



ASK AMANDA JAYNE

MENTAL HEALTH

I would love to hear from you and will reply to letters which, if we print them, will remain anonymous. Your details will be treated confidentially. Email me at harleysttherapy@gmail.com or ring me on 07760 669246. Take a look at my website at www.harleystpsychotherapy.com

It's strange to think that when we were kids we had no internet. We had no mobile phone, tablet or iPad.

If we wanted to know something, we went to the library, or looked in an encyclopedia or asked people.

If we wanted to speak to someone, we wrote a letter or walked to the phone box, or used the home telephone. There was no web or Google! How on earth did we manage?

Although there are problems for any generation, life for us was simpler. We were not exposed to the relentless pressure of social media, or the sometimes horrifying content of the internet.

Young people today cannot begin to imagine what that must have been like. They ask how we communicated, played games, did research, spelled and took photographs?

As technology took over, the way of communicating changed. The younger generation communicate via 'the net', on social media, YouTube, email, mobile phone. More young people do not read books, but gain their information from videos and online forums. They don't meet up so much face-to-face, but online are constantly in touch with one another.

The scary reality is that increasing numbers of people are becoming addicted to this way of communicating.

There are lots of studies being undertaken. One by the Pew Research Centre, measured one of the brain's neurotransmitters, GABA, which interrupts and slows the neurons of the brain, and too much phone usage can spike levels of GABA.

Another recent report states that the blue light from mobile phones can damage sensitive cells in the retina which cause changes resembling macular degeneration, which in turn can lead to permanent vision loss.

Dr Paul McLaren, consultant psychiatrist at the Propry's Hayes Grove Hospital in Kent says:



Halfpoint/Stock / Getty Images Plus

As we get older, will our use of mobiles return to haunt us?

Everywhere you look these days, people are on their mobile phones, tablets and iPhones. Psychotherapist and counsellor Amanda Jayne explores what could be a major problem in today's technological world.

"Anything we do that rapidly produces a positive feeling has the potential to be addictive."

He adds: "People do not get addicted to phones, but they may get addicted to apps or behaviours which make it easy to access, such as gambling, shopping, social media."

Signs of addiction may be: becoming irritable if the internet is blocked; lying about how often you use your device; getting angry if you cannot use your phone; fatigue and insomnia; irritability; poor concentration;

strained relationships as a result of excessive use; having withdrawal symptoms such as anxiety, if you cannot use your device; a constant need to check social media and respond.

We can expect more proof of the impact on our health from the use of mobiles. Just as smoking was once fashionable and nobody knew the real impact on our health until much later, we can expect the same to be the case for mobile phones.

You only have to Google it to find out!