

**"Closer Together: Further Apart" –The Effect of Digital Technology on Addiction, Psychotherapy and our Daily Lives**

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The Ranch, TN  
 The Sexual Recovery Institute, CA  
 Promises, Malibu  
 Promises Austin  
 The Sexual Recovery Institute- CA  
 The Ranch - TN, USA  
 The Right Step - TX  
 Lucida - FL  
 The Recovery Place - FL  
 Sundance, AZ  
 Journey's, UT  
 COPAC, MS  
 Clarity Way, PA

**Note The Escalating Speed of Technological Change**

- Radio took 38 years to reach 50 million US homes
- Television - took 13 years to reach 50 million US homes
- Internet - took 4 years to reach 50 million US homes
- Social Networking - took 16 months to reach 50 million
- Smart Phone apps - took 9 months to reach 50 million

**Whatever is yet to come is now here before we even know it.**

**For example, consider the lowly QR Code**



**So, how many of these obsolescent 20th century devices have hauled with you into the 21st?**

- Paper Money
- Pen's, Pencils
- Door Keys
- VCR's, VHS Tapes and Betamax
- Paper Maps and Map Books
- Transistor Radios
- Film Developers
- Books
- 8mm, 16mm, 35 mm film
- Records (LP's and 45's)
- Calculators
- Watches and
- Alarm Clocks
- CD's and DVD's
- CV Radio
- Pen and Paper
- Hand Held Make-Up Mirrors
- Broadcast Media (TV, Radio)
- Newspapers and Newsstands
- Magazines
- Paper checks
- XXX Theaters
- Bookstores
- ATM's or Credit
- Cards
- Flashlights
- Encyclopedias / Dictionaries
- Typewriters, Ribbon
- Paper Records, Bills, Checks
- Pen Pals
- Fax Machines
- Street Prostitution
- Land-line Telephones
- Pick-up Bars
- Sony Walkmans, cassettes tapes
- 8-Track Players and tapes
- Televisions and CRT monitors
- Photographs
- Scrapbooks
- Postboxes
- Post Offices
- Libraries (in current form)

**While the functions of nearly all of those ANALOG WORLD devices are still desired, we no longer need the devices themselves, as most have been replaced by this single one...**



map, phonebook, music player, film player, book, notebook, radio  
 address book, compass  
 blood pressure monitor,  
 calendar, photo album,  
 friend/community finder,  
 Scrabble board, advertisement,  
 camera (video + still), store,  
 credit card, airline ticket, coins,  
 cash, cash register, gaming  
 platform, ATM, dictionary,  
 flashlight, bank, clock, travel  
 agent, newspaper, magazine +

So we are grieving these profound cultural changes right? We can't not be. And what best determines how you are adjusting to the grief process?

**YOUR AGE!**

So where are you in your Analog to Digital world grief process?

Denial and Isolation  
 Anger  
 Bargaining  
 Depression  
 Acceptance  
 or somewhere going back and forth ...

**New Worlds, Shifting Concepts**

In one example today, infidelity can no longer be defined in physical terms. I think of it more globally as *the keeping of secrets in an intimate relationship.*

And today, what you consider to be a relationship, depends mostly on - you got it!  
**How old you are ...**

**Surprise! We are right in the middle of a New Generation Gap**

<u>The Old Gap</u>	<u>The New Gap</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Mores</li> <li>• Rock &amp; Roll</li> <li>• Television and Telephones</li> <li>• Recreational Drug Use</li> <li>• Liberalism (Gender, Social &amp; Racial equality)</li> <li>• Children seen &amp; not heard</li> <li>• Personal Privacy</li> </ul> <p><b>"We Won't Listen to you!"</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Mores</li> <li>• Video Games</li> <li>• Digital Immigrants vs. Digital Natives</li> <li>• Rude Interpersonal Communication</li> <li>• Fantasy = Real Life</li> <li>• Ongoing immediate interconnectivity</li> <li>• Neural Development</li> <li>• Personal Privacy</li> </ul> <p><b>"We Can't See or Hear You!"</b></p>

If helping clients means "being able to enter their world," then being under informed, dismissive or judgmental regarding digital media means not fully understanding the world of our clients. Today this most often involves the world of younger people and parents ... but not for long.

**Understanding Tech and the Addictions**

**The Escalation of Addictive Behavior has been, and always will be driven by ...**

**Technological Advance**

**Why does technological advance evoke behavioral escalation (in the addictions)?**

1. *Increasing access xyz means decreasing inhibitors to impulsivity*
2. The human brain hungers for any new stimulation that leads to rapid fire Dopamine release (pleasure).
3. Increasing accessibility thru phones and pads means more ubiquitous and 'private' technical interactions
4. Those with preexisting social/emotional deficits no longer need to evolve a social skill set in order function (meaning learn, work, shop, have sex, date and build community.)
5. Many 'illegal street issues'- drug sales, prostitution, anonymous sex etc. are no longer on the street, **they're online.**

**Think how technology has escalated our ability to more readily obtain:**

**Intensely Refined Substances (20th century):**

- High caloric foods and snacks
- Distilled alcohol
- Cocaine, highly refined marijuana, prescription drugs

**And Intensely Refined Experiences (via 21st century digital media)**

- Gambling and Gaming
- Shopping
- Sexual content and experiences

**Why Addiction?**

While majority of us may take pleasure in these more immediate, more intense and more accessible pleasurable substances and experiences, the vulnerable among us end-up addicted. They abuse these same activities to escape, self-soothe, distract and dissociate from stressors (both internal and external)

