



- Dr. Drew Sinatra: We are spending more and more time looking at screens — computers, phones, tablets, televisions. You name it, we’re looking at it.
- Dr. Steve Sinatra: Is it good for us? Is it bad for us? How do we manage our health in a digital age and make sure we’re not doing damage to ourselves — or our children?
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: We’re very excited to have Dr. Kerry Crofton join us today. She’s a public health educator and the author of *Less Screen, More Green* — and her Mindful Tech Plan can help all of us right now.
- Dr. Steve Sinatra: We’ll be talking about the science around screen time, how it impacts children, and what we can do.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: All this and more on today’s **Be HEALTHistic**.
- Narrator: Welcome to **Be HEALTHistic**, the podcast that’s more than just health and wellness information — it’s here to help you explore your options across traditional and natural medicine, so that you can make informed decisions for you and your family. This podcast illuminates the whole story about holistic health by providing access to the expertise of Drs. Steve and Drew Sinatra, who together have decades of integrative health experience. **Be HEALTHistic** is powered by our friends at Healthy Directions. Now, let’s join our hosts.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Hi, folks...if you like what you hear today and you want to listen to future conversations on all things integrative and holistic health, subscribe to our podcast at **BeHealthisticPodcast.com**. Also, check out and subscribe to the Healthy Directions YouTube channel, which features video versions of our episodes, plus extra videos you won’t want to miss. And finally, we have more with me, Dr. Drew Sinatra, my dad, Dr. Steve Sinatra, and other health experts at HealthyDirections.com.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Hey, everyone, welcome to another episode of **Be HEALTHistic**. Today we’re welcoming Dr. Kerry Crofton, a dedicated public educator, mindfulness teacher, and author of the new book, *Less Screen, More Green*. The Mindful Tech Plan offers the powers of nature, mindfulness, and being truly connected to balance your screen time with green time. In the book, Kerry lays out the Mindful Tech Plan, and says there’s now a proven way to rethink how you use electronics to find freedom from tech overload. And how you can use social media, smartphones, WiFi, and wireless and smart devices more safely.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Kerry says, especially in this era of COVID, we have to be mindful of how we address tech overload, as most of us are immersed more than ever in the digital



world. We're eager to discuss this topic with Kerry and for her to share steps we can take to minimize the impact of all this screen time.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Welcome to the show, Kerry...thrilled to have you here.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Thank you so much. Good to be with you.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Well, we are certainly in an era where we're using tech more than ever. I mean, we have kids in school learning online, we have people working from home, using their computers. Where do we begin with all of this? There's just so much tech. How do we balance this?

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So easy to become overwhelmed. I think, first of all, we need to acknowledge all the great benefits of all this technology. Connecting with you, and your listeners and viewers...we couldn't have done this some time ago. This is, as you know, a really powerful technology, and with all energies that are very powerful, there's often an upside and, let's say, a drawback. So with my impeccable sense of timing, I published a book on screen time when we were just launching into spending much more screen time, all of us, myself included. I've got so many low-tech friends who said, "I've never spent this much time on screens."

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So I'm really mindful of, this message has to be taken into context. And as you, both of you Doctors Sinatra know, about health education — we really want people to be informed, to be fully informed, so then they can make the choices. So what I want to do today is tell you about what our Mindful Tech Plan is, our four points of how we can...in a sense, it's really rethinking our connection with all things wired and wireless. How we can use them more safely, how we can use them more mindfully. And then, of course, the big challenge — how do we get our kids off their devices and outside to play?

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Yeah, Kerry, I think that's a very important point. There's no doubt about it that these kids are on a tech overload. I mean, there's no question, it's affecting their behavior, their brains. I mean, we're hearing words of digital dementia now, in children and stuff like that. So, in your research, and I know you've been looking at this for more than a decade, because I know that we talked about this over 10 years ago...

