Disconnect

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In the halls of this hospital, or on the street,
It used to be that we might meet.
Have a laugh—or put our heads together,
Trying to make our patients better.
How important, this camaraderie,
But now, rather unfortunately
The faces of friends, or a smile familiar,
Never greet my eyes; it's quite peculiar.

Clinical symptoms seem to include
A tiny screen, to which eyes are glued;
Arm cocked forward, thumb free-wheeling
All while walking, just barely stealing
A glance, to avoid colliding head-first
Into fellow case-subjects, equally immersed,
In that tiny screen, as if it holds the key
To job (or emotional) security.
Head bent forward, with pensive mood;
Distracted apprehension soon ensues.

Management of this pervasive condition?
Move the arm to a neutral position,
Then guide the hand into the pocket,
Loosen your grip; now slowly drop it.
Relax your shoulders, lift your chin,
And realize it is time to smile again.
Meet the eye of colleague and friend
Whose warm handshake, or ear might lend
That which you may seek from your phone:
A personal connection, at work and at home.

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