All addictions involve the maladaptive abuse of intense anticipatory fantasy to induce neurochemical release and leading to addicts literally getting stuck in their heads

The Neurochemistry of Mood

- Serotonin - mood stability
- Dopamine - pleasure
- Adrenaline - energy, jolt
- Endorphins - calm
- Oxytocin - love/jealousy

**ADDICTS CALL THIS STATE...**

- Being in The Bubble
- Being in the Trance
- Feeling Spaced Out
- Feeling Out of Control
- Powerless (12-step)
  
- Clinicians think things like ...
- Dissociative State
- Self Regulation
- Self Soothing
- Affect Management

**Has it occurred to you, that the digital/ social media world is a unique and separate world and culture from our lives, IRL**

One example: What you say to someone in person and how you say it, is most often not the best way to say that same information:

- On a phone call or in public
- In an e-mail (so old school!)
- In a text
- On Instagram, twitter, tumbler, linked-in and facebook
- In video gaming platforms like WoW
- In virtual worlds like 2nd life
- Inside a romance/sex app
- When sexting -and oh yeah, how about Jennifer Lawrence and THOSE pictures?

**And how educated are you re: the clinical management of Child and Teen related tech issues like:**

- 65% of tech savvy kids have an online account unknown to family - double life
- Cyberbullying -did you know that there are about 6 differing forms or more?
- Porn and access to sexual content (by age and gender).
- Gaming - How much is too much? Who is gaming with your kid etc.
- Selfies and sexting (holding and sharing of sexual images)?
- What is ok for kids to send/share/receive by age?
- What environments are safe/unsafe online for kids?
- What is "sex" to a young adult today?
- What is dating/mating/a relationship to a teen?
- The difference between online content filters vs. online content and site blockers vs. phone/pad/computer trackers?
- Do you know when to apply and suggest any of the above Along with where to use with what age person and why?

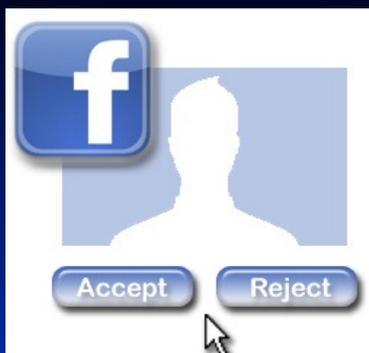
So how prepared are you today to clinically manage adult-life related tech issues like:

- (Self) Boundaries related to stress, 24/7 email and texts, “work never ends”
- (Time/interactive) Tech Boundaries with kids, family, spouses
- (Sex) Infidelity, affairs, app based hook-ups, webcam sex, porn
- (Ego) Boundaries related to tech = sense of self
- (Connection) Finding ways to connect and through tech
- (Disconnection) Finding ways and reasons to disconnect from tech
- (Parenting) Understanding what kids are doing online, what is acceptable today in their world, what is not (age related).
- (Workplace) Note that 4 different generations now populate the workplace simultaneously!

Waaaaaa! I’m an unhappy clinician now :(Why Can’t We Just Put a Plug In It? I liked the way things were ...

As we learned with Prohibition in the US, there is no turning back upon new technology or it’s effects. We can only observe with engaged interest **not judgment**, while noting and dealing with related problems as they arise

But hey- Today We Have Virtual Friends and Virtual Communities ...



And today (like it or not), we now have Immediate 24/7, geolocated unlimited access to sex (free or paid), via the now familiar device below:



- Porn
- Prostitution
- Webcam sex
- Sexting
- Escorts and “Sensual Massage” with directions, phone #, hours, prices, a map etc.
- Hook-up Apps
- Sex Worker-Locator Apps (think UBER)

Below are the most popular app-based, Geo- Locating "friend finders" or hook-up apps for casual sex-today.

- **Grinder - Gay Men / Qrusher Girls- Lesbian Women**
- **Tinder - Single straight people under 35**
- **Ashley Madison- Married people**

(And an every widening number of apps for specific fetishes and arousal templates (BDSM, Foot Fetish, Role Play etc.)



### So How Can Clinicians Stay Current?

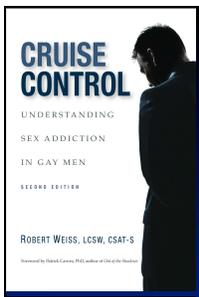
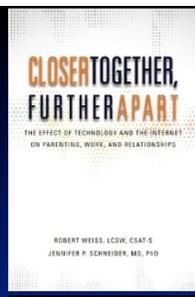
By getting as involved in modern technology and social media as you can- take 4 hours 2 Sundays a month- hire a college student to guide you.

By learning how to negotiate and understand the world of our young people and highly tech savvy adults.

By understanding these issues as they present - not how they are slanted by the media or our social peers

**Then we can best help our clients to:**

- Raise healthy, safe families
- Set and negotiate useful tech-related boundaries
- Separate the issues from the tech
- Offer insight based on experience, not judgement or fear

	<p>A comprehensive guide for anyone struggling with the devastating effects of pornography, cybersex, family, career, health, and self respect</p> <p><b>Untangling the Web</b></p> <p>SEX, PORN, AND FANTASY OBSESSION IN THE INTERNET AGE</p> <p>Robert Weiss LCSW, CA Jennifer Schneider MD, PhD</p>	
<p>Written in 2005, fully revised 2013 For Gay Male Sex Addicts and their Therapists</p>	<p>Written in 2007 On Cybersex Addictions. Always Turned On- coming out Jan 2015</p>	<p>Written 2013 What therapists and our clients need to know about tech in 2014</p>

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