Dr. Kerry Crofton: 15, I think.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: 15, that's right. We were at the A4M (The American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine). I mean, that's unbelievable how time flies. But there has to be some good aspects of tech that are useful for children. And on the other hand, there's some destructive. And I guess the key to our conversation today is how do we



be productive in our children — but not creating self-destructive tendencies at the same time. So that’s the challenge for today. So if that can be addressed and if our viewers can take that information in, I think that’s really the crux of the matter.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Mm-hmm, I agree.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yes.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: For those of us that are concerned about this, it’s really a challenge, so let’s put in context of this discussion. Everything you do to minimize your kids’ dependency on screens is good. So, please focus on what you can do that makes you feel good, and really try your best to let go of all that makes you feel guilty. As parents, the last things we need, COVID or no COVID, is anything more to feel guilty about. So that’s why we framed this Mindful Tech Plan and this book, *Less Screen, More Green*, in a way of offering people, “Here’s the science.” This helps to build your motivation. So as you said, Steve, I mean, this is changing the development of kids’ brains, their social patterns and behaviors. So, as young as you can, really be mindful of giving them screen-free, low-tech, nature-based, connecting with *you* ways to self-soothe, to express themselves, to entertain themselves. And it’s a challenge. I acknowledge that, for sure.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: And so...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Be specific, Kerry. I mean, how do you do that?

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Well, one of the things is, we’ve talked about using, as Drew read in the intro, using the power of nature. So make sure every day, and weather...as Richard Louv, the author of the *Last Child in the Woods* says, “There’s no bad weather. There’s just the wrong clothes.”

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Very true.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So, if you live in California, Drew, you’re okay. But every day, make time to get your kids outside, to sit on the back porch, maybe it’s nearby nature. Or maybe you’re in lockdown, in which case, sit by an open window. Read a nature-based book together...just some screen-free way. Have lots of board games around, and cards. There’s many sad things that I see in this, and one of them is how often you see parents on their devices, and they’re so focused on their devices, and the kids are just looking for their attention. Looking for their attention.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So there’s a couple of concerns with that. One is, they’re not getting the early bonding, and connection, and attention they need and crave. And they’re also



learning how you have this connected dependency, and that this thing rules and is the hub of your whole world. So part of what we're doing is showing people how you can have connectivity in a safer way, and how you can make time each day, as I said, for time in nature, for quiet time, where a mindfulness practice, prayer...some way to just be with yourselves.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: I've got a quote here I just wanted to read you from Thích Nhất Hạnh, and he says, "We have to go back to ourselves, to our beloved ones, to nature, because electronic devices help us to run away from ourselves. We don't have to reject these devices, but can make good use of them." So that's really what we're focused on. So each day, time in nature...each day, some kind of quiet time and mindfulness practice...and each day, some way of being truly connected. Sit down on the floor with your kids and play a board game, or fashion something, draw, sketch. We need more of those good analog things.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I love that quote by Thích Nhất Hạnh, because the adults certainly are running away from themselves by using screen time, as well. I mean, I think we're all guilty of it, and I love what you're talking about because you're not only allowing the screen time to be put aside, but you're allowing the rich time with your kids to be the most important part of your day. And that's what we need more of, is more family time...less screen time.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Exactly...and so I can hear the parents saying, "Oh, God, I knew they were going to talk about that, but I'm so busy and I don't have the time." It really is, I know it sounds trite, but it's the quality. You can be in the midst of something...maybe not in the midst of a Zoom call. But you can be in the midst of something, you're cooking, or you're writing up a report, or whatever you're doing, and your child is looking for you. Just turn and be with them, touch them, just put your hand on them and say, "Sweetheart, what do you need?" And honestly, in a minute or two, they can feel connected and heard, and then you go back to what you need to do. But if you're focused on this all the time, or on your screen all the time, it's hard for them to get that feeling of connectedness with you.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Right, because when an adult is on, let's say, a cell phone, or the devices or whatever, the computer...and they're not giving the child any attention, they're disconnected. And what I really like what you said is, even if they give that child 30 seconds, a minute, two minutes of just focus, a time where you drop everything and you acknowledge the child where they're at, I think that makes all the difference. Because that's what children need, they need to have that vital connection between the parent, to know that they exist and that they're real — and that you're available for anything. And I think that 30 seconds, one minute, just the way you said it, was key. Very, very key.



