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Lecture - 26 Technology and Communication: Mobile Personality

Hello everyone, welcome back to the NPTEL MOOC course from IIT Kanpur on Developing Soft Skills and personality. We are in week 5 module 2 and this is the 26th lecture of this course as I said all ready we have crossed half of the course and we are in the next half and already we are in the second module of the next half and for the second half of the course I have actually started with a very interesting and a most relevant module that is with regard to technology and communication. So, in the previous lecture also I started with that and this one I am just particularly going to focus on the use, the influence, the misuse, the impact of mobile technology and how it is giving you a kind of mobile personality and before I start my lecture, let us take a quick recapture of what I did in the previous lecture.

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I started this week particularly in the previous lecture telling you about the Impact and Influence of technology in Communication in general. We are living in the information age and then all high-tech technology has given us advanced benefits, but at the same time it is not without any impact on our personality. In that context, I introduce to you the novel term used by Donna Haraway determining calling the kind of personality that we are caught in between as Cyborgs which means cybernetic organisms indicating that we are part machine and part human beings and we have lost this human identity partially because of the blurring interface between biotic and mechanical components we are not able to really distinguish between what is biological and what is actually technological. So, we have reached that point and that juncture of time. We became cyborgs by treating all media extensions of human faculty as real. Technological components define as well as human identity.

I give you the example of all the technological items such as like electronic gadgets that you use, the kind of tablet that you use, the kind of laptop that you use, the cars that you posses they all try to tell the kind of person that you are, how rich, how powerful, how simple, how content, how happy, how distressed and all that and you actually feel that this gadgets should define you, but I was trying to tell you it should be the other way round if you are the kind of person who is trying to develop your intrinsic motivations and who is trying to develop the inner core of your personality, the outer external peripherals do not actually affect your identity and do not affect you thinking also, keep that in mind. So, it is not the car that you own that defines you, but it is what you think inside you that actually defines and characterizes you. You need to change that thinking that is most important and you have to change your mindset which is actually being influenced by technology.

Machine is given human treatment and human is treated like a machine. So, in that context I told you about the story of the father who actually hurt the fingers of the son and then later he regretted to realize that the son was really loving him so much and the biotic component that are the fingers which are lost can never be replaced whereas, the scratch that was caused by the sun on the car could be removed immediately, the cyber gain shift which has happened already its affecting us mentally as well as physically and in this context, in this background we need to ask three important keywords, one is control the other one is benefit and the third one is choice.

We need to ask very self probing questions like who controls technology. Who is giving direction to technology? Who is leading us to technology? Are we really controlling the technological gadgets that we use or is somebody controlling us using them, who benefits from it? Are we really benefiting or somebody else is benefiting and do we

really have a choice in buying, possessing, not possessing some of the technological gadgets or is somebody choosing these once for us. So, these are the questions you need to ask and the answers will reveal so many things to you, accordingly you can modify your personality.

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Now, in this one let us focus on the impact of mobile cell phone technology and how it is actually changing our personality or how it has changed us so much and how we can restore salvage humanity from that. First, if you look at the purpose for which mobiles phones were actually invented, the purpose is to give mobility against fixity. So, the land phone is actually land connected phone whereas, this cell phone using radio waves like the telephone which converts sound signals into electrical ones and then again it reverses the same process, here it uses radio waves to send signals and you are able to make it movable. So, instead of sticking at home and attending the call, you can be anywhere and then you can talk to somebody even from a remote distant place and the main intension is to save time instead of all the time going and standing somewhere outside and then standing in a queue. So, you can call somebody immediately.

The other purpose is to help in emergency such as like your are caught in an accident or you are suffering a kind of heart attack or any kind of emergency where your presence is required or your attention has to be called or you have to call somebody you can use it. The other interesting factor is you can connect to people instantaneously instead of going and then fixing a time to call a phone or even the time that you spend in going towards the landline. So, you can immediately take it from your pocket and call someone. Overall, it is invented to keep human contact intact, but we need to ask the questions is this mobile phone really serving this purpose? If you look at it carefully, cell phones have actually moved away from their original purpose with smart phones, the ones that we posses these days, one can check e-mail, play games, chat in social media, listen to songs, watch movies and send text messages and so on. So, even it is doing the function of the camera and then today it has come out with so many apps which we cannot even think of, unimaginable advance in technology in smart phones.

