They're politically inflammatory. They are posting images that make you want to react to whatever you're happened to be seeing. So there's point of view, inflammatory perspectives that maybe not political, there's just points of view. And then you end up upset about stuff with your spouse and family. But then you're upset about stuff in the world on top of it, and you've just spent all this time stirring up. It's like you've fomented all this anxiety and frustration and your soul. And about this word? Yeah. Content dependent. Yeah, maybe not addicted. But you've become content dependent. Where it's becoming a it's become a soul sucking life sucking activity. That is not a full blown addiction. Yeah. But honestly, I guess the way you would test it is to say, I'm going to take a week and not do anything and then you would know

D Dave Leake 19:10

no TV. No internet, except for your work. Yeah, no. So

J

Jeff Leake 19:14

when people say I could quit if I wanted to say well, then go ahead once you take a week away from it, don't use social media for a week. Don't play any video games for a week. Don't Netflix binge for a week, find other activities to do and then ask yourself the question. Has this been a healthy contributor to my soul? Or has it been a diminishing contributor to my soul?

D

Dave Leake 19:34

Yeah, it has I think anybody can moderate but going cold turkey I'm not going to touch any of this at all. feels it's just a different level. Yeah, so So like the the habit that I just just kind of crystal crystallizes for a second we can talk about this discuss it. I think why we want to do this episode because we're having a discussion about this. It's really possible that Many of us are sort of avoiding the hardest things in life by running away, we you can even call it escapism. If you want to zoom Yeah, you know, we're running away, to numb ourselves out to not have to deal with emotions. It's not that we're not actually, you know, still in a situation, but rather than thinking about it, or doing anything productive to fix it, or having even just having to sit there and feel our feelings, instead of feeling them, we'd rather just numb them with a bunch of different type of dependence or addictive behaviors. Yeah, often revolving around content. I know people that probably,

J

Jeff Leake 20:38

well, porn is especially one of these vicious black holes you can enter. So it's not just your online, looking through funny videos of dog tricks, right? Now, all of a sudden, you've been, you know, roped into images, and you're searching for the next and searching for the next and searching for the next. And it's in it's a stronger dopamine hits, right that you're experiencing. And it's, and now you've really sucked yourself into something that's sinful. And addictive, right? I think some people would have similar problems with the addiction to shopping, like some people spend money on the internet. Because it also provides that hit of buying something you want, like you shop in shops, and then you buy, buy, buy, buy, buy, and you put yourself in a financial hole, because that is a way of coping with some things. So there's probably levels of intensity, depending upon what you're engaged with online. But either way, we have to admit that this is a very real, it's a very real, you know, and we are living in a time where there is a mental health crisis everywhere. And we have to admit that maybe part of the contributing factor to this is not just a stressful world, it's these kinds of rhythms that are part of our life, which are making our mental health way worse, no doubt. So you content addict, and then you go to a counselor to process your emotions. Yeah, right. But if you don't ever establish a healthier pattern of life, you're in a vicious cycle where you're never gonna get out of these emotional problems that are there. Because you're,

D

Dave Leake 22:14

you're processing a more specific health, you go to a counselor, because you have a mental health issues. But then every time you're feeling something intense, you need a high from

health issues. But then every time you're feeling something intense, you need a high from some sort of something. There's different ways to get high. And so we we're actually not helping our health, because we're avoiding it until we talk to a therapist. Yeah, therapist gives us steps, but it just is a slow process. And often it becomes just a state of being one

J Jeff Leake 22:37

step forward, two steps back. So let me describe eating your own momentum. Yeah,

D Dave Leake 22:41

let me describe for myself, like where I've been appoints. So I've realized is that you know, working as a pastor, sometimes a high stress job more for you than for me, for sure, you've dealt with way more than I. But

