

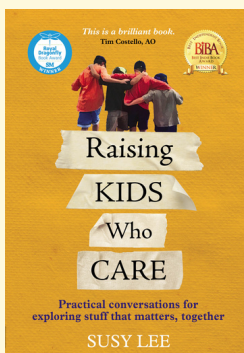
# 'What's tech got to do with my mental health?'

...a practical family conversation



Communication is the best tool we have for life and love. Below you'll find a fun conversation to help your family work out how to use technology well without it taking over your lives.

Just follow these conversation steps to help you talk knowledgeably, honestly and practically. If they're up to it, let the kids lead you by reading out the instructions. Enjoy!



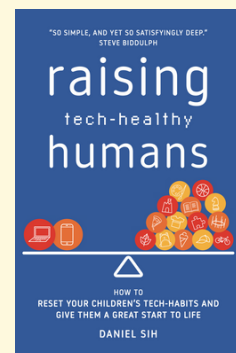
Susy Lee

'Raising Kids Who Care: Practical conversations for exploring stuff that matters, together'



Daniel Sih

'Raising Tech-Healthy Humans: How to reset your children's tech habits and give them a great start in life'



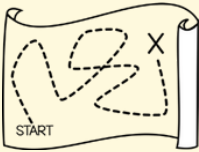
# 'Mental Health and Tech'



1 Where the conversation's headed



2 Stimulating ideas to get started



3 Reading the instructions to prepare



4 On the road: talking together



5 Unpacking what we've learnt



6 Making it matter by taking action!

# 1 Where we're headed

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The aim of this conversation is to raise our awareness about the impact technology is having on our mental health so we can make good choices.

# 2 Getting Started



Here's some info about tech and our mental health from Daniel, author of *Raising Tech-Healthy Humans*:

*“Technology is interesting and valuable. But too much technology use can become a problem. If we reach for our phones whenever we feel lonely, or stressed, or bored, it can distract us and reduce our happiness.”*

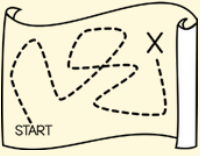
Research shows that too much technology is robbing us of sleep, affecting our moods, and potentially causing harm to our mental health. If we never switch off our devices, we can miss out on so much of the goodness of life!

*“When it comes to your own tech use, how healthy are your habits? Do you do strange things like check your phone on the toilet? Or feel phantom vibrations in your pocket? Or get agitated if you miss a text or call?*

*These might be signs that you're being controlled by your device, not the other way round.”*

# 3 Your Instructions

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Fill in this quick quiz:

- 1) how much time do you spend on the internet in a day?
- 2) do you check your phone at night and does this affect your sleep?
- 3) Are you aware of your tech habits? Are you happy with them?
- 4) Do you check your phone on the toilet?
- 5) Do you reach for your phone when you are lonely? bored? stressed?
- 6) what meaning or reward do you get from checking your phone? comfort? security? self-worth? distraction? ?
- 7) are you spending enough time with your friends IRL?
- 8) are you spending enough time outside? doing chores or study? having cool hobbies?
- 9) do you sometimes feel like there might be more to life?

# 4 Talk about this...

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Talk together through your answers to the quiz.

Talk about life balance and give each other some feedback about how you see the balance in each other's lives at the moment.

Discuss some ideas as a family to unplug and enjoy other things sometimes:

- leave phones charging outside bedrooms to ensure tech-free sleep
- no devices at the dinner table to ensure good conversations together about your days (see Susy's book for ideas)
- no devices on car trips to encourage games and conversation and just staring out the window letting our brains get creative!

# 5 Unpacking...



How are you feeling about this? It can be annoying or even scary to be challenged on our habits - they are there to meet our needs or protect us from our fears.

Check in with each other about what emotions this conversation might have raised.

What help do we need to make adjustments?  
Aim to make tiny achievable changes and celebrate them together!

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# 6 Moving forward



Feel free to do more research on this subject. Daniel's book 'Raising Tech-Healthy Humans' has lots of practical suggestions for families.

Susy's book 'Raising Kids Who Care' has conversations about lots of other ways to use your time purposefully.

Could you talk to your friends about this stuff?

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