CURSING THE MOBILE PHONES

Description

The scene would at once look amusing as well as alarming when Iâ??m on my daily commute to my office. The folks on the busy road: the cyclists, the motorists, college going teens, owner driven cars, cabbies, city bus drivers, young ones waiting in bus stops, housewives on shopping jaunts, leisurely pacing grandmaâ??s and grandpaâ??s â??hordes from all walks of life I see through my car window present one common posture: the right hand raised, head tilted slightly to one side, the palm intimately cupped over the ear, somewhere in-between in the private darkness the ubiquitous Smartphone is glued â?? literally- day-in and day-out.

All of them, frantically speaking into their phones, as if dealing with an extreme emergency -they shout, they argue, they threaten, they warn, they smile, they go into trance, they kiss, they whisper, they cry, they are stunned, they ask, they admonish, they divorce, they pray: all done and finished with the handheld device â?? the smartphone. I never imagined that our technology is creative enough to pack so many good benefits and equally addictive elements in such a small instrument. Positioning it firmly for many years to come, the mobile has a potential to become a universal best friend; for 99% of the population all over the world it has become ubiquitous, embracing everyone, irrespective of age, gender, and economic status, and career.

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When I say it is alarming, let me illustrate what I witnessed on a busy roadway one day:

I noticed one gentleman passing by me on an old model rickety scooter. The scooter, as well as the man striding, has a weird swing riding forward. My initial guess was, perhaps, he was drunk, but on closer look, I noticed he was madly shouting and hysterically arguing into his mobile phone; one hand guiding the scooter and the other, slapped to his ears. Now the scooter has taken a zigzag run and next moment as I have anticipated, he fell on the road at its edge; he on one side and scooter a little away from him. In that instance what I caught hold of and what I felt, was both alarming besides amusing. Luckily, there is no traffic behind and saved as he was not hit by any other vehicle. But that fellow sat on the road unbothered and continued his arguments and shouting into his phone, not even trying to dust himself or check his scooter now lying belly up. He further waved his free hand to me indicating â??donâ??t bother about meâ??.

Annoyingly, the menace of mobile phones is intruding into every minute of our relationships and lives and we, the adults arenâ??t an exception to this rampant technological pathogen. It is truly offending to meet for a dinner, and finding two of my buddies ignoring me and good food before them: checking the messages or typing short messages or a pleasant conversation interrupted by a call and I have to wait until the call is concluded. Over an hour into our dinner my friends have spent more intimate time with their phones than with the fifty five â?? year old living soul â?? me! Carrying Smartphones around has thrown up a new culture that the communication and connecting habits among people are now in virtual reality and on blue glowing screens.

â??Password for the WIFI, please broâ?•, the moment the young adults enter a classy coffee shop, would be their first request before ordering their cappuccinos. Later we find them slump in the chairs

their faces focused on the glowing screens of their phones. No loud chattering, no giggling, no clowning around, no wide grins. Only one fixed mugshot: just shrink the entire face into one tasteless shape â?? their noses stuck in their phones.

The relationship/friendship between two persons subliminally matures with steps like laughing together, talking together, physical nearness, expressions of feelings, a dash of affection, a bag of gifts: one should feel free to be what he or she by nature is. Human affairs and its evolution into a lovably dependable interaction is an exclusive accomplishment of two individuals coming together, working out together, and investing time together: Intimate relations would never flourishingly grow up well, sitting among technology ridden environs, mobile phone-based interactions, e-mail exchanges, Facebook profiles, snapchat pics.

â??One of the sweetest things in life is the courtship phase of a relationship, in which we get to know all the weird and wonderful things about eachother and begin to feel the growing bond. Technology, mobile phones are ruining our relationships, friendships, our family bonds and making us miss out on these joyful moments of togethernessâ?• (Huff post-Canada).

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I think no one would be surprised even briefly when I quote that teenagers are spending more time on their phones than they are spending in face to face interactions with their real friends or parents. It wouldnâ??t sound excess when I say that mobile phones, the social media sites, the freely available digital content are overwhelmingly dominating the ideas, the behavior,and attitudes: playing a disturbing role in their emotional states.

As parents, teachers,and educators we arenâ??t rightly â??digitally literateâ?? to understand them as we find our youngsters who are quick to adapt to the latest technological concepts but also savvy enough to enter the colleges with latest mobiles phones in their hands. They are now growing in a world where the multiple TV channels, multimedia games are the nurturing and guiding experiences of their childhood and prematurely metamorphize into â??all knowing adultsâ?? bypassing the formative adolescence and teenage realities. But innocently deficient: of patience, grit, tolerance, agility what our parents and our grandfathers had experienced and psychologically amassed when they were enjoying their teenage timelines.

Noticing some of strangest habits among the mobile phone generation no longer shock me: like they canâ??t sleep securely without their mobile phone within their quick reach. They constantly check their screens if they have a wi-fi signal or the battery charge. If the mobile is not with them for a couple of minutes they in a flash knock the panic button and all hell would break loose. To be in constant touch with their friends and checking the messages and texting is the dominant activity spending more time than what they would spend sleeping. Consumed by mobile phone mania most teens by default choose the multiple social networks platforms to create their own identity and to retain a standing among their peer group.

Now the social scientists have given a label to this angst â?? nomophobia â?? a short form of â??NO MOBILE PHONE PHOBIAâ?•. The health researchers describe it as an intense fear of being without a mobile phone, or beyond mobile phone contact. And among the mobile phone generation, this fear is alarmingly on the rise. Having a cell phone leads to spending all the time talking, chatting and texting, and waiting for the likes and responses and any trivial delay in receiving the responses would push them to stress, fatigue and increased anxiety which keep them away from any productive work.â??Textietyâ?• is a new term for this looming mental angst: feeling anxiety on not receiving or

sending messages.

One of the dreaded fallout of crazy fixation on mobile phones is while driving. Teens in their eagerness to respond to calls and messages are careless enough without realizing that it can lead to major accidents or sometimes even cost their lives. Distracted driving has proven a major cause of traffic crashes and leading causes of death in teens.

Teens are free to draw their conclusions that mobiles phones and social media is making them happy, stay connected; and less lonely: let it be. But parents and responsible adults shouldnâ??t shy away from offering them some good advice: how to discipline their mobile phone usage and social media addiction. A few practical suggestions and some training will set up around them some safety measures: Turning off the cell phone while driving is one rule they have to faithfully adhere to. Switching off the cell phone before going to sleep is one practice that helps in good sleeping schedules. Restraining the impulse to reply to a text or urge to text frequently can reduce anxiety bursts. Remove social media apps, like Facebook, twitter, snapchat from Smartphone, and only check in them from Laptops is one implementable precautionary alternative. Adjusting every day 30 minutes of cell phone free time at set intervals of a day and replace that time with healthier activities can be a best tip for them.

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The aftermath of the continual assault of mobile phone mania and intrusion of social media into all domains of relationships and personal lives is what is left of a generation growing devoid of personal interaction and inferior social and soft skills. Just like maturing as a good singer is never automatic and that requires regular practice. So do social skills. Most of the job interviews and later the professional dynamics mostly involve face to face interactions. Luck favors and ensures a favorable job to those who realize soon enough that successful career is not about short messages or emojis but the real-life expertise of vocal and personalized expressions: that would invite progress and prosperity into our orbit. Shrewdly, if our teens learn, the sooner the better, to retreat from the mobile phones mania and internet addiction, I believe, would assuredly increase their chances to reach this highpoint of fame and happiness.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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