Week 11 Lab:

Technology and Stress

Read the following questions to see how much technology is impacting your stress levels.   
**Bold** the statements that relate to you.

* I could not guess how many times I check social media in a day.
* I find it stressful to go a long time (like a class period) without checking my social media.
* I could not guess how much time I spend playing video games in a week.
* I worry about what other people will think or say about me if I go a long time without posting on my social media accounts.
* I have missed out on in-person experiences with my friends and family because I was on my phone (texting, scrolling through social media etc.)
* I have been late for appointments with my friends or family because I was distracted by my phone or computer.
* I have been late for school assignments because I procrastinated online.
* **I have thought that I heard or felt a notification from my phone that wasn’t really there.**
* **I have told myself I’ll go to sleep after watching one more video.**
* **I have told myself I’ll go to sleep after I get one more thing in a video game (win another game, level up, unlock a new loot box etc.)**
* I have gotten up in the middle of the night to check my phone.
* When I wake up, I immediately check my phone notifications (other than to turn off my alarm or check the time)
* **I often play games or browse online when others think I am asleep.**
* I keep track of how many followers I have on social media.
* I pay attention to how many comments, likes, and/or views that I receive on my posts.
* I often compare my life to other people based on what I see on social media.
* I have deleted a post because it didn’t get enough likes or views.
* I have checked what other people are posting about an event (party, sports event, concert etc.) during that event.
* I have missed out on enjoying things because I was busy documenting them (taking pictures, recording a concert, posting/tweeting about it, etc.)

**Reflection Questions**

Please answer the following questions using full sentences.

1. Do you think you’re addicted to an electronic device? (Phone, TV, video game console, laptop, etc.)   
   If yes, which device(s) take up most of your time?

As someone who is always on their computer, I do not believe so. I say this because I am active and the reasons that I am on devices are usually productive. I absolutely used to be addicted to my computer and social media back in high school, but growing up, leaving most social media’s inactive, I would not say I am addicted anymore. I use my desktop most of the time. My phone is used only when I need to use it as I find it is not nearly as comfortable of an experience.

1. Choose a device, preferably the one you spend the most time on.  
     
   **My desktop**
   1. What is the primary benefit that you get out of using it? (Specific to your life or situation)  
        
      Other than my livelihood, I benefit from my desktop by being able to quickly access most of my interests through it. I can quickly go from drawing, to coding, to watching a video, to talking with my friends, to playing a game very quickly. I’m quite good at many of the activities I can do with a computer, and so my desktop also tends to bring me a sense of accomplishment through completing activities well.
   2. What is one way it has a negative effect on you? (Specific to your life or situation)  
        
      I find that I lose track of how much strain I am putting on my eyes. My eyes tend to be very dry at the end of each day, likely from how seldom I blink while focusing on some task. Although I am not currently, I am susceptible to a computer addiction as well. If life goes poorly to the point of which I cannot keep myself mentally balanced, I may find myself letting go of responsibilities and getting sucked into gaming for all hours of the day and night again.
   3. Describe one way that this device could help to reduce your stress.

Letting myself relax with a show or a game can help reduce my stress. Sometimes, I just need something else other than some type of work to cut through my built up stress from the day. I have quite a comfortable setup, nice monitor, performant specifications, custom built keyboard, closed back headphones to help silence outside noises and boost the volume of music, games, or content. I find myself immerse into what I am doing due to the way I have set up my desktop and the surrounding environment.

1. Think of a typical week day, such as a random Monday.  
   1. Do you think you could spend the day without using your electronic devices (phone, laptop, TV, computer, video game console etc.)? Why or why not?

If we take work and school out of the occasion, absolutely I believe I can. I enjoy hikes, running, and working out in general. I would probably go outside either with friends or by myself on some sort of adventure. In the winter, I would probably go snowboarding or bundle up and go on a walk in a forest somewhere. In the less cold season, I would go biking, running, or, again, walk in a forest.

* 1. What are some stressors you would experience from having the device around?

Work calls out of the blue stress me out, especially when I am busy. Or when so many people keep typing to me, whether it is work related, school related, friends, or all at once. Notification pings can only get so frequent before I start question my sanity. My stress levels definitely increase as I find I have to answer each and every one of them.

* 1. What ways could your stress be lowered without having the device around?

Without my desktop, I might not have felt as confident about taking on as many responsibilities as I have at my job. This would translate into less work to do overall and less notifications. I also wouldn’t have taken on school which has significantly decreased the number of hours to myself. My stress due to how much free time I would have.

* 1. Do you think your electronic devices causes you more stress than it does to relieve it? Why or why not?

No, I think it relieves more stress than it causes. Considering my age, 24, and my stage in my career, my current ability to use a computer effectively is extremely valuable to me. If I was not able to use my desktop or phone, when necessary, I would feel like I am moving at a snail’s pace. The tools that I have access to and my ability to use them rests my impatient need to get tasks done. So, because I am economically worth more while using a computer to give myself the best chance of digging myself out of the financial disaster Canada is in and because I am able to get what I want done in a quick manner, I believe it reduces my stress more.