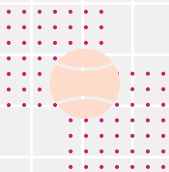


TECH-WISE FAMILY

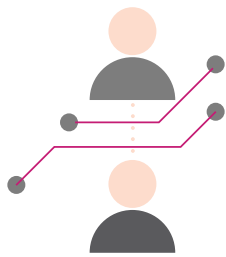
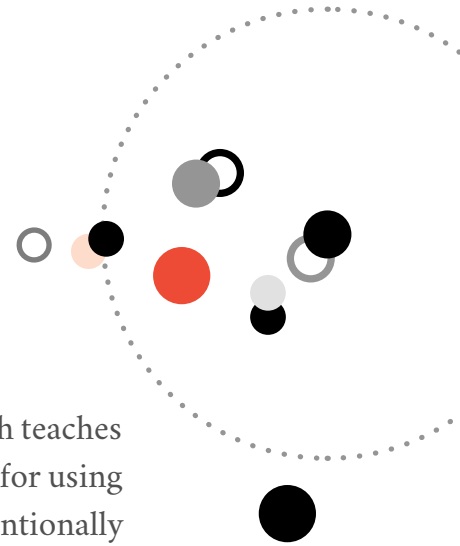
with Andy Crouch



Andy Crouch



Andy Crouch teaches principles for using technology intentionally to become the kind of people we long to be.

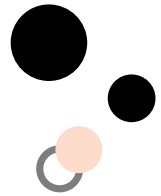


Andy Crouch is partner for theology and culture at Praxis, an organization that works as a creative engine for redemptive entrepreneurship. His two most recent books—2017’s *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* and 2016’s *Strong and Weak: Embracing a Life of Love, Risk and True Flourishing*—build on the vision of faith, culture and the image of God laid out in his previous books *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power* and *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*.

Andy serves on the governing boards of Fuller Theological Seminary and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities and is an advisor to The Repentance Project, The Pelican Project and Revoice. For more than 10 years he was an editor and producer at Christianity Today, including serving as executive editor from 2012 to 2016. He lives with his family in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

Learning outcomes

- See tech in a new way and how it affects our most formative environments: our homes, churches and workplaces
- Identify core practices essential to intentionally using technology
- Create concrete commitments to not just limit technology but also to reintroduce tools and instruments in our lives



Introduction

The tech-wise life is not (just) about limits—it's about flourishing, what we really want. It's not about kids. It's also not about screens. It's about devices and the way they have replaced tools in our lives and, equally importantly, in our imagination of how life should be. In this introduction, Andy shares how we can rediscover what's most important in our homes, churches, schools and workplaces.

- How does the tech issue go beyond just “screen time limits for kids”?
- If you could change one thing about your relationships with those who are in your household or who are closest to you, what would you change?
- What habits can you add to your life to help you grow personally and in your relationships with others?

“The tech-wise life is not (just) about limits—it's about flourishing, what we really want.”



TECH-WISE:
Core Ideas





Part 1: Tools, Devices and “Easy Everywhere”

In this 15-minute video, discover the foundational concepts woven into every session of the course. What makes technology what it is? What do we mean when we use this word? Through the illustration of the furnace and the fireplace (with emphasis on the Latin word *focus*), Andy helps us understand the transition from tools to devices and its effect on the human experience.

- What are the devices that fill your life, and what have they replaced?
- What experiences are no longer part of daily life that used to be?
- Do our lives get better as they get easier?



Even using conservative estimates, the typical young person spends nearly 20 times more hours per year using screen-driven media than taking in spiritual content.

“The risk as we introduce more and more devices into our life is that our lives get way easier, but they also get way less engaged. They require less of us. And this actually has a very profound effect on how children see their parents as children grow up.”

37%

Part 2: Instruments

What we've gained and lost in the tech age can be summarized in two experiences: playing an instrument (which is pre-tech) and pressing play (the essence of the device paradigm). As we've made the shift, we've gained a lot, but we've also lost. This session describes how the tech-wise life is built around tools and, above all, instruments, with devices at the edges in a supporting role.

- Press “pause” in this session and make a list of the ways the shift from “making” to “pressing a button” has affected our lives.
- In this session, Andy says the tech-foolish life is built on having all kinds of devices in our lives but neglecting the tools and instruments that help us become the kind of people we want to be. In what ways do tools and instruments help us become better people?
- What is your personal history with instruments? Did you play an instrument growing up? Did you grow up around instruments? Do you play one now? What instrument would you most like to learn, or have always admired, and why?

Four in 10 Gen Z (39%) say looking at other people's social media posts makes them feel bad about the lack of excitement in their own life (vs. 34% Millennials, 24% Gen X, 8% Boomers).

