



Gamers Beware

Tom's grades began slipping when his roommate Brian introduced him to a little black box known as a PlayStation 3. Tom was still smart, but he was becoming addicted to the PlayStation. Hours that could have been spent studying were devoted to getting to the next level.

Video game addiction is becoming a real problem worldwide. It causes gamers to avoid family, friends, homework, sports, sleep and, in some extreme cases, food and personal hygiene. Once they start playing the game, time goes by so quickly that they don't realize the effects of gaming on their lives and relationships.

Video game addiction doesn't just affect young people. There are an increasing number of adults that play for four or more hours every day.

Keith Bakker, director of Smith & Jones Consultants, explains "The person [with addictions] is trying to change the way they feel by taking something outside of themselves... For gamers, it's the fantasy world that makes them feel better." Gamers are often those with poor self-esteem, confidence or other social problems. In some cases, gaming becomes a pastime that gets out of control. If gaming has begun to interfere with the

performance of a person you know, it is time to intervene. To assess the extent of the problem, keep a log of how often and how long the gamer plays and see the reaction. If there is a problem, don't start by asking gamers to completely give up gaming. Start small by setting specific time limits.

For example, if gamers play for two hours a day, suggest they cut it down to one hour. Bakker says the toughest part of treating video game addicts is that "it's a little bit more difficult to show somebody they're in trouble. Nobody's ever been put in jail for being under the influence of [a game]."

Don't think of games as evil. If this is his chosen form of entertainment, let him play, but don't let it get out of hand.

If someone you know is addicted to video games, you should understand that there is hope. It is important to show gamers that they are not powerless over their addictions. To overcome video game addiction, be fully aware of how gaming affects social, academic and emotional well-being, as well as a sense of reality. Most importantly, remember it is not a crime to be a gamer, but it is necessary to be prudent.

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You might be addicted if...

- You play for increasing amounts of time.
- You think about gaming during other activities.
- You game to escape from real-life problems, anxiety, or depression.
- You lie to friends and family to conceal gaming.
- You feel irritable when trying to cut down on gaming.

Finding an Anchor When Speaking in Public

In a famous stand-up routine, Jerry Seinfeld joked that the number one fear for the average person is public speaking, and the second biggest fear is death. Seinfeld concluded that at a funeral most people would rather be in the coffin than giving the eulogy.

As funny as it is, Seinfeld speaks of a growing problem which, for some, even becomes a social phobia or a social anxiety disorder.

It is especially hard for Latter-day Saints to get away from public speaking. If it hasn't happened to you already, you will someday get the dreaded phone call from a member of the bishopric asking you to speak in church. You may think the butterflies in your stomach are normal, but they may be a sign of social phobia.

In its most extreme cases, a person with social anxiety disorder will avoid any interaction with the public. The Mayo Clinic has released information listing the symptoms of this disorder:

- Intense fear of being in situations in which you don't know people
- Fear of situations in which you may be judged
- Worrying about embarrassing or humiliating yourself
- Fear that others will notice that you look anxious
- Avoidance of social interaction
- Blushing
- Trembling or shaking
- Upset stomach
- Difficulty talking
- Difficulty making eye contact

There are a couple ways to overcome social anxiety disorder. One way is cognitive behavior therapy. This therapy consists of teaching your body and mind to react appropriately to anxiety. To do this, you need to get rid of negative thoughts so that you can perform everyday tasks. In essence, this is therapeutic positive thinking.

Another method you can use when faced with speaking in public is called anchoring. President Seymour Segnit of Change That's Right Now, a company that has helped hundreds of people overcome phobias, is an advocate of this method. Segnit explains that anchoring "works like this: whenever you are in an intense emotional state your nervous system creates a link between the two." Basically, you are creating a link, or an anchor, between a powerful feeling and a stimulus.

To begin anchoring, find a stimulus such as squeezing your fist or tugging your earlobe. Next, practice tying that stimulus to positive emotions. The first step is to think of a fond memory or imagine yourself at your favorite vacation spot. Recall how you felt during those times, and repeat this until you can recall the desired emotion any time you want by using your stimulus.

According to Segnit, "This technique works like a savings account. The more you put into it, the more useful it becomes."

So why not give it a try? Whether you have an extreme case of social anxiety disorder or you just get a little nervous in front of people, it would not hurt to try so that when you do get that dreaded phone call, you will be able to speak with confidence.