Now, the original intention of facilitating communication through voice remotely is forgotten. So, is this causing an erasure of humanity? Yes of course, and let us see how it is happening. Now, before we go into it, just let us put you into a kind of test, a simple test and then you ask these questions yourselves and then try to answer, the answer is actually in terms of frequency and then how much you say yes or how strongly you say no, how strongly you agree and how strongly you disagree with these ones.

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Now, the test will tell you whether you have become moborgs and I am just playing with the term that Donna Haraway uses in terms of cyborgs, moborgs I want to say that you have become mobile organisms just like cybernetic organisms. Now, these are some questions which we can put in the test and then you try to answer this as honestly as possible, do you sleep and wake up with your mobile? So, this means like a while going to sleep, you listen to songs or soothing music or watch movie before sleep or you do anything, but then you need this mobile before you sleep and then do you wake up with your mobile that is it is the mobile that wakes you up and then as soon as you get up, you want to see you mobile first. So, that is the last one you see and the first one you see in the morning, do you carry mobile with you all the time? Is there a time that you free yourself from mobile? Do you have some mobile free hours like while walking, some people leave the mobile at home, they do not want mobile to disturb when they go for walking. Some people when they go for praying to the temple or mosque or church or when they go even for simple meditation or for a yoga kind of session they again leave the mobiles at home.

So, do you free sometimes or even when you play some sports. So, is it the time that you leave mobile at home and then you completely focus on the activities that you are doing for your own personality, your own mental health, do you give some free time? Have stopped wearing a wrist watch, it is another question that you have to ask. So, many people have completely lost this habit. In fact, they think that it is completely redundant, they do not have to wear a wrist watch and you use only mobile phone to check time.

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Some more questions, have you stopped listening to music from a music player? So, there were times when you had different types of cassette player then again DVD player

and then CD player and then like all kinds of players with musical system fitted with sound speakers and all that. Now, are you using that or you have just stopped it and then you prefer to listen to music only through your mobile, have you stopped watching news on the television? So, you have put some apps and then you use only the apps to check news on television and then have you stopped using the calculator? So, have you just completely removed calculator from your table or have you never purchased a calculator because you know that you can use an app from the mobile and now you can use it for checking.

The other interesting thing you need to ask yourself is have you stopped using address book or phone book? So, there were times we were maintaining addresses on address note book or we were having phone numbers in the front, have you stopped jotting down even some important numbers because you are sure that you can store them on your mobile phone and now you also know there are so many apps you can connect and then you can put it on the net also. So, you never feel that you are going to lose them and you have stopped this habit of noting down on a note book.

Have you stopped remembering even important phone numbers? So, remember the times we used to memories 40 50 phone numbers then it can to 30 20 and then at least ten important phone numbers. So, how many important phone number you can recall at least the close ones your own family members, your own boss and important emergency numbers mobile numbers, even doctors mobile numbers, do you remember or are you the kind of person who even needs to check your number on your own mobile before telling somebody what is your number.

So, where are you and in case you have to remember some important numbers you do not even bother to memorize them because you know that you will just store it and you can recollect it any time. The other interesting question is have you stopped using your camera? Is mobile the only one that you use for taking pictures? And you have stopped using your camera. Now, if you keep saying that you are doing this with highest frequency and then you agree with all these questions instead of saying no and then you have already become this moborgs, the mobile organisms. Mobile has become an integral part and parcel of you and you cannot dispense with it. The next important thing is like have you become an addict? When I say that it is becoming highly indispensable, there are some people who have not yet become addicts. So, the next level is, has it become a bad habit? Let us ask some more questions and then the way you are going to answer the questions will determine whether you are an addict or not.

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Now similar questions but with different intensity, before going to bed do you feel insecure if mobile is not kept near your pillow? Do you have to keep it below your pillow? Or hide it somewhere in your pocket? Or keep it next to you? Otherwise you would not get sleep at all and while sleeping does you get up frequently to check up for messages? So, you get a kind of anxiety if you do not check the messages and even when you are sleeping, you have to get up and check whether these messages have come or not, whether anybody is calling you or not.

