

Internet addiction

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The internet was created in the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, during The Cold War. Today the internet is known as a large public access network of other interconnected computer network. The internet provides a plethora of information as well as many services that people view as necessities in today's world such as, e-mail, instant messaging, file sharing, gaming, etc. The internet is so " convenient" that many people could not even imagine life with out it. There is so much information on the internet that it basically caters to anyone with access to it. Being so accessible the internet can easily become addictive to people just as drugs can. The dictionary defines addiction as the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming. Critics argue though, that " internet addiction" is not possible because there are no chemical substances involved. However, just like people can get addicted to television or anything else that they may enjoy, the same concept applies to internet use. As internet growth increases, so do the number of users that log on everyday, and with more users, the number of " addictions" grow every day as well. As with any type of addiction, it is becoming a serious problem for many people, causing conflicts with employment and academics. It doesn't matter what a person's age, sex, religion, race, etc., anyone is subject to become addicted. This problem is becoming so large that there has even been a Center for Internet Addiction Recovery established to help those with this " disorder." The internet is used for so many different reasons and they all can become addictive. People can get addicted to chat rooms and instant messaging, surfing the web, online auctions, pornography, and even online gaming. The

most recent and extreme case of internet addiction occurred in South Korea, when a man passed away from heart failure after playing the popular online role playing game World of Warcraft for 50 hours straight. Although this is a very exceptional case, internet users can suffer from exhaustion from long periods of use. It is often believed that people use the internet as a way of escaping reality. Those who are lonely or bored see it as a place to easily make new friends instantly from the safety of their home, or wherever they might be, without actually having to deal with the whole face to face aspect of things. The user can act like whomever they want to when speaking to other users online thus creating their ideal self in this new identity. These types of relationships, though they seem harmless, can actually spew the users view on reality and push them farther away from society itself and affect their real life relationships. For example if an "addict" spends all night on the web talking to random people and surfing the web, then their performance at school or work will suffer the next day because they were up all night. I can testify to the negatives of being addicted to the internet. Going back to the topic of addiction to online games, I myself was once addicted to the one. It was the summer of 2003 and the online role playing game Star Wars Galaxies had just been released. I picked up a copy just expecting to play around with it casually now and then. But once I started playing it, I slowly started playing more and more, until eventually, it was all I did. I would play as soon as I woke up until the about four or five o'clock in the morning, and sometimes even later then that. And every day it was the same process. I rarely ever went out and all of my friends would wonder where I was all the time, thus it affected all my relationships. Financially it

was killing me, because at the time I was not employed I was spending my money paying the monthly fee just to keep playing. It was also hurting me physically because, I always felt so drained because of my lack of rest. Also my hands, back and neck would always be aching because I was on the computer so much. This first hand experience helped me realize this was not healthy for me or those around me because I was always missing from the picture so often. The Internet is an amazing information resource. People all over the world use it to connect with human beings of other countries and cultures. Internet Addiction begins when the rest of the person's life begins to fall apart. It is certain that for many people, Internet use begins to squeeze out activities. First, you might miss your favorite TV show for your hobby, but then things change. Time at the computer screen begins to nudge out time for family, friends, school, work, meals, and sleep. This is when one knows that there addiction has gone too far. There is no "real cure" for Internet Addiction Disorder, but like most addictions, the first step to recovery is admitting that you have a problem.