

Grayscale mode combats phone addiction

by Molly George and Rhea Mech

Only a small group of iPhone users have discovered grayscale mode on their phones, a setting they are using in an attempt to break their iPhone addiction.

Addiction to cell phones has been an increasing problem. According to a New York Times survey, average adults check their phones about 150 times a day, or once every six minutes.

This addiction to phones has become big enough to earn a name: nomophobia.

Nomophobia is a 21st century term for the fear of not having your phone on you, showing our addiction and dependency on our small rectangular devices we unintentionally worship.

There are obvious negative effects linked with being addicted to your cell phone, including impaired sleep, lack of focus and increased anxiety.

Research on brain chemistry shows that the constant notifications and colors on phones are distracting, rewarding and addictive all at once, according to the New York Times.

Grayscale mode is a setting which allows users of most Apple products to change the colors on their phones, so the usual bright, appealing colors of apps and photos turn to various tones of gray.

When the screen appears in dull shades of gray, scrolling through Instagram is not as interesting and playing a game is not as fun, which makes users either want to put

their phone down, or quickly turn grayscale off.

The original purpose of the grayscale setting was to help Apple users with visual impairments, such as color blindness, but the setting has become increasingly popular as its secondary effects of limiting phone addiction has become more clear.

While those trying to curb phone use have found the feature useful, people who rely on grayscale to help their visual impairments use the feature the most. This is not surprising, as the feature is hard to find, and rarely mentioned.

The hidden grayscale feature, which was made available with iOS 8 in 2014, takes eight steps to access.

In the latest phone update, users can open settings > tap general > accessibility > display accommodations > color filters > switch color filters on > select grayscale.

To make the process of switching between grayscale and color easier, users can set up a shortcut, by going to settings > general > accessibility > accessibility shortcut > color filters > press home button three times to switch back and forth.

The shortcut is helpful for those who want to have the grayscale experience, but also want to watch a particular photo or video in color before switching back to the grayscale mode, and also benefits those who constantly forget the steps it takes to access the feature.

When we tried the grayscale feature for a few hours before giving up, all we wanted to do was use our

iPads, or our laptops, or watch T.V. instead, and the urge to switch back to the normal screen.

As long as we have other devices to use instead of our phones, our addictions and dependencies, whether we try to deny them or not, will not go away.

For this reason, the grayscale is not going to single handedly fix the phone addiction problem. But, it is a start.

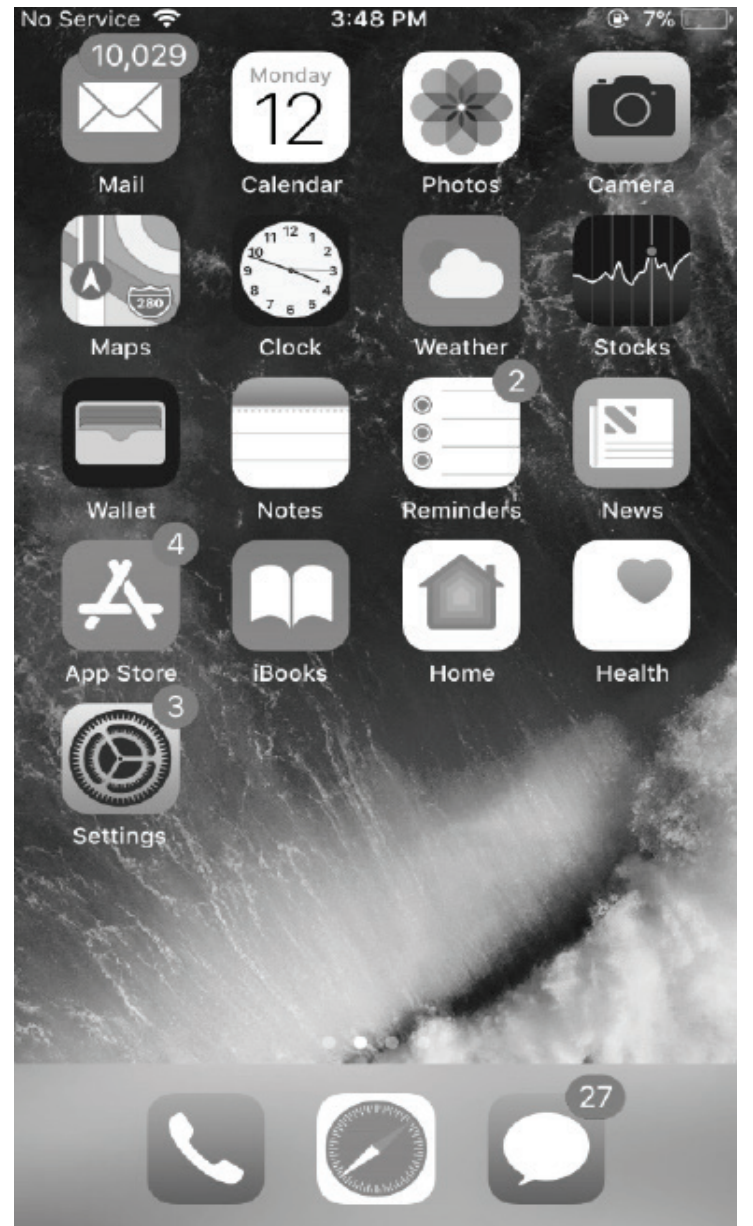
It has been shown that people are attracted to bright, saturated colors, which explains addiction to Smartphones and video games. It can also explain why many people have a shared secret desire to eat Tide detergent pods, or other colorful non-edible things.