Next, do you sacrifice your sleep routine? Due to your interest in activities in mobile, let us say you sleep from 10 to 7, but because your friend is calling you at 10 30. So, you adjusted your sleep and then the friend wanted you to join a game, you are playing a game or you are on a chat. So, long chat, playing games and then or you just started going to Facebook or using Whatsapp and then you wanted to join some social media and then you started sharing information and enjoying chatting with people. It started at 10 30 and suddenly you realized that it went up to 12 30 and again you realize another 10 or 15 minutes and then you realize its 3 30.

Now, are you loosing track of time and then most importantly losing your sleep routine because of this, how long can you live without your mobile? And in a hypothetical situation let us say if somebody gives you 1 crore rupees to live without mobile, how long can you live without it? Can it be forever if somebody gives you 1 crore rupee just today, can you give it up forever? Or you say for 10 years you can restrict yourselves or for 1 year for some months, for 1 month, for 15 days, for 10 days, for 3 days, for 1 day or is it only for some hours or for some minutes or you are going to say loudly that you cannot live without a minute without your mobile and if you are going to say this so, you already suffering from this Nomo phobia, the fear phobia means fear, Nomo is short for no mobile phone phobia. So, you are suffering from this fear that even if you lose 1 minute, you cannot live. So, there is a inherent fear already in you and you are stressing yourself and then this has become just an integral part and then it is like you are chained to it and it is very difficult to even leave it for a minute.

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Look at the interesting funny quote I got from net it says that I finally realized it, people are prisoners of their phones, that is why they are called cell phones and there is a play on the word cell. So, cellular phone at the same time cell also indicate prison that you are caught in your own prison when you are using a mobile phone some more questions again if you are answering affirmatively, you have already reached the addiction stage, do you get nervous when some apps do not work? Suddenly an app is not working. So, then its making you feel nervous and do you get nightmares about losing you phone. So, suddenly you get up late night while sleeping and in the dream you got a feeling that somebody has stolen your phone or you lost your phone, are you afraid that your battery will run down soon? So, will it cause you some kind of fear that battery will run down and then will not be able to make important calls, because of this or may be because you want to talk to more people and connect, do you keep an additional mobile as a spare? Or are you the kind it is not just one additional mobile, but you keep two three phones along with you.

Do you get eye strain and neck problems due to texting and excessive use and you do not mind about that and you know that your eyes are straining and you should stop watching a movie or continuously texting on that, but you continue because you cannot stop it even if it is paining, you have neck problems even they call it as text neck because of texting, the constantly you are looking down and texting and then it is causing you problem. So, because of that and the excessive use you are getting this eye strain, but you do not mind about it, you continue with it. So, that indicates another aspect of addiction and then have you ever met with a car accident miner or major due to mobile use? So, just like few minutes you are on the mobile attending to your call and a few fractions of seconds you missed somebody crossing and then you lost control and then you hit somebody, do you talk on phone while driving your bike? So, you use one hand and in the other hand you just put in your ears and then still talk and then keep driving do you do that.

Do you miss important activities while going to you preoccupation with mobile? You never realize that time is passing, you miss you class, you miss an important lecture, you miss an important event like examination because you are just playing with your mobile Now, if you have reached this stage, psychologist say that you have got already this obsessive compulsive disorder. So, you are obsessed and you are compelled to use it and you completely like the ostrich you burry your head literally into the sand, here it is mobile, your entire mind and all your interest is buried inside this mobile activities and then you do not see reality. So, you are suffering from this obsessive, compulsive disorder.

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Few more questions do you panic when you misplace your phone? So, when your phone is misplaced somewhere, do you panic? It also indicates your level of addiction, how cool you are, how much you panic and do you feel stressed if you phone malfunctions. So, suddenly it stops, suddenly there is no display on the screen, it is not opening properly or it falls into water, sometimes it slips down from your pocket and it breaks, does it give you acute headache stress and then immediately you feel that it is as if like heavens have fallen down and then the hell is freaking lose and you are not able to do anything, do you remain highly stressed and not able to focus on other activities till you restore your mobile phone? And do you get angry? If someone touches your phone or someone checks the message or someone checks what is happening in your whatsapp or who are your friends on facebook, do you get immediately angry? Even if it is a very close person, your spouse or your friend or your children or somebody is touching it do you get angry? Cannot you resist taking a call even in very important meetings, but you are not able to call.

