



By: *Elise Quevedo*

Are we using technology to elevate our lives or to escape from them?



Scrolling through my feed a few days ago, I noticed some content tagged with #RawDogging. Let me explain if you missed this **trend** when it first made waves last year. It refers to travelling without using technology, with no maps, translation apps, or curated playlists, just a person, the world, and the unknown. This trend has a few variations, but the essence is the same.

It might sound edgy at first, but isn't that how travel used to be? We walked around, got lost, asked for directions, joked, and gained knowledge.

Before contemporary technology took over, many of us lived that pure, unfiltered existence; it wasn't a fad. How, then, did something so fundamental turn into a novelty? Why has it become a countercultural act to simply be in the moment?

I reflected on how far we've come and what we may be leaving behind in the process. Technology has woven itself so tightly into the fabric of our daily existence that the idea of experiencing the world without it now garners hashtags and headlines. What used to be instinctual is now seen as radical. And that should give us pause.

Let me be clear, I love technology. I work in it, advocate for it, and believe in its transformative power. But I also believe in balance. This article is just a reminder to step back once in a while.

Those who know me behind the scenes know how traditional I am in certain areas and that no amount of technology will ever replace me in believing in that balance.

Because while we may be building smarter devices, if we aren't careful, we risk becoming more disconnected from ourselves and each other in the process.

When Convenience Becomes a Crutch

The truth is, we've become accustomed to convenience. Everything we do, from ordering food, amenities, or even a date, is now a swipe or click away. Algorithms predict what we want before we even know we want it.

And that's impressive, yes, but it can also be dangerous if we lose the ability to think, feel, and act outside that digital framework.

Technology enhances our lives, but when we rely on screens to tell us how to navigate our cities, entertain our downtime, or even validate our self-worth, we risk becoming passive participants in our own stories.

We check our phones before we check in with ourselves

There's a subtle deterioration happening, one notification at a time. We're trading real-world serendipity for digital predictability. Eye contact for blue light. Conversations for comments. Moments for metrics.

We check our phones before we check in with ourselves. And that's a problem.

The False Allure of Constant Connectivity

We're more connected than ever, yet loneliness statistics continue to climb. And I don't believe that's a coincidence. Being "always on" doesn't equate to being emotionally available or spiritually present. If anything, it can pull us further away from the now. We film the concert instead of dancing in it. We photograph the sunset instead of sitting in its warmth. We scroll through someone else's life instead of living our own.

We stopped experiencing and started documenting

Let that sink in for a moment. Somewhere along the way, we stopped experiencing and started documenting. The beauty of life, its

raw, unscripted, unfiltered chaos, has been edited for aesthetics and monetised for clicks.

I'll be honest, put up my hand, and acknowledge that I occasionally fail to turn off technology as well. I need to remind myself to glance up from my devices occasionally.

Being Present in a Hyper-Digital World

Don't get me wrong, technology is not the villain here, and it never will be. It's a tool, a powerful, life-changing tool, as we have come to understand over the years. But, like all tools, it needs to be used with intention. And that's the keyword here, intention.

Are we using technology to elevate our lives or to escape from them? That's a tricky question, but one we must ask ourselves regularly. Because while technology will continue to evolve with AI, AR, VR, and beyond, we remain human. Finite. Fragile. Beautifully imperfect. And our time here is limited.

Let's not wait until we're looking back at a life half-lived through a screen to realise what we missed

So we must choose to be present.

To go for walks without podcasts, share meals without phones on the table, listen fully, look up, breathe, notice, and remember that the little things, sunrises, laughter, and conversations without distractions are the big things.

Let's not wait until we're looking back at a life half-lived through a screen to realise what we missed.

Tech-Life Balance, It's Not Optional Anymore

In 2025, the idea of "balance" isn't just wellness

jargon, it's survival. Burnout is out of control. Mental health is declining. While technology may not be the sole cause, it certainly doesn't help when used without boundaries.

I've spoken with professionals across industries, from developers to executives, and one recurring theme keeps surfacing, "we're tired."



The solution is simple, but not easy. We must choose to disconnect to reconnect

Tired of being plugged in 24/7. Tired of reacting to notifications instead of setting our own pace. Tired of missing life while we're trying to optimise it.

And so, the solution is simple, but not easy. We must choose to disconnect to reconnect. We must be willing to "raw dog" (nope, I won't be using this term myself long term) life once in a while, not just travel.

Take the scenic route. Ask a stranger for directions. Put the phone down during lunch. Resist the urge to record every moment. Savour it instead. Because while the cloud may store your memories, only you can live them.

A Future We Can Still Shape

The choices we make today will shape how future generations engage with technology and with each other. Let's model what it looks like to integrate tech into our lives without letting it run our daily lives.

Let's normalise being unreachable sometimes.

Let's make space for silence, for stillness, for unfiltered joy.

The most revolutionary thing we can do in a hyper-connected world is to be fully present

Let's remember that the most revolutionary thing we can do in a hyper-connected world is to be fully present.

I don't know what the next big trend will be. Maybe it'll be digital detox cabins, or maybe it'll be neural implants. But I do know this, no matter how advanced technology becomes, it will never replace a sunset shared with someone you love, a laugh that makes your stomach hurt, or a memory made simply by being there, completely, unapologetically, and without distraction.

My question to you is, will we remember to live, even as we build the future?