How to Overcome Social Anxiety

- Adjust your attitude. Get rid of any unrealistic expectations of your behavior. Replace negative thoughts with supportive ones.
- Start small, in a logical place, and build from there. Start by saying something simple to a fellow classmate. The next day, speak with the same person, and maybe add another into the conversation. Build from there.
- Speak up. Talk in a louder voice than you are used to doing. Keep good eye contact and a relaxed posture.
- Have something to say. Become knowledgeable about current events or campus news.
- Be a curious listener. Ask open-ended questions (questions that cannot be answered simply by saying yes or no). Take the risk to approach another person who looks shy.

Develop Your Master Mind

Are you tired of the same routine? Do you find yourself in a rut? Bored of the same old scenery day after day? Then maybe it is time to try something new.

Increasing your brainpower can be more fun than you would think. It's time to get out of your daily routine and do something different. Play with your brain, so to speak. Learn a new language, master a new hobby, read challenging books or put together puzzles. These activities stimulate blood flow and strengthen the connections (synapses) between nerve cells in the brain.

According to Layla Merritt, a contributor to Psychology Today Magazine, even simple things like "watching Comedy Central may give your creative thinking a boost."

Turn everyday routines into new experiences by making little changes.



Try changing your driving route home from work or walking the other direction around the block. These are

simple changes, but the novelty will give your brain what it needs to grow.

Brain-enhancing activities

- Brush your teeth using the opposite hand.
- Eat at an ethnic restaurant.
- Rearrange your furniture.
- Plan a trip to a place you have never been.
- Pick up a musical instrument.
- Learn a foreign language.

THYMES AND SEASONS

Keep your family healthy and satisfied with these recipes.



Miracle Fruit?

Cranberries combat cancer, fight heart disease, and reduce the bad cholesterol in your arteries. Recent research shows that the cranberry helps keep your body running smoothly. Here are some things cranberries will do for your health:

- Fight cancer and heart disease
- Decrease risk of bladder infection
- Help prevent cavities and plaque

Putting cranberries into your diet is easy and inexpensive. Cranberries are readily available in juices, desserts or as a fresh snack.

These two simple recipes will help you get started using cranberries in your diet.

Classic Cranberry Nut Bread

2 cups flour
1 cup sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 cup orange juice
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
2 tablespoons shortening
1 egg, well beaten
1 1/2 cups Ocean Spray® Fresh or Frozen Cranberries, coarsely chopped
1/2 cup chopped nuts

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan. Mix together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda in a medium mixing bowl. Stir in orange juice, orange peel, shortening and egg. Mix until well blended. Stir in cranberries

and nuts. Spread evenly in loaf pan. Bake for 55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool on a rack for 15 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely. Wrap and store overnight. Makes 1 loaf.

Cranberry Salad

8 cups baby spinach leaves
1/2 medium red onion, sliced and separated into rings
1 (11 ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
1 1/2 cups sweetened dried cranberries
1 cup honey-roasted sliced almonds
1 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 cup balsamic vinaigrette salad dressing, or to taste

Directions:

Mix all ingredients and enjoy!

Physical Wellness Through Faith

For years religion and faith have been at odds with the medical world. It is a constant battle to which there seems to be no end. Recent studies, however, are showing that spirituality may play a bigger role in the healing processes of the body than the medical community originally thought.

Spiritual practices in and of themselves, according to the University of Maryland Medical Center, improve overall health by improving coping skills, promoting healthy behavior and reducing feelings of depression and anxiety.

Spirituality can be defined in different ways. To some it is a belief in a higher power. To others it is a connection with nature. Whatever the definition, some conditions and illnesses respond well to spiritual practices.

The LDS church has a program that integrates medical strategies and spiritual methods called The Addiction Recovery Program. Sponsored by LDS Family Services, this program uses twelve steps to help people overcome a broad spectrum of addictions. It is patterned after the program used by Alcoholics Anonymous.

Some medical centers are also catching on to this integration of medicine and religion. One such medical center is the California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC). Patients at this facility receive an eight-page form with detailed questions about their beliefs and religious practices. CPMC is also researching the health benefits of faith and have found that “people with religious and spiritual beliefs heal faster and have lower mortality rates.”

