HITTING RESET: ENCOURAGING DIGITAL WELL-BEING BEHAVIOR CHANGE IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Charlie Potts
Gustavus Adolphus College

Abstract
In this article, I explore the perceived digital well-being of undergraduate students and the effects of purposeful intervention on motivation and digital behavior change. Digital well-being can be defined as a concept of defining the impact of technologies on people's mental, physical, and emotional health (Shah, 2019). Smartphones are a necessary tool for a vast majority of today's college students, and their ability to manage the influence of their digital connection is a critical aspect of their overall well-being. This qualitative study included 22 undergraduate students at an institution in the Midwest. Participants were guided through a structured intervention to encourage self-motivated behavior change. Through this article, I outline how purposeful intervention around digital behavior change has a positive influence on self-perceptions of digital well-being. Implications for future practice and research are discussed.
Keywords: digital wellbeing, college, behavior change, wellness, student development

Please direct inquires about this manuscript to: Charlie Potts, cpotts@gustavus.edu. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1758-3092

College Student Affairs Journal, Volume 42(2), pp. 20 - 39
ISSN 2381-2338

Smartphones occupy a prioritized space in the lives of many of today's college students. The use of smartphones is nearly ubiquitous among teens and young adults (Vogels et al., 2022). The prominence of smartphones has created challenges for college students as they navigate their educational experience while managing how they incorporate phone use into their daily lives.

Traditional-aged undergraduate students on campus today are primarily part of Generation Z, characterized by Twenge (2017) as having a set of generalizable characteristics which include an increase in time spent on the internet, a decline in in-person social interactions, and a noted rise in mental health challenges. While more diverse and inclusive than previous generations, Twenge (2023) noted that the more connected this current generation is digitally, often the less connected they are socially and in person. Having grown up almost entirely in the age of access to smartphones, these students are the product of a society where constant access to technology and information is the norm.

A recent study of Gen Z students found that participants spent an average of over six and a half hours per day on their phones, picked up their phones an average of 167 times per day and received an average of 223 notifications per day (dcdx, 2023). Twenge (2017) wrote that Gen Z is "on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades. Much of this deterioration can be traced to their phones" (para. 10). Humans - and particularly those in the Gen Z group - remain attached to their devices despite the negative effects they may experience - whether they be social, physical, or mental - in part because devices are designed to keep us hooked (Alter, 2017).

Phone use has increased rapidly over the past five years, due in part to the ease of access to smartphones but also related to the Covid-19 pandemic (Jonnatan et al., 2022; Ratan et al., 2021; Stevic et al., 2022). As social restrictions increased, individuals turned to their phones for connections to family and friends, as well as entertainment. While phone use is not recognized as an addiction by the American Psychiatric Association, "there is a growing number of mental health specialists who recognize that people can get addicted to their smartphones" (Sneed, 2022).

Whether today's students view smartphones as necessary communication tools or valued accessories that enable social connections, the prioritized space that phones inhabit has created a shift in behavior for young people, and there is now a critical need to understand how these devices influence our students' well-being and create opportunities for students to develop skills around reflection, self-assessment, and behavior change. This study sought to demonstrate the effectiveness of motivational interviewing tactics in assisting students with behavior change related to their phone use and their perceptions of their digital well-being.

Literature Review

Several key areas of extant research and writing inform this project. These areas include literature related to defining digital well-being; the physiological and psychosocial effects of digital technology use; and motivational interviewing. In addition, frameworks of behavior change that influenced this study are included. Each of those topics is expanded upon below.

Digital Well-being

A primary method for defining the degree to which digital devices - namely smartphones - are integrated into one's life is *digital well-being*, an evolving concept that has varying definitions. Shah and Knight (2019) defined digital well-being as an integration of personal health and relationships in digital settings. Büchi (2021) defined digital well-being as an "individuals' subjective well-being in a social environment where digital media are omnipresent" (p. 1) and that digital well-being concerns an "individual's affect (e.g. positive emo-

tions), domain satisfaction (e.g. one's relationships), and overall life satisfaction in a social environment characterized by the constant abundance of digital media use options" (p. 4). Vanden Abeele (2021) defined digital well-being as "a subjective individual experience of optimal balance between the benefits and drawbacks obtained from mobile connectivity" (p. 7). In addition, it creates a "mobile connectivity paradox" for many users, where constant connectivity can support autonomy but can simultaneously challenge autonomy by exerting direct control over thoughts and behaviors by diverting attention away from people's primary activities (Vanden Abeele, 2021, p. 934).

The facets of digital well-being outlined by Shah and Knight (2019) are that individuals manage digital connectedness, overload, and distraction, and that they understand the benefits and risks of digital participation in relation to health and well-being. Burr et al. (2020) described digital well-being as "the impact of digital technologies on what it means to live a life that is good for a human being" in an information society (p. 1). Though definitions of the concept vary in scope and depth, a simplified version that encompasses the aspects of the definition vital to this study is that "Digital well-being considers the impact of technologies and digital services on people's mental, physical, and emotional health" (Shah, 2019, para. 3).

Physiological and Psychosocial Effects Of Digital Technology Use

The use of digital technology and social media is tied to physiological effects that are negatively impacting the well-being of young adults. A primary focus of prior research has been smartphone addiction, often rooted in the use of social media, as it is a primary driver for the use of phones. While experts argue whether smartphones are truly addicting, Sneed (2022) noted that addiction is partially defined by control, compulsion, and consequences - that is, performing a behavior more than intended, being preoccupied with a behavior and performing it compulsively, and "continuing use in spite of negative social, physical, and mental consequences" (para. 5).

College students have underestimated and under-reported their smartphone use (Lee, et al, 2017). Social media stimulates brain chemistry, drawing users to "likes" and connections, which can have negative effects on students as they develop addictions to social media use (Haynes, 2018; McSweeney, 2019). Addiction leads to distraction, which may prevent students from focusing, multi-tasking, and prioritizing, including distracting from academic success (D'Amato, 2019; Lepp et al, 2015; Sapci et al., 2021; Shankar & Park, 2016). Smartphone addiction is also correlated with depression in addition to aggression and impulsion (Kim, et al, 2015). Despite near-constant connection with others, young adults are experiencing an increase in perceived social isolation and loneliness (Hunt, et al., 2018; Primack et al, 2017).

