Indications for the Misuse of Internet:

- Feelings of happiness accompanied by guilt when online.

- Unsuccessfully trying to quit or limit internet usage.

- Being unable to keep track of time while online.

- Neglecting family/friends and responsibilities in order to maximise internet use.

- Lying to friends/family about the duration of internet use.

- Feeling anxious, uneasy and frustrated when the internet use is limited.

- The inclination to use the internet more when under increased stress and anxiety.

- Emergence of problems (such as lack of sleep, tiredness, body aches, weight gain/loss, becoming indebted) due to the activities performed via internet (chatting, online shopping, gaming, porn) and the amount of time spent online.

- Thinking about the internet when not using it.

If internet use has started affecting you or someone else you know, and this behaviour has turned into an unhealthy behaviour, you can get help. EMU-PDRAM can support you to take control of your behaviour regarding internet use.

Eastern Mediterranean University
Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research
Centre
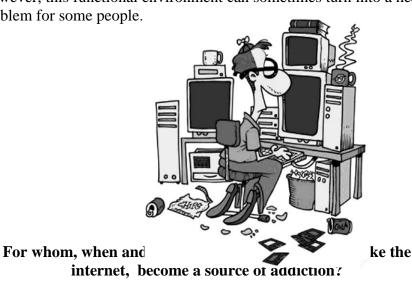**(EMU-PDRAM)**

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Healthy Internet Use

Healthy Internet Use:

With its vast and continuously updated sources of information, communication channels and opportunities for entertainment, the internet has become an important part of our lives. We are communicating, having fun, learning and studying via the internet. However, this functional environment can sometimes turn into a health problem for some people.

For whom, when and ke the **internet, become a source of addiction?**

Risk Factors which lead university students to misuse the internet and possibly cause internet addiction:

- A large amount of unsupervised/uncontrolled free time

- Free/cheap/unlimited internet access.

- Avoidance of problems related to studies, interpersonal relationships (family/teacher/friend), money issues, stress, anxiety etc.

- Lack of social skills, loneliness, İdentity crisis

- Alcohol consumption, drug abuse and smoking.

The passage below, told by a university student, gives us an idea of how misuse of the internet can affect one's life.

"My biggest wish was to become an engineer. I succeeded in getting into the department I wanted and started my education. Because my university was away from my home I was staying in university accomodation. My family had bought me a laptop so that it would help me in my studies. In my free time, I was playing online games, communicating with friends and surfing on the web just for fun. I had a very nice circle of friends and a girlfriend. My studies were also going fine. I don't understand how things turned upside-down so quickly. I kept spending more and more of my time playing online games. After sleeping for a few hours at night, I continuously went back to my laptop wondering whatever had happened in my online games while I was asleep. I started skipping classes, neglecting my girlfriend, friends and my self-care. My friends started complaining that I had been spending a lot of time on online games. So I began hiding the time I was playing. During the rare occasions when I was unable to play, I felt unhappy, anxious and angry /frustrated. My studies were not going well anymore and I failed because of lack of attendance. I couldn't tell my family that I had failed. My girlfriend broke up with me and my friends turned away from me. As my unhappiness and stress increased, I played more and more games on the net. Right now I am unable to stop playing. My health isn't good either. I will have to drop out of school if it things go on like this. My family has figured out that some things are not going well in my life."

When do I need to get help?