J Jeff Leake 22:53

I mean, so what we do in ministry, and I know we have a lot of people in ministry, who listen to this, so maybe you'll appreciate just hearing why your life is so stressed out. I mean, you can, you can go from preaching a message where you pour your heart You've prepared for, let's say, 10 to 20 hours, you just preached it, you didn't think it went so well, you leave feeling a little bit emotionally and physically depleted, then you maybe have someone in your in your own personal life, that you're, you're struggling with something at home, and you've had a little conflict, and then someone in your congregation dies, and you grieve yourself, you've got to be present, maybe with someone at the hospital, and they've just, they've just died and you're standing there with a grieving family, then you got to deal with that funeral. And then you stop in to realize that the income in your church wasn't what you thought it would be. And so now you got to have some kind of budget cut. And you're you're feeling like how am I going to cut this because I got this big outreach plan down the road and, and you know, then you show up at an event not every volunteer comes in. So now you're scrambling around and physically exhausted, you get home and your wife says, I thought you're gonna be home a lot earlier. I was planning on that. And so it's it's a constant moving activity thing. And then it's also very spiritual, where you're trying to help people take steps with God, or you're praying them through on things. So it's, it's exhausting. I love it. I love being in ministry. I'm not in any way complaining. But I am saying that from a soul health perspective, we do need extra measures of making sure that we're doing the right things in our spare time because you can't afford to dig yourself another hole. There's enough things pulling out of you. If you keep digging yourself another hole through content addiction, how are you ever gonna make let's get let's

D Dave Leake 24:34

get back into my story because yes, that's a good description, honestly, like, I would say most of the things you said I have experienced in the last like three months, like some of them, probably half of them in the last two weeks. Like I was like, oh, when you were first going through all those letters like that, that literally just happened to me like a lot of that stuff. somebody's dying and all this different. You know what I mean? And anyway, so for me what I do Even if it wasn't just all that stuff, I think anybody in a high stress job can relate the pressure

that I was feeling to perform, and to do a good job and be respected and grow my ministry and stuff. I think, overall, because I've been doing this for a little more than 10 years, I guess now. So, like, there's been times when the pressure has just been really intense. And there's other family stuff happening. And it has been, like, the only thing I want to do when I get home is just stop thinking about work, or stop thinking about what I'm dealing with. And so, you know, maybe I'd be with my wife, and then we would watch TV or she'd do something else. I'm watching TV, or I'm playing video games where I'm reading, literally 20 Steelers and Chelsea news articles, which I'd still that's what they got to they got me to delete this because I probably read 25 articles, it helps when they're winning. Yeah. And they're both just doing okay. So but for me, so I found myself like, like, just have, like, I was really dumping myself into hours and hours where I you know, it was like, I'm doing something enjoyable. I'm doing something somewhat fun. But like, before I know it like I do I say it like the whole night's gone. You know, and I really haven't done

J Jeff Leake 26:16

you're like, I don't even want to go to bed because I have to get up tomorrow. Yes.

D Dave Leake 26:19

Oh my god. No, but seriously, like, you're joking about that. But then I'm like, Oh, I

 26:23

can't believe the night's already this point. So I'm gonna stay up and play video games still three? And yeah, I know you're tired. And

D Dave Leake 26:30

you're losted Yeah, and you wake up the next morning, and then you're dreading it. And it's like, Oh, my goodness, no way to live. And I've lived there for I mean, not not that recently, but in the last few years I've been there. I've had seasons like that. So like this is okay. So personal steps that I've recently taken, because I felt like God has asked me to, one of the things that I did was, and this is not an how to guide that I think anybody else needs to feel pressure to follow because I think this just came out of like prayer and assessment of where my heart has been, and of what my patterns are. So I'll just say my wife is not a fan of video games. She doesn't hate them. But like, she definitely dislikes them at least like whatever the below hate is. She's just tolerant, but she doesn't like them. I like video games. I still do. I don't I don't think they're horrible. I have a lot of fun playing with my friends. I know I'm 32 of a dad, maybe I shouldn't be playing video games anyway, what I found was No,

J Jeff Leake 27:28

I don't think that at all your generation grew up on them. It's like what my generation did with sitcoms and TV shows. I mean, still, that's still out there and available. I don't think there's any

anything inherently wrong with how some video games, maybe sure. But but so anyway,

