

Church Unplugged

READING
Psalm 46
Mark 6
Philippians 4
Romans 12

And he said to them, “Come here by yourselves to a desolate place, and take a rest for a while.” For there were many who were coming and going, and they hadn’t yet had an opportunity to eat.

Credit to Stephen McAlpine for this idea. He wrote an article called [dumb church](#), like a dumb phone in contrast to a smart phone that has just so many apps and features.

(He has some good stuff, google him).

Although I think maybe “unplugged” is a better description than “dumb”.

Of course, if you have a mega church, unplugged might not work so well for the folks up the back.

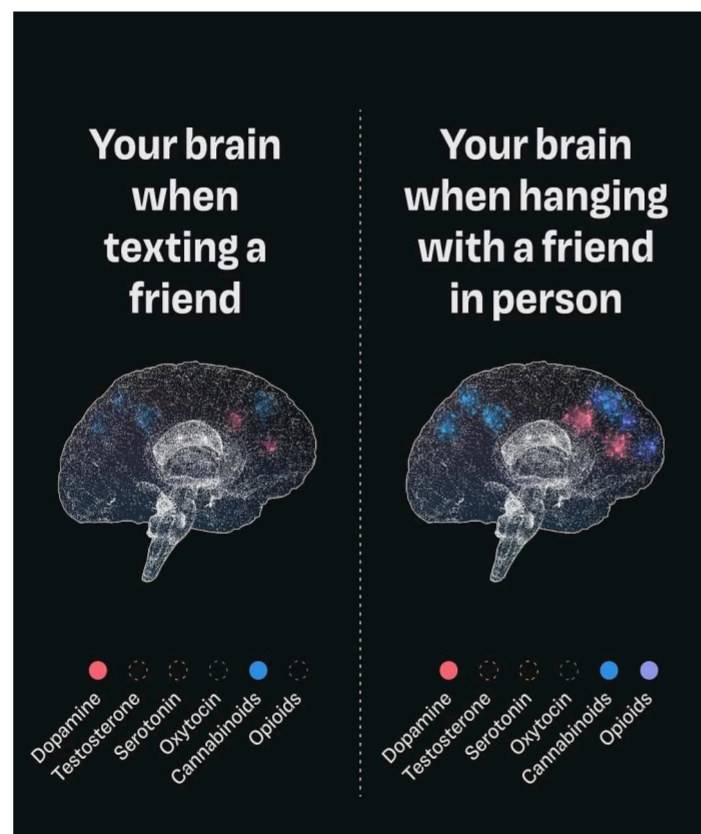
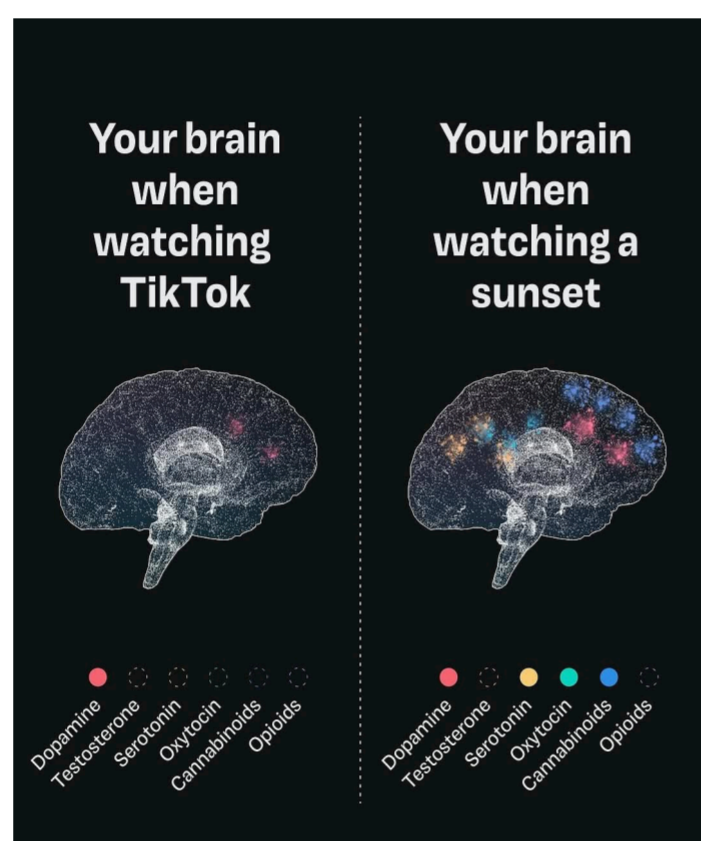
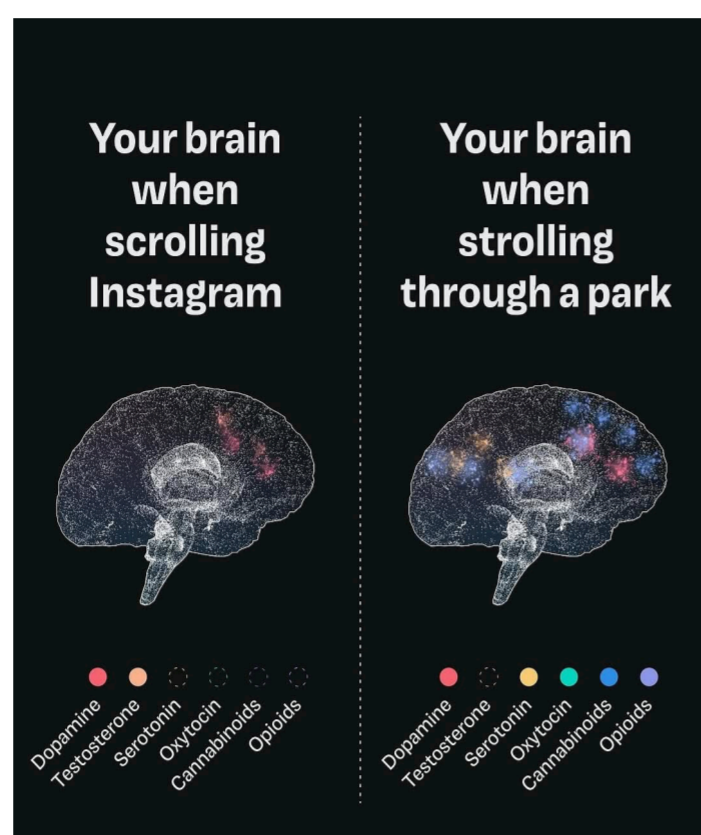
But read on, think what you can do to reduce your reliance on technology, even for a day.

