

Internet Addiction

“We may appear to be choosing to use this technology, but in fact we are being dragged to it by the potential of short-term rewards.”

—Tony Dokoupil, *Newsweek*



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. How many hours a week do you spend on the Internet?
2. How have mobile phones changed your social life?
3. Is it possible to be addicted to the Internet?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ___ 1. validation | a) something that exists online and not in the real world |
| ___ 2. dopamine | b) to get in the way of something |
| ___ 3. interfere | c) feeling like a less important person compared to others |
| ___ 4. incessant | d) an illness (usually not serious) |
| ___ 5. prevalent | e) common |
| ___ 6. distracting | f) repeated |
| ___ 7. ailment | g) a strong urge to do something |
| ___ 8. compulsion | h) a chemical that makes you happy for a short time |
| ___ 9. inferior | i) taking a person's attention away from where it should be |
| ___ 10. virtual | j) a sense of value |

Reading

INTERNET ADDICTION

Hooked on the Web

1. Do you feel a sense of **validation** when your online post, link, or photo receives a lot of attention? According to some experts, when you send or receive information on the Internet, you experience a short-term high. The **dopamine** production in your brain is similar to the effects of drugs or alcohol.
2. When a habit or substance **interferes** with your daily life, it can be defined as an addiction. **Incessant** email checking and online chatting are a few examples of net addictions. Online gaming and shopping are others. The rise of mobile devices has made Internet addiction more **prevalent**.
3. Overuse of the Internet can be a source of conflict in relationships. A child or spouse may feel jealous about how much time a loved one spends online. People who socialize online instead of at home or at work risk losing their real-life relationships. On the other hand, some people lose their jobs because their social networks are too **distracting**.
4. Internet addiction can cause mental and physical **ailments**. The **compulsion** to surf the web may cause people to feel **inferior** or overwhelmed. This can result in depression and even suicide. Spending too much time in front of a computer can also cause backaches, eye strain, and carpal tunnel syndrome.
5. The Internet has worked its way into many areas of our lives. What can we do to avoid Internet addiction? Some experts suggest having a tech-free zone, such as a dinner table or family room. Leaving a smartphone out of reach while in a car or out with friends is also a good idea. People are less likely to become addicted to **virtual** living if they are satisfied with their life and relationships in the real world. Maintaining strong ties with real-life friends and family members is key!

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. According to some experts, what do Internet users become addicted to?
2. Give a few examples of net addictions.
3. Why does the reading mention jealousy?
4. How can the Internet cause a person to lose their job?
5. What is the final paragraph about?

Vocabulary Review

A. Related Words

Which words from page 1 are related to the sentences below?

#	Sentences	Words
1	I don't have a real boyfriend, but I have one in my gaming world.	
2	When I see my phone, I feel the need to check my email.	
3	I have a sore neck from staring at my computer screen for so long.	
4	I was happy when I got an award for my charity work.	
5	Alcohol addiction runs in my family.	
6	I'm trying to get my work done, but my phone keeps going off.	

Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Word Families

Choose the best word from the following word family to complete each sentence: **addict(s)** / **addicted** / **addictive**

1. My sister is an Internet _____ .
2. I'm _____ to Facebook.
3. There are many _____ in the chat room.
4. This game is _____ . I can't stop playing it!
5. Be careful. You may become _____ to that online club if you join it.
6. I don't believe that you can become _____ to email.

Discussion Questions


1. What aspect of the Internet do you find most addictive?
2. How would your life change if you could no longer access the Internet?
3. Have you ever felt inferior because of something you saw online?

Critical Thinking

IN PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS

Do you think Internet addiction should be classified as a medical disorder? If yes, what kind of professional help do Internet addicts need? How does an addiction to the Internet differ from other addictions?

Listening

 <http://blog.esllibrary.com/2013/11/06/internet-addiction/>

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

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