

# Have We Taken the Whole 'Disorder' Thing Too Far?

There's a new disorder out there and it's known as PIU: Problematic Internet Use.

You think I jest? Honestly, I thought it was a joke too when I first heard of it, but no, it "exists." A [recent study](#) on PIU describes the disorder as:

*"[A] behavioral addiction with characteristics similar to substance use disorders, and young adults have especially high risks of behavioral addictions. PIU is defined as 'use of the Internet that creates psychological, social, school, and/or work difficulties in a person's life'. ...*

*PIU can significantly impair daily life functioning. PIU has been linked with negative mental health consequences such as depression, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), hostility, social phobia, problematic alcohol use, self-injurious behavior, and sleep difficulties, including insomnia, snoring, sleep apnea, nightmares and difficulty staying awake during the daytime. In addition, PIU has been associated with the following academic problems: absences, poor grades, and academic dismissal."*

Wondering if you have PIU? Here's a handy checklist to diagnose yourself:

- Ever been saddened by the happy, idyllic Facebook status updates of your friends? That's PIU depression.
- Having trouble focusing on reading something longer than a few paragraphs? That's a sure sign of PIU ADHD.
- Getting angry with a family member for continually talking to you while you're focusing on your iPad? That's PIU-induced hostility.

- Staying up far past your bedtime because you were binge watching movies on Netflix? That's self-injurious behavior brought on by PIU.

Before I get ripped to shreds by those who say that there are certain disorders which are genuine and not a laughing matter, let me state that I agree.

That said, have we taken the whole disorder thing too far? Is it time to start realizing that many of these "defects" are really character flaws for which we have no one or nothing to blame except our own selves?

The famed philosopher [Aristotle](#) would have said yes. He may have even labeled a person with PIU as a "profligate," someone who lets his desires rule his decisions, even when those desires often cause him pain.

Instead of being profligate, Aristotle encouraged people toward temperance. A temperate man, Aristotle said:

*"[T]akes no pleasure in those things that the profligate most delights in ... but those things which, being pleasant, at the same time conduce to health and good condition, he will desire moderately and in the right manner, and other pleasant things also, provided they are not injurious, or incompatible with what is noble, or beyond his means...."*

Perhaps we would see less PIU if more of us would consciously seek to practice the temperance or moderation that Aristotle preached.