TEAM C — B2

When Technology Starts Controlling Us

Digital technology has transformed the way people communicate, study and organise their everyday lives. Smartphones, social media and online services provide convenience and constant access to information. At the same time, however, permanent connectivity can influence people's behaviour in ways they do not always notice.

One of the most obvious examples is the constant flow of notifications. A message, email or social-media alert can interrupt an activity even when it is not important. After checking one notification, people may move from one app to another and eventually spend much more time online than they originally intended.

This behaviour is not always a conscious choice. People often reach for their phones automatically when they are bored, uncomfortable or waiting. In this sense, checking a device can become a habit rather than a deliberate decision. The problem is not simply the amount of screen time but the way technology competes for our attention.

There are also benefits to being constantly connected. Students can communicate easily, access educational materials and collaborate online. Workers can stay in touch with colleagues and complete tasks from different locations. Technology can therefore increase flexibility and productivity when it is used purposefully.

The challenge is to establish boundaries. Turning off non-essential notifications, creating phone-free periods and avoiding screens before going to bed are relatively simple strategies. More importantly, people need to become aware of their own digital behaviour.

Digital well-being does not mean rejecting technology. It means using it intentionally rather than allowing every notification, recommendation or message to determine what we do next.

Ultimately, the question is not whether technology is good or bad. The more important question is who is making the decisions: the user or the technology?

Task 1. Identify the main argument.

Write the main idea of the text in **one sentence**.

Task 2. Choose the correct answer.

1. According to the text, notifications can:
   a) improve concentration in every situation
   b) interrupt activities and lead to further online activity
   c) make people use fewer apps
   d) eliminate digital distractions

2. The writer suggests that checking a phone can become:
   a) a deliberate professional skill
   b) an automatic habit
   c) a form of productivity
   d) a way to avoid all communication
3. The writer believes technology:
   a) is mainly harmful
   b) should be avoided by students
   c) can be beneficial when used purposefully
   d) makes people less productive in every situation
4. Digital well-being mainly involves:
   a) rejecting modern technology
   b) reducing all screen time to zero
   c) becoming more intentional about technology use
   d) using more productivity apps

Task 3. Vocabulary in context

Find words or phrases in the text that mean:

1. continuous connection → _____
2. convenience and usefulness → _____
3. to disturb an activity → _____
4. planned and conscious → _____
5. limits or rules about when something can be used → _____
6. intentionally → _____

Task 4. Cause and effect

Complete the chain using information from the text:

Notification → _____ → _____ → more time online

Then explain:

Why can this process happen without people consciously choosing it?

Task 5. Critical thinking

Discuss:

1. Is screen time the best way to measure unhealthy technology use? Why / why not?
2. Can a person be highly connected and still have good digital well-being?
3. Should universities introduce phone-free periods during classes?
4. Are notifications useful or mainly distracting?
5. Who should be responsible for healthy technology use — the individual, technology companies, or both?