

Last night NOVA's *Digital Nation* made a studied inquiry into how information technology is changing the way we interact and think. Students at MIT who are "high multi-taskers" (they are constantly texting, IM'ing, checking email, Facebook, and Twitter to stay in touch) believe that they are smart enough to be highly functional as they multi-task.

New research is proving them wrong. They ARE smart, no doubt about it. But they spend more energy changing focus than accomplishing as much as they think. This has a lot of educators, researchers, psychologists, and parents concerned about diminishing attention spans and sustained thought processes in students and young adults. Even those of us past the student years struggle with a deluge of input.

This research proves how easy it is to delude ourselves about what is really happening. **It feels productive to be in constant motion**

- texting here, tweeting there, posting a clever Facebook comment everywhere.

But it's not necessarily helping you gain traction in your business.

[Dr. Daniel Amen](#), a psychiatrist who does SPECT scans of brain activity, has found that electronic interactions including games can have an addictive effect on the brain.

Electronics stimulate the pleasure centers, so it feels good to be doing all that attention-switching.

But consistent use of electronic devices can short-circuit deeper thought processes and development of relational skills.

This brings up the question of "How wired do you want to be"? How much of your thought power do you want to use switching from one electronic input to another? **Do you want to feel productive or be productive?**

It takes persistence to turn off the "noise" and pay attention to what is important in your business. As an entrepreneur, it's always been way too easy to pay attention to the daily to do's and urgencies and put important planning and implementation on hold.

Only by breaking away and stepping back can you see the big picture, notice what your market wants, see how your business could run better, and think about your next move. This is the role that meditation, a yoga class, or a mindful walk serves for many business

owners. A business planning class can set this process in motion as well for it presents numerous aspects of your business to consider as a whole.

Being flustered and stressed is not a sign of productivity and success. Having time to think and act on what is important to you and your business will help you attain your goals more consistently.

I consciously strive to find a balance between "on-line" time and "my line" time. It's not easy to turn off email, Facebook, Twitter, and the phone. But I do it to give myself space to think, write, plan, and execute. Otherwise, I fear I will be swept away in the rushing TwitStream of data, opinions, and information that can overwhelm my own thoughts and creativity.

How about you? How are you handling the wired balance in your business? [Email me to let me know.](#)