DIGIT

BOOST COMPETENCES FOR RESPONSIBLE ONLINE IDENTITY

Let's get started!

Be aware of the side effects
of excessive Internet use

Let's get started!

Ask yourself…

o   How much time do you spend online on a daily basis?

o   How much time do you need to spend online?

o   Have you thought about an impact Internet has on modern society?

o   And on your own life?

Let's get started!

Normal Internet use vs. excessive use

Today, it is rare to find someone under the age of 70 who doesn't use the Internet – at least occasionally. Regardless of your age and your interests, the Internet provides an easily accessible source of information and a virtually endless supply of entertainment. Importantly, the Internet is no longer tied to a home computer and can be accessed almost anywhere via cell phones, laptops, tablets, gaming consoles. Wherever you go, the Internet is waiting for you.

So when does normal use cross the line into excessive use or addiction?

Let's get started!

Normal Internet use vs. excessive use

- **The number of hours spent online is, by itself, not enough to indicate a problem!**

Imagine two people who both spend 30 hours per week online. Person A is not working, has withdrawn from family and friends, and has few social interactions beyond meeting people online. Person B also spends 30 hours per week online but is working, finds time to meet with friends a few times per week, and generally has a fulfilling life outside of the virtual world.
Clearly, Internet use is more of a problem
for one of these people than the other.

Let's get started!

Excessive Internet use

What matters is how the time online is (or isn't) interfering with other important areas of life such as work, school, health, and in-person relationships.

If a person repeated goes online to avoid real world responsibilities or difficulties and this avoidance creates even more problems in their life, this may suggest excessive use or even the presence of an addiction to the Internet.

Let's get started!

Side effects of excessive Internet use

The Internet obviously is a fantastic tool, but it's easy to get sucked in and spend way too much time on it (especially on social media sites).

Excessive use of the internet can be linked to psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, social isolation, and insomnia.

Internet addiction can also reveal itself in a form of an addiction to online video games, online shopping or gambling, etc.

Let's get started!

Watch the video
What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains

List the main conclusions/information related to the topic

Let's get started!

Discussion
(based on the video)

1) What is overstimulation? How can we feel it?

2) How the Internet causes distraction?

3) Which activities make us become more compulsive?

4) How does the Internet affect our Short Term Memory (STM)?

5) Why is the process of Consolidation Development of the didactic unit DIGIT MANIFESTO disturbed when using the Internet?

6) How can we increase our attention level in everyday life?

Let's get started!

Watch the video

[5 Crazy Ways Social Media Is Changing Your Brain Right Now](#)

and list the main conclusions/information related to the topic

Let's get started!

Discussion
(based on the video)

1) Name 3 main ways Social Media is affecting our brain.
2) Does using the Internet and Social Media intensively improve our multitasking?
3) Which of our needs can Social Media fulfil? How could we fulfil these needs in more healthy way (offline)?
4) What role Social Media plays in your life? Do you have a feeling you should rethink it?
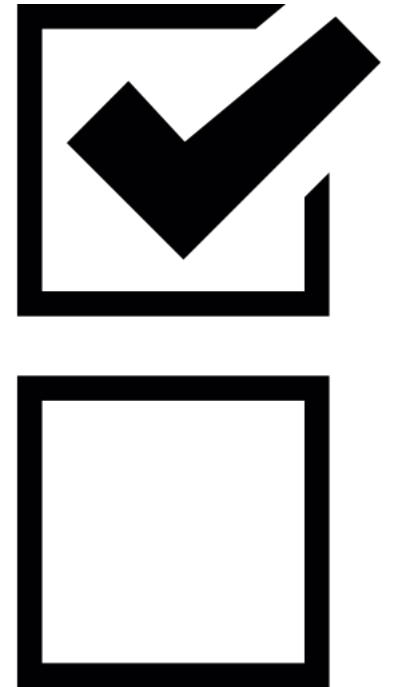
Let's get started!

Thank you
for your attention!

Dive in!

Be aware of the side effects
of excessive Internet use

Dive in!

