

# Preface

Dear practitioners, scientists, and students,

We are very happy that the book “Internet addiction: Neuroscientific approaches and therapeutical interventions” is finally available to you. Current developments in the DSM-V underline the importance and the need for a scientific book on this newly emerging disorder, as the term “Internet Gaming Disorder” now appears among the emerging measures and models in Section III. It has been included in this section with the aim of better understanding the nature of Internet addiction and potentially including it as a distinct disorder in the next update of DSM.

To precisely describe and characterize Internet addiction (and the related term “Internet Gaming Disorder”), strong research efforts have been invested around the globe. In this book, we give you an extensive overview of Internet addiction by leading researchers in the field. It is fantastic that such a large number of scientists doing the most important work on Internet addiction have agreed to write reviews on their research approach. We are very grateful for this support.

We are sure that the present book will not only be an excellent guide to Internet addiction for scientists and therapists working in this field, but to all individuals interested in this new topic, or even patients affected by this emerging disorder. Clearly, the topic of Internet addiction is of special relevance around the globe in this increasingly connected online world.

Of note, the book is written for students, practitioners, and researchers alike, as a wide range of different approaches to the understanding of Internet addiction—ranging from molecular genetics to brain imaging—are represented in this book. Each chapter gives a short introduction to these methods, as applied to the better understanding of Internet addiction. If you require greater detail on the neuroscientific techniques such as structural MRI or molecular genetics, we refer you to the core text, “Neuroeconomics” of the series “Studies in Neuroscience, Psychology and Behavioral Economics” in which this book is also published. This core text contains an extended appendix with individual chapters on a large number of neuroscientific methods. In addition to a very good overview on Internet

addiction and neuroscientific approaches in the second section of this book, a large part of this book (the third section) gives interesting and valuable insights into the treatment of Internet addiction. Experiences from both psychopharmacology and psychological counseling are presented. The latter is also considered from a cross-cultural perspective (Germany and South Korea). Finally, insights from a governmental stance aimed at tackling this newly emerging disorder are also given. We hope that this more practical section will be of special help to counselors all over the world in treating this potential new disorder.

We thank all authors for their contribution. Without their valuable time spent on this project, this book would not have been possible. Every single contributor is a well-known researcher/practitioner in the field of Internet addiction. We are very happy that they have all agreed to participate and to contribute without hesitation. Last but not least, we thank Éilish Duke for her fantastic support in improving the language of the present book.

A last note: We are aware of the controversial discussion in scientific circles on how to name problematic Internet use. Neither it is clear if problematic Internet use actually reflects an addiction nor is Internet addiction an official diagnosis in DSM-V and ICD 10. However, taking into account early studies on this topic but also the fact that the term Internet addiction still is often used and appears as quite “handy” in everyday communication of this topic, we decided to use it for this book.

Let us know if something of relevance is missing from this book. This will help us to update the book in an eventual second edition.

Best wishes

Christian Montag  
Martin Reuter

Internet Addiction

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