

## ARE YOU ADDICTED TO THE NEWS?

*We got the bubble headed bleached blonde comes on at five,  
She can tell you 'bout the plane crash with a gleam in her eye.  
Its interesting when people die. Give us dirty laundry...The late Don Henley*

### WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ With the increase in channels/sources, addiction to the news has become widespread
- ❖ News channels are much different from the past where emphasis was on objective, unbiased reporting; today news reporting is for entertainment, to support other network shows, to promote advertising, and to increase anxiety so that you will tune in for more
- ❖ Research has shown that watching too much news coverage of traumatic events can lead to feelings of isolation, depression, and stress
- ❖ People who constantly follow the news tend to be less engaged in real life and more engaged in events that do not affect them or will pass quickly with time
- ❖ Some people believe that news is to the mind as sugar is to the body; it is taken in small quantities, it does not reach saturation, it is digested easily and quickly, it does not require thinking, it usually does not affect our lives and it creates a craving for more
- ❖ News becomes addictive when
  - it starts to take over control of your life
  - you feel an emptiness when you don't know what is going on
  - when watching the news becomes more important than enjoying your life
  - when you feel a craving to know what is going on
  - when news reporting affects your judgment
  - when too much news makes you feel depressed
  - when you don't want to watch the news but just have to
- ❖ News addiction is a form of distraction where you learn to think that what is reported is important but in reality you are becoming disengaged from the activities around you
- ❖ News channels tend to promote what and who they think are important but are really not
- ❖ News stories tend to distort reality; they only report snippets or small pieces of news that may be wrong and are designed to make you come back for more
- ❖ In the search for entertainment, news channels often report sensational and adversarial events to get you to watch their stations
- ❖ News reports are everywhere and easy to get; on our televisions, computers, cell phones, magazines, and other electronic devices
- ❖ News shows often contain panels of experts to make sure you get their views, even though they are often wrong, rather than encourage you to develop your own thoughts

### WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Limit your news input and schedule a specific amount of time each day to get your news
- ❖ Consider whether the news is really that important to you; does it really affect your life?
- ❖ Become aware of your mood and thoughts after watching a news program
- ❖ Try a "news fast" or going cold turkey to remove yourself from all sources of news input
- ❖ Spend time with friends, exercise, engage in a hobby, increase your support system
- ❖ Remove yourself from social media that bombards you with news stories
- ❖ Occupy your news time with reading, playing a game, watching a movie, or walking
- ❖ Seek professional help if you have difficulty giving up the news, feel an emptiness, or find your moods affected by watching the news

### WE CAN HELP!

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

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