Discussion

Have you ever wondered…

o how much time do you spend online at work?
o how much time do you <u>need to</u> spend online at work?
o how much time do you spend online in your free time?
o what kind of impact the Internet has on you?
o what kind of impact the Internet has on your friends, family and colleagues?
o what kind of impact the Internet has on different groups – teenagers, adults, elders, others?
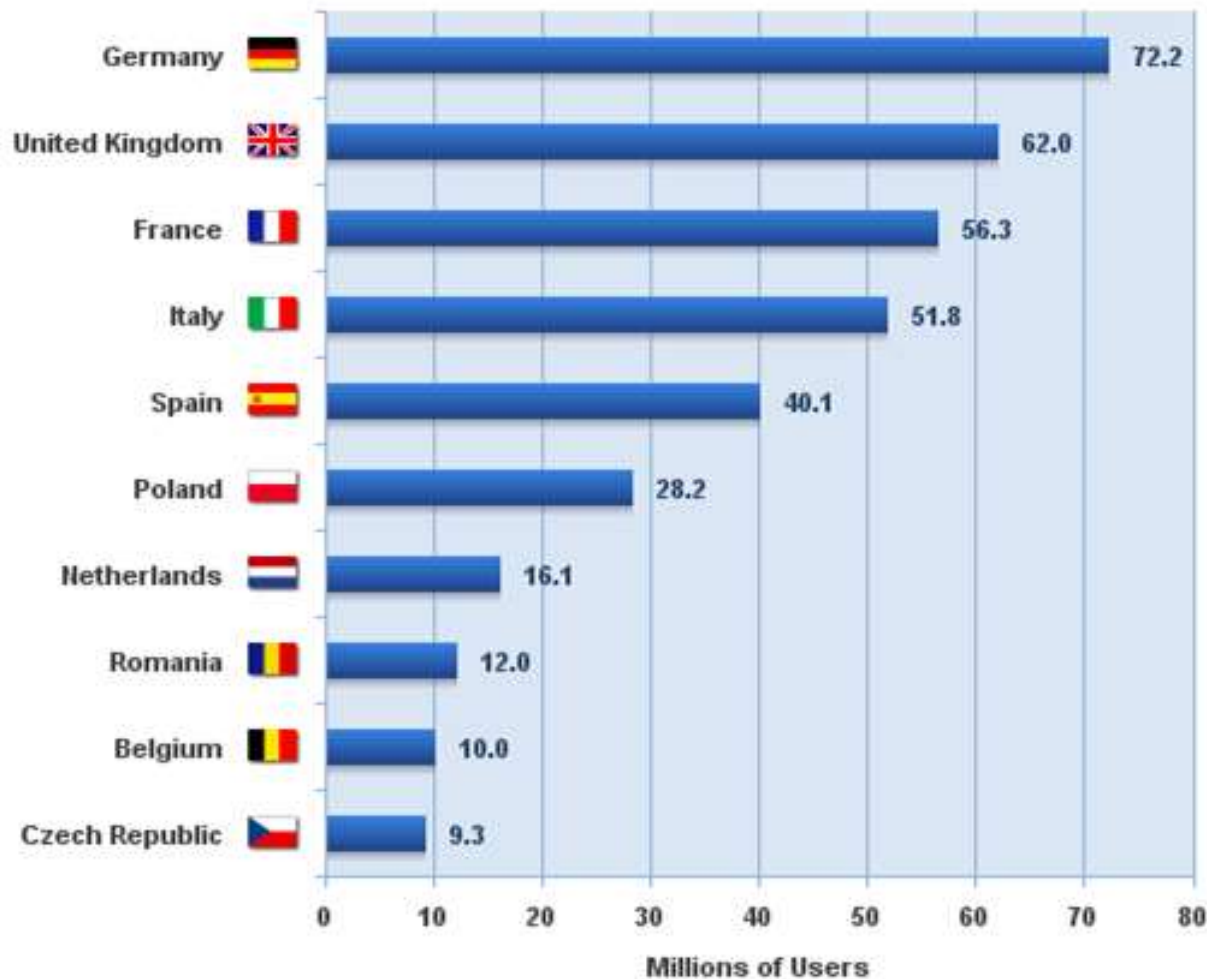
Dive in!

