



AMY JULIA BECKER



summer edition

5 SCREEN TIME PRACTICES FOR FAMILIES





When it comes to family use of technology, I want to nudge our family, and yours, towards creation and connection and away from consumption. I am grateful for Tish Harrison Warren's **interview** with Krista Boan and Tracy Foster, who reminded me of these distinctions. Similarly, I am grateful for her **conversation** with Andy Crouch, who reminded me that technology can be utilized as instruments that develop our humanity rather than as devices that dehumanize us.

With those thoughts in mind, here are five screen time practices for families for the summer.

Amy Julia

1

Use iPads or iPhones only while standing up between the hours of 9am and 5pm.

FAMILY FOCUS:

No sitting down while using our devices, which means we use them for quick texts, to check the weather, and to check the Yankees score. But we won't be curling up in a chair away from other people going down a YouTube rabbit hole. We also place them in a central location for those hours rather than keeping them in our pockets or by our side.



2

Rest from technology.

FAMILY FOCUS:

We will rest from technology for one day each week and for one week of family vacation. During that time, the kids will turn their devices off entirely. My husband and I will give each other our phones. I can glance at his messages or use his phone if we want to, say, make a dinner reservation and vice versa.



③ Establish a family movie or game night.

FAMILY FOCUS:

We will re-establish a night for our family to join together for fun. Too often in our household in the evenings, you will find each of us alone on our devices. Movies, games, even reading books out loud with each other can bring us together around a shared story or experience rather than as a way to sequester ourselves.



4



Keep devices out of the bedroom overnight.

FAMILY FOCUS:

Honestly, this practice is for me, as everyone else already abides by this rule. We've all found that we sleep better when our phones are not available once we've gotten ready for bed.

5 Talk about these practices regularly.

FAMILY FOCUS:

We will ask questions about how technology is equipping us to connect, create, and consume. We will ask about whether and when our phone usage drags us down and lifts us up. As we talk, we will make exceptions. We will make adjustments. We will reflect on what we gain and lose from this approach to tech use.



I hope these practices are not a matter of constraint but of freeing us up to enjoy each other, enjoy the sunshine, enjoy moving our bodies and learning and reading, and to enjoy summer!

For a one-page, printable version of these practices, go to the next page or [go here](#).

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**5 SCREEN TIME PRACTICES
FOR FAMILIES**

01

USE IPADS OR IPHONES ONLY WHILE STANDING UP BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9AM AND 5PM.

02

REST FROM TECHNOLOGY.

03

ESTABLISH A FAMILY MOVIE OR GAME NIGHT.

04

KEEP DEVICES OUT OF THE BEDROOM OVERNIGHT.

05

TALK ABOUT THESE PRACTICES REGULARLY.



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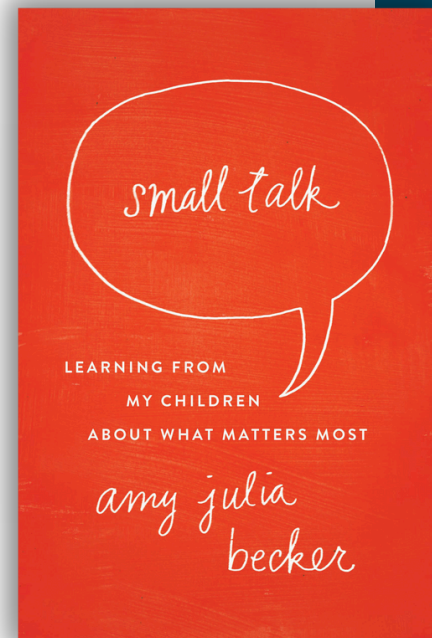
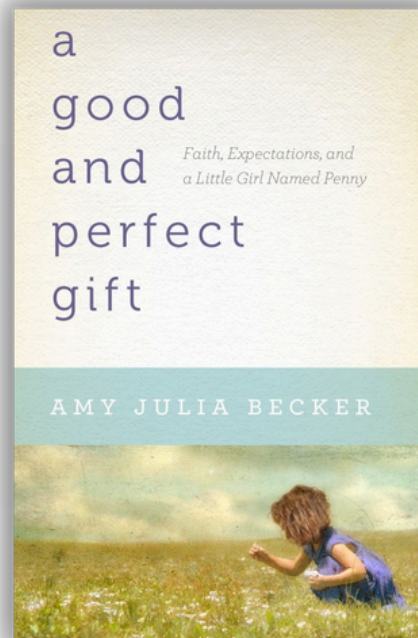
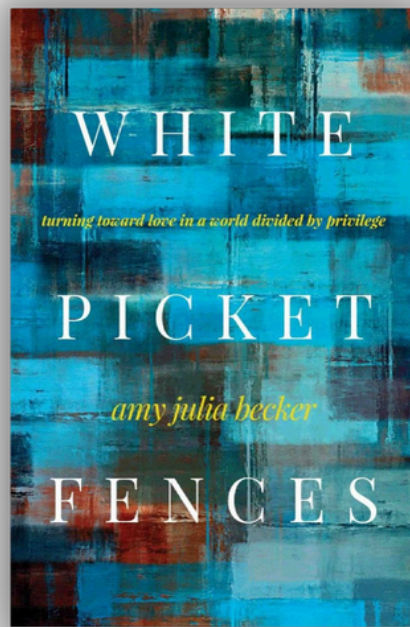
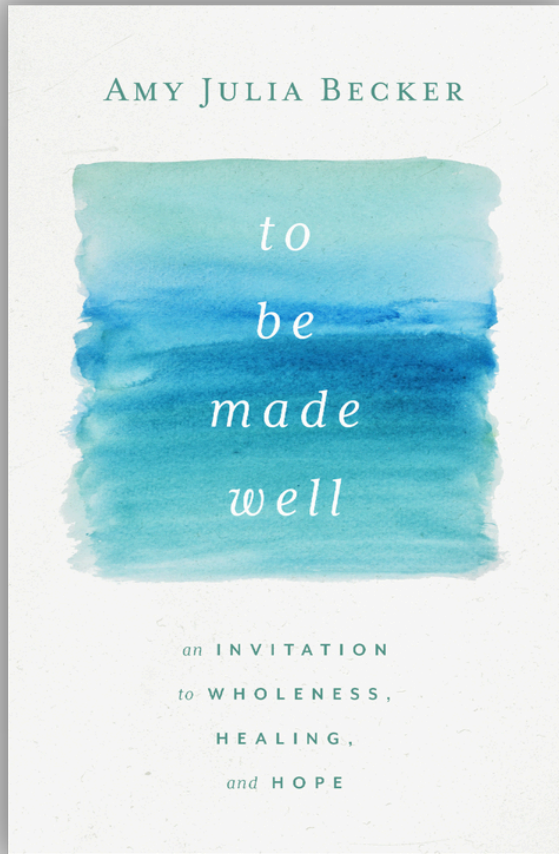


ABOUT AMY JULIA

Amy Julia Becker helps people reimagine the good life through her writing and speaking on disability, faith, and culture. She is the author of *To Be Made Well*, *White Picket Fences*, *Small Talk*, and *A Good and Perfect Gift*. She is a guest opinion writer for national publications and hosts the *Reimagining the Good Life* podcast. She is a graduate of Princeton University and Princeton Theological Seminary (MDiv). She lives with her husband and their three children in western Connecticut.

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