Chapter 11
Heartfulness Meditation:
A Technique to Reduce the Health Impacts of Digital Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The advancement of technology has increased the usage of the internet and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Many people face health and psychological issues due to overuse of social media. So, there is a need to promote techniques of a healthy lifestyle for the people, especially the youth. After studying the ill effects of social media and excessive phone usage by the youth, the authors have tried to use heartfulness to reduce the impact of the digital world on their physical and mental health. If we can train our minds properly, we can avoid unwanted thoughts and focus inward. But we have to know the correct techniques to train our minds. The heart plays a very important role so by meditating on the heart one can control their thoughts. It happens only through heartfulness meditation practice. Meditation helps us to improve sleep quality and sound sleep gives us a healthy lifestyle. By regular practice of heartfulness meditation, one can have better awareness and self-control by which the health of an individual remains good.

INTRODUCTION

Digital technology and media have influenced our life to a great extent. The world had come to our fingertips and we handle most of our tasks online through our smart phones and laptops. Whether it is studying, doing research or shopping, everything is being performed online by a number of people worldwide. But a very few of them are aware about the impacts of digital technologies on our mental and physical health.

According to the social media statistics of India in 2022, there are 467 million social media users that is equivalent to nearly 33.4 percent of the total population (Simon Kemp, 2022). Disturbed sleep due to social media use (DSSM) is defined as reduced or disturbed sleep caused due to specific behaviors like checking notifications, incoming messages and updates on the social media. Such behavior leads to poor academic performance among the students. (Katerina et al., 2020). Most of the youth in India use social media on their phones. Though many of them believe that social media helps them in education and can be entertaining at times but at the same time the youth agree that due to more time on social media they are not able to interact with their family and friends. Along with this some more disadvantages of social media are increasing cases of depression and loosing concentration on daily tasks (Abhani, 2019). Too much involvement with the social media leads to bad habits. The youth are more susceptible to cyber bullying which in some cases may lead to suicides or physical and mental disturbance (B.E. George & Noblelyne, 2017). A lot of time on social media leads to social isolation which has become one of the prominent reasons for mental, psychological, physical and emotional problems like depression and anxiety (Danielle Reed, 2017). The over usage of social media is kills time and has negative impact on their studies (Yogesh & Avinash, 2021).

A study published in the Indian Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health 2020 discloses that about 3.5 percent of the Indian adolescents suffer from Internet Gaming Disroder (IGD). Nearly 8% boys and 3% girls suffer from IGD according to this study. The extended screen time is the major reason for this disorder (Vamsi et. al., 2020). The people addicted to computer games spend more time playing games. Some of the games may include violence and completion of targets. The addicts are so obsessed with the game that they give least importance to studies and other daily routines. Addiction to online computer games is another factor that has disturbed lives of many youngsters. With excessive usage of online games, the people get addicted to it that causes many health issues like headache, neck pain, vision problems and mental problems (Avasthy et. al, 2019). There exists a direct relationship between IGD and anxiety, depression and stress among the male students (Sandhiya & Ayesha, 2019).

Besides games and social media online shopping is another reason that compels the youth to use their phones and internet. The people prefer online shopping due to

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