

What Does Media Fasting Really Mean?

New people can have a hard time wrapping their head around what true media/tech fasting means.

There is a difference between “staying away from our addictive media” and “fasting.” Staying away from our addictive media is where many of us want to end up, but that is not something we can usually do early in media addiction recovery. The lines are too blurry. Fasting is where most of us need to start and stay for a long time in order to detox our bodies and minds from the chemicals and effects of addictive media use and take on a new way of living.

FASTING is what is required in Closed B2B Groups. This means NO use of ANY media or tech that is not ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY for work, school or NECESSARY family needs (like setting up doctor appointments or messages to or from school). This means (but is not limited to) no TV, movies, streaming, social media, porn, news, non-necessary shopping, word games, dating and meet up apps, internet ANYTHING UNNECESSARY, phone or tablet apps, gaming, gambling and for many people COULD (and probably SHOULD) include podcasts, music, audiobooks, books online, fiction reading, magazines, meditation apps, sports apps, messaging apps, or any other sort of input that you get lost in or spend more time on than intended. This may be different than other media/tech programs’ definitions of fasting but this is how we have found people can achieve true media/tech sobriety. REMEMBER: Always ask yourself, “Is It REALLY Necessary?” We have found that the more sober we are from ALL media which isn’t absolutely necessary, the better chance we have of maintaining long-term sobriety by working the 12 Steps with a clear mind.

Some people say, “But my family/friends/partner watch a movie together each week, can I do that?” The response is, “How about suggesting that your family do something else together during that time, like play a board game, dance together, go to the park, go for a walk, read together, or some other activity which doesn’t require media/tech. There is a list of 300 things to do besides media on the website (It is right next to the Sunday Funday Meeting listing or under the Literature tab). Look at that, or have them look at that, and pick some things to try. And then there is, “But at my mom’s house her TV is always on.” We suggest you ask her if it is okay to turn it off while you are there so you can spend some time talking with her or doing something else together. If you are somewhere where you absolutely cannot get them to turn the media off, then either be in a different room, or turn your back to the TV (which is pretty uncomfortable, and often not very successful,

so be careful). It means not sitting facing a TV in a restaurant, or finding restaurants where there are no TVs on. It means not watching ball games, and often not listening to them either. It means IF IN DOUBT, DON'T DO IT.

This is not meant to be easy or to be a punishment. It is meant to detox you so that you can get your life back. If you are not ready for this commitment, then you may need to try recovery in some way other than Closed B2B.