

# Why The Addiction To Reading Is Best Left Untreated!

Dr Roshan Jain

“A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. The man who never reads lives only one” - George R. R Martin



**A**ddiction to books and reading comes in handy and is best left untreated! Because as George Martin goes on to say, “sleep is good, but books are better.” Indeed, no one ever lived their lives while sleeping. You dream it, but have to wake up to live it. Also, it is a strong belief that your day can start wonderfully well if you read an inspirational book for just 15 minutes each morning. Equally, you can enjoy better sleep, if you go to bed with a good book rather than an electronic device!

## The Original Virtual Reality Experience

In fact, a book is the original virtual reality experience and good readers

often report becoming so connected and immersed in the narrative, they find it difficult to put it down. When you read your brain does not make a real distinction between reading about an experience and actually living it, as the same neurological region is activated.

## Create A World In Your Own Mind

So when you read books, it allows you to create a world in your own mind, even if you didn't mean to. Also, studies have demonstrated improved ability to identify objects and bring images to awareness if you have read visually describing sentences. Equally, your imagination of a plot and character is usually better than the one presented

by another, like when a novel is turned into a movie.

## Choose To Live Many Lives

Books are portable magic! Pick one up and you are transported to another realm, where imagination is let loose, and where simple black and white print exposes you to many shades of grey and other colours. So, while you might only have one life, you can choose to live many, if you start reading. Books are transformative as they enhance self-awareness and better understanding of our world and the lives of others. Hence, here are some advantages books and reading has on the human psyche.



## The Effects Of Reading On Your Psyche

### Reading To The Mind Is What Exercise Is To The Body

It exercises your brain leading to better memory and concentration span. Studies have demonstrated that it slows the development of the forgetting illness such a dementia. In simple words 'use it or lose it.'

### Helps Expand Your Horizon

Books are the medium for acquiring knowledge and expand our horizon. They help us to create an engaging vocabulary base and are our permanent assets. According to Ralph Waldo Emerson, "A man is known by the books he reads."

### Improves Analytical Skills, Attention And Focus

Reading improves analytical skills over and above any other activity like watching a movie. While reading, one gives more time and consideration to imagination, reviews the plot, character and story, thereby enabling better ability to opine. An immersed reader is experiencing the story.

There is remarkable improvement in the

Pick up a book and you are transported to another realm, where imagination is let loose and where simple black and white print exposes you to many shades of grey and other colours

attention span and focus. In this techno crazed world, attention is widely divided with repeated distractions from gadgets, media and activities. It seems we are getting disconnected and it's taking a toll on the quality of life and experience. If you read, you get immersed and the world around you evaporates.

### Acts As A Stress Buster

Books are potent tools for stress reduction. It can either transport you to other realms or bring you back into the present moment, which is the

need of the hour! Being here and now can take you away from everywhere unnecessary and for this, you need to pick out a good book or any other good reading material.

### Promotes Tranquillity

Readers are tranquil people. You become what you choose. Depending on the kind of books you choose, you select a state of relaxation, inner peace, spiritual awareness and enhanced self-help skills.

### A Companion On The Go

Books are the best portable companions with entertainment and intellectual stimulation in one package. It takes away the modern day ailment of 'boredom.' An intellectual is never bored as he is always looking for opportunities to find time to do things - reading being one of them. Books give you the choice to be happy anytime, anywhere, even when waiting in a long queue.

### Enhances Empathy

Deep listening and deep reading is somewhat similar. It make you more empathic. These habits must be cultivated. They occur when the mind is quiet and thoughts are flowing, rather than crowded with judgments, assumptions, or conclusions. They make you open and curious and interested, as though you were hearing this person or living the experience for the first time.

While deep listening enables you to feel and live the emotion of the person, deep reading does the same, feeling what the character in a story feels. Doing either is known to physically change your brain and enable you to let go of the emotional and mental chatter found in the real world.

**Dr Roshan Jain**

Sr Consultant Psychiatrist  
And De-Addiction Specialist,  
Apollo Hospitals Bangalore