Internet Usage: EU vs Rest of the World

WORLD REGION	Population (2017 Est.)	% Pop. of World	Internet Users, 30-June-2017	Penetration (% Population)	Internet % Users	FACEBOOK 30-June-2017
European Union	506,279,458	6.7 %	433,651,012	85.7 %	11.3 %	252,070,000
Rest of World	7,012,749,512	93.3 %	3,451,916,607	49.2 %	88.8 %	1,727,633,530
TOTAL WORLD	7,519,028,970	100.0 %	3,885,567,619	51.7 %	100.0 %	1,979,703,530

Internet Usage in the European Union - 2017

Source: https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm

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Dive in!

European Union - EU28
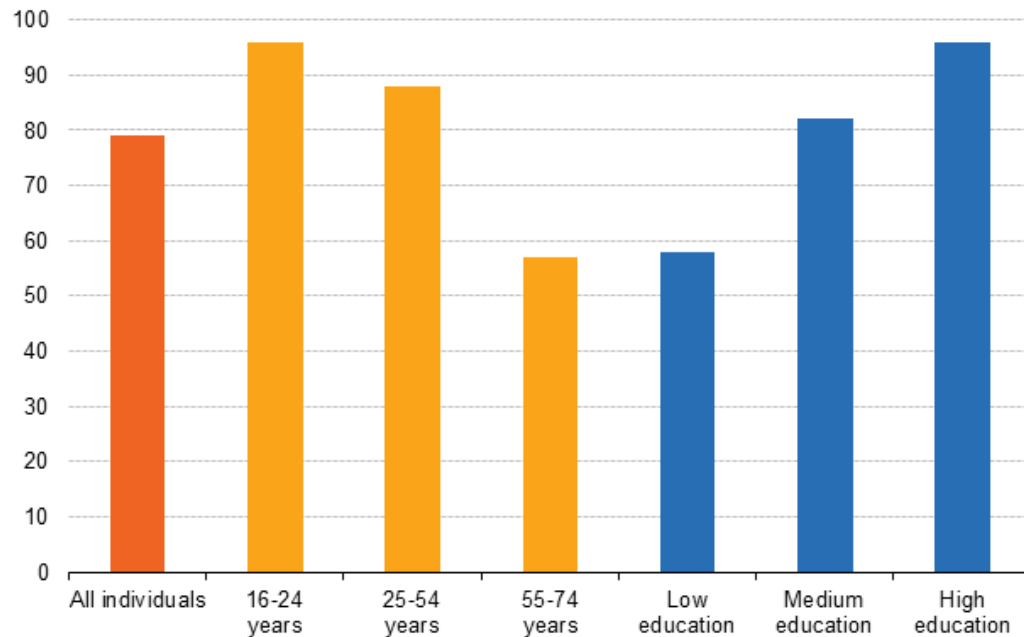## Top 10 Internet Countries - June 2017
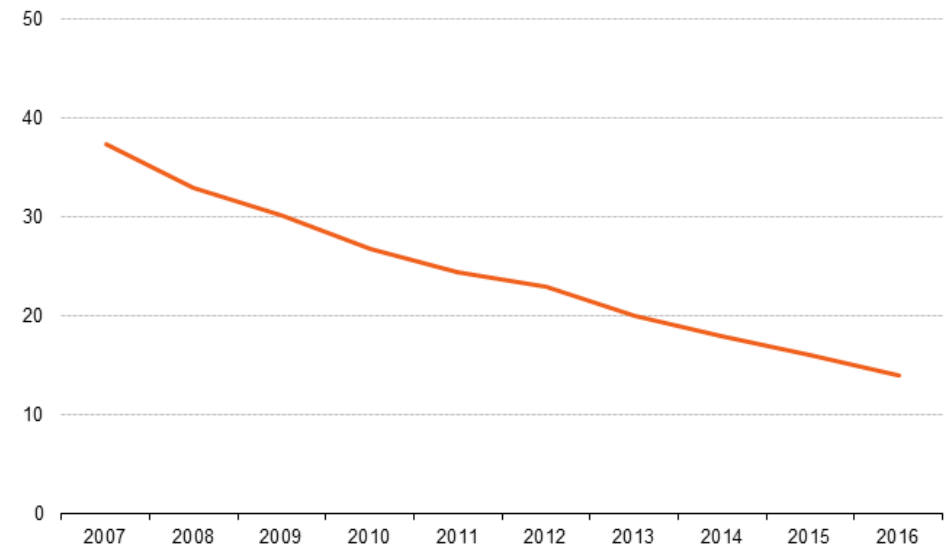

Internet usage
- European Union

Dive in!

