COURSE TITLE: **FREEING DIGITAL PRISONERS: Reconnecting with ourselves and others**

WA CLOCK HRS: 60
OREGON PDUs: 60
NO. OF CREDITS: **6 QUARTER CREDITS** **PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48: 60**
[semester equivalent = 4.00 credits]

INSTRUCTOR: **Charity Staudenraus**
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
"If we have lost control over our relationship with smartphones, it is by design. To ensure that our eyes remain firmly glued to our screens, our smartphones – and the digital worlds they connect us to – internet giants have become little virtuosos of persuasion, cajoling us into checking them again and again – and for longer than we intend. Add it all up and North American users spend somewhere between three and five hours a day looking at their smartphones." - Eric Andrew-Gee

In the words of Simon Sinek, "I love technology. I think there is nothing wrong with technology. It is about the balance." This course is designed to help you find that balance for yourself and access new resources to share that balance with your students. The written text is Disconnected by Thomas Kersting which is available via Amazon or Barnes & Noble for $9.99 and additional materials are available at no charge online. This course is recommended for Pre-K-12 educators.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The book, *Disconnected,* by Thomas Kersting was rereleased in August of 2020.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

- A solid understanding of the science behind our obsessive need to check our devices.
- Knowledge of the apps, programs, etc. available to help us reduce screentime.
- A deeper appreciation for time spent being present.
- Working knowledge of the resources available for educators to discuss this issue with students, educators, and parents.
- Options for mitigating our screentime and maximizing our connections with ourselves and others.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

HOURS EARNED:
Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION

REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT
Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)
Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

REQUIRED TEXT
Disconnected: How To Protect your Kids from the Harmful Effects of Device Dependency

ISBN# 1540900304
by Mr. Thomas J Kersting

Publisher: Baker Books

None. All reading is online.

MATERIALS FEE
Under $15.00 on Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION
Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.
Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

Assignment #1: COURSE FORUM: Introduction
According to the market-research group Nielsen, adults are spending over 11 hours per day interacting with screens. In 2016 (I'm sure the numbers have increased) Common Sense Media reported that teens spent an average of 9 hours per day on their devices, NOT including time spent for school or homework. Kids 8-12 were found to spend 6 hours per day interacting with media and kids 2-5 were averaging 32 hours per week.

Complete the following:

- Read the Introduction (pages i to iii) in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected.
- Watch the Levi Wolff video, you'll need to scroll down the page a bit to find it.
- View Sherry Turkle at TED2012 Connected, but alone?
- View this photo essay as a Photographer removes smartphones to show our strange and lonely new world

Respond in 450-500 words with your own perspective and relationship with screens. What is your reason for taking this course? Is there something in the Introduction that has you excited to read this book? Did you connect with something in either the Levi Wolff video or the TED Talk?

Assignment #2: Acquired Deficit of Attention

The idea for this course was born out of the responses from the remarkable teachers who have taken my **Happiness** and **Making the World a Better Place** courses. In our correspondence, it became abundantly clear that screen time is impacting happiness and the ability to make priorities for educators and students whether they are in preschool or college. The CDC reported that about 9.4 percent of children (6.1 million) in the US between 2 to 17 have been diagnosed with ADHD with rates increasing both among children and adults. ADHD is now the most common neurodevelopmental disorder in childhood. Raising a child with ADHD costs five times more than raising a child without the condition. The CDC is exploring everything from poor nutrition to genetics. In this chapter Thomas Kersting digs into Dr Gary Small's research at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA to explore the link between technology and ADHD.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 1 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected.
- Watch Study: Heavy smartphone usage linked to ADHD in teens
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/-Or41b7ZfA4?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch: Brain Hacking
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/awAMTQZmvPE?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch: Gen Z and the end of our Humanity

https://www.youtube.com/embed/QpB4bNqvA_M

- Read Dopamine, Smartphones & You: A battle for your time
- Read The first generations of 'digi kids' are struggling with literacy

Respond in 450-500 words including your perspective on the comparison of the 45-year-old alcoholic and Jan, the 24-year-old millennial. Include your own perspective and the points that hit home from the chapter and the resources above.

Assignment #3: The Equivalent of a Full-Time Job on Screens
The ramifications of excessive screen use are vast whether we are talking about lack of fine and gross motor skills, tech neck, head horns, eye strain, or distractibility.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 2 of Thomas Kersting's Disconnected.
- Read MRIs show screen time linked to lower brain development in preschools
- Read Screen Use Tied to Children's Brain Development
- Review this research roundup and find at least one study that pertains to you.
- Watch this Nature Valley ad

https://player.vimeo.com/video/133769368
Nature Valley | 3 Generations from Fort York VFX on Vimeo.