Social media and phone use in teens led to negative effects on well-being, particularly in the form of inadequate sleep patterns, neck pain, eye strain, and lack of physical activity (Derakhshanrad et al., 2021; Lepp et al., 2013; McLoughlin et al, 2019; Rathakrishnan et al., 2021; Rosen et al, 2016; Viner et al, 2019). Other research has shown that many phone users enter a dissociative state when on social media, becoming so absorbed by phone use that they lose sense of time and space while engaged with their screens (McQuate, 2022).

The increase in students seeking assistance with mental health concerns coincides with the rise of social media as a central communication method (Lauckner et al., 2018; Lipson et al., 2018; Schwitzer & Vaughn., 2017; Twenge et al., 2018). Digital technology and social media use appear correlated with negative mental health outcomes (Kaler et al., 2020; Mathewson, 2020; Twenge, 2020; Twenge et al., 2018). More recently, young adults are engaging in *digital self-harm*, described as anonymously posting, sending, or sharing harmful content about themselves in order to cope with

the mental stress of constant connection, and to bring about change in themselves or to elicit reaction from others - often an indicator of potentially more serious mental health challenges, including suicidal ideation (Archer, 2023).

The American Psychological Association's *Stress in America* survey (2017) revealed that social media and digital technology usage significantly increased perceived levels of stress, but relatively few individuals took action to change their habits. The result is a decrease in sense of well-being, which is having a devastating psychological impact on students (Hunt et al, 2018).

While research demonstrates the negative impact of smartphone use on young adults, the effects are not all bad. Regular or routine use was positively correlated with social well-being, positive mental health, and self-rated health (Bekalu et al., 2019). Social media and phone use can provide social connection in healthy ways, including expanded opportunities to connect with others, providing support during times of stress, and a more diverse peer group than they might experience in person (Turner, 2023). Expanded access to information and extended social support networks via social media and phone use can create positive experiences for young adults.

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a therapeutic tool utilized to facilitate behavior change. The method uses a collaborative approach between a professional helper and an individual who is seeking behavior change in order to help the individual explore and resolve ambivalence (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). While most often used in the treatment of lifestyle problems or concerns in healthcare and addiction treatment, it is a widely applicable and useful strategy in other areas of personal development where behavior change is being sought. Motivational interviewing techniques create a directive, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping individuals address their ambivalence and reduce resistance to change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). The key principles of motivational interviewing include expressing empathy, developing discrepancy, avoiding argumentation, rolling with resistance, and supporting self-efficacy (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). The key steps of implementation are often summarized as engagement, focusing, evoking, and planning.

The overall goal of motivational interviewing is to increase the individual's intrinsic motivation so that change arises from within rather than being imposed from without (Lopez Viets, et al, 2002), thereby minimizing resistance to change. The technique includes asking open-ended questions, reflective listening, affirmations, and summarizing in order to tap into internal motivations for change rather than imposing external motivations (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

In alignment with other approaches used with college students to address development and behavior, motivational interview requires that the individual seeking change plays a significant role in the change. Iarussi (2013) expounded on the notion that motivational interviewing fosters college student development. Motivational interviewing has been used for academic advising (Ockenfels, 2014), career services (McClain, 2010), and in college classrooms (Wells et al, 2014).

Theoretical Frameworks

This study on college students' perceptions of digital well-being and behavior change was informed by several existing conceptual models of behavior change. While these models have traditionally had primary use in health settings, there is a broad applicability to student development as it relates to social behaviors and wellness concepts like digital well-being. Prochaska and DiClemente's (1983) The Stages of Change Model articulated the six stages of behavior change as pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and relapse. Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory complimented The Stages of Change Model by emphasizing the im-

portance of self-efficacy, skill development, and determining the outcomes of and assigning a value to behavior change. The Social-Ecological Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) considered the complex connections between factors for individuals, emphasizing that context is relevant to the opportunities and motivations for individuals to make behavior change. McLeroy et al. (1988) redefined Bronfenbrenner's (1977) theory as a framework for health-related behavioral change. The models that served as a framework for understanding health-related behavior change provided insight into the process and value of behavior change.

While previous studies focus on the effects of phone use on the well-being of college students, there is a gap in the research regarding the effect of proactive skill development and the process of behavioral change to counteract negative effects of phone use. This study sought to demonstrate the effectiveness of motivational interviewing tactics in assisting students with behavior change related to their phone use and their perceptions of their digital well-being.

Research Design

The intent of this study was to explore the influence that purposeful intervention had on digital behavior change with a focus on creating a theory of digital well-being development. Understanding that purposeful intervention via motivational interviewing has been used to elicit and empower behavior change, I was interested in discovering how this process might lead to a developmental model to explain the process college students experience while seeking and enacting behavior change. The central research question - *How does motivational interviewing intervention influence perceptions of digital well-being in undergraduate college students?* - was answered utilizing a qualitative approach. The approach was designed based on grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz, 2014). Glaser and Strauss (1967, as cited in Charmaz, 2006) advocated for "developing theories from research grounded in data rather than deducing testable hypotheses from existing theories" (p. 4). Mills et al (2006) acknowledged the interrelationship that exists between the researcher and the participants in constructing the data. In constructivist grounded theory, data and theories are constructed by the researcher as a result of interactions with the participants (Charmaz, 2006). This method was particularly relevant for a topic that has yet to be broadly explored in existing research.

Data Collection

Participants were second-year undergraduate students at a small, private college in the Midwestern United States. This study focused on second-year college students because of characteristics unique to their experience. The intent was to capture students at a point after which they had already transitioned to college and were familiar with their routine and socialization - both in-person and digital - at college but were not yet so rigidly set into patterns of socialization that behavior change might be unappealing. The research site enrolls approximately 2,100 undergraduate students, of which 55% identify as female and approximately 21% of students identify as non-White.

Participants were recruited via an email distributed to a campus mailing list for second-year students and via social media posts through multiple campus accounts. Potential participants who responded to the email were sent a screening questionnaire to verify eligibility and collect basic demographic information. Those eligible were selected in order of response while balancing for self-identified gender.

A total of 22 participants engaged in the study, of whom 12 identified as women and 10 identified as men (Table 1). The racial/ethnic composition of the participant group was more diverse than the population of the research site institution, providing a wide range of perspectives. Of the 22 participants, 11 (50%) were White students, 6 (27%) were

Black, 3 (14%) were Hispanic/Latino, and 2 (9%) were Asian-American.

