



# COUNSELING CENTER

## Video Games and the Impact of Chronic Over-Stimulation

While video games are one of the most popular outlets for recreation, for some they can be a source of obsession, overuse and addiction.

### Signs and Symptoms:

- Preoccupation with gaming
- Withdrawal symptoms when gaming is taken away or not possible (sadness, anxiety, irritability)
- Inability to reduce playing, unsuccessful attempts to quit gaming
- Giving up other activities, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities due to gaming
- Continuing to game despite problems
- Deceiving others about the amount of time spent on gaming
- The use of gaming to relieve negative moods, such as guilt or hopelessness
- Having jeopardized academic or job performance or a relationship due to gaming

### Quick coping tips/strategies:

- Establish a moderation or abstinence plan related to gaming behaviors
- Be mindful of environmental cues and triggers that contribute to gaming / digital media behaviors
- Set your environment up for success (create a protected / compartmentalized work environment)
- Use accountability software to support self-awareness and intentionality with digital media use (Screen-Time, Digital Well-Being, Rescue-Time)
- Utilize organization and management tools to support daily intentions including where gaming fits in (Google calendar, to-do lists, timers, etc.)
- Find ways to engage energy, curiosity and creativity in non-screen-based activities
- Maintain consistency and routine with self-care (sleep / sleep hygiene, nutrition, exercise)
- Engage in meaningful social opportunities in-person

Learn more about the impact of chronic over-stimulation and gain the tools necessary to take back control.

