

1. INTERVIEWER BACKGROUND: Studies, professional-life experience

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Psychologist - Psychotherapist - Educator and Counselor

After a first degree in Education and Training Sciences, I completed a three-year master's degree in Individual and Group Counseling. During this training period, I discovered my passion for psychology, so I took a master's degree in Clinical Psychology and later a specialization in Gestalt Psychotherapy. In the meantime, I earned several masters, including one in Ericksonian Hypnosis and another in Specific Learning Disorders. I devote most of my time to clinical work within my private practice.

2. ADULT LEARNING CHALLENGES: What are the challenges that are faced by the professionals and caregivers in the fight of screen addiction phenomena?

There are many challenges that professionals are facing, but the basis to start is definitely being able to create a dialogue between teachers, parents, teens and the Psychologist-Psychotherapist who eventually enter in contact with the patient. Collaboration and teamwork are necessary conditions for the intervention on the boy with addiction to have a positive outcome. It would be unthinkable for a helping relationship professional to be able to help the patient without the collaboration of the entire system in which the young person is embedded. Each person is embedded within multiple systems (family system, school system, etc.) and often, the individual's "illness" is only the external manifestation of a dysfunctional system, which is precisely why the greatest challenge involves the intervention succeeding in involving the system in which the young person is embedded. To do this it is required extensive information and awareness-raising work at multiple levels, starting with schools and families. Train and inform adults about the digital world, the positive and the negative implications it brings. In the majority of cases, adults do not know their children's virtual world, what apps they use, what sites they visit or who they interact with on the web. They do not imagine that digital devices can conceal so many dangers and above all, many are unaware that prolonged exposure to these devices, can create a real addiction. That is why information, in these cases, is vital. But then, should we ban young people from using digital devices? The answer is NO!

This is where further challenges arise, as in the age we are living in, it is necessary to recognize that smartphones, tablets, PCs and various consoles, are part of our lives. The real core of the issue lies in educating young and old in their proper and healthy use. Many professionals agree that in the early years of a child's life it is necessary to avoid the use of smartphones and other devices. As the child grows, he or she will get closer to such devices, but exposure times should be very limited and, in any case, it is not recommended to give one away before the age of ten. It is important to establish firm rules of use regarding the times, places, and circumstances under which such devices can be used. They should also never be used by parents with secondary purposes, such as using the smartphone to calm the child, as this will prevent him from learning to express emotions in a healthy way, or to make him eat, as this would prevent the child from establishing a good and conscious relationship with food. In addition, it is essential to avoid solitary and passive use, especially before the age of 10. It is important that there is

always a guide to supervise what the child watches and does, so that he or she can intervene and explain, so that it still becomes an educational moment. These are just a few examples, of course, the issue should be dealt with in a broader and more detailed manner.

3. COMPETENCES EXPECTED IN RELEVANT ENTERPRISES: What are the relevant competencies expected for professionals that work with children of being at high risk of screen addiction?

- 1) First, to set a good example because adults primarily educate by their own behavior that is imitated by younger people. Bandura said that personality is formed, in large part, by modeling.
- 2) Know the topic of screen addiction and what the possible risks are.
- 3) Recognize that it is a true form of pathological addiction and not just a pastime.
- 4) Know how to identify the warning signs in children/youth behaviors, such as aggressive reactions when the device they are using is taken away from them, or poor socialization with peers, low school performance, poor commitment to homework, etc.
- 5) Recognize the psychological levers used by tech companies, i.e., why these tools are so persuasive to the human mind.
- 6) Know how to offer viable alternatives, to encourage children to use time in healthier and more constructive ways.
- 7) Explaining to them it is good to use technology for good purposes.
- 8) Helping children recognize and manage their emotions, especially the anger and frustration that arise at the very moment they are prohibited from using the devices in question.

4. ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: Do you know any relevant educational material, methodology or pedagogical interventions for preventing and detecting screen addiction? Can you please describe them?

Please see the tests of Gavoni.

5. CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL CONTRIBUTION AND POSITIVE OUTCOMES: What are the appropriate conditions for successful contributions and positive outcomes of implementing such interventions in the working or everyday environment?

The basic condition from which to start is information and training on these issues. They should involve the child/youth, the family and the school. To create, around the young person, an informed and knowledgeable environment that does not judge but is supportive in order to overcome a condition of extreme difficulty.

6.IMPACT OF CONTRIBUTORY APPROACHES:What is the impact of such approaches?

The impact of these contributions can definitely help the person directly affected to feel better, through a more conscious use of technologies and through a healthy expression and management of their emotions.

In addition, it will have an impact on the whole family system that will find a new balance given by situational awareness and not being left alone in managing such a complicated situation, this will improve the quality of life of all members.

7. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES: Do you have any further innovative interventions that you may know or want to suggest for being implemented in your working or everyday conditions?

I do not know of any innovative methods in this sense, but I do know of one method that has been returning excellent results forever and in all forms of addiction or distress, in general. I am talking about psychotherapy; it is based on the human relationship. It is the relationship that arises between therapist and patient that heals. The purpose of psychotherapy is to promote change such that certain forms of emotional suffering are permanently alleviated. Specifically, I specialize in Gestalt Psychotherapy, a post-analytic psychotherapeutic method that integrates body, experiential, depth, group and family models into a unique synthesis. It originated in the United States in the 1950s, thanks to the insights of German psychoanalyst Frederick Perls, his wife Laura Posner and a group of U.S. intellectuals, including Paul Goodman and Isadore From.

All experience can only take place at the boundary of contact between "a human animal organism" and its environment. And it is precisely what takes place at this boundary that is available to our observation and therapeutic intervention. According to Gestalt psychotherapy, what heals is not the rational understanding and thus control of the disorder, but rather the feeling of recognition in the intentionality of contact toward the significant other. This approach brings aesthetic values, respect for individual creativity, and recognition of the beauty inherent in human relatedness into the realm of the clinic and the person/society relationship. The art of Gestalt psychotherapy includes improvisation, creativity, and poetry as the essential word arising from the body. Gestalt psychotherapy applies to the individual, couple, family, group, and organizations. For Gestalt Psychotherapy, any disorder or pathology is a creative act of our mind in response to a situation of suffering. Precisely because of this, the symptom is received as a "message" that comes when the person is very ill. From this perspective, we can look at addiction just as a symptom and then use it to help the person "heal" from his or her inner suffering.