

THE ALTERNATE VIEW - FROM THE COUNSELING DESK 3

HAS YOUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY COMPROMISED YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Spending too much time online can lead to mental illness. Overuse of internet can result in loneliness, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and heightened aggression. Spending too much time on social media sites causes lowered levels of wellbeing. Spending too much time on computers, watching movies, playing video games, chatting and following others on social media leads to higher levels of emotional distress, depression, anxiety and self-rejection. High levels of screen time can lead to social isolation and feeling disconnected from family and friends. Users of social media may experience increased levels of social dissatisfaction and unhappiness as a result of unfair and unrealistic comparison of themselves, their happiness and popularity to their friends and to celebrities they follow. Binge watching of your favorite T.V show or movie series leads to cognitive loss, depression, obesity, loneliness, fatigue and expectation of instant gratification.. Continuous browsing of social media and internet may cause distorted perception of time and reality.

MENTAL DISORDERS ASSOCIATED WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY

1. **Selfitis:** The compulsive need to take and post pictures of yourself on social media.
2. **Constant checker:** Constantly almost obsessively checking your emails, texts and social media accounts
3. **Gaming disorder/online gaming addiction:** Compulsive playing of video games or unhealthy need to access online multiplayer games
4. **Phone addiction:** A dependence syndrome in which mobile phone user uses excessive amounts of time and money on mobile phone communication including using it in inappropriate situations and becoming preoccupied with phone use
5. **Nomophobia:** Fear of losing or becoming separated from your smartphone
6. **Idisorder/technology addiction:** Changes to your brain's ability to process information and ability to relate to the world that results in psychological disorders.
7. **Face book depression:** Depression caused by social interactions or lack thereof on Facebook or other social media sites/spending too much time on Facebook.
8. **Phantom vibration syndrome:** Where one feels like the cell phone is vibrating but it isn't.
9. **Cyber bullying:** The act of harassing someone online by posting nasty, mean messages anonymously.
10. **Social media disorder/Social media addiction:** Compulsive or problematic social media use.
11. **“Truman show” delusion:** Having the unsettling feeling that you are being constantly watched/or your life is being literary “broadcasted” for everyone to see.
12. **Cyberchondria:** The believe that you have the disease you read about online/seeking health advice and treatment cures from internet/making internet your favorite doctor.
13. **Phantom ringing syndrome (fauxcellarm):** Rushing to check your phone only to find it was never ringing but your brain punked you into thinking it were buzzing.
14. **Technoference:** Use of phones during meals, conversations, dates and leisure time

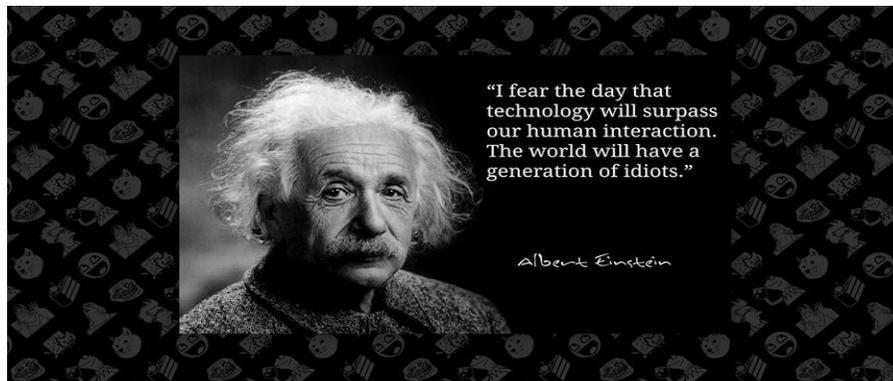
15. **Cyber sickness disorder:** The disorientation and dizziness some people feel when interacting with certain digital environment.
16. **Internet addiction disorder:** A constant and unhealthy urge to access the internet/excessive internet use that interferes with daily life.
17. **Google effect:** Tendency of the human mind to retain less information because it knows that all the answers are only a click away.
18. **FOMO:** Fear of missing out when not logging especially into social media.

ENSURE YOU REMAIN MENTALLY HEALTHY AS YOU USE TECHNOLOGY

BY:

- ✚ Taking a digital detox/digital retreat/unplugging
- ✚ Taking occasional breaks from internet use
- ✚ Changing the way you use your smart phone
- ✚ Trying a techno ‘fast’ for a specific amount of time
- ✚ Instilling technology- free times and zones in your home e.g. meal times
- ✚ Balancing and placing limits on your tech time e.g. for every hour I spend on computer or smart phone, I spend an hour away from them doing something else.
- ✚ Leaving work at work and avoiding taking home computer based work projects.
- ✚ Never sleep with your phone and tablet. Indeed be aware of the possibility of dangerous radiation emitted from them that could cause tumors
- ✚ Practice proper moderation and digital ‘hygiene’
- ✚ Take a break from social media for a defined period of time.
- ✚ Quit social media indefinitely if you are facing cyber bullying.

“Technology should be tools to help us not handcuffs to chain and enslave us”.



By Winnie Student Counselor, For help consult the counselor as an individual or group for guidance and counseling Office No. 9, Old Administration block.

You can also email studentcounselling@pu.ac.ke