



5 IDEAS

TO HELP YOU **UNPLUG** NOW AND THEN

TODAY'S WORLD DEMANDS instant gratification and immediacy. We have been trained to have our availability set permanently to "Contact me now, I'll respond." If a friend neglects to answer a message in an acceptable period of time (obviously a maximum of two hours), we are ready to send out a search party to make sure he or she is still breathing. Our time no longer belongs to us. How do we begin to regain control? How can we go about "unplugging"?

Here are 5 ways to disconnect from the noise in order to reconnect with purpose:

1 Inhale. Not just the air in your space, inhale your surroundings. Take just three minutes a day to really look at where you are – both physically and introspectively. God's voice is often whispered through the stillness.

2 Go off the grid. It can be done. Allow yourself just one morning or afternoon per week to silence your phone and be wholly present with whomever, doing whatever. Ask God to use you where he needs you. Your full attention will be a blessing to others.

3 Communicate. This can be a phone call to a friend, a conversation over coffee or writing in a card to a

relative. The point is to communicate with that one person and be present in that moment with your entire being.

4 Clean something. Organize a drawer, scrub a counter or wash your car. Allow your thoughts to drift. You will find out where your hopes and worries are, and you will know where to focus your prayer.

5 Be part of the solution. Give others the gift of knowing you don't demand to be moved to the top of their priority list when you call or text.

■ When we allow ourselves the opportunity to tune out the world, even for a few short moments, we are better equipped to practice gratitude and offer God's grace to those around us. Challenge yourself to try it today. †