D Dave Leake 27:44

I'll fast forward. So I just said I kind of felt convicted from like the way that I would numb myself. So one of the things I did was got rid of all social media, which wasn't a huge thing for me, I've kind of been phasing out for years, and then I'll hop back in for a little bit than a back end. But one thing I just did, actually yesterday was for a few months, I'd sort of been feeling like I should sell my PlayStation like, and because, again, I don't think it's bad to have it. But it was one of those things that it was like, just a really easy way for me to. Anytime there's pressure without really thinking about just cope for a little bit. I'm like, I'm not even really cool. So

J Jeff Leake 28:23

you removed a trigger,

D Dave Leake 28:24

I removed it, I removed an outlet to numb myself. Okay, you know, I removed one source of, it's really not for me about time wasting.

J Jeff Leake 28:34

It would not necessarily if someone's listening to this, I wouldn't have to necessarily sell it. You could just put it in the closet for a while if you sure didn't want to as long as you didn't have the magnetism to pull it out and break your own commitment. But yeah, okay,

D Dave Leake 28:47

that's, that's kind of so I am sort of trying to step into this. I feel like I tend to be somebody that if I'm not careful. I can just avoid, like I'm a very even keeled person. I don't have a whole lot of high highs or low lows. But part of why I do that as I think I avoid my I avoid pressure is not that I run from it in a work context. But when I have to come home rather than processing it, I tend to just I

J Jeff Leake 29:14

love the word that you use there. I think that fits this content, addition, diction discussion, you numbed yourself out.

D Dave Leake 29:21

It's a are you dull yourself, whatever you call yourself out? Yeah. So it's like a painkiller. So

it's a are you do it yourself, whatever you call yourself out? Yeah. So it's like a painkiller. So instead of having to feel the pain of pressure, I just take a couple of PlayStation Advils you know, and it like takes away the pressure headache for a little bit like but that would just

J Jeff Leake 29:36
be but it doesn't deal with it or remove Oh, it

D Dave Leake 29:39
definitely doesn't. It

J Jeff Leake 29:39
doesn't replenish.

D Dave Leake 29:41
No it. In fact, for me, I would often feel more drained and it would build and build and build until I would be just like, exasperated and frustrated and when's the season going to come to an end? Oh, my goodness. And I realized it wasn't just because of the situation I would be in it was because of the way that I was handling it and coping.

J Jeff Leake 29:58
So So What's the replacement activity? Because it's one thing to get rid of the numbing effect from a, from a habit. But then you have to replace it with something. Okay, so that it isn't so that it becomes healthy. Yeah.

D Dave Leake 30:17
I think one of the things that you have to Okay. I don't know if this is exactly answering your question, but I'm just talking through my process so

J Jeff Leake 30:26
that we can have this counseling session right here. Yeah, for everyone to hear. Yeah.

D Dave Leake 30:31
One of the things I've had to do is, it's not necessarily a replacement, but it's just to realize like, it's healthy. Do you have to actually sit in whatever I'm dealing with, okay. Not avoid life. Like

sometimes me feeling discomfort, emotionally, or mentally or whatever, about the stuff that I'm going through? It's not, it's not going to kill me to feel bad for a while. And honestly, it's driven me to have to pray more. Yeah. Because one of my only healthy outlets that I have now, I'm not going to use media escapism, because I'm like, Well, I'm either talking to somebody or I'm gonna pray about this and talking to somebody only helps so much, and some people don't get it and you're talking. And that's like, Ah, I think I think it's another way to cope is just to ask everybody else, you know, that to listen to be processed. I'm a verbal processor. But I think one of the things it's done is it's driven me to to have to have more time praying and releasing and declaring the promises of God over my life.