According to Lonny J. Brown, Ph.D., “At least six studies [...] have found a relationship between involvement in a religious community and longer survival.”

Several studies have also shown that people with strong religious and spiritual beliefs heal faster from surgery, are less anxious and depressed, have lower blood pressure and cope better with chronic illnesses such as arthritis.

As the line between medicine and faith continues to thin and fade away, rest assured that by practicing a religion you have a better chance of living a healthy life. Your physical wellness is benefitted not only by following the Word of Wisdom, but by practicing your religion entirely and having faith.



Are You Running for or from Life?

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults should engage in “moderate-intensity physical activities for at least 30 minutes [five] or more days a week.”

Certainly there are many workout options. One of the easiest, most inexpensive and most effective workouts is running.

According to Michael W. Smith, M.D., the benefits of running include “cardiovascular health, lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, revved-up metabolism, and a sense of self-esteem.”

Running can burn anywhere from 200 – 1100 calories an hour. The more time you put into it, the more benefits you will notice.

How to Get Started

If you are taking this to heart and have decided that tomorrow you are going to run five miles, congratulations on your optimism, but you may want to start more realistically. Getting started does not mean you have to sign up for a marathon.

The nice thing about running is you can do it anywhere. In the winter, go to the gym, and in the summer, you can run around the block.

Initially, don't try to kill yourself. Run for a minute then walk for two minutes. The next day run for two minutes then walk for two minutes. Pace yourself with a comfortable workout, but continually push yourself.

It is also very helpful to find a friend. The two of you will push each other more than you could push yourself. Running with a friend will also make your experience more pleasant because of the mutual support.

Getting Started

1. Buy the right shoes
2. Make a plan
3. Remember to warm up and cool down
4. Don't hesitate to walk
5. Eat and drink the right foods
6. Stretch

How to Deal with Losing a Loved One

Everyone has lost a friend or family member. Fortunately, the gospel gives the knowledge that loved ones will be reunited someday. However, grief is still a natural process everyone goes through.

This grief may last for months or even years and is natural and healthy. According to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, M.D., the emotions of losing a loved one can include denial, anger, sadness, depression and guilt.

There are several things that you can do

to help progress through the healing process. The first step is accepting that your loss is real. Allow yourself to feel the pain; pushing it aside and not allowing yourself to grieve will not help. Those unresolved emotions could remain with you for years.

The next step is slowly adjusting to an environment without your loved one. Continue with life even though it hurts. Keep pushing along, and it will help you heal more than withdrawing from the world.

Going forward doesn't mean forgetting about the loved one who died; it simply means that your grief has run its course. The pain will diminish with time, and things will get better.

The last stage is moving forward and investing your time and feelings into new relationships, friendships and activities. Don't constantly look back on the pain. Family and friends are there to support you. You have the strength to get through it.

Forgive and Forget for Your Health's Sake

Whether in church or in one of your religion classes, the subject of forgiveness has probably come up. However, your spiritual well-being is not the only thing that stands to benefit from forgiving.

Dr. Charlotte vanOyen Witvliet, a psychology professor at Hope College, performed a recent study of 71 students. Witvliet asked them to think about someone who had wronged them and then asked the students to think about forgiving the individuals. As they did, blood pressure and stress levels decreased. As they recalled how they were wronged, their blood pressures soared, stress levels went up and heart rates increased.

How Forgiving Benefits You

Think about the costs of failing to forgive: retaliation, isolation, revenge and stress. Holding on to these feelings calls for a constant supply of anger, resentment and defensiveness. This wastes much physical and emotional energy that could be directed toward

productive activities. Forgiveness is

not always easy. It is usually easier to nurture resentment and anger than to harvest feelings of forgiveness and sympathy.

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the Seventy states, "Not only our eternal salvation depends upon our willingness and capacity to forgive wrongs committed against us. Our joy and satisfaction in this life, and our true freedom, depend upon our doing so."

An unforgiving attitude is both spiritually and physically draining. When you use all your energy to foster anger, it can have a wearing effect on your immune system. This will lead to a susceptibility to sickness that otherwise could have been fought off if your immune system had been working with full power.

Forgiving is like a strenuous physical workout. This effort has a positive effect on the body. Not only does forgiving erase pain, it also decreases blood pressure and stress levels. For both your spiritual and physical well-being, exercise your forgiving muscles and feel better.