Each participant engaged in two individual semi-structured interviews approximately three weeks apart. During the initial interview, participants were asked to assess their personal phone use habits and define what healthy phone behavior might look like. Utilizing motivational interviewing methods developed by Miller & Rollnick (2013), the initial interview focused on engaging, focusing, evoking, and planning. Through reflection and discussion, participants determined how their phone use was affecting their lives, assigned value to the change they hoped to make, and set tangible, measurable goals for behavior change [Figure 1].

Participants identified what they appreciated most about their phone and what was hindering their relationship with their phone. Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with how they currently used their phone in relation to perceived norms on campus, and then to identify the perceived value of behavior change. Participants were encouraged to identify behaviors related to their phone use that they wished to change during the initial interview, and then strategies and tactics were co-created with the researcher to determine a plan of action before the second interview.

During the second interview [Figure 2], participants were asked to reflect on their actions during the time between interviews. The average time between interviews for participants was 19 days. Participants explained which strategies were successful and what or who impeded success and highlighted the ways they measured success. Participants were asked to articulate how the intervention process helped them understand their digital well-being and what they learned about themselves while trying to create behavior change. And finally, participants were asked to once again rate their level of satisfaction with how they currently use their phone and were asked to explain how they felt about the change in the self-rating they provided compared to their first interview.

Data Analysis

The intent of this study was to develop a theory of digital well-being development applicable to college students. As this is a relatively unexplored topic, qualitative data was analyzed using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) in order to understand participants' socially constructed reality and how they make meaning of those experiences. Following Charmaz's (2014) methods of data analysis, data from the interviews were coded in three steps: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. The coding process acted as a funnel, narrowing the line-by-line coding into themes, and then testing the themes for saturation to create the three primary themes from the data. The coding process began while data were being collected, allowing for constant comparison to ensure data saturation. Memo writing throughout the data collection and coding process provided constant reflexivity. Random, informal member checks were employed to ensure the validity of the participants' accounts of their experiences. In addition, a bracketing exercise was conducted to demonstrate validity and identify assumptions and knowledge of the research topic.

Positionality

As a student affairs practitioner with nearly two decades of professional experience, the start of my career coincided with the birth of Facebook as a social media platform. While I did not experience digital technology via the same modes as current students, I have witnessed and engaged in discussion and research around smartphones and social media use my entire career, thus influencing my perspective on the topic. I have conducted research related to social media and gender performance, social media use and mental health in college students, and created a digital well-being initiative on my campus. My perspective of growing up and navigating college without the influence of social media or smartphones limits my ability to fully engage in the perspective of current students. I am a White, cisgender man who has a

specific perspective on digital well-being and digital technology use because of my age, personal experiences, and educational opportunities - and those perspectives differ from the college students who participated in this study.

Findings

The intent of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how undergraduate college students perceived their digital well-being within the context of their college experience, and to develop a theory of digital well-being development grounded in the experiences of participants. The resulting emerging theory of digital well-being development [Figure 3] provides a framework for understanding how college students interpret their digital experiences and how they may be guided through a developmental process in order to achieve an enhanced sense of digital well-being through increased self-awareness of digital habits, experiencing and interpreting tension and conflict with digital habits, developing an intent to act and taking action to make change with digital habits, and ultimately developing and demonstrating digital mindfulness.

Analysis of the data collected during interviews resulted in three distinct themes that led to the development of the emerging theory. The primary themes, which are outlined below, included a) reflecting on digital behaviors, b) seeking digital behavior change, and c) developing digital mindfulness.

Reflecting On Digital Behaviors

Participants strongly identified that a key component in managing their relationship with their phone was a consciousness about the benefits and drawbacks of phone use and the role it played in their lives. Prior to the interviews, most participants acknowledged that they had not thought critically about their phone use. Those who had thought about it previously admitted that they had not been motivated nor able to then act on making behavioral changes. Larry said, "I feel like I've been pretty aware that my phone [use] is getting in the way of things in my life, but I just can't help it." Interviews provided an opportunity to recognize and develop a sense of self-awareness around digital well-being.

When referring to their perceptions prior to intervention, participants suggested that while they occasionally thought about their phone use, they did not necessarily think of it in practical nor specific terms and acknowledged that impulse control often inhibited thinking more deeply about it. Eleanor said, "I do think about whether I use my phone too much, but I think it's subconsciously because of just years of hearing 'Put down your phone!' from adults." The compulsion articulated by participants was immediately justified by the recognition that their phone use kept them connected to relationships and would shift responsibility for their impulse to peer pressure. Marisol said, "It's like I know social media is literally built to suck you in, but I still can't control the impulse. And texting, calling, social media - it's about relationships, so it feels justified." Andrea added, "I'm compelled to respond to everyone who makes my phone light up with notifications. I feel like I could control how much I use my phone if everyone else was off of their phone."

Participants articulated a newfound sense of consciousness about their phone use during their post-intervention interviews. Emeliana said, "We tell ourselves that using our phones is a brain break, but we deceive ourselves. It's actually not a break if it causes you to get all up in your feelings. This has made me actually think about my phone use and realize that I don't need my phone as much as I thought I did." Evette said, "After working on [my relationship with my phone], it's like always on my mind. Makes me feel some kind of way. But at least I'm thinking about it now." Emeliana and Evette's assessment of how their phone use evoked emotion and occupied their minds was a new awareness of the role their phones play in their lives - a direct result of intervention. Larry added, "As long as I'm committed to it, I can do it.

Consciousness is the key." Being conscious of the issue inspired participants to think about potential behavior changes and prepare to take action.

Seeking Digital Behavior Change

A second primary theme that emerged from the data analysis was that participants had identified a desire to change their behaviors with their phones and the intervention had motivated them to take action. Participants sensed and were able to articulate a conflict related to their digital technology use. Specifically, participants identified phone use habits that interfered with or distracted from aspects of their lives that created tension in some way.

The recognition of this tension created an intent to take action to make change to eliminate or mitigate the conflict. Participants were given strategies to try during the intervention and were able to state the importance of knowing what tools were available to them in order to take direct action to change their behavior. The ability to reflect and take action was a vital step in the participants' sense of ownership over the process of making change.