J Jeff Leake 31:28

That sounds really, really spiritual, though. So So let's maybe break it down a little bit from that. So for me, so I don't have the same guests trigger things that you would have because I never played video games. I played Mario Kart with you guys growing up it was my you get dizzy? Micro toolkit, the new graphics on the Mario craft to play the really old Mario 64 or whatever. Yeah, Nintendo 64. So I don't ever really play video games, computer games or anything like that. I grew up watching TV like crazy in a mind numbing way. But that's probably not as big of an issue for me. Now maybe my phone is the thing I need to be convicted about, and think about. But for me, getting some coaching slash counseling, one of the things that that my coach said to me was, you need you need some identified soul replenishing activities that you built into your life. And we and I determined there are two things that I really love. One is being outside and taking a long walk. I know it's boring. But when I get that way, Dave that you're describing, and I need to pray and process some things. For me now unco sit in a room somewhere and pray although sometimes I guess I do. I take me out for an hour walk. Yeah. And I don't listen often what I do, I don't listen to anything. I just walk around. And I let my mind and heart sort of slowly think through and process through things. It's not like I'm intensely Oh, God, please heal me kind of think it's more just creating the space and the solitude to be able to do it. The second thing was, I like driving around in my jeep, especially in warm weather with the the top the rooftop off. So those two things for me become replenishing activities. I think there is a good thing to have something right away to get away and have those soul replenishing activities.


D Dave Leake 33:28


Yeah, you know. So you mentioned hurry sickness as a part of Yeah, the so title earlier, which I think kind of has a lot to do with what drives us towards Oh, there


J Jeff Leake 33:37


is. Yeah, so there's a great book that you ingest turned me on to the ruthless elimination of hurry by John Mark Comer, John Mark Comer. And at Allison Park church, as we go into the brand new year, we're going to actually do a weekend series, we're going to call it ancient habits, current stress. And we're gonna go through the four ancient habits that he describes in his book that are the solution, I think, to content addiction, and hurry sickness. So let's describe hurry sickness, hurry sickness, according to John Ortberg. I think he quoted this and in his book, the life he always wanted is the constant pressure to do more and more things in less and less


time, often in the face of opposition, real or imagined. And I think he said, with a consequence of, of feeling battle validated in your life or something like that. So we're all living in a hurry. And here's six symptoms he gives for hurry sickness. You're constantly speeding up daily activities. So

 Dave Leake 34:39
is this John Mark comer.

 Jeff Leake 34:40
This is John Ortberg. Okay. You're multiple, you're multitasking. Your life is cluttered. You feel like you're living on the surface. There's a sense of superficiality. Because of that you have a growing inability to love and process things with people and then you have something he calls sunset fatigue, which is, when we're just too tired, too drained or too preoccupied to love the people to whom we have made the deepest promises, hurry prevents us from receiving love from the Father in heaven, or giving it to his children. And so he has the statement, you have to ruthlessly eliminate. Hurry from your life. Yeah,

 Dave Leake 35:24
there's a microphone on the chapter where he talks about some of the symptoms of various thicknesses. Go ahead. Yeah, he's work. Some of these were convicting. Oh, boy, he was saying, Okay, so moving from one checkout line to another because it looks shorter, faster, counting the cars in front of you and either getting in that lane as least, or is going the fastest multitasking the point of where you forget other tasks, like, basically like he's saying, like getting mad or irritated over all these things that slow us down, even just for a millisecond. So here are 10 symptoms that John Mark has of hurry sickness. Irritability is where you get mad, frustrated or annoyed way too easily. He says hypersensitivity, I'll take some minor comments hurt your feelings of grumpy email that set you off for a little turn events to throw you into emotional funk. ruin your date, restlessness. When he tried to slow down you actually can't relax. workaholism or just non stop activity, you don't know how to stop emotional numbness, out of order priorities, lack of care for your body, escapist behaviors, slippage of spiritual disciplines, and then isolation Sheesh.

