

## DO YOU HAVE AN INTERNET ADDICTION DISORDER?

Computers and the Internet have made it really easy to rant.

It's made everyone overly opinionated... Scott Weiland

### WHAT TO KNOW!

- Internet addiction refers to the overuse or compulsive use of the internet to avoid dealing with one's problems and is actually an impulse control disorder
- A survey by Sell Cell found that 42% of kids use their phones over 30 hours a week
- Other research from Common Sense found that teens look at their digital devices an average of 6.5 hours a day not including schoolwork or homework
- Symptoms of Internet Addiction include guilt, anxiety, depression, isolation, avoidance of responsibility, mood swings, loneliness, insecurity, and procrastination
- Physical symptoms include headaches, insomnia and disrupted sleep patterns, backaches, eating poorly, poor personal hygiene, and vision problems
- People with Internet Addiction:
  - Are preoccupied with the internet and online activities
  - Spend more and more time on the internet with difficulty getting offline
  - Feel a high when liked or receiving positive comments to postings
  - Feel depressed when ignored or ghosted online
  - Have impaired personal relationships because of time spent online
  - Lie to oneself and others about the amount of time and activities online
  - Feel a compulsion to let others know about one's activities, travels, friends
  - Use the internet to lift one's mood and overcome feelings of hopelessness and depression
  - Spend an excessive amount of time online socializing with others via facebook, emails, facetime, discussion groups, or gaming
- There are five recognized types of Internet Addiction:
  - Virtual relationships via social media, dating, old friends, group chats
  - Compulsive behaviors such as gambling, shopping, following
  - Sexual behaviors including viewing porn and having cybersex
  - Information seeking from youtube, web surfing, podcasts
  - Playing online games individually or in groups or teams

### WHAT TO DO!

- Recognize and accept that your internet use is excessive and a problem
- Unplug one day a week
- Rather than trying to stop, set boundaries and rules for appropriate use of the internet
- Observe your moods and see how they change when online
- If you are obsessed with a particular game or site, stop its use
- Prioritize your health by ensuring that you eat and sleep well
- Take frequent breaks if you are online for extended periods
- Balance your internet use with walking outdoors, playing sports, taking a yoga class
- Consider attending Internet and Technology Addicts Anonymous (ITAA) meetings
- Seek professional help to learn to manage emotions and increase self-awareness

### WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [\*\*DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com\*\*](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

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