Dr. Drew Sinatra: You know, Dad, I just thought of something. When I was a young boy, you had your beeper for the hospital.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: That was awful, awful.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: And that was...I mean, I remember, you were constantly checking that thing, and it was going off. And I mean, obviously times have changed since then, but that was sort of the beginning of being disconnected, right, from your life in the sense of your family, but like, being connected in with that technology piece. And I think it's just exponentially higher these days, that we've all gotten just so plugged in to our phones, and our computers, and our tablets, and all these electronic devices. And they've actually, almost...it's like, you were wearing your beeper, now we carry our cell phones, and we have watches that we connect to one another with. And it's like we're just making these things closer to our body and almost a part of us. It's odd, isn't it?

Dr. Steve Sinatra: No, it is odd...but I'll have to tell you, it's absolutely true. I mean, the day I gave up that beeper was a day I could absolutely live in a world relaxed! Because being an invasive cardiologist with people that could actually pass at any moment from cardiac arrhythmias, I mean, high blood pressure, low blood pressure, CCU, ICU...and living on a beeper, I got to tell you, it's worse than vigilance, Kerry. It's waiting for another shoe to drop. The problem is that the shoe's always dropping, because the beeper's always going off, and your autonomic nervous system never resets. It's always on overdrive, and that's the problem.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: And thank God that I discovered grounding and earthing in my growth and development with Clint Ober 15 years ago, because again, placing your bare foot on Mother Earth. And again, this is something that you teach your children all the time, Drew, I know. This is something where if you can get the child...and you said it, also, Kerry. Getting the child back to nature, I think, is really key. And the physiological aspects of grounding are extraordinarily important, because again, that's going to balance the overactive autonomic nervous system that we get from our devices. So it's a perfect match.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: It is, and really...part of my concern with this dependency on devices, and again, as I said, it's very challenging because we need them. We use them for so many of our activities. But there's a couple of concerns, and one is that when we are spending so much time on a small screen, it's taking us away from so many ways that we are grounded, that we are truly connected, that we are feeling that we're living a life with purpose and meaning, and we really feel good about how our time is passing. And the other thing is the harm that can come from just too many hours connected to a wireless device.



Dr. Kerry Crofton: And so, what I encourage people to do is...in a way kind of like grounding, I teach a technique called pausing. And I also teach mindfulness meditation, and for some people, you say...I shorten it down to five minutes. And I was giving a lecture, and the guy says, "Five minutes? You want me to sit quietly without my device for five minutes?" So anyway, I'm now teaching a technique called pausing. Okay, so you've got your phone, and using your mindfulness...so part of Mindful Tech is, instead of just this automatic, habitual, your brain is hooked on the dopamine, you're all psyched into this, you're stressing every cell in your body — your heart, your brain, everywhere. We thought we had stress before the digital age, but now we're really in overdrive.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So, have a thought awareness. Is this call, or text, or shopping online, whatever it is I'm doing...is it necessary, is it a distraction? Or is it something that's truly meaningful? Or you may, for example, start off with something that's necessary. So you go onto your Messenger, or you're on your server, and you're your online, or wherever you are. And you started off because you had to find out some research, or you had to book a holiday, or you were something...or you wanted to catch the news. Speaking of stress, catch the news. So you do that, what you needed to do, what's necessary. But then, before you know it, you are down the rabbit hole, and you have spent 20 minutes, an hour, a couple of hours, and where have you been?