 36:28
So it's like, Oh,

 Dave Leake 36:32
when I when I first read this, the first chapter in reverse elimination of hurry I was I sort of had my eyes like popping out of my head. Because I don't know that every single one of those describe me perfectly, but probably 80%. You know what I mean? Were something that I would struggle with pretty often. So

J Jeff Leake 36:49

there's this article, I'll pull it up here. Now it's on. It's from a site called masterclass.com. And they said, What are the causes of hurry sickness? Fundamentally, it is repetitive thoughts of being behind not accomplishing enough, which increased stress and anxiety and cause hurry sickness, constantly checking digital devices, and comparing accomplishments to others on social media, our modern day behaviors to help lay the groundwork for this thought and behavior pattern. Right. So John, Mark Comer talks about these four ancient habits that are built into the Christian way of living, that oftentimes we neglect, one is having a weekly Sabbath. Second, is the principle of slowing, purposely slowing your life down, rather than speeding it up. And number three, is simplicity, simplicity, which is a little bit like slowing, but it's just, you know, decluttering having living a life that has less on purpose, yeah, not always running after more, more more about everything, and trying to simplify so that you don't end up spending energy in ways that are sideways. I

D Dave Leake 37:57

think, I think the the thing with simplicity to that would be was convicting for me, let's say, is the need to have to buy stuff like he was talking a lot about just, you know, our consumerist economy, like we don't have the latest mice or car, big vacation, new shoes, new phone, you know, like, but just, there's like a drive a desire that we're falling behind. And so we need so simplicity is intentionally having less and slowing down our consumer, you know, activities, basically. Then

J Jeff Leake 38:30

the final one is solitude, silence and solitude, silence and solitude, which is, for an introvert like me, I love that when, in fact, being introverted, makes, I think, gets me naturally moving towards breaking this content addiction problem, simply because I love to withdraw and evaluate where my soul is, and process that until until I feel better. I'm

D Dave Leake 38:55

not so sure, though, that that's actually a benefit for most introverts. Really. Yeah. I mean, if you're thinking about content addiction, what are most introverts doing when they're by themselves? That's true, you know, it's not that they're not eating or cooking or but often it's content, some form, okay?

J Jeff Leake 39:11

Because you'd rather it's taking your introverted ness and aiming in the right direction, then I guess, which is towards silence and solitude rather than mind numbing activities.



D Dave Leake 39:20

So silence and solitude is one of those practices that I'd never have done. Yeah. Like, I just not a part of my life.

J Jeff Leake 39:26

I'm great at that. Oh, man. In fact, as growing up well, with you guys growing up with five kids, I was always in pursuit of so.

D Dave Leake 39:36

Yeah, I never felt like enough. Oh, Mike, your younger brother was just laughing. Because he was like, remember how you guys used to tell us like whenever you take a long drive, like we'd say, how was the car? I didn't say I was fine. Like what you talked about nothing that told us we had no topic. It was either it was simply like no talking, because you'd be like, nobody can say a peep no bags. crinkling no moving No. Just the your seat belt

 40:00

only way of surviving. So you're not supposed to tell my secrets.

D Dave Leake 40:05

People love the secret that we'd have sometimes hours of silence all

 40:10

right beside somebody else. Let's see who can win the silent game it was enforced.

D Dave Leake 40:19

Good times. Yeah. I don't miss that though. But besides, besides that, like I it's not really up. It's there's no normal part of my life where I just am totally away from any noise. And don't have my phone on me. Yeah. And I'm not because the thing about silence is you're not even talking. You're not listening to background music. There's no Lo Fi. It's just like, yeah,

J Jeff Leake 40:40

because you know, a lot of people don't know what to do with that. In fact, as soon as they people get home, they turn on something. Yeah, they turn on music, they turn on television, they turn on something. So it's in the background. Because silence is a bit scary for people, then you start to think, and then you start to feel, and then you feel bored, and you're on and

then you feel distraught. And then you feel so but actually you're designed to feel all of those things, because you've got to process them. Because the lie is if I turn on some noise or numb my mind out that all of this is going to go away, and it doesn't go away. It just compounds. Yeah. So whatever is going on inside you, if you don't slow down enough and get enough quiet, to process it appropriately. And it just builds up on you. It starts the backup. And next thing you know, it's starting to come out of your life in other ways. And so this is a big part of the mental health and just going for an hour counseling session doesn't resolve that bad health rhythm pattern that you have, you got to get yourself into a pattern where you can, you know, recover and replenish. So



41:48

talking about the four disciplines, our goal is to start the new year



Jeff Leake 41:51

intensely reviewing these four things, Sabbath, simplicity, solitude, and slowing. And we're going to we're going to use the entire month to start the new year, which is also a time when we do some fasting and praying. And I'll just tell you, even in this conversation, Dave, I think at least a week of my season in January, needs to be because I always set aside food. And we did a recent podcast on why why fasting or why fasting is necessary, right? I actually think for at least a week I need to unplug my phone. Yeah. Just to see probably just to see the effect it has on my life.