“As we've made the shift from tools to devices, we have gained a lot, but we've also lost something. We've lost that mysterious beautiful thing that happens when we become someone or something different...This is what is missing in the 'easy everywhere' world—opportunities to actually play, to actually be fully ourselves.”



Part 3: Flourishing, Formation and What Technology Is “Good For”

“Easy everywhere” is most dangerous in the most formative environments: home, school and church (and, likewise, the creative and formative phases of work). What’s at stake is the heart of human flourishing, the best life possible for human beings. Our picture of what we’re meant to be should be guided by the vision of a human person that comes from the greatest commandment.

- What is technology good for? What is it not good for?
- What do the words of Jesus, “all of your heart, soul, mind and strength,” mean to you?
- What does “loving your neighbor as yourself” mean? Are there any boundaries there?
- In what ways do devices (the “easy everywhere” lifestyle) short-circuit your ability to live with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?

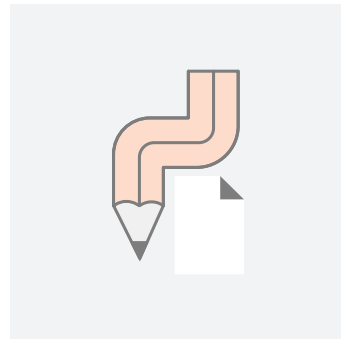
Sixty-two percent of parents check their phone within the first hour of their morning. Seven in 10 (70%) sleep with their phone next to them.



“The most important formative things in our lives are full of risk, and they’re full of meaningful difficulty. They require me to go someplace where I’m not fully safe—whether emotionally, sometimes physically—where some aspect of my heart, soul, mind, strength, is not just being protected, but is being put at risk. That’s all true relationship, that’s all true growth as a human being, and it requires meaningful difficulty.”



TECH-WISE:
Core Practices



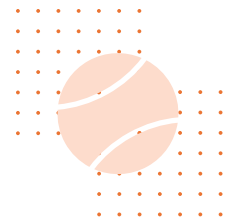


Part 1: Shaping Space

The things that fill our common spaces shape our lifestyles. Instruments of activity and creativity encourage active lifestyles. Devices of convenience discourage active engagement and creativity. Just like putting healthy snacks in reach helps to change our eating habits, filling the center of our living spaces with instruments that require active engagement and creativity will make small, but significant changes to our life activities.

- Where do you spend most of your time?
- What are the things at the center of that space?
- How might filling the center of your spaces with instruments that require activity and creativity, plus pushing devices of convenience to the edges of your spaces, change your lifestyle?

Only 12 percent of U.S. adults set aside time each day to not use electronics.



“What are the things at the center of your space? Those are the things that are going to shape your life. They’re either going to shape you into an ‘easy everywhere’ person, who doesn’t really become, who doesn’t really grow, or they’re going to shape you and the people you live and work with into the kind of people who do something together, who create something together.”

60%

Part 2: Structuring Time

The Industrial Revolution disrupted the biblical rhythms of life: work and rest. Devices exist in a nonstop work environment and push times of Sabbath rest out of our lives. We can regain our sense of natural, biblical rhythm by intentionally disengaging from our devices one hour per day, one day per week and one week per year.

- What devices take up most of your time?
- How can the act of disengaging from your devices bring new value to your work when you return to use them?
- If you disengaged from your devices one hour per day, one day per week and one week per year, how would you use that time?

DATA Three in five U.S. adults (60%) never take a break from social media—11 percent do for parts of the day and 5 percent one day a week.

“Our devices never rest. And if we’re not careful, they will reshape our use of time into an always-on, 24/7 life.”



U.S. parents say, on a typical weeknight, their children spend their time watching television or movies (64%), playing video games (42%) and on social media or texting their friends (27%).



Tech-Wise Family Course



THE TECH-WISE FAMILY RECOGNIZES THAT HOME IS MEANT TO BE THE PLACE WHERE THE VERY BEST OF LIFE HAPPENS, AND THAT THE VERY BEST OF LIFE HAS ALMOST NOTHING TO DO WITH THE DEVICES WE OWN. WHAT COMMITMENTS AND DISCIPLINES CAN HELP FAMILIES—PARENTS AND KIDS ALIKE—TO LOVE AND USE ALL KINDS OF TECHNOLOGY WITHOUT LETTING SCREENS TAKE OVER?

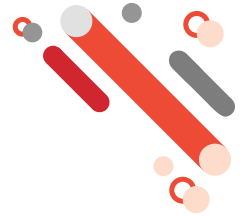
This track has five sessions, focused on understanding the meaning of family, creating better daily rhythms, distinguishing rest and leisure, navigating online risks and embracing personal presence.

Session 1: What Is Family For?

Technology is good for some things. But it's not good for shaping us into the people we want to be. The most formative environment in anyone's life is the family, where we experience our most intimate relationships. This session deals with the formation of wisdom (for ourselves, for others and in our spirituality) and courage (the ability to do what's right, even when it's hard), both of which develop best in a family context.