Prior to intervention, participants recognized a desire to make change. Teddy said, "I have moments where I am on my phone and realize I'm there, but not there, if that makes sense. I know in my brain that I'm not in the moment, but I can't help myself and that has to change." Rose explained how a lack of knowledge about strategies and tools pre-intervention affected her ability to manage her phone use. She said, "I would get into this cycle of over-use, then guilt, then I would overreact, then over-use again. And I just do that over and over and never know how to get out of the loop." Anita stated a similar sentiment about not knowing how to make change when she said, "It's not that I can't change or don't want to, it's just *where do you start?!?* I feel like I have zero self-control and zero idea [about] how to switch up my habits when it comes to my phone." The desire to make change was challenged by a lack of resources or knowledge about where to begin.

Participants' perceptions of their own digital well-being post-intervention were heavily influenced by how they understood the behavioral changes they were able to make. Eleanor said "I think this [intervention] has helped me with my relationship with my phone because it's forcing me to name it as a thing in my life. It's really about taking time to think about my relationship with my phone in new ways." Olive expressed her feelings about the role her phone played in her life and how behavior changes were providing perspective for her. She said, "It's basically a dependent relationship - it's weird how deeply I feel about my phone. I'm realizing while that's probably normal behavior for [college students], it shouldn't be normal." Igor added, "I'm a disciplined person, but this was *not* easy. It's like trying to eat right - you are so tempted to eat a cheat meal. And that's okay sometimes, but you have to really know how to do that in moderation so that it doesn't affect all the other parts of your life."

Angela described her behavior change as a massive shift in how she was thinking about her phone use when she said, "We need to be re-wired on a deeper level, and having the tools to make change for ourselves feels like a re-wiring." The ability to use strategies that they helped create inspired participants to think about meaningful change in their behaviors and the importance of centering their phone use in their lives in order to create lasting change.

The use of motivational interviewing tactics during interview sessions provided an intervention that focused on motivations for change. The sense of accomplishment that resulted from participants driving change for themselves was noted several times. Bryan said, "I feel so good after not using my phone all the time. It's like '*Yes, I conquered my phone! I did this.*'" Angela recognized that motivational interviewing tactics provided her with the skillset to make change when she said, "We all know we should change a few things, but we're not always equipped to be intentional about it. Having

a set of strategies to try makes a huge difference." Jacob added, "This put words to what I need to do and gave me motivation. I'm sick of doing the same thing over and over without success. But I feel like now it's at the front of my mind and I have ways to manage it." Bringing digital well-being and digital habits to the front of their minds was a crucial step in the process of creating behavior change.

Developing Digital Mindfulness

The final theme to emerge from data analysis was focused on the mindfulness required to make meaningful change in behavior related to digital well-being. Participants noted that the practical changes they made provided a benefit, but it was the notion of centering the issue in their minds that was most beneficial. That is, raising awareness of their phone use into their consciousness and then being mindful of how and why they used their phones in order to feel more control and healthier about their patterns of behavior.

Current college students are acutely aware of the ubiquity of phone use among their age group, and with it comes the recognition that it is part of their overall sense of well-being. Andrea said, "Well-being to me includes working toward a better version of yourself, and for lots of people my age that has to include managing your relationship with your phone better." And like other aspects of well-being that require attention and work, the students in this study recognized the need to prioritize how digital well-being fits into their lives. Mathias said, "My phone can have a huge impact on my well-being, so focusing on how it fits into the bigger picture or puzzle of my life is important."

Participants identified the lack of mindfulness about phone use as a hindrance to their overall well-being. Gerald said, "Our phones keep us in our own heads and it's hard to escape. I'm trying to be more mindful of that, so I don't get lost as much anymore." Carrie shared similar sentiments when she said, "My subconscious really sways real-life action. I am learning how to acknowledge boredom and the sort of mindlessness of using my phone to re-train my subconscious." The direct acknowledgement of digital mindfulness and identifying how they might address it were a key theme that emerged from the data.

Several participants described their mindfulness as a reprioritization of other aspects of life in order to understand the role their phones played in their lives. Sarah said, "I learned that when I'm alone, I wasn't usually able to spend much time just existing. I'm learning what to do with myself, so I rely on my phone less and kind of just peacefully be myself." Mary said, "There's such a clear correlation between how I use my phone and self-image and self-worth, and I'm learning to express myself how I want to now that I feel more control over how I use it." The connection between digital mindfulness and self-empowerment is important as the participants continue to develop as young adults.

Discussion

The results of this research provide evidence that digital well-being is subjective to the individual and the achievement of digital well-being is a developmental process of identifying positive and negative impacts of engaging with digital activities and being aware of ways to manage and control those activities to improve personal mental, physical, and emotional health.

Existing literature calls out the concerns related to smartphone use and identifies concepts of digital well-being. This study emphasizes the capacity participants have to create and implement digital behavior change as a way to influence their perceptions of their digital well-being and provides a blueprint - in the form of the emerging theory - for intervening to assist in behavior change and to aid in the development of digital mindfulness.

The emerging model of digital well-being development was created through the analysis of the participants' articulation of the knowledge of digital well-being that was constructed through their

engagement with this study. Through the constructivist grounded theory approach, Charmaz (2006) noted that the researcher is not a neutral observer but rather an active co-participant in the research and construction of data and theory. The interviews for this study delved into how participants perceived, understood, and articulated their phone and social media use, which led to the creation of knowledge about how participants understood digital well-being as well as helped articulate the process the participants experienced as they developed their digital well-being.

While participants' growing self-awareness of digital technology use was a valuable aspect of the interview process, the acknowledgement that behavior change was desired is at the heart of the emerging theory. The digital well-being development model is predicated on the recognition and desire that participants expressed to make digital behavior change. The use of motivational interview techniques served as the intervention method that allowed the participants significant opportunities for self-reflection to understand how their phone and social media use was influencing their lives and how and why behavior change might be valuable.

During the first phase of the model, participants co-constructed an understanding of terms and concepts of digital well-being while reflecting on their phone use in the context of their own lives. The self-reflection and self-assessment of the role of phones in their lives led to raising the issue into consciousness. The ability to reflect on their phone use via interviews with an objective researcher allowed participants to participate genuinely and without judgement, creating the opportunity to honestly articulate conflict or tension they may be experiencing with phone use affecting aspects of their lives like time management, interpersonal relationships, academic success, and their mental health. This recognition served as the underlying motivation to make behavior change.