Dave Leake 42:31

Like because it all up because except for your your calls or something. Yeah,



Jeff Leake 42:35

because I may be, I may be more addicted to my phone than I realize, to that device, or at least dependent upon maybe addicted to strong, maybe a little bit dependent upon it. And need to figure out how to break that. Yeah. Because I do think there's an ultimate goal here, which is to live not in dread, but enjoy Yes. To live not where you're constantly running away from the last set of problems you had or the pressure that you feel. But to live knowing. I'm where I'm supposed to be doing I'm supposed to do be doing with the people I'm supposed to be doing with in a god pleasing way. I'm filled with the Holy Spirit, I know what I'm supposed to what I'm called to and I'm just doing my best. And every moment of every day, I'm just drinking in the pleasure of being alive. And being able to be where I am with the people in with like there is a way to enjoy your life. That is that is this where we want to want to get to



Dave Leake 43:34

yeah, get Can I Can I throw out some of that we've talked about this before, but this is just helpful to frame it. Because I want to make sure that the importance of this is coming across, you know, there's a theory among like in addiction research. As for for addicts of any kind, but

you know, there's a theory among like in addiction research. As for for addicts of any kind, but let's just let's just say, you know, drug addicts or alcohol, alcoholics is probably a little bit easier to illustrate the point that like the minute an alcoholic begins to start coping with alcohol is the minute they stop emotionally maturing. So if somebody started your growth right there, so if you if you started coping at 12, then even if you're 45 in some ways, you have the emotional maturity in terms of coping that a 12 year old would have because you didn't have to develop the skills that people have to have to process and cope with difficulties in life without this. So like, I know, we're not talking about specific like substances. But I think my personal theory is that a huge, huge it's not the entire reason why there's a mental health epidemic. But I would say like maybe a massive contributing factor is the fact that we are all coping with content. We're all therefore as



44:47

old in our minds. Yeah. earlier.



Dave Leake 44:49

I mean, how early How early do kids nowadays start having an iPad like to oh, you know,



Jeff Leake 44:55

goodness. Often you know, when you said that David also reminds me of the fact that a big part of getting victory or sobriety, in your life, as a person who is dealing with some kind of substance addiction is to go through 12 steps, a lot of people have gotten freed from needing to do a ruthless inventory of their lives. And then to go and make amends for things that you've this is all what you would call maturing. So sometimes I think the AAA process is these 12 steps are really helping us learn what maturity looks like in dealing with your problems and, and your failings. And so it's going through the, the what makes you healthy as a person, not just how do I stay free from the substance? No doubt, maybe maybe everybody could benefit from the from a 12 step journey? Yeah.



45:42

No, don't get free from content.



Dave Leake 45:44

Well, anybody that's already been through a 12 step journey, the advantage that they have is they're aware of what addiction feels like, yeah, it's easy to recognize other forms of your life. But yeah, so I guess like, in closing, is



Jeff Leake 45:56

it possible. Dave, when we're recommending that, so maybe you can you can reflect on this?

it possible, Dave, when we're recommending that, so maybe you can you can reflect on this. When you start to pull back from it all? Do you feel a sense of withdrawal? like you would with some kind of substance? Totally. Okay.

D Dave Leake 46:10

I think I think the thing that you feel first and foremost is bored and frustrated. Like, what am I most What do I do with my time? Like, this is what like, I'm just sitting here, like, bored and frustrated. And then often, like, for me, anyway, then then comes a lot of the anxiety of things that I've been avoiding. And like, because like this is this is, this is part of why subconsciously, I've probably been doing all this stuff is to not feel what's coming now that follows boredom and frustration. What

J Jeff Leake 46:41

happens when you deal with the anxiety and the pressure? Do you ever get on the other side of that? Absolutely.