- What is the formative nature of family? What do we learn within that context?
- What does wisdom mean to you? Courage?
- What are the ways in which we fail in our most intimate relationships of family? What do we learn from those experiences?
- Andy says, "Family is the best place to fail." What does this line mean to you?
- How does technology help us avoid failure? What effect does that have on our formation of courage and wisdom?
- What's the one sentence Andy says he and his wife repeat to their children?

One in five U.S. parents (21%) says their family doesn't know how to have a conversation anymore because they are all on their phones or devices.



“Family is not just formative for our kids, it's formative for us, for becoming the kind of people who can actually discern what's the right thing at the right time for the whole family and for each member.”

78%

Session 2: The Rhythms of Our Days

So far we've looked at the big picture of technology. In this session, we move to the practical application of the role technology plays in our day-to-day lives, especially in the context of the family, our most formative environment.

- The best way to shape our lives is to begin and end our days with minimal devices and light. What simple rituals can you put in place with that idea in mind?
- What does Andy say is the most important single practice for managing technology and family life?
- In her book *The Writing Life*, Annie Dillard says, "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." What are some routine moments that you can use to connect with one another without the presence of phones?

Three-quarters of U.S. parents (78%) believe raising children today is more complicated than it was when they were kids—65 percent say this is because of technology /social media.

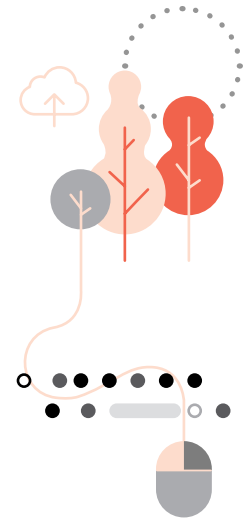


“Nothing easy forms us. So, everything that forms us in some respect is hard. Maybe another thing we have to say to one another by way of encouragement as we go along on this tech-wise journey is, ‘This is going to be hard for all of us—parents and kids—but it’s going to be good.’”

Session 3: The Limits of Leisure

How do we make our homes places of real rest? In this session, we look at the history of how the home became a place of leisure, how we were designed for rhythms of work and rest and the good news about boredom.

- What was the original design for human work and rest?
- How did technology change our rhythms?
- What are the differences between toil and work, rest and leisure?
- What are some ways you can reclaim the Sabbath for yourself and your family?
- If you distract yourself from boredom, what do you prevent from happening?



Engaged Christian parents list video games (31%), digital content (31%) and social media (23%) among their top three struggles when it comes to guiding their children's spiritual formation.

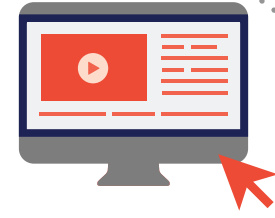
“What would it look like if one day a week, things were really different in your home? Devices and all the ways they connect us to significance and self provision were turned off, and instead you had this day where you planned to enjoy, to do things that, for the whole family are the most fun, the most restorative, the most genuinely restful—and where there might even be time for mom and dad to get in a nap. That's the kind of days that we built our Sundays around.”

93%

Session 4: Privacy and Secrets

The number one concern parents have about phones is the content accessible to their children, especially sexual content. But we need more than filters to protect against sexual content. We need a different way of looking at and framing the issue.

- In what ways are media dangerous?
- In what ways do media shrink relationships?
- In what ways is social media toxic? Are there positive aspects of social media?
- What are some speed bumps you can use to slow the access of porn?
- What is the difference between something that is secret and something that is private?



More than nine in 10 parents (93%) say parents have a lot of responsibility in protecting children from inappropriate online content.

“Most teens’ exposure to pornography is created by other teens and distributed through text messages through social media. Often their parents have little understanding or knowledge of it, and there is no filter currently available that will filter out sexual content from text messages or from social media.”

68%



Session 5: The Big Picture

What do we really want in our lives and families? To answer this, we may need to ask two additional questions: What are we going to add to our lives, and how will we multiply moments of connection with our family? We were made to love God and each other in the fullness of who we are. In this session, Andy discusses how to choose heart-soul-mind-strength activities that shape us as a family and help us live fulfilling, meaningful lives.

- What are some heart-soul-mind-strength activities you can do as a family?
- There is no substitute for personal presence. What are some milestones in life where it's important to show up for and support others?
- What is the cost of an “easy everywhere” lifestyle? What are some of the moments of life in which technology fails us?

Roughly seven in 10 parents say smartphones will hurt children's ability to develop healthy friendship (68%) and social skills (71%).

“At the moments of greatest vulnerability, what we most need are other persons who know how to be with us, who know how to be fully with us. There are moments in life that cannot be mediated. No medium can do the job. No device can help. And they are the ultimate moments in life.”