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Modern Health Problems and Solutions

In these modern times, living out among society can often be a tough thing to endure. Being a part of the stressful modern lifestyle that is continuously changing, it is not surprising to find that many people seem to buckle under the stresses they are enduring and their health declines. This stress-related health decline seems to show that many people are sick because they are part of the system, or, in other words, the world in which they are immersed and all its problems. What should we do to cure or even prevent some of these health problems? For every illness related to our daily stresses, such as the side effects related to television addiction and overexposure to sexual content in the media at a young age, there are multiple solutions that can be applied.

In the United States, obesity caused by excessive sedentary activities such as watching television or playing video games is a very widespread problem. Some researchers have even labeled this propensity to sit for hours in front of the screen as a television addiction, which they say is a huge contributor to obesity. In her article "Television Addiction", Marie Winn explains how people are dependent on the television, and what the side effects of this addiction can be after a long time. Even though it may seem to be a minor problem compared with others, addiction to television and the resulting obesity that springs from hours of sedentary activity are two of the major pandemics in the US.

The addictive tendency for people to spend hours in front of the TV every day can be a difficult cycle to break. According to Nielsen Media Research, an American poll company that specializes in the measurement of television and radio audiences, the average time an American spends in front of the television is four hours and thirty-five minutes per day. My sister's two sons, five years old each, with the excuse that they must watch each daily episode of their favorite cartoon, watch more than four hours of television per day. I've been trying to make them do something else other than watching television, but it seems to be an impossible mission. Most television programs are created only to mindlessly entertain people in front of the screen. As if this were not enough, commercials then come on, filling our brains with meaningless information. All this being designed to attract audiences and hold their attention, of course, people become addicted to and enjoy this sort of entertainment. Day by day, they get trapped in this cycle that is not ended very easily. This immobilizing activity leads to weight gain and a high percentage of these habitual viewers become obese. There is a solution to this problem, which seems to be so hard to solve. What did people used to do about a hundred years ago? Television, cable, and access to thousands of channels are all inventions of the last century, and only seem to increase in popularity all the time.

One must remember, though, that before it was invented, people used to spend their free time in a different way. The solution is this "different way." The solution is finding alternatives to watching television. Hanging out with friends and or going camping is a possible way to avoid the television, or even drawing something or reading a book. In short, forcing oneself to spend time in an efficient and productive way and resisting the urge to stare at the screen passively the whole day are the best ways to cure an addiction to watching television. This problem can be fixed by just getting off the couch. One of my oldest friends Silvio, used to be television-

addicted. When he was 14, Silvio began to suffer from depression caused by problems in his family. He would stay home for days watching television and sleeping. Because of all the time he spent at home doing nothing other than watching television, he started to gain more and more weight every day. After only six months, he was diagnosed with diabetes related to his obesity. His mother and I decided to help him, making him leave his house and take a walk for with us for an hour every day of the week. Even though he is still overweight, he doesn't watch as much television as he used to watch, and his condition is getting better day by day.

Also related to our exposure to media are the problems caused by commercials and TV comedies full of sexual content and their influence on the younger generation. Because of the ramifications of the media's influence, children are continuously being bombarded by wrong ideas about sex. Because of its harmful effects, this overexposure could be considered a health problem. The continual stream of unhealthy messages is affecting the new generation by giving it wrong ideas about what sex really means. Young girls who get pregnant at the young age of sixteen, fathers who are less than twenty years old, and young men that rape girls to satisfy their own wrong ideas about sex and love are all indirect consequences of these unhealthy messages put out in society. At the age of sixteen, people shouldn't even be thinking about sex because they are not mature enough to understand the importance and responsibility involved in such an act. Sixteen should an age where they have to do some stupid things to understand exactly when they fit in the world but one of these stupid things doesn't have to be sex. Sex is not just about a sexy pair of red underwear or a beer that makes a man think he will seem more macho than he is. However, when the commercial break starts on television, there will always be someone who is telling you that sex is directly related to the product they are selling.

One TV commercial has the tagline, “You’ll be irresistible with the new fresh flavor of Axe.” The screen then shows a guy standing in between two girls who are flirting aggressively with him and smiling seductively into the camera. Another commercial titled “Kiss and Make Up,” promoting Blue Light beer, also has a very blunt sexual message. The commercial begins by showing two girls next to each other in a club or bar. One girl begins to apply lipstick, which prompts the other to reveal that she loves that particular color of lipstick very much. The first girl asks her if she would like some of it and they begin to share a very steamy kiss while three young guys, each with a beer in their hand, watch excitedly. The bar scene ends and the message “Less limits is more fun ... Less is more” appears followed by a snippet of the three guys and the two girls dancing together.

Sex shouldn’t be something used to sell a product to those too young to understand it. Unfortunately, that’s what society gives to us: a great deal of unfairness. To avoid this obstacle, mature adults must explain to their children what really matters, and, last but not least, those things that should not be important at their young age.

What can be gathered from this research is that in these days, it is difficult to dodge all of the problems that may come. Health problems are the order of the day and what can really be done is to cure the root of problem or, ideally, prevent it entirely. Addiction to television could be easily fought by finding an alternative activity that is not completely sedentary or by having social interaction with other people. And to avoid cultivating a new generation of kids who have wrong and brutal ideas about sex, the solution is to explain to them what really matters before they harm themselves and others.

Works Cited

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