Motivational interviewing methods included eliciting the desire to change by helping participants understand the importance of behavior change. As participants moved into the third phase of the development model, they expressed an interest in making behavior change by taking action. This phase is characterized by the movement from consciousness to action, from merely thinking about what change would mean to engaging in strategies to test behavior change. Participants co-created the behavior change strategies during the interview, playing with ideas and discussing how those strategies might look when implemented in their daily lives.

The fourth and final phase of the development model includes the ability to demonstrate digital mindfulness. This is the pinnacle of the digital well-being development model, when behavior changes and habits are ingrained, and individuals are in full control of how they balance and perceive their phone and social media use. This phase also includes a sense of pride in the accomplishment of making behavior change and sticking to strategies that improve perceptions of digital well-being. While digital mindfulness and digital well-being are subjective to each individual person, the concept of being in control and managing their own sense of digital well-being served as an accomplishment. The last phase of the model includes the acknowledgement that the changed behavior is not necessarily permanent, and that life circumstances or new technologies may result in participants relapsing into digital behaviors that create tension or conflict for them. When this occurs, the cycle of phases might begin again when the need to begin and the first or second phase to recalibrate and determine a new course of action for behavior change.

Relationship Of Grounded Theory To Existing Literature

The emerging grounded theory model reflects the stages that college students experience as they seek to make positive change in their digital well-being. The way that participants experienced the process of change aligns with existing models

of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Bandura, 1986; McLeroy, et al., 1988), however the emerging model draws from and pushes on several of the behavior change theories. Like Prochaska and DiClemente (1983), there are defined steps in the process toward change, and the model is cyclical in nature due to the understanding that students may relapse on previously changed behavior and may identify a need for additional behavior change.

Prochaska and DiClemente's (1983) model provided value to this study by establishing a framework to understand how the change process works with health-related behavior change and providing a baseline path through which students might experience change in their digital habits. However, Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) did not address the social context in which change occurs. The unique nature of the college experience in emerging adults is a context worthy of exploration to understand how and why that context might influence a willingness for students to make change. The emerging theory draws upon Bronfenbrenner (1977) and McLeroy et al (1988) by including social contexts, including the recognition of the role that interpersonal and institutional context plays in the motivation to make change. In addition, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) does not focus on motivation, therefore removing the impetus for change. The utilization of motivational interviewing capitalized on participants' interest in making change by providing a mechanism to actively engage them in creating behavior change. The emerging theory is rooted in the use of motivational interviewing tactics as an intervention, therefore using the motivation to change as a drive force by raising into consciousness the concepts of digital well-being to assist the individual in seeing that a problem may exist and encouraging them to take ownership in behavior change.

The emerging theory interacts with the existing literature by providing a framework through which to assist college students and young adults in taking a proactive approach to developing digital behavior change and creating a more positive self-perception of their digital well-being. By owning the process of behavior change, students might counteract some of the negative effects that research demonstrates phone use has on their physical, social, and mental health.

Implications for Practice

These findings have implications on the need to prioritize an emerging challenge faced by many current and future undergraduate students. Student affairs educators have an opportunity to engage students in conversations about digital well-being and the purposeful action required to increase awareness of problematic phone use and create meaningful change to address it.

Centering digital well-being in discussions with undergraduate students about overall health and wellness is a critical step. Digital well-being may influence all aspects of a student's life, including mental, physical, social, and academic. Therefore, incorporating digital well-being education into holistic student development practices is vital. Understanding *why* students use their phones the way they do is critical to addressing digital well-being. Junco (2014) referred to this the *youth normative* perspective of social media and digital technology use, imploring educators to think about adjusting our views to understand the student perspective.

Student affairs professionals should consider working with students to co-create intervention strategies to address digital behaviors. A valuable step is to utilize motivational interviewing tactics outlined by Miller and Rollnick (2013) to guide conversations that empower students to think about the value and importance of behavior change and tap into their capacity for change. Motivational interviewing techniques provide a versatile tool that can be incorporated into individual mentoring conversations, group settings, and as a useful strategy in supervision. Examples of the style of questions for these conversations utilized

in this study can be found in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

While phone abstinence is often not an ideal solution, providing students with opportunities to engage in *digital detoxing* - or purposefully creating time away from digital devices - would prove fruitful. Many participants noted that previous education around phone habits included a focus on abstinence - in other words, *put your phone away* - rather than a focus on co-creating tactics that might be more likely to succeed. Examples of strategies that participants co-created during this study included but were not limited to charging their phone away from their bed at night, leaving their phone behind for 1-2 meals per week, choosing to interact with others in person rather than looking at their phone while waiting for class to start, a *no device night* once per week, and setting time limits on certain apps that created distraction. These types of strategies co-created with students leverage their interest in behavior change and fit more acutely into their daily habits and preferences. To achieve these goals, institutions should consider creating peer mentoring or coaching programs to address digital well-being and digital behavior change. By doing so, trained students may develop strategies and tools with peers that are more successful than administrator- or staff-led initiatives. Participants in this study expressed a strong desire to discuss their phone use and create lasting behavior change, and therefore students will be motivated to connect with programming and initiatives.

Educators should make digital well-being a part of conversations in the classroom, in advising sessions, student leadership training, and other venues. Structured conversations and programming might be of particular value in new student orientation programming, where students are being wrapped into the social and cultural expectations and norms of the institution. In addition, programming focused on residence hall living and how students might integrate physical and digital spaces would be of particular interest to educators.

Digital device use is nearly ubiquitous, and the effects are pervasive, so it should be treated as a significant student health and wellness issue. Digital well-being is a component of wellness just like sleep and exercise, and therefore should be included in wellness programming.

Implications for Future Research

Future research is needed to understand how students adapt to constantly evolving digital technologies and their influences on college campuses. The rapid nature of change with smartphones and social media requires flexibility and nimbleness, and a willingness to continually seek new perspectives and data on perceptions of digital well-being. In particular, researching how smartphone use influences specific subgroups of students whose identities influence the ways they engage socially. Future research might also aim to define digital use in more complex ways, namely how the use of tools like audio books, podcasts, and e-textbooks influence students' perceptions of digital well-being. In addition, a longitudinal study of participants would be valuable in order to understand how time and changing contexts influence digital well-being for students.

