

# Wikipedia addiction and its comorbidities

A not really scientific approach to talk about wikipedian editing  
behaviour

# Are you a Wikipedia addict?

- Do you often spend more time editing Wikipedia, than you planned?
- Do you think about Wikipedia even when you are offline?
- Do you get nervous, frustrated or restless, when you can't edit Wikipedia?
- Do people in your family, friends or colleagues tell you to spend less time editing?
- Do you lose sleep because of the Wikipedia?

# What exactly is this addiction? Is it dangerous?

- Wikipedia addiction as a yet unresearched form of internet addiction. Internet addiction is usually associated with playing online games, blogging, chatting, Internet shopping or Internet pornography use.
- The bad news: Wikipedia abuse can include all of these things except the shopping part.
- The good news: Most unusual mental states of mind are only considered a health problem if they cause „clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning“ (DSM, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders)

Hypothesis: There are people in the community that have serious problems caused by too much time on the internet, working for Wikipedia

# Ideas to help with that:

- Keep this in mind and look out for each other
- meet offline
- take your own time in discussions, give others time to answer
- plan cooperative work on a generous timescale
- ...

Hypothesis: Many Wikipedians, that really have problems with „Wikipedia addiction“ have other mental problems

# Prevalences of common mental disorders (most figures from [[en: Prevalence of mental disorders]]):

- lifetime prevalence rates for mental disorders are estimated to be between 65% and 85%
- Anxiety disorders: 10.6% (in the 12 months prior to assessment)
- Mood disorders: 12-month prevalence rates of 4.1% for major depressive disorder (MDD), 2% for dysthymic disorder and 0.72% for bipolar 1 disorder
- Schizophrenia: 0.3% in the 12-month period prior to assessment
- Personality disorders: prevalence of almost 1 in 7 (13.4%), based on meeting personality criteria over the prior five-year period
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- Alcoholism: 4.1% of the population over 15 years of age (figure from [[en:alcoholism]])
- Autism (Asperger): autism prevalence rates ranging from 0.03 to 4.84 per 1,000 (figure from [[en: Asperger syndrome]])
- Post traumatic stress disorder: 8% lifetime prevalence (figure from [[de:Posttraumatische Belastungsstörung]])

# Consequences for the Wikipedia communities:

- Most Wikipedians are crazy – one way or the other.
- Rational solutions to conflicts are difficult, when one person involved is not able to act rationally. They will not always work.
- Emotional appeals are difficult, when the person addressed does have difficulties in dealing with emotions. They will not always work.
- Some editors are more vulnerable by aggressive editing-behaviour than others. They need support and protection.
- It is not always easy to get along with crazy people - Wikipedians all sometimes need support and protection, when dealing with the craziness of other editors

# Consequences for individual Wikipedians:

- Please put yourself in the sanest state of mind, that you can manage, before starting to edit.
- Be aware: You only have marginal influence on the editing behaviour of others – but you are responsible for your own.
- If a rational approach in a conflict onwiki does not work – try something else.
- If an emotional approach in a conflict onwiki does not work – try something else.
- If nothing works – go offwiki, change to another project, do something, that is fun.
- Don't risk yourself or others being hurt by conflicts in the Wikipedia – our health is more important than any article or any other content

# Questions?

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