Please Unsubscribe, Thanks!

How to Take Back Our Time, Attention, and Purpose in a World Designed to Bury Us in Bullshit

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Selections for CNN.com Readers

Nine
How to Talk About It All

Community Institutions, Associations, and Organizations, Extended Family, Work

When you need space

• “I only schedule Zooms two days a week now. I’m limiting my digital time. Can we do Thursday instead?”
• “Please count me out for now. Talk soon.”
• “I have to bow out and restore so I can live to fight another day.”
• “How can we streamline this so I can give you as much of me as I can afford to (or as my schedule allows)?”
• “We have to put some boundaries in place here.”
• “This schedule doesn’t leave much room for family time. We can commit to the kids being there once a week. More than that gets tough for us.”

When it is time to end it

• “I did some deep thinking, and I have to end my membership. I’m oversubscribed all around.”
• “This hurts, but I have to step away (for good).”
• “I am really grateful we got to work together or spend so much time together. My life just looks different now.”
• “We’ve decided not to participate. The schedule doesn’t give us enough family time.”
• “This has been weighing on me. But I know it’s not personal. I just have to make some changes.”

Best to avoid

These kinds of messages double down on your weakness. You are not weak.

• “I can’t continue. I don’t have it in me.”
• “I have nothing left to give here.”
• “Are you guys kidding me? You push and you push and you push. When is enough enough for you?”
• “I don’t have the bandwidth for you.”
• “My plate is too full. I can’t handle it.”

Eleven
How to Unsubscribe from Work or at Work

When You Want to Streamline or Set a Boundary

• “I really want to say yes, but until I finish my deadline, I can’t focus on that well.”
• “Can we round up and establish a new way to communicate as a group?”
• “I think our office needs to look a little different from how it used to.”
• “Our schedule isn’t leaving me much room for family time. How can we make some changes?”
• “I want to have a standing day each week [or hour(s) each day] to just focus on my inbox.”
• “For the summer, let’s set a dedicated lunch hour so we’re all on the same page. How does everyone feel about that?”
• “I think it’s time for us to renegotiate the terms of our work relationship.”
• “I feel like this is not working. How do you feel? What can we change here to make this work?”
• “I think we all need to unsubscribe from this idea that . . .”

Thanks!

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