This research focused on students' broad perceptions of digital well-being, therefore a more focused study on the impacts of phone use specifically on mental health, physical health, academic engagement, or other topics may provide greater depth to findings. Specific aspects of identity like race and gender - and the influence those identities have on phone use - was not explored as a factor in how digital well-being was perceived but would provide an important context for a future study. In addition, a validation study to test the emerging theory is needed in order to identify and mitigate potential variations that occur when studying opinions and behaviors and to validate results.

Limitations

This study involved 22 second-year students

at a singular research site. The relatively small sample size limits the diversity of perspectives which might be included among the participant pool. This snapshot in time for these individuals provided a unique perspective on their lived experience, particularly as they emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic. While data were collected in a post-pandemic environment, participants experienced phone use during the pandemic and therefore may have had experiences that will differ from those in the future. Participants in other age categories, at other institutions, and at different moments in time may produce different results. The influence of specific identities like race and gender on phone use was not explored in this study.

Conclusion

This study provided important insight into how students can be encouraged and empowered to make digital behavior change and improve perceptions of digital well-being by utilizing motivational interviewing tactics. well-being The resulting model of digital well-being development defines the process by which students experience changes related to their digital well-being. The model requires self-awareness and motivation to change, beginning with the acknowledgement and awareness of aspects of personal digital well-being, to experiencing tension or conflict with digital technology use, and then utilizing guided action and purposeful reflection to move into a state of digital mindfulness. This research illuminates the importance that college students place on their digital connections and phone use, and the significant influence phone and social media use has on various aspects of students' well-being.

Rose summarized the impact of the intervention on her mindset about behavior change when she said,

> I didn't know this was a thing I *could* work on. I thought it was just the way it was. [After the intervention] I feel lighter - a weight has been lifted. It's at the front and center of my mind now - the impact and consequences of how I use my phone.

Prior to intervention, participants noted that they were not fully conscious of their phone use and the effects it had on their lives in college. Once their phone use was raised into their consciousness, they were able to identify behaviors they desired to change.

By creating and implementing strategies to manage their phone use, participants were able to develop a sense of digital mindfulness that enhanced their own perceptions of their *digital well-being*. While a majority of participants were not familiar with the term digital well-being prior to their engagement in this study, they understood the concept of how integrating their phone use into their lives in healthy ways influenced their overall sense of wellness and well-being. Participants recognized the improvements they saw in their phone use behavior and articulated the positive impact those changes had on other aspects of their lives.

References

Alter, A. (2017). *Irresistible: The rise of addictive technology and the business of keeping us hooked*. Penguin.

American Psychological Association (2017). *Stress in America: Coping with Change*. https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2017/technology-social-media.pdf

Archer, A. (2023, Aug 3). "What is digital self-harm, and why are teens doing it?" Therapist.com. https://therapist.com/behaviors/what-is-digital-self-harm/

Bandura, A. (1986) *Social foundations of thought and action: A cognitive social theory*. Prentice-Hall.

Bekalu, M. A., McCloud, R. F., & Viswanath, K. (2019). Association of social media use with social well-being, positive mental health, and self-rated health: Disentangling routine from emotional connection use. *Health Education & Behavior, 46*, 69S-80S. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1090198119863768

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American psychologist, 32*(7), 513.

Büchi, M. (2021). Digital well-being theory and research. *New Media & Society*. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211056851

Burr, C., Taddeo, M., & Floridi, L. (2020). *Ethics of*

digital well-being. Springer.
Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. SAGE.
Charmaz, K. (2014). C*onstructing grounded theory*. SAGE.
dcdx. (2022). Gen z annual screen time report. https://dcdx.co/2nd-annual-gen-z-screen-time-report-from-dcdx
D'Amato, P. (2019). Smithereens and the economy of attention: Are we all dopamine addicts? *Black mirror and philosophy: Dark reflections*. Wiley.
Derakhshanrad, N., Yekaninejad, M. S., Mehrdad, R., & Saberi, H. (2021). Neck pain associated with smartphone overuse: cross-sectional report of a cohort study among office workers. *European Spine Journal, 30*(2), 461-467. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00586-020-06640-z
Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory strategies for qualitative research*. *Sociology Press*.
Haynes, T. (2018, May 1). Dopamine, smartphones & you: A battle for your time. *Harvard University*. http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2018/dopamine-smartphones-battle-time/
Hunt, M., Marx, R., Lipson, C., & Young, J. (2018). No more FOMO: Limiting social media decreases loneliness and depression. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 37*(10), 751-768. https://guilfordjournals.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1521/jscp.2018.37.10.751
Iarussi, M. M. (2013). Examining how motivational interviewing may foster college student development. *Journal of College Counseling, 16*, 158-175.
Jonnatan, L., Seaton, C. L., Rush, K. L., Li, E. P., & Hasan, K. (2022). Mobile device usage before and during the COVID-19 pandemic among rural and urban adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(14), 8231.
Junco, R. (2014). *Engaging students through social media: Evidence-based practices for use in student affairs*. Jossey-Bass.
Kaler, L. S., Stebleton, M. J., & Potts, C. (2020). "It makes me feel even worse": Empowering first-year women to reconsider social media's impact on mental health. *About Campus, 24*(6), 10-17.
Kim, M. O., Kim, H., Kim, K., Ju, S., Choi, J., & Yu, M. I. (2015). Smartphone addiction:(focused depression, aggression and impulsion) among college students. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology, 8*(25), 1-6.
Lauckner, C., Hill, M., & Ingram, L. A. (2018). An exploratory study of the relationship between social technology use and depression among college students. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy, 34*(1), 33-39. https://doi.org/10.1080/87568225.2018.1508396
Lee, H., Ahn, H., Nguyen, T. G., Choi, S. W., & Kim, D. J. (2017). Comparing the self-report and measured smartphone usage of college students: a pilot study. *Psychiatry investigation, 14*(2), 198.
Lepp, A., Barkley, J. E., & Karpinski, A. C. (2015). The relationship between cell phone use and academic performance in a sample of US college students. *Sage Open, 5*(1), 2158244015573169.
Lepp, A., Barkley, J. E., Sanders, G. J., Rebold, M., & Gates, P. (2013). The relationship between cell phone use, physical and sedentary activity, and cardiorespiratory fitness in a sample of US college students. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and physical activity, 10*(1), 1-9.
Lipson, S. K., Lattie, E. G., & Eisenberg, D. (2018). Increased rates of mental health service utilization by U.S. college students: 10-year population-level trends (2007–2017). *Psychiatric Services, 70*(1), 60-63. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201800332
Lopez Viets, V., Walker, D. D., Miller, W. R. (2002). What is motivation to change? A scientific analysis. *In Motivating offenders to change: A guide to enhancing engagement in therapy*. Wiley.
Mathewson, M. (2020). The impacts of social media usage on students' mental health. *Journal of Student Affairs, XXIX*, 146-160. https://sahe.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/08/The-Impacts-of-Social-Media-Usage-on-Students-Mental-Health-Mathewson.pdf
McClain M. C. (2010, December). Motivational interviewing: An intervention for at-risk college students seeking career services. *Career Convergence Web Magazine*. http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/38267/_self/layout_ccmsearch/false
McLeroy, K. R., Bibeau, D., Steckler, A., & Glanz, K. (1988). An ecological perspective on health promotion programs. *Health education quarterly, 15*(4), 351-377.
McLoughlin, L.T., Spears, B.A., Taddeo, C.M., Hermens, D.F. (2019). Remaining connected in the face of cyberbullying: Why social connectedness is important for mental health. *Psychology in the Schools, 56*, 945– 958. https://doi-org/10.1002/pits.22232
McQuate, S. (2022, May 23). 'I don't even remember what I read': People enter a 'dissociative state' when using social media. *University of Washington News*. https://www.washington.edu/news/2022/05/23/people-enter-a-dissociative-state-when-using-social-media/
McSweeney, K. (2019, March 17). This is your brain on instagram: Effects of social media on the brain. *Northrop Grumman*. https://now.northropgrum-

