

# 21ST CENTURY ADDICTIONS

By Raelene Byrne

To me addiction is a compulsive behaviour, something that disempowers you and enslaves you into its energy. Whether it's something we take, drink, or do, the addiction compels us to give away our power, our choices and some of our will and it becomes our crutch, our lifeline, the one thing we 'can't live without'.

Addictions are plaguing our modern world and there is a lot of research on the topic and new treatments are being brought to our attention.

However my mind looks at the socially acceptable addictions, the ones that have enslaved us in an insidious cycle of dependency and control.

The universal addiction to technology and to instant gratification, that desire to have what you want right now, is affecting everyone and all levels of life.

Most of us, myself included, are prisoners to our mobile phones. They dictate much of our lives. The mobile phone wakes us, tells us what meetings we have, reminds us of important dates, and brings people from all over the world into our space and consciousness in an instant.

We seem to be answering to the sound of these devices more than we do the inner voice of our hearts.

The number of times I have been with people, and again I say I am guilty of this, where we could be enjoying some social occasion and someone's phone goes off, or you see people constantly checking phones for messages.

The times of connecting with people

that are in the same physical space, having dinner, coffee, even a walk along the beach is disrupted by a device that delivers people not in the same physical space into the moment. Yet, we allow those people to have importance and presence while the physical person who has created time to be with us is left waiting for us to be present with them.

Most of us, myself included, have our phones on us all the time...even when in movies we find it hard to turn the phone off....this is addictive behaviour, where we have given away our power to devices and contraptions that rule our every moment with a tight rein. We are unable to have 'conversations' that aren't interrupted.

Technology is connecting us to the whole world, making us global, yet, as we plug in to the bigger world, we are plugged out from those around us.

How often have I heard of people who say their kids' text each other and they are in the same house? The more we expand through technology, the more we cut off from the people in our real world.

And with this technological advancement has come another addiction, that of 'instant gratification'. We see it, we want it and we get it....credit cards have given us the ability to have everything we want in a moment.

Years ago you left home at 18, lived in a flat with about three sticks of furniture, not much else, but you relished your freedom.

These days, parents are finding it difficult to get kids of 25 plus to leave home.



These young adults can't afford it, yet they have every piece of technology to play with. The instant gratification is evident everywhere, it is purely a lack of patience. Take a few moments each day to observe what is happening and you will see it everywhere. 'I want it and I want it NOW' seems to be the mantra of the times.

Life has changed due to technology and its wonders have gifted our evolution and I know it will not stop, however we have to acknowledge that we have become dependent and that our personal power and space has been compromised.

Yes I concede, technology is a part of our lives and will be as we evolve, however can we honour the wonders of all that it brings to us, allow the amazing connections and be in awe of how clever we are, yet can we also choose to switch off from time to time.

Are we able to attend a gathering of friends and leave our phone in the car, for a few hours, can we attend a movie and know we can be totally immersed in the wonders of the story. The call of simplicity is upon us to be in the moment, and rediscover the wonders of life.

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