

## TECHNOLOGY AS TYRANNY

### Candle Lighting and Opening Words:

The digital revolution has blurred the lines between time on and time off, and time off is disappearing. As for our leisure time, we've created a culture in which we're still 'working' while we play: needing to photograph every moment, then crafting witty posts of our 'fun, relaxing activities' on Instagram, then obsessively checking responses. We can barely catch our breath in the tsunami of personal and work digital input, which results in us not being truly present for any of it.- TIFFANY SHLAIN

### Check-In:

### Focus Readings:

"We generate more data now every couple of hours than we did from the dawn of time to 2003. What that means is that when that data is caught, captured and sorted those who own it and control it have an insight into our lived experience beyond anything that anyone in the past could ever have dreamed of into what we think, what we care about, how we feel, where we go, what we buy, who we speak to, what we say, what we do on any given day, who we associate with. We leave a trail of these things which offers a window into our soul both individually and collectively that dwarfs anything that the philosophers or the kings or the priests of the past could have dreamed of," Susskind

"The digital is political. Instead of looking at these technologies as consumers or capitalists we need to look at them as citizens. Those who control and own the most powerful digital systems in the future will increasingly have a great deal of control over the rest of us," Susskind

Something strange has happened to our way of thinking – and as a result, even stranger things are happening to the world. We have come to believe that everything is computable and can be resolved by the application of new technologies. But these technologies are not neutral facilitators: they embody our politics and biases, they extend beyond the boundaries of nations and legal jurisdictions and increasingly exceed the understanding of even their creators. As a result, we understand less and less about the world as these powerful technologies assume more control over our everyday lives.

Across the sciences and society, in politics and education, in warfare and commerce, new technologies are not merely augmenting our abilities, they are actively shaping and directing them, for better and for worse. If we do not understand how complex technologies function then their potential is more easily captured by selfish elites and corporations. The results of this can be seen all around us. There is a causal relationship between the complex opacity of the systems we encounter every day and global issues of inequality, violence, populism and fundamentalism.- [James Bridle](#) THE GUARDIAN

## **Moment of Silence for Reflection**

### **Questions:**

1. What role does technology play in your life? Has this changed over the last few weeks?
2. What are your worries with the intersection of technology, politics, and corporate America?
3. What role does technology play in your political choices/views?
4. What are your fears around technology?
5. How has your life improved because of technology?

### **Likes/Wishes**

### **Closing Words:**

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,  
may the clarity of light be yours,  
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,  
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.  
And so may a slow  
wind work these words  
of love around you,  
an invisible cloak  
to mind your life.

--John O'Donohue, last stanza of Beannacht, from "To Bless the Space Between Us"