Formula to REACH Forgiveness

- R** – Recall the hurt objectively without blame and without self-victimization.
- E** – Empathize by imagining the viewpoint of the person who wronged you.
- A** – Altruism. Think of a time you were forgiven and how good it felt.
- C** – Commit to forgiveness.
- H** – Hold on to forgiveness.

Are You Making the Most of FHE?

Over 93 years ago President Joseph F. Smith made the promise that if saints held Family Home Evening "love at home and obedience to parents [would] increase." Faith would be developed and "the youth [would] gain power to combat the evil influences and temptations which beset them." If there were a need for such a blessing 93 years ago, how much more need is there today! So why do Latter-day Saints often take lightly the counsel to have Family Home Evening?

A Perilous Time

There is no doubt that life is very busy. Many are going to school full time or working full time, or in many cases both. Because of these responsibilities, together with the complications of daily life and the chaos often found in it, a break is needed from the world. Satan is working harder now than ever, making FHE that much more important. President Gordon B. Hinckley tells of his childhood experiences with FHE:

"In 1915 President Joseph F. Smith asked the people of the Church to have family home evening. My father said

we would do so, that we would warm up the parlor where Mother's grand piano stood and do what the President of the Church had asked.

"We sang together. We prayed together. We listened quietly while Mother read Bible and Book of Mormon stories. Father told us stories out of his memory.

Out of those simple little meetings, held in

the parlor of our old home, came something indescribable and wonderful. Our love for our parents was strengthened. Our love for brothers and sisters was enhanced. Our love for the Lord was increased. An appreciation for simple goodness grew in our hearts. These wonderful things came about because our parents followed the counsel of the President of the Church."



Valuable Promised Blessings

No one can afford to miss the promised blessings of FHE that President Hinckley described. It doesn't have to be an extravagant get-together, it can be simple; it just needs to happen, remembering that what is done is not as important as consistently doing something.

Ideas for FHE

- Get out the family photo album.
- Research your family history.
- Tell stories around a campfire.
- Go get ice cream and walk around the temple grounds.
- Bake cookies or bread.

Control Your Body Language

According to most communication experts, more than 90 percent of what people say is unspoken. It's time to learn how to use body language to your advantage.

Patti Wood, author of "Success Signals," suggests that body language is everything from facial features, to eye contact, gestures, stance and posture.

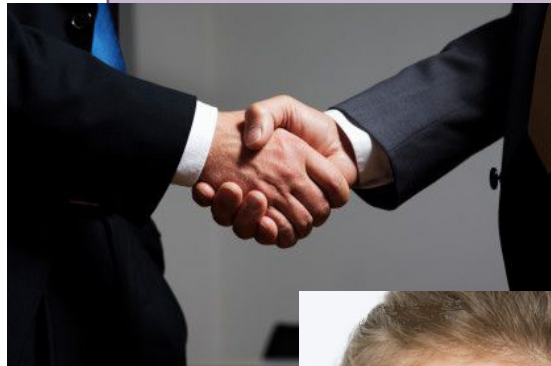
Although not a perfect science, knowing how to read body language can improve your own image as well as your understanding of others.

At your next job interview, be conscious that you are being critiqued more on the way you shake your interviewer's hand than by the actual interview itself. A good handshake is firm (not bone-crushing), lasts about three seconds, and is accompanied by eye contact.

You can know if a girl is really interested in you by her nonverbal clues. Jo-Ellan Dimitrius, Ph.D., wrote in her book "Reading People" that signs of romantic interest can include an exaggerated smile, laughter, staring, making eye contact, winking or entering your personal space.

Most importantly, know that you can improve how you present yourself by simply being aware of your own nonverbal communication. Confident people, according to Dr. Dimitrius, have good hygiene, give firm handshakes, make good eye contact, dress conservatively and appropriately for the occasion and are physical and athletic.

Pay attention to the way you interact with others, and remember that you are saying something even without opening your mouth.



Quick Facts

Handshakes

A person can read your fear level, shyness, personality type, and confidence all by the way you shake their hand.

Posture

Posture is a sign of dominance or submissiveness.

Eye contact

Genuine eye contact emulates honesty and directness.

Playing with your hair

When a girl tucks her hair behind her ear, it can be an expression of flirting.

Did you know . . .

Over 90% of your communication is non verbal.



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