

Internet Chat rooms are a phenomenon of the technology age, leading people to form “relationships” online and neglect them in person.

**Top 10 Signs You're Addicted to the Net
(some of these may go over your head if you don't have a computer)**

10. You wake up at 3 a.m. to go to the bathroom and stop and check your e-mail on the way back to bed.
9. You get a tattoo that reads "This body best viewed with Netscape Navigator 1.1 or higher."
8. You name your children Eudora, Mozilla and Dotcom.
7. You turn off your modem and get this awful empty feeling, like you just pulled the plug on a loved one.
6. You spend half of the plane trip with your laptop on your lap...and your child in the overhead compartment.
5. You decide to stay in college for an additional year or two, just for the free Internet access.
4. You laugh at people with 2400-baud modems.
3. You start using smileys in your snail mail.
2. The last mate you picked up was a JPEG.
1. Your hard drive crashes. You haven't logged in for two hours. You start to twitch. You pick up the phone and manually dial your ISP's access number. You try to hum to communicate with the modem. And You succeed.

1. Our Need to Belong

Human beings have an incredible need to belong. We need each other. We need to know we are loved and connected to one another. An anomaly is a person who is a hermit, who lives apart from everyone else. That is unusual. Most of us need people and hunger for companionship and human touch.

A. Internet Phenomena.

i. Addiction to chat rooms

1. Chinese shut down private internet cafes'; college student begs for 5 minutes on the net.

2. Psychologists tell us that those who use chat rooms seek a freedom from their loneliness. Attractive because.....
 - a. Everyone knows your name (Like the Cheer's Bar)
 - b. You can be "yourself" (or for that fact, someone else)
 - c. You are welcomed no matter what you look like, feel like.
 - d. You can behave as you wish and meet your social needs.
 - e. Many feel their best friends are on line.
 - f. People tend to be more open because no one sees them or hears their voice
 - g. Alternative form of social interaction
 - h. You can express yourself through symbols and "macros" (smile, kiss, frown, etc). and the subtleties of our true expression are hidden from perceptive eyes.
 - i. Must go back over and over to keep your name before others lest they forget you.
 - j. Users feel more like their "true" selves than in "real" life. In some ways like writers or poets who through their work learn to express themselves without being in the presence of others.
3. What is missing here?
 - a. You never touch anyone or are touched by anyone.
 - i. Human beings need human touch. (basic Maslow's Hierarchy)
 1. Baby will die without touch.
 - ii. Touch is a vital component of our most intimate relationships.
 1. A pat on the back
 2. A hug
 3. A kiss
 4. A hand held in comfort
 - iii. Without it, adults will experience loss and profound sense of longing.
 - ii. People NEED each other!
 1. There are a record number of single adults in America – an all time high!
 2. Vance Packard calls America, "a nation of strangers"
 3. There is an epidemic of loneliness in our society
 4. 4 in 10 Americans admit to frequent loneliness.
 5. The advertisers understand this need
 - a. Never do they show ppl drinking alone (as often happens) but in the context of enjoying other people's company.
 - b. Advertisers know that Americans really are longing to be CONNECTED.

B. Revelation time:

- i. Fill in the blank....