Internet access and usage statistics - Europe

Individuals who used the internet on average at least once a week, by age group and level of formal education, EU-28, 2016 (% of individuals)

Individuals who have never used the internet, EU-28, 2007-2016 (% of individuals)

Source: ec.europa.eu

Dive in!

What does Internet addiction mean:

Internet addiction is a **mental condition** characterised by excessive use of the internet, usually to the detriment of the user. Addiction is generally understood to be a mental disorder involving compulsive behaviour. When someone is constantly online, they may be described as addicted to it. While it is recognised as a problem, professionals have yet to agree on whether to recognise the term as a distinct form of addiction. Internet addiction is also known by numerous other terms, including internet addiction disorder, pathological internet use, internet dependency, problematic internet use, internet overuse and compulsive internet use.

Source: *www.techopedia.com*

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Dive in!

Internet addiction in numbers

The disorder occurs worldwide, but mainly in countries where computer access and technology are widespread such as North America and Europe.

It is estimated that **210 million** people around the world are addicted to the **Internet** and **Social Media**.

Source: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160791X16301634

Mainly among males

It occurs in the late 20s or early 30s age groups

Source: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18399706

Internet addiction and mental health

Internet addiction is associated with:

- Depression (a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act, depression is different from sadness or grief/bereavement)

- Anxiety (a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome)

- Social isolation (withdrawal, a state of seclusion or isolation, i.e., lack of contact with people)

Dive in!

Internet addiction and mental health

Internet addiction is associated with (cont.):

o Poor impulse control

o FOMO - Fear of Missing Out (anxiety that an exciting or interesting event may currently be happening elsewhere, often aroused by posts seen on social media)

o Overstimulation, information overload (exposure to or provision of too much information or data)

Sources: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18399706
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S235285321730007X
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/S1532785XMEP0402_03
https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/what-is-depression

Internet addiction

Typically, we think of addictions as pertaining to substances, chemicals, or drugs that can produce dependence and tolerance.

However, **any behavior or activity that produces a reward can, in theory, become addictive** – or at the very least, turn into an unhealthy habit that interferes with the quality of one's life.

Those addicted to the Internet are often drawn in by **social rewards**. For example, even though a video game addict may enjoy the challenge, graphics, and sense of accomplishment of his favourite game, the most compelling reason to play may be the connections he makes and the responsibility he feels to fellow gamers who are a part of his online team.

Source: www.techaddiction.ca

Dive in!

Signs of Internet addiction

What are the signs and symptoms of internet addiction?
Similar to the symptoms of video game addiction, the signs of Internet Addiction can be broken down into four distinct categories – psychological, physical, behavioural, and relational.
But of course, the signs will vary from individual to individual and you'll rarely see a textbook case. However, there are certain signals…
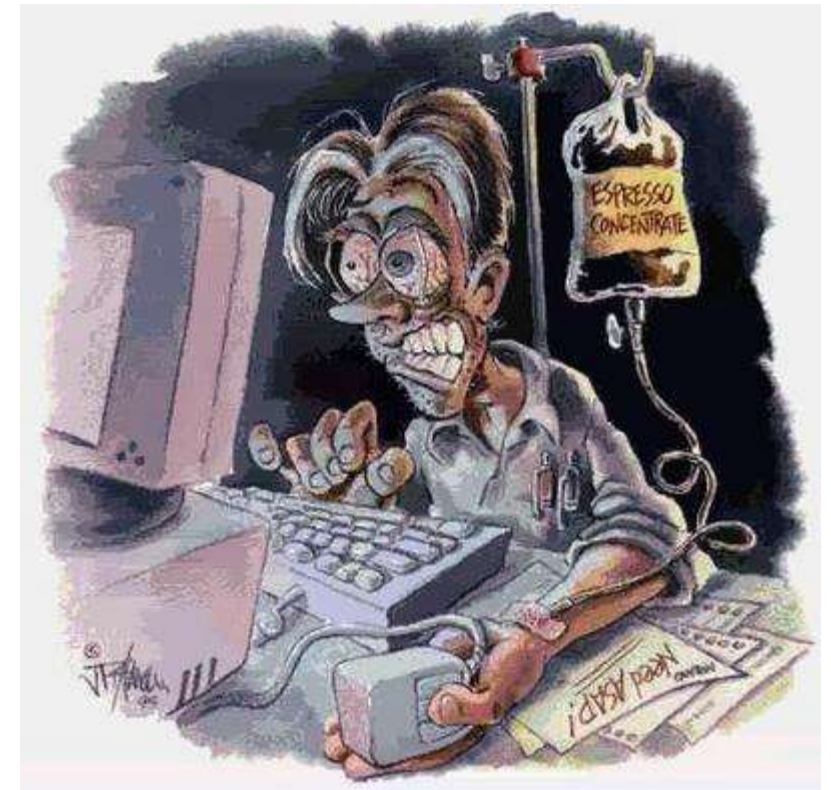
Dive in!

