ILLUSTRATION: **ZARIF FAIAZ**

Looking out for our mental well-being in the digital era

ZAHID HOSSAIN KHAN

In the era of the fourth industrial revolution, the internet, automation and robotics are a part of our reality. In many cases, they are deeper than reality. There is still ongoing debate about whether the internet is involved in our lives, or if we are stuck in a digital cycle. How can one find an escape from this loop?

The digital lifestyle

The digital lifestyle is a half-baked subject for everyone, and as we go deeper, we are confronted with the harsh realities of technology addiction, monotony, stress, and the core weaknesses of human relationships. How can we understand the well-being of our minds when this digital life is the new norm?

According to Harvard Business Review, an average American spends 11 hours a day in digital space. Starting from the most popular hits on YouTube to TikTok's micro-videos, our eyes are always stuck on the internet. One in five Americans suffers from mental health problems because of the internet, while various mood disorders and anxiety are now common among young internet users.

A variety of digital materials are busy trying to stimulate our neurotransmitters. We used to be fascinated by meteor showers in the sky, but now we find dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and GABA rushes from viral videos.

Screens are everywhere

This over-reliance on the digital world is why the human mind needs to be taken better care of. Even though we live in a human society, we spend most of our time with one machine or another - either the mobile phone or the newly purchased Google Home or Alexa.

Our lives revolve around machines. The

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machines, like Transformers from the movies, understand each other. What you see on the mobile screen, you read for a while and watch on the big screen of laptop, desktop or TV.

There is no release or space from the screen. Mobiles, computers and TVs are all different versions of the same screen. There is no way out of the screen. From the super shop and the ATM booth to the diagnosis in hospitals -

we see different forms of screens everywhere.

It is very important to take care of the mind of the person in front of the screen. If the mind is not good or well, do you believe the machine will be good for work? Instability of the mind weakens the quality of the work. Mindfulness is very important in the success of work or in the way of life.

How to bring peace of mind to digital life

Do not start the day with a mobile phone in hand at seven in the morning. Try to give yourself some time in the morning. Give time to family. Do exercise, do yoga or have a cup of tea to stay fresh in the morning.

Add different devices to different tasks. Try to use a mobile phone for communication, hold office meetings on the laptop, use smart TV for Netflix. When you do something, do the task with full mindfulness. Don't get lost by launching videos with autoplay on YouTube.

Be aware of digital etiquette. Those who are working from home should keep a worktable while keeping family life separate.

Don't go around working all the time. Keep in mind that work does not define your life. Don't mindlessly seek QR codes. Pay attention to creating memories with friends and family.

Bring comfort to your life by using technology to the maximum. Settle on the various things in life such as paying bills at the bank, collecting medical reports online. Extend your time and space with the help of technology. Don't be busy all the time, pay attention to the moments of life.

The writer is a mental health activist and member of the mental healthcare platform 'Moner Bondhu'