

### Critical Insight on Internet Addiction

I chose internet addiction as my focus due to I've experienced it and I find it even more disturbing today. An article I found relevant to today is one done on U.S. college students and their internet addiction. College students are continually hooked on technology, especially cell phones, other social media and the Internet (Siew, 2010). They are showing symptoms of drug and alcohol addictions according to a study (Siew, 2010). A student that was interviewed said that they know that they are an addict and say "their dependency is sickening" (Siew, 2010). The student also says it is hard to shed the "media skin" especially with all the iPods, laptops, cell phones, phone applications, and so on (Siew, 2010). It was noticed though that the addiction was not able to be connected to a single device, application, or outlet (Siew, 2010).

This article shows how serious this addiction is and that it is most likely not just one media outlet it would be more likely to be a Blackberry, several applications and Internet on and off the phone for example. I wish it was easy to blame the Internet and Facebook for that addiction, but it's also available on cell phones, iPods, iPads, etc. It is everywhere and very much in your face and available. I chose this article because it caught my attention and it was also a study. It was honest and I find it reliable as well; I never knew someone was doing or did research on things like this. Apparently, they know there is an addiction and there is a problem. It's scary that the people that they interviewed, some realized that they do have or it is a problem, the internet addiction that is.

A few sites I chose gave me some very disturbing statistics and yet helpful information. I found out that 9-15 million people in the United States use the Internet everyday and that number

goes up by 25% every three months according to a study done by Wieland et al. (2005) (TechAddiction.ca, 2011). A study done by Venturini in 2005 found that 84% of college counselors agreed or strongly agreed that Internet Addiction Disorder is a legitimate disorder and 93-94% have “some but not sufficient training to no training on diagnosing and treating this type of disorder (TechAddiction.ca, 2011). I strongly agree that all counselors, either in high school, college and/or graduate school, need to have or get training on this. If it is being looked at closely in college students I would start training and getting answers about 1 year ago 😊.

Some of the warning signs of Internet addiction are being on-line longer than intended; using the Internet to “escape” from problem; and jeopardizing and risking an intimate or personal relationship, job, education or career; these are just to name a few signs (Illinois Institute for Addiction Recovery). I never thought of Internet addiction causing financial problems. I thought it was more about creating personas, like this Institute addresses, and that the loss of family, friends and personal relationships (Illinois Institute of Addiction Recovery). That is all I thought it was, so I learned something from this source, which I wish I would have thought of. It seems logical, the financial loss, if you think about all the elements that are connected and that it would probably be easy to lose money by getting newer versions of technology or having to move from somewhere and provide for themselves.

My last source pointed out that this is a growing epidemic on different levels (NetAddiction.com, 2009). They address online gambling, chat rooms, online affairs, and e-Bay addiction. I had no idea that there could be an eBay addiction or how that was possible or would work. So, it’s more than Facebook and Twitter; I feel ashamed that I thought it was just social networks like that. I guess those stuck out because those are the ones most talked about and seen in the media. It’s not everyday or every other month you see an article on eBay addicts. If you

were like me you'd raise an eyebrow and wonder. So I'm glad I learned something else and new about Internet addiction. I never would have thought about some of these aspects if I didn't look; I'd still be thinking it was just Facebook, Myspace, Twitter and so on. These other addictions need to be brought forward into the spotlight.

While compiling information for this, I came across websites that say they are here to help people recover from internet addiction. Now if you are trying to help someone why would you have your site encourage them to befriend them on Facebook, Twitter, and so on? Another question that came to mind was when are social networking sites going to be used against us for war or other attacks? I still don't think people understand how serious this issue is. What you've put on Facebook is there. If you've deleted your Facebook it is still there, because you can still reopen it and it's like you never left. Companies and some universities are checking you out and finding your social network sites you have. So, I believe, no matter how much you delete and no matter how much you try and hide what you use to do on Thirsty Thursdays, they will find it and you better be ready to answer. Plus, this can impact all sides of you and your life; you should ask yourself "what all am I willing to risk and lose due to my addiction?"

## References

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