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So that's why the mindfulness is being able to take a pause. So you've made your call, you've done what you needed to do was necessary — and now just pause and breathe, and then you feel when you're into the distraction. And when you acknowledge that basically you are just bored, you're frustrated, you're fed up, you're anxious, you're overwhelmed with the tremendous pain and divisions in the world and you just...take me to anywhere. I can't travel right now, but let's just go on a blog of somebody who's traveling.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So you pause to see where you're just getting hooked. And then as you say, Steve, with the grounding, the breathing, the earthing...just bring yourself back, bring yourself back into your body, bring yourself back into the moment. And you begin to feel, kind of, awake and present. You feel your heart, you feel your body, your being, and you can feel yourself softening and becoming just more content. I used to teach a lot of...I guess I still do, although I like to think I'm semi-retired. But I'm like you, Steve, it never quite seems to happen.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: No, you can't retire, can't do it. It's not allowed any more.



- Dr. Kerry Crofton: We really have to see how we can take charge of our nervous system, how we can shift from that stress mode into rest mode. And honestly, these things really take us away. So I don't know how much time we have left, but I would love to go through some of my safer tech solutions and some of the things that you were talking about, Drew, in terms of what are the concerns, particularly with the wireless devices.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Let's do it. Yeah.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: Some days, I wish I had never heard of this, but I'm grateful, I think, because I really want parents, particularly, but everyone to be informed, particularly if you're having some kind of symptoms. So let's say insomnia, excess stress, we all have that. But you might be having vertigo, dizziness. You might be getting cardiac effects, and you don't know how to reach Dr. Sinatra. We know that the radiation that is emitted by all wireless devices, and the cell towers that they need to connect to...there are not hundreds of studies, there are thousands of published, peer-reviewed studies that are showing how this...somebody described it like a jagged jaw tooth, like really heavy-metal music. And it's jarring to every cell in the body. It can cause leakage of the blood brain barrier, suppression of the immune system. As we said, cardiac and cognitive effects.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: The good news is that we don't have to go there, we don't have to live with that. So I brought a few little "show-and-tell" things, fellows. This is a ethernet cable with a USB plug that plugs into most computers and most laptops. So their signal goes through the cable, rather than going through the air, and going through your brain, and your whole body. There are many concerns with tablets, iPads, and using smartphones, etc, for those kinds of connectivity, because you can't actually plug a USB-thing to get ethernet connection in those devices.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Well, actually, Kerry, you can! I've got a couple of devices I've been using...I don't have it right here with me, but I usually do. I plug in my ethernet, and I plug it into my phone or my iPad.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: You can plug your ethernet into an iPad?
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Absolutely, yes. I'll send you some information on this.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: Excellent.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: My brother was all onboard with this years ago, probably around two years ago. And so now the cables are everywhere. You can get them all over the internet.



- Dr. Kerry Crofton: Perfect. Okay, so the next thing I have to do is tell you about this. I gave these to my kids and...okay, so it's a corded landline.
- Dr. Steve Sinatra: Corded, corded. Very important, yeah.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: Corded, very important. So, if you don't remember anything I said, remember, corded over cordless, wired over wireless. So I gave a corded landline to my kids, and the grandchildren call it the "Granny" phone. Because Granny's the only person that ever calls on the landline. So please don't feel discouraged, there are many ways you can keep connected without the harmful levels of wireless radiation. But one of the reasons that is a concern is that, and I don't want to go into too much detail, but the standards are not accurate. So the emissions from a smartphone, particularly, are so-called within the government sanctioned levels. However, they are at levels that have been shown to be harmful.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: So if you have...I really don't recommend even a flip phone for a kid, but for older children, if you are determined for them to have a device, don't give them something they can play games on. At least with your beeper, Steve, you couldn't search the internet on your beeper...
- Dr. Steve Sinatra: Right.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: ...or play video games. So, if you think you have to, give them a low-SAR, that's specific absorption of radiation level, less radiation phone. And they can't play games on it...it's not cool. We want our kids to be tech-savvy, that doesn't mean teaching young kids to code. We want our kids to be safe, that doesn't mean giving them cell phones.
- Dr. Kerry Crofton: So, there's so much information. If you are really interested in the science more, Drew, I always recommend Dr. Joel Moskowitz, who's the head of the Public Health at the University of Berkeley. And his website is SaferEMR.com. He's an epidemiologist, and he follows the science, and how he sleeps at night, I'm not sure — but he sends out, quite often, summaries of the research. So it's really helpful to know, what are the safer tech solutions, what are the ways that we can keep using this technology in a balanced and safer way? Because there are a lot of ways to do that safely. It just takes, really, the knowledge and the motivation, and just doing it.
- Dr. Steve Sinatra: Drew, I'm going to jump in on this, because Kerry made two vital points. Basically she talks about using the corded phone. I mean, that's a must in the house. Having a corded phone is going to be the safest thing you can possibly do, as opposed to speaking on a cellular phone. And even the instructions these