man.com/this-is-your-brain-on-instagram-effects-of- social-media-on-the-brain

Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational interviewing: Preparing people to change addictive behavior* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change.* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Mills, J., Bonner, A., Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 25-35.

Ockenfels, H. (2014, Feb. 27). *Motivational interviewing as an advising tool* [Conference presentation]. Academic Advising Association Conference, Lincoln, NE, United States. https://aaa.unl.edu/2014Conference/BreakoutSessionHandouts/Motivational%20Interviwing%20handout%20for%20AAA%20presentation.pdf

Primack, B. A., Shensa, A., Sidani, J. E., Whaite, E. O., Lin, L., Rosen, D., Colditz, J. B., Radovic, A., & Miller, E. (2017). Social media use and perceived social isolation among young adults in the U.S. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 53*(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2017.01.010

Prochaska, J. O., & DiClemente, C. C. (1983). Stages and processes of self-change of smoking: Toward an integrative model of change. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 51*(3), 390-395. https://doi/10.1037/0022-006X.51.3.390

Ratan, Z. A., Zaman, S. B., Islam, S. M. S., & Hosseinzadeh, H. (2021). Smartphone overuse: A hidden crisis in COVID-19. *Health policy and technology, 10*(1), 21.

Rathakrishnan, B., Bikar Singh, S. S., Kamaluddin, M. R., Yahaya, A., Mohd Nasir, M. A., Ibrahim, F., & Ab Rahman, Z. (2021). Smartphone addiction and sleep quality on academic performance of university students: An exploratory research. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18*(16), 8291.

Rosen, L., Carrier, L. M., Miller, A., Rokkum, J., & Ruiz, A. (2016). Sleeping with technology: cognitive, affective, and technology usage predictors of sleep problems among college students. *Sleep health, 2*(1), 49-56.

Sapci, O., Elhai, J. D., Amialchuk, A., & Montag, C. (2021). The relationship between smartphone use and students' academic performance. *Learning and Individual Differences, 89*, 102035. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2021.102035

Shah, A. (2019, September 3). *Defining digital well-being*. Jisc building digital capability blog. https://digitalcapability.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2019/09/03/defining-digital-well-being/

Shah, A., & Knight, S. (2019, July 1). *Digital well-being workshop* [Conference presentation], Academic Practice & Technology Conference, London, UK. https://aptconference.org.uk/index.php/apt/apt2019/paper/viewPaper/1382

Schwitzer, A. M., & Vaughn, J. A. (2017). Mental health, well-being, and learning: Supporting our students in times of need. *About Campus, 22*(2), 4-11. https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.21287

Shankar, N. L., & Park, C. L. (2016). Effects of stress on students' physical and mental health and academic success. *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology, 4*(1), 5-9. https://doi.org/10.1080/21683603.2016.1130532

Sneed, A. (2022, Feb. 8). I'm addicted to my phone. How can I cut back? *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/well/live/smartphone-addiction-tips.html

Stevic, A., Koban, K., Binder, A., & Matthes, J. (2022). You are not alone: Smartphone use, friendship satisfaction, and anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis. *Mobile Media & Communication, 10*(2), 294-315.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. SAGE.

Turner, C. (2023, Feb 16). 10 things to know about how social media affects teens' brains. *National Public Radio*. https://www.npr.org/2023/02/16/1157180971/10-things-to-know-about-how-social-media-affects-teens-brains

Twenge, J. M. (2017). *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy - and completely unprepared for adulthood*. Atria.

Twenge, J. M. (2017). Have smartphones destroyed a generation? *The Atlantic*, September 2017. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198

Twenge, J. M. (2020). Why increases in adolescent depression may be linked to the technological environment. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 32*, 89-94. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.06.036

Twenge, J. M. (2023). *Generations: The real differences between gen z, millennials, gen x, boomers, and silence - and what they mean for America's future*. Atria.

Twenge, J. M., Joiner, T. E., Rogers, M. L., & Martin, G. N. (2018). Increases in depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates among U.S. adolescents after 2010 and links to increased new media screen time. *Clinical Psychological Science, 6*(1), 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702617723376

Vanden Abeele, M. M. P. (2021). Digital well-being as a

dynamic construct, *Communication Theory, 31*(4), 932–955. https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtaa024

Viner, R. M., Gireesh, A., Stiglic, N., Hudson, L. D., Goddings, A., Ward, J. L., and Nicholls, D. E. (2019). Roles of cyberbullying, sleep, and physical activity in mediating the effects of social media use on mental health and well-being among young people in England: A secondary analysis of longitudinal data. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health, 3*(10), 685-696.

