

AFFLUENZA: WHEN TOO MUCH IS NOT ENOUGH!

*We could have had it all...
Rolling in the deep ...Adele*

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Affluenza is the combination of the words **affluence** and **influenza** and has been defined as a contagious and socially transmitted condition of overconsumption
- ❖ It is not a mental disorder but an attitude of a society that will overload itself with debt while wanting to consume more
- ❖ Affluenza also refers to the inability to understand the consequences of one's actions because of being financially privileged such as trust fund babies
- ❖ Affluenza was recently used in the defense of Ethan Couch, a 16 year old privileged drunk driver, who killed four people and injured another 11; he was given probation
- ❖ As a legal defense, affluenza has been used to excuse the wealthy from crimes committed because of living a life of little responsibility and accountability; consequently they are unequipped and unable to control their actions
- ❖ Affluenza can also be the societal placing of a high value on money, possessions, physical appearance, and fame with the attitude that too much is never enough
- ❖ Some theorists believe that affluenza leads to excess materialism, overconsumption, "luxury fever", consumer debt, overwork, waste and personal alienation and distress
- ❖ Paul Comstock coined the term affluenza which can be characterized by:
 - ❖ a distorted view of money and its importance
 - ❖ a false sense of entitlement
 - ❖ a lack of self-discipline
 - ❖ a lack of motivation
 - ❖ an inability to delay gratification or tolerate frustration
 - ❖ guilt and depression
 - ❖ low self esteem
 - ❖ feelings of incompetence
 - ❖ workaholism to constantly earn enough to spend
- ❖ Affluenza is promoted by advertisers and others who condition us to want more to feel happy, secure, accepted, successful, and valuable
- ❖ Those who buy into the advertisers' messages often work long hours in jobs they dislike to have enough money to buy products they don't need or want and then don't have enough time for family or personal development
- ❖ Affluenza has sometimes been referred to as Sudden-Wealth Syndrome where people have made or inherited large amounts of money and have a lack of guilt or motivation

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Change your attitude from materialism to what is truly important in life
- ❖ Live more simply and save money; ask yourself if you really need the purchase
- ❖ Avoid malls and online shopping; don't spend impulsively
- ❖ Consciously live within your means and do not try to "keep up with the Jones"
- ❖ Criticize commercials and advertising media so as not to feel inadequate
- ❖ Plan your luxuries and enjoy them when you can afford them
- ❖ Volunteer for community service to help those less fortunate than you
- ❖ Exercise and don't escape into alcohol or drug abuse to numb your feelings
- ❖ See professional help to assist you in eliminating affluenza

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [**DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com**](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

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