

From the Other Side of Internet Detox

It's been a week since I've been allowed back online, and while the urge was there to jump right on and stay on in an effort to catch up on the missed emails, the Twitter chatter, the blog posts, the Facebook happenings, and various bits of "work" I had to do, I eased back in slowly.

I have to say, life is a lot easier with access to the internet. If I need directions, a recipe, the phone number to the "real" Tara, it's as easy as popping open my laptop, which spends most of the day on my kitchen counter. It's arguably the most used electronic device in that room... with the microwave coming in a close second. I certainly did miss that convenience.

I also missed the connectedness the internet brings me. Although I did become a little more creative in ways to reach out to and even meet new people last week, I don't feel like I did it to an extent that it completely filled the void that abandoning email and social networking left. I was mainly just left with a lot more alone time, but I don't know if that was necessarily a bad thing. It was sort of nice to be with my thoughts, to thumb through the crisp paper pages of a magazine, to watch a Real Housewives of Atlanta marathon while my son napped, to stay on top of the dishes a bit better and to finally clean my windows.

Ultimately, as I mentioned in my previous journal entries, my internet free week left me feeling calm, relaxed, and almost free of anxiety. The knots in my neck and shoulders, which I beg my husband nightly to rub out, dissipated. My stress level decreased. I've spent this week consciously thinking of how to maintain this level of inner peace. Really, the only answer I've found for myself is to just listen to my mind and body, and shut down and step away whenever I feel like I'm getting "lost" online... whenever I'm there without a purpose. I think it's working.

In other updates, Kendall is still slightly less tantrum-y, and I've probably condensed my online time to about 4 hours a day, mainly consisting of his naptime and after my husband gets home from work. I will admit, though, to hopping online for a few minutes at a time while "on duty", too. Hey, even stay at home moms should be able to take a break to check emails, and since a lot of them pertain to play dates and the latest health advisories on H1N1, I consider it part of the job.

This week has mainly been about balance, and just like when I deprived myself of carbs on the South Beach Diet, I found that I'm not that "hungry" for the internet after going without it for so long. I just hope I don't find myself bingeing on it like a cream cheese bagel at 2 in the morning any time soon. Perhaps I can look at this new phase as sort of the Weight Watchers approach to using the internet? I wonder how many points I have to spend on a status update?