

Online shopping addiction is a mental illness

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The advent of the Internet has brought with it the convenience of shopping at our leisure in the comfort of our own home. However, for many, the allure of shopping for bargains and treats can turn into an addiction. Experts

believe there is a danger that online shopping can develop into a mental illness. Researchers from the Hannover Medical School in Germany have termed it "Buying Shopping Disorder" (BSD). The researchers say this condition should be recognized by the medical profession as an illness and should not simply be classed as one of various "impulse control" disorders. Psychotherapist Dr Astrid Müller said: "It really is time to...accumulate further knowledge about BSD on the Internet."

Dr Müller and her colleagues conducted research on data from earlier studies on compulsive shopping. Their research focused on 122 patients who sought treatment for BSD. Dr Müller reported that about five per cent of the population may be suffering from BSD. She added that younger people are more prone to developing it and experienced greater levels of anxiety and depression. People with BSD readily exhibit negative behaviors. These include spending excessive amounts of money on things they don't need, hoarding and never using things they order, buying things for the sake of instant gratification, and ending up in debt. BSD can destroy marriages, relationships and mental health.

Sources: mirror.co.uk / medicaldaily.com / yahoo.com

Writing

Online shopping is better than shopping in malls. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

Internet / shopping / bargain / treat / addiction / mental illness / medical / disorders / colleagues / patients / population / anxiety / depression / gratification / marriages

True / False

- The Internet has made shopping at home more uncomfortable. T / F
- Experts say that online shopping addiction is a form of mental disorder. T / F
- The research described in this article was conducted in Germany. T / F
- A psychotherapist said we needed to accumulate further knowledge. T / F
- Researchers looked at data on over 1,000 BSD patients. T / F
- A researcher said nearly 10% of people may suffer from BSD. T / F
- People seek instant gratification by shopping online. T / F
- Researchers say people can end up in credit because of BSD. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1. advent | a. co-workers |
| 2. leisure | b. gather |
| 3. experts | c. fulfillment |
| 4. classed | d. specialists |
| 5. accumulate | e. requested |
| 6. colleagues | f. likely |
| 7. sought | g. arrival |
| 8. prone | h. arrears |
| 9. gratification | i. categorized |
| 10. debt | j. relaxation |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How has the Internet changed the way we shop?
- How serious is it that one in five people may have BSD?
- How can doctors treat people who suffer from BSD?
- Why might BSD lead to anxiety and depression?
- How would you help a friend who had BSD?
- Have you ever been in debt?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The advent | a. by the medical profession |
| 2. in the comfort of our | b. things they order |
| 3. the allure of | c. knowledge about BSD |
| 4. this condition should be recognized | d. instant gratification |
| 5. time to accumulate further | e. shopping for bargains |
| 6. 122 patients who | f. destroy marriages |
| 7. younger people are more prone | g. of the Internet |
| 8. hoarding and never using | h. to developing it |
| 9. buying things for the sake of | i. sought treatment |
| 10. BSD can | j. own home |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of online shopping?
- How does online shopping compare to shopping in malls?
- What are the dangers of online shopping?
- How do you feel when you shop online?
- What do you buy for yourself as a treat?
- Why do you think shopping is an addiction?
- Is shopping more addictive for men or women?
- Do you think shopping addiction is a mental illness?

Spelling

- the nnvoncee of shopping
- the alurl of shopping
- griasbna and treats
- the medical ooirsepnfs
- various mpliuse control disorders
- time to alcamucuet further knowledge
- movipcusle shopping
- levels of yneixta and depression
- hetbiix negative behaviors
- spending csexiseve amounts of money
- ohndgria and never using things
- for the sake of instant roitfataingic

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. j	3. d	4. i	5. b
6. a	7. e	8. f	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Online

You think online is the best place to shop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places to shop. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shopping mall, market or charity shop.

Role B – Shopping Malls

You think a shopping mall is the best place to shop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places to shop. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): online, market or charity shop.

Role C – Markets

You think a market is the best place to shop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places to shop. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shopping mall, online or charity shop.

Role D – Charity Shops

You think a charity shop is the best place to shop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places to shop. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shopping mall, market or online.

Speaking – Shopping

Rank these with your partner. Put the best places to shop at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • Online | • Local stores |
| • Shopping malls | • Other countries |
| • Markets | • Newspapers |
| • Airports | • Charity shops |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.