days on the cellular phones that's showing...don't even touch it to your body. I mean, if you read the fine print, it says, seven eighths of an inch, or in other words, don't touch it to your ear because of the radiation factor.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: And the other thing is, it's basically, and I'm so glad you mentioned it, Kerry, these cordless phones in the house. It's like having a big antenna in your home. I mean, the amount of radiation it puts out is unbelievable. And I have to tell you, as a heart specialist, I had calls from my colleagues for the last five years. Basically, the wife went into atrial fibrillation, they went into atrial fibrillation, and my first question was, "Do you have a cordless phone in your home?" And they would say, "Yes. In fact, we just got one." And I would say, "Throw it in the trash."

Dr. Kerry Crofton: We have it right here beside where we sit, and right here beside where we sleep.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: It's amazing, but these cordless phones put out radiation so much. And remember, the heart is the most vulnerable organ to electromagnetic frequencies. So right now, we're in an epidemic of atrial fibrillation, where the heart is running wild in a panic. And I just think the electromagnetics is one of the major culprits, and people have to realize this. I mean, people are very resistant to not changing some of their phones and stuff like that. But these cordless phones belong in a trash can. That's where they belong...

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Well, Dad...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: They can do enormous damage to the body.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: You know, Dad, there's a big convenience factor here. A lot of these technologies, they provide convenience, like having a cordless phone over a corded phone. But I'll tell you, I mean, I haven't had WiFi in my home for...I don't even know, at least 12, 13 years, and no cordless phones or anything. And once you get used to plugging up your computer into ethernet, and using these devices in a really smart way, it's not an inconvenience. To me, I just think it's normal to have some ethernet cables running around the house.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Exactly.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: But...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Right. Well, we're all on the same page, I mean, that's great...that's wonderful.



Dr. Kerry Crofton: But do you know, one of the good things, really Steve, I've noticed recently is, most people don't even have landlines, so they don't have cordless phones. So if you want to put together a kind of, a kit, package. Let's say somebody says, "I'm concerned about what I've heard. I don't really believe you people all that much, but maybe you're saying something that's true and I'm concerned." As you said, Drew, you can be on your computer, you can be you on your calls, you can do all this — but do it with a wired connection. And then also it's really helpful, I find, to have some kind of monitoring device. Because I know from when I do talks and workshops, and I can rattle on, unfortunately, for days about this, but honestly, when I take out one of these meters and so...I've stopped doing this because people, all they come up, and they want to measure yourself up there.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: And honestly, when they hear how these things blare, and how far away they blare. Or they take this around and they take it to the base of the cordless phone, or they take it to their smart...my God, the smart TV, the smart fridge, the smart watch. All of this smart technology, sadly, is harming our health extensively. But really, if you have a device, and you don't need to know the whole spectrum, but it is helpful to realize — if you're measuring the electromagnetic fields, in other words, I've got a light here on, so there's electromagnetic field coming when it's flowing there and it's on. And I don't have any, fortunately, any wireless devices around. Just this thing that I carry in the car, and that is wireless radio frequency. So you have to have different meters to measure those. But you can get...do you remember, Steve, these ones we had that we got from the UK...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Oh, yeah.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Yeah. These are great...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Drew is laughing, because, yeah...my son Step tried to get involved in purchasing the company, because we really believed in it, yeah.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: We were in an airport one day and I had this on, and I'm looking around, and I think, "Oh, there must be somewhere." And I go into the washroom, and they have a little thing written, "Yes, even here, WiFi hotspot." And I'm like, "Oh, no." Anyway, so I'm wandering around the airport and I'm looking for somewhere that I can sit where it's not too...and my daughter says to me, "Mom, I think you'd feel a lot better if you put that silver thing away."

