

# HACKED MINDS – A Loss of Personal Freedom

## SYNOPSIS

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### Summary Overview

*Hacked Minds is a short book of nine chapters and an epilogue that succinctly and in a thought-provoking manner reviews and analyses features and trends in our modern digital age, pinpointing the issues we face, challenging some of our assumptions, and alerting us to how much our privacy may be at risk. It then provides guidelines on commonsense strategies to use, as well as encouraging the proper use of digital power, but guiding us how to avoid key pitfalls.*

**Chapter One** sketches the reality of “big data” and how it has an all-pervading effect in our lives, notably through the apparent urgency of remaining connected and up-to-date when it comes to the compelling effects of social media such as Facebook. A challenge to consider whether people control technology, or whether technology controls them.

**Chapter Two** gives insights into how some aspects of the modern digital age can cause depressive behaviors and be counterproductive to health and wellbeing, especially when it comes to missing out on the spontaneity and enjoyment of natural life. Over-connectedness on social media portals can lead to false presentations of the real self, and the fear of missing out (on news in social media) can detract from enjoyment of the ordinary or regular aspects of life; author challenges readers to evaluate and be sure to self-regulate their use of media.

**Chapter Three** traces the addictive effects of the use of digital technology, especially in its causing a culture of dependency on the part of its users; considers the differences between digital immigrants (older people) and digital natives (those who have grown up with access to digital technology from a young age). Provides some tests for readers to evaluate whether they are truly free when it comes to how they use the digital tools and devices they have at their disposal.

**Chapter Four** introduces the idea of a more sinister aspect of the digital revolution—the extent to which a person’s data and digital habits may be being monitored, and the capability that electronic equipment actually has to achieve this.

**Chapter Five** builds on information and insights from the previous chapter and explains to readers how digital analytics have the capability to profile a person’s activities, habits, and preferences, leading, in practical terms, to an individual’s death of privacy.

**Chapter Six** contemplates the place of Cyberspace, and how it is being exploited by not only commercial entities, but also by government and military institutions, and the implications there are for ordinary people to become desensitized to this threat and of the potential that there is for technology to totally dominate life.

**Chapter Seven** explores how the mind-numbing and socially destructive forces of digital technology can have an all-pervasive effect on individuals in community and may be at risk of being more easily dominated by hidden agenda forces operating behind some of the digital facilities that are at the disposal of modern society.

**Chapter Eight** calls readers to give thought to how their use of digital devices needs to be carefully and intentionally regulated, especially when unchecked assumptions may lead to compulsive behaviors; provides guidelines on some simple strategies and steps to reclaim their freedom.

**Chapter Nine** begins to round off the book, this episode highlights and commends the usefulness of digital technology, and how readers may enjoy and appreciate the benefits it brings in areas such as communication, business, healthcare, education, religion, and in the care of seniors.

The **Epilogue** calls the readers to be intentional and in a controlled way to monitor and reduce their use of digital technology—retaining the positive elements, and being aware of (and discarding when appropriate) the less-helpful elements.

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