So, you take it and you do not mind people thinking bad about you, even if they think it is impolite and untruth you do not bother about it, you are just immersed in your call and then you talk to the person without bothering about what other people will feel, without showing any sensitivity to what is happening around because you just cannot resist it, you have to take the call and even when you are surrounded by friends you keep yourself busy with your mobile. So, you are in a party, but then you all the time look at your mobile and then you do not face anybody in the front.

Can't you control your mobile bills? If somebody will ask you what is your bill? So, you cannot say, you say that it depends and then it exceeds the limit like instead of the initial 300, 500, 800, 1000 it zooms up to 10000, 15000, 20000 you use data enormously and then it is just like all the time talking and chatting and using mobile phones for this. So, is it like rising like anything without your control and then finally, do you hate talking to people in person? But feel like chatting with them on mobile. So, on mobile you can chat with the same person endlessly any number of time, but when you see the same person face to face. So, you withdraw, you do not even feel like talking. You say hello, hi and even you say that lets catch up on the mobile. So, if you are doing all these things as I said you have already become an addict and then you have to be very watchful and you have to come out of it.

As participants of this course who is doing the soft skills and personality, it is important that you retain your human personality. However, beneficial technology will try to ensnare you, attract you, but you should realize the harmful part of its impact and then as I said you try to salvage the humanity, you try to rescue the human qualities where technology is completely coming and making you function like robots.

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So, how to become human in this completely technological surrounded world where it is very difficult resist temptations, especially the electronic temptations and I say this it is difficult initially, but try to practice sooner or later and then as I said small step each day and then start with small frequency and increase and form these habits these are good habits keep some mobile free time in a day, people know that 6 to 7, they call your mobile will be switched off because they know either you are on work or you are praying or you are just eating or you have time with your family or its your complete mobile off time and nobody can reach you or they know you are in the library or they know that you are in the class wherever you are, but they know that there is a free time in a day and you do not touch your mobile.

Keep mobile switched off when you sleep. They say that the radiation can give you cancer. So, the same things that happen wherever you keep in your body and that is the next point I am going to make, keep distance from phone while talking. So, putting it close on your ears is actually going to make the radiation affect your ears, affect your body. So, try to keep a distance, use again speaker mode and then so that you can hear it unless you are in a crowded place and unless it is a very private conversation, in that case again if you can use a Bluetooth and then still keep away from the phone.

So, still it can save you. Try to minimize keeping the phone with you even while talking putting it on your ears and keeping it literally away from you as much as possible, keep it in a distance and do not put it in your pocket. So, if could carry it on hand bag and if you can put it on a small bag for mobile and if you can carry it instead of putting it in your pocket especially just above you heart where it is going to affect it very badly. People say that even when they have put it on the trouser pockets it is affecting the thighs and it is giving bone cancer and other things, the radiation is affecting. So, try to keep yourself away from this.

Treat mobile as your slave, as your servant and you be the king, you be the master, but do not let it dictate terms as your master, use wrist watch and then whatever kind that you like, use it and use calculators and avoid taking the mobile all the time, use memo pads to note down important phone numbers, note down important contact numbers. These are all things like I am not saying that you should use calculator on phone because when you are outside and then you do not have to carry the calculator all the time, but given a chance on your table calculator is there and mobile phone is there, try to use the calculator when you have a choice so that, you can avoid the frequent use of this. Keep your calls and messages transparent, whomever you call.

So, whoever is there in your facebook, whoever is linked in your whatsapp, can it be transparent? Can you make it as transparent as possible? So that your spouse can see that, your friends can see that or anybody can see that and can it be transparent? So, making it transparent actually relieves you from lot of stress, it gives you peace of mind and then it completely relieves you from bad stress and if there are contacts, if there are discussions you do not want to show it to some people in particular, all the time your mind will be consciously trying to prevent your mobile from being seen by somebody and all the time you will be in psychological stress.

Then the next important point to be human, never keep mobile in your hand while driving again distant is you can keep it in a distance, use speaker in the car or even while driving on the bike you try to stop it and then listen and then you continue even if you go 1 or 2 minutes late it is fine and if you are hurry, if you cannot stop. So, just keep the call ringing, let it go, let the other person realize that you are driving or something and once you reach a safe place you again call back, try to find out addresses by maps and by asking people, those days we were either using map or we were just asking people and then we were trying to figure out. So, the human contact was intact.

