



By **Heather Callaghan**, *Editor*

You may remember Aziz Ansari from the hit show *Parks and Recreation* or more recently, *Master of None* on Netflix.

The comedian-turned-actor used to be absorbed with all things social media. He had a Reddit hangout where he'd discuss romantic problems of the modern world. His findings there may have shown up in his new book *Modern Romance: An Investigation*.

So why should you care what he does on his phone. You probably shouldn't but here we are just the same. And perhaps that's his point with his recent move to delete the Internet from his phone. (I will say that public personalities have way more influence than we give them credit for, so any positive move they make can have a ripple effect.)

At the risk of talking myself out of a reading audience, here's why he's loving life without the constant swipe action. Could it be that he's on to the nature of the media as a big *weapon of mass distraction*?

Ansari told *Time* of the fidgety, fickle discontentment of mankind:

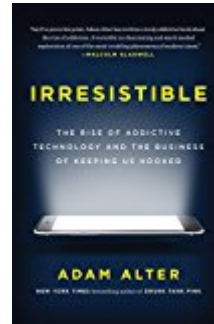
Whenever you check for a new post on Instagram or whenever you go on The New York Times to see if there's a new thing, it's not even about the content.

It's just about seeing a new thing. You get addicted to that feeling. You're not going to be able to control yourself. So the only way to fight that is to take yourself out of the equation and remove all these things. What happens is, eventually you forget about it. You don't care anymore.

Then came the withdrawal, not surprising considering the addictive nature of screen time.

When I first took the browser off my phone, I'm like, [gasp] How am I gonna look stuff up?

But most of the sh-t you look up, it's not stuff you need to know. All those websites you read while you're in a cab, you don't need to look at any of that stuff. It's better to just sit and be in your own head for a minute. I wanted to stop that thing where I get home and look at websites for an hour and a half, checking to see if there's a new thing. And read a book instead. I've been doing it for a couple months and it's worked. I'm reading, like, three books right now. I'm putting something in my mind. It feels so much better than just reading the Internet and not remembering anything.



Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked



Aside from gaining time and feeding his brain, he stumbled on a truth:

I was reading all this Trump stuff, and it doesn't feel like we're reading news for the reason we used to, which was to get a better sense of what's going on in the world and to enrich yourself by being aware. It seems like we're reading wrestling rumors.

It's like reading about what happened on Monday Night Raw. When you take a step back, it all just seems so sensationalized. Trump's gonna get impeached! No, he's not. None of that sh-t's happening. But you are going to read all the articles. So if you take yourself out of it, you're not infected with this toxicity all the time. Also, guess what? Everything is fine! I'm not out of the loop on anything. Like, if something real is going down, I'll find out about it.

I think Ansari summed up the concept of online media well – a sensationalized and time-wasting Punch & Judy show of sorts.

Last year, **America's Fixer Upper sweethearts** announced that they weren't letting their children use cell phones and TV. Carrie Anne-Moss who played Trinity in the **Matrix** movie series used **screen time** as a metaphor **for the real matrix**, and described the lack of presence she experience with her children when she was sucked into her phone.

Ansari is simply part of a growing number of entertainment personalities that are stepping up and out when it comes to nature of media to drain our consciousness.

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#)