- View this Visual Essay by Christopher Lee and Aparna Nancherla.
- View Time to Put Away Fortnite???
- View How has the pandemic impacted screentime?

In your 450-500 word response include a reflection on the topics discussed above as well as your personal perspective on how screen time impacts the ability to focus on a task that requires intense concentration. What information was surprising or new to you? Was there a specific passage in the book or portion of the resources that resonated with you?

Assignment #4: Who Needs a Self-Esteem When You've got Social Media?
FOMO or Fear of Missing Out is vastly exacerbated by Social Media. Twenty years ago you might hear about a party on Monday and wish you'd been invited. Today, thanks to social media, you could see pictures, get notifications, and be constantly reminded that you weren't invited before, during, and after an event. As an adult, it is easier to put all of this in context, but as a young person, it can feel like you've been ostracized. Among young people, the use of social media is seen as necessary in order to be invited to important events and not using that media constantly can lead to FOMO.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 3 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected
- Read Middle School Misfortunes Then and Now, One Teacher's Take
- Read Social Media and the 24 Hour News Cycle is Depressing a Generation

- Read and Watch The Dangers of Social Media Addiction
- This site takes a deep dive with some resources you may find helpful THE DANGERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR TEENS
- Watch or Listen to Dr. Cal Newport's TED Talk, Quit Social Media
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/3E7hkPZ-HTk?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch or Listen to the interview with Johann Hari The Loneliness Epidemic
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/m3aIQuMWJCA?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0

In your 450-500 word response include a reflection on the 24/7 world of social media that is following our children home from school and following us everywhere we go. Reflect on your own insights on FOMO, warning signs, and the consequences of being this "connected".

Assignment #5: Multitasking or an inability to complete any tasks?
At first, I was surprised to see the reference to Emotional Intelligence 2.0 by Dr. Travis Bradberry in this book, but on further reflection, it is apparent that there is a clear correlation between the increase in screen time and the need for Emotional Intelligence lessons in our classrooms. For years the ability to multitask was applauded, but it turns out that when we attempt to multitask we often lose the ability to focus and complete a single important task.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 4 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected. Here is the link referenced at the bottom of page 36: http://bit.ly/M9rlws
- Read How Screen Time Creates Kid 'Dopamine Addicts'
- Read Your Smartphone Reduces Your Brainpower, Even If It's Just Sitting There
- Read These Are The Long-Term Effects of Multitasking
- Watch Passion, Priorities, Persevereance
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/SlsyY46-y4o?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0

In your 450-500 word response include your reflection on Professor Nash's research into multitasking. Please include your response to the multiple studies referenced in this chapter including Jeff Guo, Psychological Science, and Common Sense Media. Reflect on the additional resources included above including how you can utilize this information.

Assignment #6: The Disconnect
In 2018, American's spent over $43 billion on video games. On average, children play video games for 2.13 hours a day with eight percent playing more than 5 hours a day. The average American video gamer is 33 years old and prefers to play on their smartphone. Of the $43.4 billion spent in 2018 the bulk wen to content, with gaming systems making up less than a quarter of that total. Nearly 65 percent of US adults play games A study by NPD Group has determined that 91% of kids aged 2-17 play video games either on consoles, phones, tablets, or computers.

Complete the following:

- Reach Chapter 5 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected
- Watch "I want my ipad". I am not condoning parents filming children's tantrums as I believe strongly in the autonomy of individuals regardless of their age, but I believe it is important for us to inform ourselves and discuss the impact of this screen time not only on the toddler years but the impact as these young people grow older.
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/5fXZ7Hp-Z8E?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch My Gaming Addiction Left Me Homeless
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/l5Uq6_XS_YQ?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch Real Sports with Bryan Gumbel: Video Game Addiction
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/Mee6QRN_Vxs?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0

In your 450-500 word response include a reflection on video games including your own experience, your opinions regarding the chapter, and what you would add after reviewing the resources.