Now, everywhere you use GPS and not all the time GPS is taking you accurately to the particular desired place, sometimes you even take a roundabout way, use it when it is absolutely indispensible when it is emergency completely unknown place, but then if you can avoid using it and then slightly place is known to you but slightly unknown address where you can find out yourself by asking somebody try to do that.

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Towards the concluding part, I want to give you some suggestions as how you can maintain mobile etiquette. So, etiquette is actually the social norms with the guided rightful behavior, especially if you are surrounded by people and when you are using this. So, what are some of the etiquette that you can follow basically when you are in face to face communication avoid using mobile or use face to face communication to the maximum extent possible, if you are in the same building, instead of calling somebody who is in the next door or in the same block on mobile, you just try to fix up quick time drop in and then talk to the person instead of using this avoid texting, calling people on mobile who are in the same house and who are in the same office. So, avoid that just go and then talk to the person.

Use mobile only when it is absolutely necessary. Now, generally in India and even some of the Asian countries there is an obsessive tendency to use mobile to the excessive manner possible, but then you do not see that much of use in places in Europe and all that, I went for a conference in Romania and the conference organizer one lady was there with the participants, we were taken out side for a tour and then from morning 8 till evening , we were all together and then I did not see most of the people using mobile phones at all. So, there were completely focused on the sites we were seeing, at 8 o clock at night, the organizer said that she can get taxi's for us if we want and then she ask whether she could take a taxi, I said how would you do that. So, nobody was around that

area and how are you going to manage it and I did not have my mobile because of a different country I did not use a different sim.

So, she took the mobile from the handbag immediately and then she said she will use the mobile. Now, I was quite surprised and taken aback because from morning 8 till evening 8, 12 hours the mobile was in her hand bag and not a movement she took it out for chatting to people or taking a picture we went to so many places or texting somebody, but it was absolutely necessary to call a taxi using a mobile when we were in a place where there were no nearby phones and all that and then she took it out. So, that was a good indicator to me to realize that you should use it only when it is absolutely necessary and you should minimize the use as much as possible.

And then do not call someone just to pass your time. So, be concerned about the others time and then you do not just call somebody just because you want to pass time and then completely unmindful of what somebody else will be doing. Similarly, do not call someone on mobile to ask a trivial thing that can be cleared on a message, one small doubt what time is it and then what are you going to do? What are you doing now? Very small trivial things, clarifications if you can just send a text message and seek clarification it avoids so many stressful moments for the other person especially if the other person is busy like let us say the person is in a meeting. So, when you call for a small thing and they are very busy in a heated discussion and your phone buzzes, it rings frequently and calls the person again and again, it actually annoys the person, it troubles the person and some people like once they get addicted to mobile.

So, the movement a beep sound or a buzzing sound comes, immediately they run to the phone and then they take it and they find that nothing is there and they feel very disappointed. So, be careful when you are using it and especially if it is a trivial small information, use a text message and do not highjack someone time by calling them in their busy schedule and if at all you have to call you just find out the most suitable time and then call.

So, do not highjack it, completely take away the time, be empathetic all the time, avoid calling busy people as much as possible and give value to their time, do not use mobile call where a text message or e-mail can serve better purpose. Like today in corporate offices and then places like IITs and most of the institutions everything is done through emails and people check the email on their mobile phone wherever they are on the laptop computer its checked all the time. So, when you know that the person is checking e-mail frequently, you can just send an email instead of calling the person on mobile and then taking the person's time and using your time also.

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Now, in terms of business calls identify the most suitable time first. So, as I said sometimes even interviews are conducted using this, very important calls come using this. So, identify the most suitable time first then you can message and ask whether it is the right time to call or even when you call, you can ask the person whether it is the right time to call and if the person says no, can you call after 1 hour, you just call after one hour or fix the appointment as when you should call and in case you intrude, when you say you will take only 2 minutes, do not take 20 minutes or 2 hours it is unfair, untruth, uncivilized behavior thinking that you can do anything and it is a very aggressive and insensitive behavior and next time the person wont like taking your call use miss calls as reminders only if you are ask to do so.

