



Do you also suffer from "iDisorder"? The dark side of the digital

If you come to my practice with typical signs that your physical health and psychological well-being are impaired by mobile phone use, I advise you to largely refrain from its use. Why?

The radiation of GSM, UMTS, LTE and WLAN frequencies, which your digital devices use for mobile communication, leads to oxidative cell stress, a reduction of cellular energy and damage to mitochondria, our cellular power plants [1]. The review "Biological and Pathological Effects of Radiation from 2.45 GHz on Cells, Fertility, Brain, and Behavior" [2] cites more than 100 "studies on damage to fertility, effects on EEG and brain function, DNA and cancer development, effects on heart, liver, thyroid, gene expression, cell cycle, cell membrane, bacteria, and plants. The cell-damaging effects also have negative effects on learning, memory, attention and behavior. Risks that many are not even aware of.

iDisorder

This term is used to describe a disorder caused by the use of digital media "in which elements of many psychiatric disorders are combined" [3]. It is characterized by addictive behaviors, compulsive behaviors and attention disorders (e.g.: Do you have to look at your cell phone all the time, so you don't miss anything?), anxiety (e.g.: If you forgot your cell phone somewhere or - really bad - lost it), disinhibition in virtual communication and loss of empathy (e.g.: It's much easier to write a remark below the belt than to say it to someone in a face-to-face conversation). The compulsion of an always positive self-presentation in social media leads to permanent stress (e.g.: Which photo of me do I post tonight so that I get as many "likes" as possible?). Do you also panic as soon as your cell phone battery is empty and you can't find a recharging option far and wide?

Social factors

When I tell my patients to limit their use of digital media, they raise the following objections: they feel they "no longer belong", they think they can no longer "have a say," or they even believe they can't get along without it because everything from their phone number to various access PINs is stored on their cell phones. And often they say: "I have nothing to hide.

However, you have to realize that every use of your mobile phone number, all your Google clicks and every Facebook entry is stored to create a personal and movement profile, a "digital twin" of your person, which forms the basis for personalized advertising, consumer orientation and political control. What appears to you as "so common, convenient, uncomplicated and fast" and is therefore accepted uncritically by many, is in reality a mechanism that is- controlled by algorithms and artificial intelligence - supposed to relieve you of thinking and making decisions for yourself. Do you think that you can orient yourself comfortably, safely and reliably in an increasingly complex and chaotic world and receive an objective description of reality? For example, by using a fitness tracker, a health app, or educational software that assesses your progress in some skill?

But who set the standards on which the evaluation is based? Can you be sure that the devices are not manipulated from the outside? And what if your health insurance contribution suddenly increases because your data obtained from

cashless payments at the supermarket reveal that you are a smoker and regularly buy alcohol?

Digital surveillance is sold to you as a kind of "digital guardian angel" [4] who - supposedly for your own good - makes sure that you do exactly what certain institutions want.

Political and industrial institutions want to know what you communicate and consume, when, where and with whom, in order to control and manipulate you. It's like Chinese social credit system: if you don't behave in accordance with the government, you can no longer study, travel, open a bank account, etc. "Those who don't behave die a social death" [1]. Those who do what is expected do not stand out and then have nothing to fear. Those who are "obedient in advance" can even gain plus points by doing so. Those who do not conform deserve punishment by themselves or by others. This is why denunciation is also cultivated. The fatal thing: many deliver their data voluntarily and thereby do the work of the controllers "You are the lab rat that provides the data with the help of which you are manipulated" [6].

What can you do?

- Stop sharing digital data and support the companies that make it possible. Protect your privacy and the privacy of your loved ones by maintaining digital anonymity. That way, you can continue to act spontaneously and without bias.
- Automated voice on a company's "service phone" that only asks for data from you? As a human being, don't let yourself be reduced to data and look for another service provider in the relevant industry who still has personal contacts.
- Take every opportunity to fill out forms in analog form (with a pen). Anything in digital form can be hacked, shared and sold. Make yourself as independent as possible from a technology that - you are not told - is very harmful to the environment and prone to failure.
- Create your own solutions when the given ones do not fit for you. Keep the chance to make mistakes and learn from your mistakes. Nobody knows better than you what is "right".
- Inform yourself further about the topic. There are several books [7].

My personal tip: Talk to people, whenever possible, face-to-face **in the real world**.

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