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'Selfitis'

New Generation Addictive Disorder

'Selfitis' is a recently introduced mental disorder in which people feel compelled to continually post pictures of themselves on social media. This term was first coined in 2014 to describe obsessive selfie-taking in a spoof news story which suggested the American Psychiatric Association considering it as a disorder. Recently the term "selfitis" also made it into the oxford dictionary of English. The researchers at Nottingham Trent University and Thiagarajar School of Management in India decided to investigate whether there was any truth in the phenomenon. They have now confirmed that 'selfitis' does indeed exist and have developed a 'Selfitis Behaviour Scale' which can be used to assess its severity.

The team developed 20 statements which could be used to determine the severity of 'selfitis' by rating how much an individual

agreed with the sentiment. Examples include "I feel more popular when I post my selfies on social media" or "When I don't take selfies, I feel detached from my peer group." The scale, which has score from one to hundred was developed using a large number of focus groups with 200 participants to determine what factors drove selfitis. This scale was tested using a survey of 400 participants. Participants were based in India because our country has the most users on Facebook, as well as the highest number of deaths as a result of trying to take selfies in dangerous locations. The findings, published in the International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction confirmed that there are three levels of selfitis.

Levels of selfitis

According to APA there are three levels of Selfitis. Border line Selfitis: Taking selfies at least three times a day, but not posting them on

social media. b. Acute selfitis: Taking selfies at least three times a day and sharing them all on social media.

c. Chronic Selfitis: It is defined as an uncontrollable urge to take one's own pictures round the clock and posting them on social media platforms more than six times a day.

Typical 'Selfitis' sufferers are attention seekers, often lack self confidence and are seeking to 'fit in' with those around them. They will be hoping to boost their social standing and feel part of a group by constantly posting selfies and may display symptoms similar to other potentially addictive behaviours. Research suggests that people take selfies to improve their mood, draw attention to themselves, increase their self confidence and connect with their environment. The excess of self photography may lead Psychological disorders such as Narcissism, Psychopathy and Depression.

Now the existence of the condition have been confirmed, it is hoped that further research will be carried out to understand more about how and why people develop this potentially obsessive behaviour, and what can be done to help people who are the most affected.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has given the green light to Bayer Pharmaceuticals for the marketing of the first drug i.e. Anti-selfie pills to cure selfitis, an inflammation of the ego in this condition. There will be three colour coded pills based on three levels of selfitis: Blue pill for acute selfitis; Red pill for chronic selfitis and Green pill for boarder line selfitis. The FDA approval came after successful Phase III clinical trials which showed the new pill's overwhelming safety and efficacy rate of plus or minus 3% in combating

Selfitis. Because selfitis has become a highly contagious worldwide epidemic, the FDA granted Bayer a fast track approval process. FDA drug approval takes anywhere from 10 to 15 years, but it took just 14 months for Bayer to get the marketing green light. The new drug comes in pill form and requires an authentic prescription. Dosage is different for men and women. Men need to take only one pill a day while women need 5 pills. Neither Bayer nor the FDA had any explanation on the dosage discrepancy.

New Stanford study recommends custom bread toaster to cure selfitis. This new cure is in the form of a "selfie toaster" which imprints personalized selfie photos on bread slices. The kitchen appliance is manufactured and distributed by Vermont Novelty Toaster Corporation. The Stanford researchers studied 500 individuals suffering from chronic selfitis and provided them with customized selfie toasters. After six months of tracking the study participants, researchers found that 75% were cured of selfitis and have totally stopped taking selfies. The researchers concluded that the daily routine of "consuming one's self" for breakfast creates a subconscious resolve to keep the ego in check.

Selfitis Behaviour Scale

Read the statements below and for each one give yourself a rating of 1 to 5, where 5 is strongly agree, and 1 is strongly disagree.

The scores are as follows:

0-33 Borderline

34-67 Acute

68-100 Chronic

1. Taking selfies gives me a good feeling to better enjoy my environment

2. Sharing my selfies creates healthy competition with my friends and colleagues
3. I gain enormous attention by sharing my selfies on social media
4. I am able to reduce my stress level by taking selfies
5. I feel confident when I take a selfie
6. I gain more acceptance among my peer group when I take selfies and share them on social media
7. I am able to express myself more in my environment through selfies
8. Taking different selfie poses helps increase my social status
9. I feel more popular when I post my selfies on social media
10. Taking more selfies improves my mood and makes me feel happy
11. I become more positive about myself when I take selfies
12. I become a strong member of my peer group through selfie postings
13. Taking selfies provides better memories about the occasion and the experience
14. I post frequent selfies to get more 'likes' and comments on social media
15. By posting selfies, I expect my friends to appraise me
16. Taking selfies instantly modifies my mood
17. I take more selfies and look at them privately to increase my confidence
18. When I don't take selfies, I feel detached from my peer group
19. I take selfies as trophies for future memories

20. I use photo editing tools to enhance my selfie to look better than others

Reference

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