Psychological Signs of Internet addiction

- Frequent feelings of guilt after spending too much time online
- Great difficulty avoiding the Internet for recreational use for more than a few days in a row
- Often losing track of time when online (e.g., suddenly noticing that several hours have passed when it seems like just a few minutes)
- Strong feelings of frustration or tension when unable to go online
- Unreasonable justifications for unhealthy levels of use ("Other people are online even more than I am")
- Downplaying the negative effects of excessive Internet use ("At least I am not addicted to drugs or alcohol")
- Loss of interest and participation in hobbies or activities that were once enjoyed
- Feeling calm, content, or happy only when online
- Preoccupation with going online when engaged in other activities (e.g.work, or when out with friends)
- Often experiencing negative mood (depression or anxiety) when not on the Internet

Physical Signs of Internet addiction

- Significant weight gain or loss due to poor eating habits and lack of physical activity

- Headaches, neck aches, back problems

- Tired, dry, and/or red eyes

- Irregular, unhealthy eating habits

- Carpal tunnel syndrome (a medical condition due to compression of the median nerve as it travels through the wrist at the **carpal tunnel.** The main symptoms are pain, numbness and tingling in the thumb, index finger, middle finger and the thumb side of the ring fingers)

Dive in!

Behavioural signs of Internet addiction

- Occasional "marathon" Internet sessions lasting all day or all night
- Frequently eating meals in front of the computer or skipping them completely
- Regularly using the Internet until very late at night despite having to get up early the next morning
- Multiple attempts to reduce Internet use with little or no success
- Going online at every opportunity
- Spending more and more time online and less time interacting with others offline
- Often going online while neglecting other important responsibilities (e.g., school, work, family, household tasks)
- Displaying anger or resentment when questioned how much time is spent online
- If a student, decreased time spent studying and poorer academic performance

Dive in!

Relational Signs of Internet addiction

- Relationship problems and frequent arguments stemming from one partner spending too much time online
- Blaming one's spouse or partner for the amount of time spent on the Internet ("If you paid more attention to me, I wouldn't be online so much"
- Losing real world friends, gaining online-only friends
- Comments by others expressing concern about one's Internet use
- Decreased time spent with family and friends
- Deceiving others about the amount of time spent on the Internet
- Decreased interest in sex

Source: TechAddiction, Dr. Brent Conrad, Clinical Psychologist

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Dive in!

Signs of Internet addiction - conclusion

Ultimately, the symptoms of addiction can vary from person to person. However, if you notice several of the previously mentioned signs, it is rather clear that either you or someone you know should rethink your relationship to the internet and how much you use it.

Of course, it's a lot easier said than done, but – as the old truism goes – **acknowledging there's a problem is the first step to solving it.**

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Effects of Internet anonymity

Interacting on the Internet mostly does not involve "physical" interactions with another person (i.e. face-to-face conversation), and therefore easily leads to a person feeling free to act differently online, as well as unrestrained in civility and minimisation of authority, etc.

People who are socially anxious are more likely to use electronic communication as their only means of communication. This, in turn, makes them more likely to disclose personal information to strangers online that they normally wouldn't give out face-to-face. The phenomenon is a likely cause for the prevalence of **cyberbullying**, especially for children who do not understand "social networking etiquette."

