



WE'RE TOGETHER. BUT ARE WE ACTUALLY HERE?

Mark and I talk about screens, attention and making room for the people in front of us. The alerts, the switching between things, the habit of filling every spare moment. There's a lot to be curious about in our everyday routines.

Dr Mark Williams and I chat about attention, screens and being with our people.

YOUR ATTENTION IS THE GOOD BIT.

01 A LITTLE BOREDOM IS ALLOWED.

Mark argues that unfilled time gives children room to play and explore their interests. Every moment doesn't need another activity or something on a screen.

02 LEAVE A LITTLE ROOM TO THINK.

Mark talks about working memory and revisiting ideas when we pause or reflect. There can be a moment without another stream of information arriving.

03 THE PERSON OR THE PING?

Mark asks us to think about whether an alert should matter more than the person giving us their time. It's a simple question to bring into the day.

04 DOING EVERYTHING AT ONCE CAN FEEL PRETTY DISTRACTING.

We question multitasking and talk about moving between work and notifications. Reducing unnecessary alerts is one thing to consider trying.

05 CONNECTION IS SOMETHING WE CAN MAKE TIME FOR.

Mark encourages volunteering and joining in with community life. There are ways to connect beyond the names in an online contact list.



LOOK UP. SIT BESIDE THEM.

More useful bits from the conversation, each with one way to use it.

Pick the one that fits your week.

06 SAY WHY YOU'RE ON YOUR PHONE

Mark suggests telling the people with you when you need to check something. It's fine as long as you're honest. **Try it:** Explain what you're checking before you pick up your phone at family time.

07 TALK SIDE BY SIDE

Mark's daughter opens up in the car with her music on. Looking forward together feels less confronting than face to face. **Try it:** Invite your teen to something side by side instead of a formal sit-down.

08 ONE CHILD AT A TIME

Mark finds siblings are less honest with each other around. One-on-one time brings a different conversation. **Try it:** Plan a simple outing with one child and let them help choose it.

09 READ WHERE THEY CAN SEE YOU

Mark reads on the couch and his kids often join him with their books. Modelling beats nagging. **Try it:** Sit down with your own book during a quiet time at home.

10 SET REPLY EXPECTATIONS

Mark told students when he'd answer email. They sent fewer and often solved things themselves. **Try it:** Tell colleagues when you answer non-urgent messages, and keep a route for urgent ones.



PHONE DOWN. PEOPLE UP.

One catch-up, actually there.

1 NOTICE ONE INTERRUPTION.

Which non-essential alert pulls you away most often? Could you silence it for a while, keeping the alerts you genuinely need?

2 GIVE ONE CATCH-UP YOUR ATTENTION.

Put the phone out of reach for a meal or conversation. See what you notice when you're not checking it. There's no need to turn it into a grand challenge.

3 DO SOMETHING AWAY FROM THE SCREEN.

A walk, a quiet pause, something in your community. Try one this week and see which you'd want to do again.

ONE THING BEFORE 50. OR STARTING NOW.

Give one moment your attention. The person beside you, the meal, the walk. What happens when you leave the phone out of it?

OVER TO YOU

The interruption I'd like less of is...

The offline moment I'll make room for is...
