

Downgraded

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It was an addiction that was long in the making. First came the cell phone for emergencies only, then came the cell phone so that the office could reach me, then came texting my friend "What time is soccer practice?", followed by a quick game of Bubble Breaker and finally internet so I could google "symptoms of swine flu" whenever I felt feverish. The last straw came two years ago with I connected the phone to my email account.

Then one night, while watching a favorite television show of mine “Intervention”, I realized I was no better than Kathy, the alcoholic soccer Mom, who drank mouthwash in order to get her daily fix. The only difference between Kathy and I was that she probably had mintier fresher breath – but other than that – I was an addict just like she was.

The next morning I informed my husband that, “I’m turning in my phone.”

At first he didn’t believe me but the more we talked, he soon realized I was serious.

“But how am I going to find you?”

Now, not only do my husband and I live together but we work together too. There is about a 3-hour span during the day that he - can’t find me.

Oh, how sweet, I thought to myself, he might miss talking to me. But the more he protested I realized it wasn’t that he couldn’t talk to me that bothered him, it was that he couldn’t literally find me to . . . pick up his clothes at the cleaners or take his car in to be serviced or

Undaunted, I insisted “I don’t want it anymore!” Finally, after much “negotiation” we agreed I would not go completely phoneless but would just downgrade.

On Saturday morning as I prepared myself for my - - no less than two hour visit to the phone store - - he insisted he go with me, just to insure I didn’t break our agreement.

I approached the young man behind the desk. “My contract is up and I don’t want this phone.”

He smirked at the six month old phone I handed him and said, “Yeah, they don’t even make this model anymore and we can upgrade you to a ...”

I cut him off, "I don't want an upgrade. I want to downgrade. I don't want email, internet or texting."

The 17-year old looked at me like I was insane. "But your plan allows you to have a Blackberry - for free!"

"Freeeee," my Husband remarked. "Why won't you just take the upgrade – pleaaase for me."

"No", I insisted. "I just want a phone, nothing else, not even a camera on it."

The teenager looked at me as if I were an ancient dinosaur he had just stumbled upon. He then looked at my Husband and I swear he mouthed "How old is this granny?"

Reluctantly he led me to this dimly lit dark corner of the store and handed me a flip phone (remember those!). "This is as basic as we get", he said. (Very judgmentally I might add!)

"I'll take it." My husband just shook his head in disappointment, "Does it even have voicemail?"

That afternoon I came home and my children grabbed my new phone.

My eldest looked at the phone in horror, "It doesn't have games or internet. This isn't a phone."

Everyone appeared to be against me. I began to think I had made a mistake.

That is, until my 6 year old picked up the phone and said, "Cool – look it flips open – I've never

seen one do that!"

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