Assignment #7: Long-distance Parenting
The benefits of an undistracted family dinner are numerous. There is even an amazing group you can check out The Family Dinner Project for ideas, advice, and the benefits of carving out uninterrupted time. Unfortunately, in one study carried out by the Boston Medical Center, 73% of adults observed were using a mobile device continuously during a meal. Childhood injury is on the rise despite major safety improvements. Dr. Ari Brown uses the term "distracted parenting" to describe the growing problem.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 6 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected
- View these videos: Daily News Video and Australian Public Broadcast
-

https://www.youtube.com/embed/ge_Wa6azMpA?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Read Parenting While Distracted
- Watch Potential risks of sharing kids' photos online
- Watch Parents oversharing on social
- Watch What you are missing while being a digital zombie
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/TAIxb42FjwE?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0

In your 450-500 word response, write a reflection on the chapter, including the author's perspective regarding parenting, coaching, family time, and the dinner table. Specifically address the statement "Folks, if we put our minds to it…all we need to do is to learn a little self-control and teach this to our children." What information was surprising or new to you in the book and the resources above? Was there a specific passage in the book or portion of the resources that resonated with you?

Assignment #8: Handheld Devices and a Lack of Social-Emotional Learning
As educators, we know that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence are able to manage themselves and better relate to their peers. Is it just by chance that as screen time has risen we've also seen a growing need for Social-Emotional lessons in the classroom?

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 7 of Thomas Kersting's Disconnected
- Read this article by 14-year-old Sonia Bokhari
- Read Technovoidance: Managing Difficult Feelings with Devices
- Read What Happened When I Made My Students Turn Off Their Phones
- Watch: Two Questions to End Bully for Good
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/p433K12rjPE?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch Jordan Matter's "Unstoppable" series following the inspiring story of Lizzy Howell
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/EgTshfSvM0A

In your 450-500 word response include a reflection on Daniel Goleman's "mixed model" for emotional intelligence and Peter Gray's summary on the state of emotional resilience in today's young people. In your response, include your own insights into the importance of social skills. Reflect on how Sonia's words can remind parents to be role models in social-emotional health. Reflect on how technology has changed social-emotional learning and what gave you hope in the provided resources.

Assignment #9: Leaders Not Followers
"Any fool can do something cool and look cool, but it takes skill to make something uncool cool again." ? Criss Jami, Killosophy

While this chapter is focused on parents I see the key points as speaking directly to all of us. You are not a Luddite for choosing to limit screen time for yourself, your children, or your students. However, it is becoming increasingly rare for individuals to choose to limit their screen time and Thomas Kersting calls us to be leaders.

Complete the following:

- Read Chapter 8 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected
- Read Why Disconnecting is Essential to Children's Development
- Check out the Wait Unit 8th Campaign | Away for the Day Campaign | Commercial-free childhood and their Screen-free week - if these do not apply to you please research campaigns and groups that are working to preserve the magic of childhood and empower parents and/or teachers to be leaders in this movement.

In your 450-500 word response include a reflection on the difficulties faced in choosing to not conform whether that is as a parent, individual or educator. Share any surprises, lessons, or ideas you took away from the resources above.

Assignment #10: 5 Rules
I appreciate the fact that Tom Kersting is willing to put his stake in the ground and embrace these 5 rules. A decade before I gave birth to my oldest child I put the gist of these "rules" into my syllabus, sent research home, and highlighted them both during Back-to-School night and during conferences. I took the approach that I would do my best to eliminate homework for all of my students. I only needed a few things from parents. "1. Do your best to help your student get sleep. Tired kids are grumpy and they aren't ready to learn. Getting sleep means keeping devices out of their bedrooms and helping them get there at a reasonable time." I regularly shared recommendations on sleep. "2. Ask your student what we are learning about, I regularly post extra links so students can share interesting things with their families. Please ask them at dinner what they are learning about in class. I will give them something every single day."

Please complete the following:

- Read Pages 182-83. Stop before ‘Stepping into…”
- Explore the sleep and device recommendations for the age you teach and for yourself.
- A helpful Media Contract I frequently shared with parents/guardians.
- Explore #SavetheKids for many helpful resources
- Watch: Empowering Kids to Rise Above Technology Addiction
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/6qsQXRqREwM?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch Why our screens make us less happy
- Watch Look Up
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/Z7dLU6fk9QY?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0

In your 450-500 word response reflect on each of the 5 rules. It is difficult to overstate how important these rules are not only to the children in our lives, but also to our own well-being. Be sure to include struggles and potential pitfalls in sticking to these rules. Reflect on how you can use these rules in your own life and how you can share these "rules".

Assignment #11: Mindfulness and Meditation
Parenting toddlers, one of the first things you learn is not to say "don't put your blocks there" instead you say, "put your blocks in the bucket". Likewise, if we want to overcome the addictive nature of screens we need to prioritize what really matters in our lives.

