

ask Dr Roshan Jain

Your *mental and emotional health* questions answered

Q My 20-yr-old son took an overdose of sleeping tablets following a break up with his girlfriend. He had been irritable for a few days and slept very late. He was hospitalised for treatment and has recovered well. However, he was not seen by a psychiatrist when he was admitted and I am not sure why. What do you suggest?

We see many young individuals who get very attached to each other and upon separation experience a strong sense of rejection. This is followed by low mood, negativity about life and some engaging in self-harm or suicidal act, either impulsively or after contemplation and planning of the act to end life. It's the latter one we worry about clinically, as risk of repetition is higher.

Suicidal behaviour is usually associated with mental health and psychological problems. Studies have noted prevalence of mental health problems being higher in the young (age 10-24 years) with one in two individuals suffering from mental illnesses.

Compared to general population, the risk of completed suicide after the initial self-harm episode is highest within the first six months, and there is over 20-fold increase in further five years. It is therefore important that all individuals who engage in self-harm or suicidal acts must be referred to a psychiatrist for suicidal risk assessment and counselling.

You should talk to him openly as a friend and offer unconditional support. I suggest he consult a psychiatrist for a formal evaluation of any ongoing mental health issues and suicidal thoughts/risks. Perhaps he just needs supportive counselling to help him adjust with his relationship issues.

Q My husband is always occupied with his smartphone/computer. He is always checking updates on Facebook and many other social network sites repeatedly and even late at night. It is affecting his work and our relationship. Kindly advise.



Your husband is one of the many individuals caught up in the virtual world, accessing a wide range of unnecessary information and getting connected to people around the world except those around him! Technology, as much as it has connected us, is also disconnecting us more than ever.

Perhaps social media is contributing to an ever-increasing isolated existence and poorer development of personality including social skills and coping resources. The ensuing results are for one to guess: development of psychological problems, including anxiety, depression, and maladaptive

use of drug and alcohol. Overall, the benefits of social media may be matching its disadvantages.

Here is some advice for him and us all:

- ◆ Use smartphone and computer for intended purposes only and track usage time online
- ◆ Choose use of social media on either phone or computer, not both
- ◆ Cut down membership of the number of social network sites and substitute available time with sports and health activities
- ◆ Choose real person interaction over virtual connections, and spend quality time with spouse/partner

Consider consulting a specialist in addictive disorder, if the seemingly compulsive behaviour continues, especially for evaluation of underlying unattended emotional or psychological issue.

I remember an update on Facebook, which said "I used to have a life, now I have Facebook!" I think we all need to get our lives back, reconnect with our surroundings and live mindfully, not mindlessly.

Our doctors will answer all queries on emotional and mental health. Got mind trouble of your own? Drop us a mail at bpositiveQA@apollolife.com
Or write to

B Positive magazine,
Lifetime Wellness Rx International Ltd,
5th Floor, Life Science Building,
Apollo Health City, Jubilee Hills,
Hyderabad-500033

Dr Roshan Jain,
Senior Consultant Psychiatrist &
De-addiction Specialist,
Apollo Hospitals, Bangalore.