“Coincidentally” I read an article yesterday comparing brain activity charts for people who were messaging, using social media, instagram, tiktok, things like that... vs the image of people’s brains who are having face to face conversations, hanging out with their friends.

It was a staggering difference. To the point that the technology based interactions left the brains looking almost asleep.

And all they achieve is to stimulate dopamine production - which keeps you addicted.

Check it out. Click an image to see a bigger version.



I think we need to get rid of most of the technology in our churches.

But I know we need to be realistic. And we might need *some* technology, but I wonder how much better it might be for our church if we can at least reduce it.

Perhaps we can have the “Amish” approach. They’re not against technology per-se, but for each technology they evaluate it and ask, “Is it adding to what we do, adding to who we are?” If not, it’s out.

But those of you who are old like me, ... do you remember when church was about relationships?

When we always had lunch with other church people after church on Sundays? Either at our house or theirs.

We need to quieten down and spend time thinking about important things. And talking about them with each other. Over lunch, not over the internet.

Remember when most Christians could flip through a physical Bible and find a book or a chapter pretty quickly without using a bible search app on their phones?

Remember going to the mountains or the coast and just sitting and meditating, praying, just spending a couple of hours with God - with just his creation and a Bible?

When you’re at home by yourself, doing Bible study, ... maybe some of those apps help. I use one every day. Not Just Words (for iOS and for Mac). I wrote it, so I think it’s pretty cool. Especially for study. It’s got a thesaurus built in, so it finds those verses you remember from other translations, or you remember it says something like “blah”, but you can’t remember the exact wording. And it’s free btw.

So I 100% see agree that apps like that have value.

But when we’re together as a church, let’s focus on being a body. Focus on each other. Instead of on our phones. Or even focusing on multimedia presentations. Let’s find ways to focus on each other. To have conversations. To listen to each other.

For sure we still want a sermon, but let’s try just having a mike so they can hear the preacher.

More and more technology, “connecting” us is the way the world is going.

But it really doesn’t connect us. It is really dividing us, and making us more self-focused.

Remember Romans 12?

“And don’t be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you discern what the will of God is — good and pleasing and perfect.”

Unplugging might not be as “dumb” as it sounds.

Unplug your church for a day and see what happens.

And if you can’t organise that, at least unplug yourself every now and then.