Dr. Steve Sinatra: You know, Kerry, I was giving a lecture in Las Vegas about 10 years ago. There was about 200 people in the room, and I asked if anybody had an iPhone 2 or 3, one of the early iPhones, and they did. And I said, "Would you make a call?" And



I took that device and I was standing a hundred feet away, and it blew up the room. In other words, the sound was so loud that the radiation from that one cell phone, she put it on speakerphone, just permeated the whole room. And the doctors were shouting, “Turn it off, turn it off.” And it’s amazing, those 200 doctors had an experience that day because the problem is, is we can’t see, feel or taste this wireless radiation, but it penetrates our DNA. It gets into our heart cells, it gets into our brain, and it causes aging. It ages the cells, and that’s what people have to get.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Some people can feel it, so there’s something called electro hypersensitivity...

Dr. Steve Sinatra: Right, right.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: ...and some people can. So, I think it’s really important, as I say, to keep coming back to, what are the strategies? What are the solutions? What are the ways forward that we can live healthy, and with our children be healthy, and grow up in this digital world? And that is really...I hope this doesn’t sound too prescriptive or pat or whatever, but I’ve really found what I call these three powers — make time each day to connect with the natural world. And maybe that means doing a flower arrangement, or go sit outside under a tree. I’ve made a great connection with this woman, Sylvie Rokab, who did a wonderful documentary called *Love Thy Nature*, and she does forest bathing. And this year we did our first virtual forest bathing.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: So make time each day to connect with nature, make time each day to connect with your own being...quiet time, yoga, mindfulness, Tai Chi, Qigong, grounding, something like that. And make time each day to really, truly connect with your children and your loved ones with lots of screen-free activities and fun. And please, don’t feel guilty. You’re not going to...like, with dealing with any dependency or addiction, but it’s every positive step, feel good about that.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah, Kerry, that’s very powerful, and there’s some amazing recommendations you just made there. As we wrap up today, as always, we’re going to share some **Wellness Wisdom** with our listeners. So if you had one big, simple “pearl” of wisdom for reducing the impact that screen time has on us, what would that pearl be?

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Use the pausing technique. And don’t wait until you feel like unplugging. Just do it, and get up, and walk away. Give the dog a hug, walk outside, sit on the grass, look at the sky.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Beautiful.



Dr. Steve Sinatra: Well said. Very well said, Kerry.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Well, thanks for coming on the show today.

Dr. Kerry Crofton: Thank you so much. It's wonderful to see you, fellows.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: That's our show for today, folks. If you have a question or an idea for a show topic, please send us an email or share a post with us on Facebook. And remember, if you like what you heard today and you want to be an active member of the **Be HEALTHistic** community, subscribe to our podcast at **BeHealthisticPodcast.com**, or on Apple podcasts, or wherever you download your favorites. You can also find more great content and information from us and the Healthy Directions team at HealthyDirections.com.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I'm Dr. Drew Sinatra.

Dr. Steve Sinatra: And I'm Dr. Steve Sinatra.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: And this is **Be HEALTHistic**.

Narrator: Thanks for listening to **Be HEALTHistic**, powered by our friends at Healthy Directions, with Drs. Drew and Steve Sinatra. See you next time.