1. I am a _____ (Christian; Dad, Mom, American, Southern Baptist, Republican, Indian's fan) etc.
 2. I go to _____ (Indians games, Here's Hope Church, etc)
 3. I belong to _____ (Here's Hope Church, The Elks, My Spouse)
- ii. If you say you "belong" you are saying you are an integral part of the life and work of that organization or church.
- iii. If you say you "go to those activities" you are really saying that you are an observer or a partial participant and have not yet entered into the life of that organization.
1. Imagine going to an Indians game and getting to play...you wouldn't say you "go to the game" anymore, you would say you BELONG to the team!
 2. The difference between GOING and BELONGING can be seen in the picture of a football game with 60,000 fans desperately needing exercise, watching 22 men desperately needing rest.
 3. The church is By the fourth century, the churches in Rome were feeding an estimated 20,000 poor people each week. The church at that time presented to the world a visible alternative to the prevailing social order. As Georges Florovsky has written in "Empire and Desert: Antinomies of Christian History"
 - a. *Christianity entered human history as a new social order or, rather, a new social dimension. From the very beginning, Christianity was not primarily a "doctrine," but exactly a "community." There was not only a "message" to be proclaimed and delivered and "Good News" to be declared, but there was, precisely, a New Community, distinct and peculiar, in the process of growth and formation, to which members were called and recruited. Indeed, "fellowship" ("koinonia") was the basic category of Christian existence"*
 4. Church is not about "attending" and watching & listening to what goes on on Sunday, but becoming a part of a community.
 - a. Ephesians 2:19 (lb) "So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family"
 - b. Romans 12:4-5 (hb) "Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another"
 - c.
- iv. God's way:
1. We have not been taught that Christian life **includes more than believing, it also includes belonging.**
 2. Romans 12:10 "Show family affection to one another with brotherly love. Outdo one another in showing honor." Another version says, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love"
 3. HOW CAN WE DO THAT IF WE REFUSE TO COMMIT TO ONE ANOTHER?
 4. The world has stolen the word of "membership" and perverted its meaning to...

- a. Paying dues
 - b. Meaningless meetings
 - c. Irrational rules
 - d. Having your name on a roll.
5. The Apostle Paul saw it differently. (1 Cor 12:12-27)
- a. “For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body--so also is Christ. **13** For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. **14** So the body is not one part but many. **15** If the foot should say, "Because I'm not a hand, I don't belong to the body," in spite of this it still belongs to the body. **16** And if the ear should say, "Because I'm not an eye, I don't belong to the body," in spite of this it still belongs to the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? **18** But now God has placed the parts, each one of them, in the body just as He wanted. **19** And if they were all the same part, where would the body be? **20** Now there are many parts, yet one body. **21** So the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" nor again the head to the feet, "I don't need you!" **22** On the contrary, all the more, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are necessary. **23** And those parts of the body that we think to be less honorable, we clothe these with greater honor, and our unpresentable parts have a better presentation. **24** But our presentable parts have no need of clothing. Instead, God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the less honorable, **25** so that there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same concern for each other. **26** So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. “ **27 Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.**
6. You have been made a part of the body of Christ.
- a. You are an integral ORGAN, indispensable for the life of this Body.
 - b. If a body is missing an organ...the body will miss a vital function!
 - i. Perhaps some of you have had a gall bladder or kidney missing? Or a lung, or some other part. You are not functioning as you were designed because of that!
 - ii. If you hold yourself back from the body, you ROB the Body of Jesus Christ of the function God designed for it.
 - c. If an organ is removed from the body for very long, it will wither and die.
 - i. Spiritually you will become ineffective
 - ii. Physically you will be alone in your time of need.
- v. A church is never stronger than the commitment of its members to one another and to the purposes of that church.

1. A membership of worldly, careless, consumer oriented, growth stunted Christians will PREVENT a church from ever accomplishing God's given mission.
2. What would it be like to receive a letter from Jesus that says, "these things I have against you..."
 - a. You were uncommitted toward one another
 - b. You had no love for each other
 - c. You cared more about yourself and your own agenda than that of my Father

C. Membership

- i. Comes from a latin word meaning "beginning." It was meant to denote a Christian beginning his walk with Christ alongside a group of Christians that comprised the church in that city.

D. Church

- i. Ekklesia "called out ones" – "assembly" used also as a political term to indicate small city states.
- ii. Paul calls the Ekklesia of Corinth, The Ekklesia of Ephesus, The Ekklesia of Jerusalem.