Internet anonymity can also lead to **online disinhibition**, in which people do and say things online that they normally wouldn't do or say in person.

Dive in!

Cyberbullying

When you're online you are exposed to cyberbullying which is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

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Dive in!

Other potential side effects

o Being online for a long time can cause a mental "overload" which can come to the **detriment of short-term memory retention**.

o There has been established relationship between extensive internet use and delay gratification – 'problematic internet users' discounting behaviors reflect an inability to delay gratification, not risk taking' study shows. And challenges with delay gratification **can impact negatively on building strong and long-lasting relationships with people**.

Sources:
www.medicaldaily.com
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed

Dive in!

Case studies
(in small groups - 20 min)

Each case presents a profile of a person who is somehow affected by the one or more problems related to excessive use of the Internet.

Task: Analyse and propose solutions of described situation

o Marta, 35, an online shopping addict,
o Robert, 15, a victim of cyberbullying,
o Sarah, 6, a young Internet addict,
o Adrian, 28, socially withdrawn young adult,
o Greg, 65, addicted to online gambling

Dive in!

Brainstorming exercise

(generate as many ideas as possible in a group)
(10 min)

1) How could you deal with over use of the Internet on a daily basis?

2) What can we do, as a society, to prevent it?

3) What are the solutions for building meaningful relationships with people in the age of digital society?

Dive in!

Possible solutions to cope with overstimulation

Make a note when you are feeling bogged down and tired and think about how much information you have tried to compute in that moment. Give yourself time **limits** and a designated number of searches and downloads for a day. You can learn to take **more breaks** and find anecdotal means to sift through the information, or even **block out all the stimuli** in that break period. **Gardening, meditation, stretches, breathing exercises, tai chi, yoga, cooking, sports, music**…all of these are options to undertake when you want to get away from the noise of too many 'voices'.

Dive in!

Treatment of Internet addiction

o Even though there are no evidence-based treatments for internet addiction, cognitive behavioural approaches may be helpful. One of the most important aspects related to a cognitive behavioural treatment for Internet addictions is to explore the patient's specific usage patterns and then introduce **new schedules** in order to interrupt previously established patterns.

o Family/couple **therapy** may help in selected cases, and online self-help books.

o **Support groups** may also prove to be helpful in the treatment of Internet addiction by compensating for the lack of social support that the patient initially sought to get through Internet and computer usage.

Dive in!

Treatment of Internet addiction

o In some cases, a self-imposed **ban on computer use** and Internet access may be necessary.

o Other therapeutic methods are also being examined in the treatment of Internet addiction, including the use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) for the treatment of certain symptoms that may accompany Internet addiction, including anxiety and depression.

o **If you believe that you or someone close to you may be addicted to the Internet or computer usage, it is important to seek professional help for internet addiction.**

Seek Help

Sources: www.psychguides.com
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18399706

Dive in!

Another way of treating or preventing Internet addiction can be MINDFULNESS

Wherever you are, be there totally.
Eckhart Tolle

mind·ful·ness
/ˈmīndfəlnəs/

noun

1. the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something.
   "their mindfulness of the wider cinematic tradition"

2. a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.

Dive in!

Mindfulness

Improves quality of sleep

Improves memory

Increases brain functioning and immune system

Decreases stress and anxiety level

Dive in!

Mindfulness

Using the Internet, especially Social Media and its worldwide availability, is not supportive for our mental health. Changing our level of digital mindfulness may be helpful but requires altering the way we respond to discomfort. Instead of turning to our phones when feeling restlessness (e.g. when you're waiting in a queue, meeting people you don't know, etc.), you can change your response to questions which are helpful to build your awareness: *What's this restlessness about? How am I feeling right now? What am I hoping to gain from doing this? What need am I trying to meet?* Moving your attention away from distractions and coping mechanisms while choosing to focus on our core needs is something you can develop through mindfulness practices.

Dive in!

Mindfulness practice

1. Choose a natural object from within your immediate environment and focus on watching it for a minute or two. This could be a flower or an insect, or even the clouds or the moon.

2. Don't do anything except notice the thing you are looking at. Simply relax into watching for as long as your concentration allows.