Some people tell even I tell my students that you call me at this time if I do not respond to you otherwise you do not give me a call if I have responded. So, if you are asked to do that you give a miss call otherwise do not do that and do not give miscalls expecting the other person to call back and save your money and that is again other bad habit and if you want somebody to call, you call the person and if you want to save your time, you tell the person you will call again and you give a call but never give miss call make the other person call you.

Keep important points written so that you do not call again and again. Often people feel that mobile is at your hand and you can press the button and then the other guy at the other end just runs to you just like a slave and listens to you, it is like that genie you press and then the person comes and attends to you and that again indicates a very aggressive and self centered behavior, note down important points when you call and ask the person all the wants so that you finish the call even on mobile, just the other person switches off, puts back the call and then again you call immediately to find out what about that thing which you missed, you call again and again 3 calls 4 calls were made just in a gap of 2-3 minutes because you forgot something.

Now, you have no right to trouble or annoy the other person just because you are anxious, you are stressed and then you are actually feeling that unless you call the other person your stress will not be relieved and then every one minute you remember something and you call the person. So, before that remove your stress note it down all important points then you call the person.

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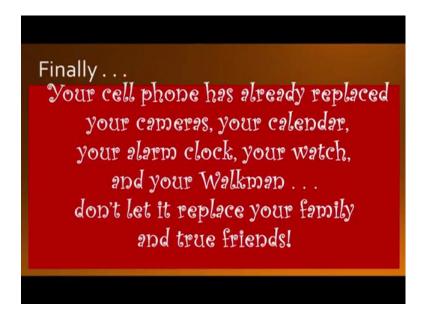
In business meetings, your phone should be in silent mode or switched off and if it rings when in a serious discussion, everybody is going to feel annoyed about you and same thing in case of interviews, exam halls and other restricted areas you should not carry your mobile phone and if required it should be switched off. So, I know in many of the exams like our own IITs gate exams, JEE exams at the end of each exam at least 4 to 6 students are just penalized just because they had mobile phones in their pocket despite lots of announcements and warnings and they thought that nobody will notice, but then it burst, it made some call and then they were caught and then they were completely debarred from that one and the exam was found to be null and void, their examination chance was canceled.

So, in interviews, exam halls do not use it and interviews again it creates a very ugly situation. So, I was in an interview with the other people and the lady candidate got a call and it is just the mother or the aunt asking her how is the interview going? So, what is happening in the interview? Have you started answering questions? So, she was saying no, I will just tell you, again after two more questions again the call comes what happened. Now, we told her just go ahead finish the call. So, she went ahead and then finished the call and needless to tell you that we did not select the candidate.

So, you have to realize that at the time of interview and exam, talking to somebody on mobile is not the most important thing and do not attend a call when you are in a face to face communication or a business meeting, if required take permission caller tone, ring tone again is something that just take it for granted, but it tells so much about you, about your personality, keep it very decent and appropriate, keep it in a manner that it does not provoke anybody's feelings, it does not hurt or affects anybody's sentiments and when they hear it, let them feel good about it, let them feel pleasant about it, it can be a good wish, it can be good music, but let it not offend anybody's sensibility even before they start talking to you. Avoid talking aloud on phone in public places or buses, trains, flights etc. as soft as possible so that the other person does not hear and then you do not disturb somebody else also talking on phone.

You should maintain eye contact with the person sitting before you in a party, in personal face to face communication or even in a formal business relationship, look at the cartoon I have put. So, the lady telling may be her boyfriend or husband she is saying do you mind if I strap your phone to my forehead so that you are looking at me when I talk. So, she can imagine that he is looking at her. She is saying I will put your phone on my forehead. Hence, it should not reach this level.

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Finally, two more wise suggestions your cell phone has already replaced your cameras, calendar, alarm clock, watch and also your walkman or walkman has already become a kind of obsolete piece now, but do not let it replace your family and true friends.

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Ultimately let your mobile number be on the top of the favorite list of somebody, your boss, family, friends or your colleagues, not and never on the top of the block list. Thank you for watching this video and I hope you will make effective use of your mobile and

minimize unnecessary use of it, save your time, save somebody else's time, reduce your stress and reduce somebody else's stresses also.

Thank you so much.