E. Membership in the Church

- i. God desires your participation at an integral level in a local church for several reasons
 1. So your COMMITMENT to Him will be lived out toward others.
 - a. 1 John 4:20-21 "If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. **21** And we have this command from Him: the one who loves God must also love his brother"
 - b. We have been called to live a life of love toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. If God has placed you here, then you are responsible to live out your commitment to God by loving and caring for these here at this church.
 2. Accountability for Personal Growth –
 - a. We have a need for accountability. The church is our forum for growth in Christ.
 - b. "I want to commit myself to these people and be held accountable for my Christian walk."
 3. Community – Joined to one another.
 - a. Each of us must learn to get to know each other. By being around them, by spending time with them, by reaching out to one another.
 - b. Lynn Stoltz said something on Sunday night that was very telling. "I really like what we are doing, I get to know others at a deeper level."
 - i. It also revealed the very reason we do what we do on Sunday nights.
 - ii. We are trying to develop community. Sunday nights is the forum in which we are doing that.
 - iii. It will progress toward a small group/home group atmosphere at a later time.
 1. Small groups are infinitely expandable
 2. Unlimited geographically
 3. Good stewardship (no new buildings)

4. Facilitates closer relationships
5. Unchurched will more likely come to a home than a church building.
6. You must grow smaller to grow larger.

F. Every Member is a Minister

- i. Minister
 1. Diakoneo – to serve another
 2. the servant of a king
- ii. The Pastor is not THE minister. Big un-biblical idea. Pastors are told what their job description is in Ephesians 4:11-13
 1. And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the training (furnishing)of the saints in the **work of ministry**, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into a mature man with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.
 2. This passage says that God expects me to fulfill my ministry by equipping you, the MEMBERS of HIS BODY to trained in the work of ministry.
 3. God created you to be ministers – to be the hands and feet of Christ!
- iii. This principle of EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER says that in God’s Army there are no volunteers, we are all drafted into service.
- iv. Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”
 1. If Jesus, the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Exalted One, the Beginning and the End, the Mighty God, The Son of God Himself...did not come to be served but to serve...**HOW DARE WE ACT AS IF WE COULD DO DIFFERENTLY!**
- v. Every Christian is...
 1. Created for Ministry
 - a. (Eph 2:10) For we are His making, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.
 2. Saved for Ministry
 - a. (2 Tim 1:9) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling,
 3. Called to Ministry
 - a. (1 Peter 2:9-10) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy
 4. Gifted to Ministry
 - a. (1 Peter 4:10) Based on the gift they have received, everyone should use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God.
 5. Authorized to Ministry

a. (Mt 28:18-20) Then Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

6. Commanded to Minister

a. (Mt 20:26-28) It must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life--a ransom for many."

7. To be Prepared to Minister

a. (Eph. 4:11-12) And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ

8. Needed for Ministry

a. (1 Cor 12:27) Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.

9. Accountable for Ministry

a. (Colossians 3:23-24) Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men,

10. Rewarded for Ministry

a. (Col. 3:23-24) knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord--you serve the Lord Christ

vi. Every minister, every member is important.

1. Small lights are sometimes more important than big ones.

a. Big ones like light houses, spot lights, search lights

b. Small ones like smoke detectors, refrigerator lights, night lights

vii. Ministry will come out of who you are....

1. SHAPE (this fall)

2. Spiritual gifts? Experiment and serve...you will find out where you are empowered!

2. Bottom Line Questions

A. Will you become a committed part of this local body of believers to help this church achieve its God-given purpose of reaching people in the Madison area with the Good News of Jesus Christ and making Disciples of them?

i. If so, we have "Discovering Hope" a class offered to help you understand the meaning of "belonging" at Here's Hope Baptist Church."

1. It is open to you even if you are currently a member on the roll but would like to make a commitment to becoming a vital part of this church's mission.

2. You will make some commitments in this 4 week class that will lead you to become effective as a Christian.

3. You will also get to know others in the church who desire to do the same

4. You will get to know the deacons and leaders of our church better.

5. You will discover Here's Hope's vision and strategy for making a difference in the Madison area.

B. Will you make the choice of MINISTERING and not just SPECTATING?

i. Response is in your bulletin. Fill it out now.

ii.