3. Look at this object as if you are seeing it for the first time.

4. Visually explore every aspect of its formation, and allow yourself to be consumed by its presence.

5. Allow yourself to connect with its energy and its purpose within the natural world.

Dive in!

Debate
(10 min)

How to balance positive sides of the Internet use and minimise negative ones?

Dive in!

Thank you
for your attention!

Wrap-up!

Be aware of the side effects
of excessive Internet use

Wrap up!

Quick summary
(pop questions)

o What is overstimulation?
o How does the Internet cause distraction?
o How does the Internet affect our Short Term Memory (STM)?
o What is Internet addiction?
o What impact does Internet addiction have on mental health?
o What is cyberbullying?
o How do you treat Internet addiction?
o What is mindfulness?

Wrap up!

Reminder – WARNING SIGNS

Watch out for the warning signs that could suggest that either you or your spouse, family member or friend may have a problem with excessive Internet se (or even addiction)…

1. **Losing track of time.** It's easy to lose track of time when staring into a screen. It happens to everyone, but if you find yourself lost in cyberspace for extended periods of time, or frequently, it's an important indicator of addiction.

2. **Social isolation.** Do you feel separate from those around you as a result of your internet usage? Do you neglect your friends and family in order to spend time online? When your internet usage becomes a barrier to socialising, it can mean you have a problem.

Wrap up!

Reminder – WARNING SIGNS (cont.)

3. **Difficulty with daily life**. A few dishes left in the sink or an unmade bed is not a cause for alarm. However, if you find that you have consistent trouble fulfilling home and work obligations due to internet usage, you may want to consider how it is affecting your life.

4. **Usage for escape**. Do you feel more at home online than in real life? Is using the computer the highlight of your day? If you find that using the internet is a great source of pleasure and your primary way to relieve stress, your usage may be problematic.

5. **Guilt and defensiveness**. Often, addicted people have an internal feeling that something is amiss. Alternatively, when friends and family are critical, the addict may become defensive and deny any sort of problem. Watch out if that occurs in association with your internet usage...
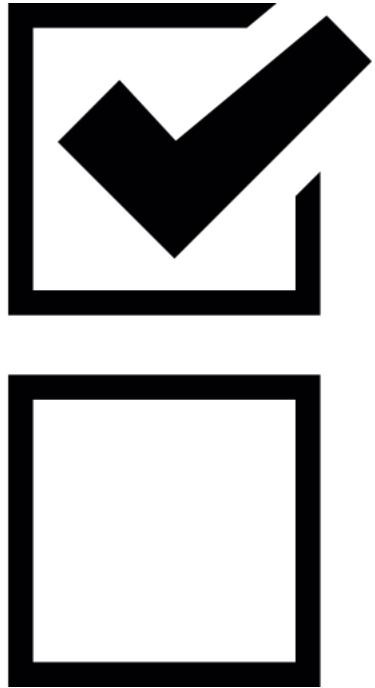
Wrap up!

Self-reflection activity

Step 1. Reflect on how daily activities on the Internet affect your environment and close relationships?
Step 2. List potential problems in one column of the table and solutions in the other.
Step 3. Share and discuss the conclusions.

Wrap-up!

Assessment test/quiz

Complete quiz and check answers in pairs.

Wrap-up!

How do you recognise the first symptoms of Internet addiction?

Write as many as possible
(5 min)

Wrap-up!

How would you approach your friend who may be struggling with Internet addiction?

Discuss in pairs on your approach and arguments

Wrap-up!

How would you approach your friend who may be struggling with Internet addiction?

Role-play/play a scene

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Wrap-up!

How would you approach your friend who may be struggling with Internet addiction?

Reflect on presented scene – group discussion

- Do you have any friends or colleagues who may be struggling with Internet addiction?
- Have you tried to start a conversation about it?
- If not – why not? What stopped you?
- If yes – how did it go?
- How can you prepare for such conversations in the future?
- Which used in a role-play arguments were working for you and which weren't?
- How to prevent Internet addiction?

Group work

Create a list
'top 10 solutions for excessive Internet use'.

Wrap-up!

Giveaways!

(handouts with basic information and list of interesting resources)

Wrap-up!

Thank you
for your attention!