Complete the following:

- Read the remainder of Chapter 10 in Thomas Kersting's Disconnected.
- Watch or listen to Adam Alter at TED2017. Adam suggests putting your phone on airplane mode, but I prefer brick mode. Directions on setting your phone to Brick Mode. Turn your smartphone into a dumbphone.
- Read Digital Addiction Getting You Down? Try an Analog Cure
- Access Best Practices for Bringing Mindfulness into Schools
- Watch The Present
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/WjqiU5FgsYc

- This podcast published by the Center for Humane Technology (a great resource) You Will Never Breathe The Same Again is a remarkable podcast that will have you thinking about your breathe and technology differently.

In your 450-500 word response address each of the themes within this chapter and in these resources including technology addiction, mindfulness, being present, concentration, anxiety, and the impact of unplugging.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

B. LEARNING APPLICATION
In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

Assignment #12: Meet Social Emotional Learning Goals with Screen Free Lessons
Many states have adopted Social Emotional Learning Standards, but even if your state has not adopted these standards you likely have goals that your school is trying to meet. Ohio's Standards are an easy read. SEL lessons have become part of the standard curriculum in many elementary classrooms and are frequently being taught in at the middle and high school level in advisory courses. Read Community Building Ideas. In 450-500 words complete ONE of the following:

- If you teach SEL: research and outline how you can include screen free lessons in order to meet SEL Standards or goals.

OR

- If you do not teach SEL, research and outline how you can incorporate screen-free SEL techniques in lessons that pertain to

your subject area, for example, an extended project that requires face-to-face collaboration time would provide the opportunity for students to work on their SEL skills. The extensive course bibliography is a good starting point for SEL research.

Assignment #13: Create and implement a lesson
Assignment #13: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

Assignment #13-A:

- Adapt a lesson based on the outline you constructed in assignment #12.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 450-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
- Submit your lesson to your instructor via the lesson tab below.
- You may download a copy of THI's lesson plan template here or use your own template.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box when you submit your lesson.

AND

Assignment #13-B:

- Watch Why I Don't Use a Smart Phone from TEDxTeen
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/TjaM0tdxtYA?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch Live in the Moment: Delete Social Media TEDx Talks
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/pOchBnZJdEk?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Watch What I learned from my social media fast TEDxYouth
- https://www.youtube.com/embed/gM3KIvZO5oU?autohide=1&controls=1&showinfo=0
- Listen to the Podcast Kids and screens
- Write and implement a lesson that addresses one of the topics discussed in this course.
- Write a 450-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
- Submit your lesson to your instructor via the lesson tab below.
- You may download a copy of THI's lesson plan template here or use your own template.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box when you submit your lesson.

Assignment #14: (500 Level ONLY)
In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete (2) two of the following:

Option A)
Review all of your lessons for a large unit or trimester. As you review each lesson put a checkmark in one of three columns: 1. No screentime 2. Limited and valuable use of screentime. 3. Excessive screentime. Choose a lesson which you categorized as utilizing 'excessive screentime' and outline how you will alter the lesson in order to maximize SEL skills and decrease needless screentime. The response should be a minimum of 750 words or 3 pages including screenshots of your lesson work.

AND/OR

Option B)
Prepare a Powerpoint, Keynote or video presentation for staff or parents in which you demonstrate how to address screentime.Please share your presentation with a minimum of 15 high-quality slides.

AND/OR

Option C)
Conduct additional research into one of the impacts of screentime (ie bullying, depression, anxiety, obesity, etc.) or some aspect of mitigation of screentime (ie utilizing one of the previously mentioned resources: Wait Until 8th, Away For The Day, Screen-Free Week or Common Sense Education). Cite your online and in-print reading sources as you summarize in 750 or more words what you learned and how you'll use this information. Alternatively, you could summarize what you've learned and cite your sources in a letter to encourage a change in policy in your school, district, etc.

AND/OR

Option D)
An assignment of your own choice with the instructor's prior approval.

C. INTEGRATION PAPER

Assignment #15: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER
(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:
Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:
CHARITY STAUDENRAUS, M.A.T, received her BA from Willamette University, her MAT from Willamette University. Charity has experience teaching math, science, social studies, business, and language courses at the middle and high school level. She is currently serving on the 2014-2017 Oregon Science Content and Assessment Panel as well as the Oregon Instructional Materials Criteria Development Committee. In addition Charity is consulting on a Rutgers University and WPI project funded through multiple Department of Education and National Science Foundation Grants.

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