

## The Smell of Addiction

I breathed in and then it hit me. The smell was a smell that I never want to smell again. It was the smell of my room, and my room smelled horrible. But why did my room smell horrible? There were the usual suspects. There was a giant pile of dirty laundry in the corner and some half-eaten food on the desktop. But my room was always a pigsty and it didn't usually smell this bad, so trying to find the root of my smelly problem, I got out of my bed and walked to the opposite side of the room. I still smelled the same horrific smell. This made me all the more puzzled. Was it following me, or did the whole room just smell bad? To determine this I left my room and went downstairs. It still smelled really bad. All of the sudden I realized that I had not showered in over two weeks! Determining not to smell like a spoiled potato, I grabbed a towel and started to take a shower. While taking that shower I was trying to figure out why I hadn't showered in over two weeks. I thought and I thought but it still eluded me.

After I finished my shower I went upstairs where I would spend most of my time. I got some clothes on and then plopped on my bed, and pulled out the thing that was the center of my universe: a tablet a bit bigger than the phones we have now. It smelled strongly of sweat and snot, and looked a moldy purple color. I put in the password, got on the internet, launched Youtube and clicked on a video. It was one I had already seen before, but despite that, it was incredible. The colors were many: white, black, red, blue, yellow, orange, pink, purple, green, and so many more, all of them leaping off the screen, transforming my dark and smelly room into a paradise. I heard a million compelling stories, all with happy endings. There were villains, heroes, and so many twists and turns. It just seemed like the purest form of happiness there could ever be. Then the video ended. Immediately, panic set in. *What do I do?* The world had lost its color and its beauty, and all that was left was this sad, little, dark, and smelly room. Everything was

diminished and pathetic. *I must escape this sad place! Quick! Escape! Another video!* So I clicked and I was brought back into that magical world with all its magic, splendor, and wisdom! Such happiness! *Wait, it's over already. No, everything is now even worse than before.* There was even less color. It smelled so bad. *Escape again, and faster this time! Don't think! Just...* I clicked on another video: happiness again, color again. But then, it was over, the video had ended. I looked around the world without joy, it was a desolate wasteland. I clicked, and I clicked, and I clicked. I did as little school as possible, so I could click and see color, so much color. I didn't clean my room, so I could click, and hear another great adventure. Who needs to change clothes when you can hear another great story? Who needs to shower, right?

Four months later, I realized why I had not been showering. I had been and still was too busy watching Youtube to do something as simple as showering. It hit me hard, I cried, and the sounds I made were so loud and painful. Later I got out of the shower and ran upstairs into my room. I was so distressed that I just sat down in a corner and cried for hours. Then slowly, I got up and looked around and the same old colorless, pointless, and deaf world looked back at me. I just wanted to go and watch Youtube videos again. But instead I layed down and got some sleep.

After I woke up I smelled something. It was my room, gross as ever. After much grumbling, I got up and finally started to clean my room. It was slow work, but then about half way through I noticed something. The world was not so colorless anymore, and, as I cleaned, the more colorful it became. After I finished, the world was starting to have color. There was a little red there, some green there. I looked at the time: 7:00 PM. I had spent all day cleaning my room, so I went to bed. I was as tired as ever.

When I woke up, I wanted to do some school for the first time in months, so I did it. It was so much fun to learn... so many new things to learn, so many cool stories to hear. I finished school, and the world was so colorful now, so happy. *Who needs to escape a place like this?*

Recently, I took a shower, as I do every day. I finished and stepped out of the shower, put some clothes on and went outside, and it was so pretty. The little fresh spring green leaves beautifully mixed with the dark, well-watered green of the grass. I saw the red, pink, and yellow flowers in the gardens and the wonderful chirp, chirp of the birds in the background. It was a fine spring morning, but a fairly normal spring morning— nothing too spectacular. But it was something Youtube could never give me. And most importantly of all, I was free to run around anywhere on that spring morning. I could read any book I wanted or perhaps bake something. I could make something out of dominoes. I was free to do anything I wanted that spring morning. In a world that went beyond a dirty, smelly, old room and a tablet. I was happier than I had ever been on Youtube.