

9 Ways Technology Affects Mental Health



Technology is a great thing. You want to watch Beyonce’s Super Bowl half-time show 17 times? No problem. You want to create a six-second video of your cat? Or share your deepest personal thoughts in 140 characters? Go crazy. But, what we might not be realizing is the effect technology can have on us. Check out these 9 ways it can affect mental health.

1. Sleep. Using a laptop, cell phone, or iPad late at night can seriously mess with your sleep patterns and habits, potentially leaving you with a sleep disorder. Late night use is also associated with stress and depressive symptoms. (Yikes.)

2. Depression. A Swedish study found that participants who felt the need to have their cell phones constantly accessible were more likely to report depressive mental health symptoms.

3. Addiction. Several studies have actually suggested that the brains of technology abusers develop a certain pattern of change over time. Studies also suggest that the amount of times technology abusers check their gadgets are just enough to trigger the addiction-oriented parts of our brains.

4. 24/7 Stress. When we come home from school or work and immediately hop on the Internet or turn on the iPad, our brains don’t get the chance to de-stress and unwind from the day’s activities, so our brains get stuck in stress mode 24/7.

5. FOMO aka “Fear Of Missing Out.” It’s a real thing now. The popularity of social media and sharing everything has led to this new sensation where everyone from middle school-ers to

working adults feel the pressure to attend every event and share every experience. It's the "is everybody having fun without me?" disease. (Hint: they're not)

6. Isolation. Related to FOMO, excessive technology use can lead to feelings of isolation or the eventual isolation of a person due to so much time spent with technology as opposed to making real connections aka human friends.

7. Incivility. Research has shown that with the ascent of Internet and technology use, rudeness and incivility on social media sites has also increased. This is bad, as being rude to someone is wrong on its own, but it can also lead to Internet bullying.

8. Insecurity. Kind of like FOMO, social media, and constant access to it through our phones, tablets and laptops means we are constantly plugged into what everyone is doing. All the time. So we are constantly comparing ourselves to everyone else. All the time. But what we are seeing is everyone's glamour shots and our average moments. Not exactly a fair comparison, huh?

9. Anxiety. Social media on our gadgets can give us anxiety about everything from FOMO to fear that our life is not "pinteresting" enough. Literally. Surveys have found that women often have anxiety that they are not crafty, creative or cute enough after using pinterest. Social media can also cause anxiety such as fear of not being successful enough or smart enough with use of sites like Facebook and Twitter.