Vogels, E. A., Gelles-Watnick, R., & Massarat, N. (2022, Aug. 10). Teens, social media and technology 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2022/08/10/teens-social-media-and-technology-2022/

Wells, H., Jones, A. and Jones, S. (2014). Teaching reluctant students: Using the principles and techniques of motivational interviewing to foster better student-teacher interactions. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 51*(2), 175-184.

Table 1.

Participant Information

Pseudonym	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Anita	Woman	African American
Andrea	Woman	African American
Angela	Woman	White
Bryan	Man	African American
Ben	Man	Asian-American
Carrie	Woman	White
Eleanor	Woman	White
Evette	Woman	African American
Emeliana	Woman	Hispanic
Gerald	Man	White
Igor	Man	Hispanic
Jason	Man	White
Jacob	Man	White
Larry	Man	White
Marisol	Woman	Hispanic
Mary	Woman	Asian-American
Matt	Man	White
Olive	Woman	White
Rose	Woman	African American
Sammy	Man	African American
Sarah	Woman	White
Teddy	Man	White

Figure 1.

Digital Well-being/Motivational Interviewing - Interview 1 Protocol

- Tell me why you're here. What was going through your mind or what sparked your interest in being willing to talk to me about this topic?
- What do you like about your phone? What are you most connected to with your phone? Appreciate most about it?
- What's your overarching goal for improving your relationship with your phone? Why is this goal important to you?
- What, if anything, is hindering your relationship with your phone?
- Tell me about how the use of your phone helps or hinders your experience in college?
- On a scale of 1-10 (10 is the best), where would you rate your level of satisfaction with how you use your phone?
    - Why more or less… e.g. why a 6 instead of an 8?
    - What do you think you could do in a perfect world to get to a 10?
    - Who can help support you in getting you to a 10?
- What strategies have you tried in the past? (e.g. turning off notifications, not sleeping next to your phone, only using certain apps, focusing only on positive apps, etc)
    - Which strategies could you realistically follow through with?
    - How would it make your life better to implement any of these strategies?
    - What could get in the way of trying these strategies?
    - What would be helpful to keep you on track? (e.g. texts from someone, reminders on phone, etc.)
- If well-being is "the integration of mental and physical health to contribute to a state of happiness, health, and prosperity," how do you feel about how your phone use influences your sense of well-being right now?
- Leaving here today, what's a good goal to achieve before our next conversation?
    - What are some tangible steps you will take to achieve your goal?
    - How will you track your progress?

Thank you for your time today. I appreciated learning from you and hearing your perspective and about your desire to change. Let's schedule a follow-up interview for 2-3 weeks from now to check in to see how you're doing with your goals.

Figure 2.

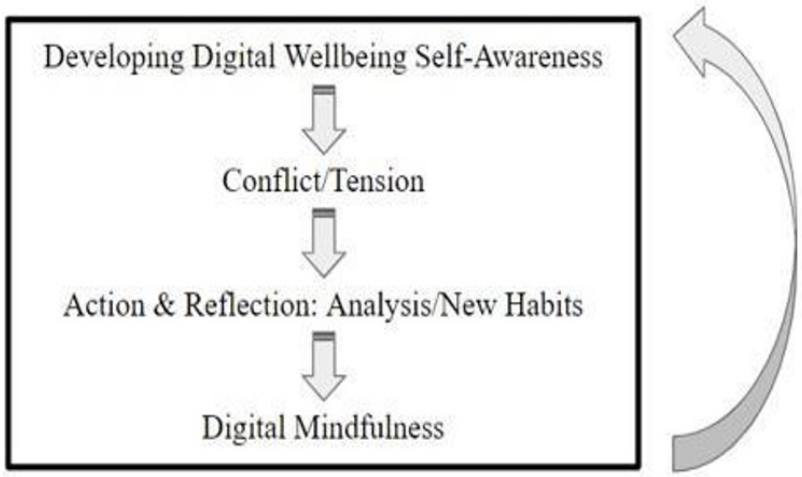
Digital Well-being/Motivational Interviewing – Interview 2 Protocol

- Where are you now after a couple weeks of trying some strategies?
    - What has worked and why?
    - What has gotten in the way of success?
- Where is there room for further improvement?
- On a scale of 1-10 (10 is best), where do you rate your level of satisfaction with how you use your phone?
- What strategies will you keep using?
- What new strategies do you want to try?
- If well-being is "the integration of mental and physical health to contribute to a state of happiness, health, and prosperity," how do you feel about how your phone use influences your sense of well-being right now?
- How have our conversations helped you think about your digital well-being/phone use?
- How do you think your peers would benefit from conversations like this?
- What have you learned about yourself while trying to change your behaviors related to phone use?

Thank you for your participation in this interview. Please complete the post-survey - I just put the link in the chat and will email it to you. Once you complete that, you are eligible for a $25 gift card - would you like a Target or Amazon e-gift card? Once I get the completed survey, I will send the gift card link.

Figure 3.

Digital Well-being Development Model



Phase 1 - Developing Digital Wellbeing Self-Awareness

- Introduction & Education (definitions, contexts, etc.)
- Raising the issue into consciousness
  - Influenced by environment & perceived social norms
- Self-reflection & self-assessment (establishing a baseline)

Phase 2 - Experiencing Conflict/Tension

- Structured reflection
- Recognizing conflict
  - Time management, boundaries, mental health, interpersonal relationships, etc.
  - Motivation to change (determining outcomes and assigning value to behavior change)

Phase 3 - Intention, Action, & Reflection

- Expressed intent to make behavior change. Moving from consciousness to action
- Preparing to change. A call to action
- Equipped with practical tools. Co-creating strategies
- Reflection & self-evaluation (assessment of actions taken)

Phase 4 - Demonstrating Digital Mindfulness

- Ingraining new behaviors
- Achieving a sense of wellbeing (pride in accomplishment, assessing relationship with device, etc)
- Reflection & Self-Assessment (how did it go? What else needs to change? What is sustainable?)
- Behavior relapse begins the cycle again