D Dave Leake 46:45


I feel like for me, looking back now, I feel like there are periods of my life where I felt like I was sleepwalking. I didn't know I was sleepwalking. You know, I didn't have any idea that anything was not normal. I felt like there's just a normal way to process things. It's like, I'm still dealing with it. I'm not avoiding my life. I'm still working a job, I still have like, you know, like, like nothing in my life was blowing up. But I was definitely sort of there was a part of me that was just vacant, and I would only deal with it when it would blow up.

J Jeff Leake 47:18

So you know, one, this is one of the things about a dependency or an addiction is that nobody Dave would have looked at you and said, Oh, he's content addicted? No. I mean, no one would say, Oh, he's got a problem with his phone like, don't, you know, sort of whispering Oh, here he comes. That's the phone dependent dude. I think the reality of it is, it's just so common, it's so common, that almost you become unusual, if you aren't dependent in some way on some of this stuff. And frankly, like, by the way, let me just say for people who are my age and older, many of that generation is not dependent on their phone, or on video game. But they are addicted to the news cycle. Oh, definitely. And they perpetually watch whatever their favorite news programming is. And it that constant. Here's what's coming next. Here's what's coming next they, in our next segment, we're going to talk about this world problem is the same kind of dopamine hit that other things have. And I have walked into rooms of family members over the last number of years and said, You need to turn that off. Because I can tell it's making you nervous. And and I actually think for people that are not in the video game generation, the 24 hour news channel is your version of content addiction.

D Dave Leake 48:40


There's a really good book I read on that by a guy named Matt Taibbi. It was his book was called hate ink, I think. And it was all about the creation of modern the modern news cycle. to actually do what you're talking about it stimulates dopamine hits it actually because it also triggers like adrenaline. Yeah. Because the way that news is framed intentionally, it's to be sold and to be marketed. And the more fear you generate, the more people are actually like dependent on hearing what's happening, what the possible solutions are like. So

 Jeff Leake 49:11

I actually mentioned this in my message this past weekend at the Hampton campus and I had a gentleman that I met for the first time after service and he came up to me said, You described my life. He said, I watched constantly and often think to myself, you are raising like a red alarm fire. Like this is one of the worst things ever, and it's gonna destroy the whole world. And I think to myself, What am I supposed to do?

 49:36


And I'm like, yeah, it's it's so

 Jeff Leake 49:37

it makes you feel so powerless. But they do keep you watching because they it's almost like life and death depends on this next news thing that you're gonna hear. Yeah. And it just keeps you engaged in something that is destructive to your soul. So maybe for you when we go into the month of January, it's not removing your phone from your life. It's to turn off whatever the news station is. That's your News of choice and into purpose to go a week finding other sources for what

 Dave Leake 50:05

I mean. Let me throw another quick other book out there because I don't know who like anybody takes my recommendations. But there I always have this thinking

 Jeff Leake 50:11

with everything you got going on and you got a new baby. When did you find time to read?

 Dave Leake 50:17


These last couple of years I listened to

 50:20

Yeah, while playing your PlayStation you're listening to No, this is probably while I'm washing the dishes or doing laundry. It's still a form of addiction. Like I'm like, I can't have silence. You know, do whatever benefiting from that. Yeah, reading all this material.

 Dave Leake 50:34

So So hey, because it was about like the eighth in Kate Inc. Like incorporated by Matt Taibbi. That's about like, how the new cycles have so he was he was a former he I think he is still he leans liberal. But he was formerly like a journalist, primarily writing for like democratic outlets. But like he kind of just comes at both sides of the political aisle to say that major news media is actually selling and making tons of money off of our fear and creating intentional, actually hatred and animosity towards the other parties just because it actually sparks business. That was one thing that it's fascinating, like when he goes through all the all know

 Jeff Leake 51:15


that, but he probably has the research to back it up, right?

 Dave Leake 51:18

Yeah. And it makes you go oh, like maybe not everybody that I thought was a dirtbag really is a derby. Like maybe there's a bunch of people that are making lots of money off of false things to get us mad. Oh, no. So that that was one thing. The other the other flipside of this. It's called fact fulness by a guy named Hans Rosling. And he talks about in his book, how often, like facts and statistics are used in an exaggerated exaggerated manner, where they don't present what's actually happening. Because if you don't present it as extreme, people don't

 51:53

feel like so. So what he says is based on

 Jeff Leake 51:55

I just sat through a whole session on someone doing exactly that. No, it wasn't that none. It wasn't that what was being said was it was untrue. Yes, yeah. It just was so slanted. Yes. It never presented the counter argument to say, now this is true. But this is also true.

 Dave Leake 52:11

And here's what so fact fulness is all about this, he says we do two things can be true, something can still be a major problem. And it can be getting much better than it was before. And both can be true at the same time. But But what he's saying is often happening is every problem as is being pitched as if it's worsening, even though most major world problems are

much better today than they were before. Yeah, like most things actually aren't getting worse. They're mostly getting better. But it feels like everything is blowing up in flames. And so he has statistics that go through this and what we need to understand about

J Jeff Leake 52:44

that could be a whole episode right there. Just that particular topic. Yeah,

D Dave Leake 52:48

it was it was a fascinating read. Because isn't

J Jeff Leake 52:50

that hopeful? Things are actually getting better than not getting worse in most cases. Now, there's some situations that are worse, no doubt. Yeah. But okay, how do we, how do we tie this one out? So as we

D Dave Leake 53:00

close, I feel like I've kind of randomly flipping where I have the information guy for this episode. Me, which is weird, but I guess as we close, like, my thoughts would be, it is worth this year, examining whether you're living your life and a little bit of a sleepwalk, super, because if you are, it doesn't like you might be going through some really difficult things, it's just best to face them head on and to live life feeling alive. And to not cope with addictive or dependent types of ways to process things. I understand pressure sucks. And it's hard and feeling, you know, pain and men uncertainty and not sharing, not being sure of how things are going to turn out all that difficult. But like we naturally were created as people like God created us as people that can process things where it doesn't have to become a mental health epidemic for us. And I think that one of the worst things to do is just the numb ourselves out. So it's just worth taking, taking some time to like, assess, and to slow down a little bit, to try to get healthy mentally. And emotionally.

J Jeff Leake 54:05

Actually, there's a there's a little scripture I'll insert here at the end, I know where at the end, I'm not going to do long. But I think it's Luke chapter 10 or 11. Jesus says that Martha and Mary's house, and he says to Martha, Martha, Martha, you're worried and distracted about so many things. And I think that that is what Jesus might say to us today. You know, you're worried and distracted about so many things. But only one thing is needed. And Mary has chosen to power down right now. And here she is, sitting in my presence and enjoying this moment. I wish he would do that, Martha right. So so maybe Jesus would look at you and say, what is it I think it's Matthew chapter 10. Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and I'll give you rest. Take my yoke upon me and learn learn from me. Because I'm, I'm humble in heart. I'm dependent on my father, right and you'll gain rest For your soul, Jesus does have rest for your

soul, there is there is a pathway forward for you. God's presence is more than enough, his grace is sufficient. But if you don't access all that, you will benefit from it. And if you're busy numbing yourself out, you'll never receive the grace for the things that you feel on the inside. And God wants to release that into your life today. Good. Yeah, that's

D

Dave Leake 55:23

good. Great. Well, hopefully this was beneficial to you. And again, we just want to say as we always do, thank you for being a part of the show. Thanks for listening faithfully, if you could help us out and in any way in this, you know, season of giving, you could give back to us. You know, not monetarily, but just in terms of helping to share this, you know, you can like and subscribe on YouTube, hit the notification bell if you want to do that. If you're listening on Spotify, or on Apple podcasts, you can subscribe. And also, you know, we talked about this, but if you can leave us a review, especially five star review actually helps us to be a little bit more visible and more known people can find this easier. And as always, you can also share this with a friend, but any of that would really help us out. So we appreciate you being with us this year, almost into the next year. 2024. So yeah, thanks for being with us. I guess we'll catch you guys next time.