There have been lots of recent discussions about the amount of time people spend on their phones, which is why the grayscale setting has been repurposed for the general iPhone user.

Switching to the grayscale setting may not be helpful to everyone, such as those who like to color code their apps, shop online, or edit photos on their phones.

However, it is extremely helpful for people with visual impairments, and, according to the New York Times, it has been helpful for people who are trying to be more aware of how much time they spend on their phones as well.

While it is often necessary to communicate on our phones, switching to black and white can give us a break from constant sensory overload.

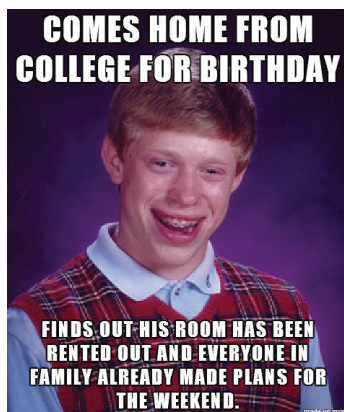


A brief history of memes

by David Heiman

The meme, a funny picture with an equally funny caption, is well known and well loved, but what most people don't know is how they started.

The first meme I remember was the 6-7th grade craze of Bad Luck Brian, a meme of an embarrassing high school yearbook photo of a man named Brian who gets something to go his way, only to find out things



went the opposite of what he wanted. "The first meme I remember seeing was troll face," senior Jack Connelly said.

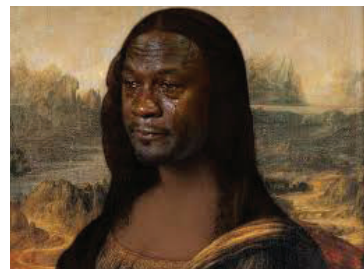
"Memes have been around since the beginning of time. On the walls of ancient Egypt, hieroglyphics were actually memes," added Connelly.

That may be a stretch, since the true origin of memes is unknown.

Most believe the first internet memes were created in the early 1990's, right as the World Wide Web started to come into fruition.

The word "meme" was coined by Richard Dawkins in 1976 in his book "The Selfish Gene" as a way to explain the way information spreads throughout our culture.

One of the first recorded internet



memes is the Godwin's Law meme made in 1990. It is a picture of a cat who has an Adolf Hitler mustache and a necklace with a swastika.

Godwin explained that as an internet debate grows longer, the probability of a comparison involving Nazis or Hitler continues to grow. This means that any online debate will eventually lead to one party comparing someone or something to Hitler or the Nazi regime.

Whether his theory is true or not, the internet meme is assumed to be the first meme ever recorded.

The meme has progressed since the early Godwin theory days to memes such as Bad Luck Brian, the smiling troll, or Gene Wilder as Willy Wonka leaning on his shoulder meme.

New memes are made and take the internet by storm almost daily, only to be forgotten a week later.

Despite the large quantity of



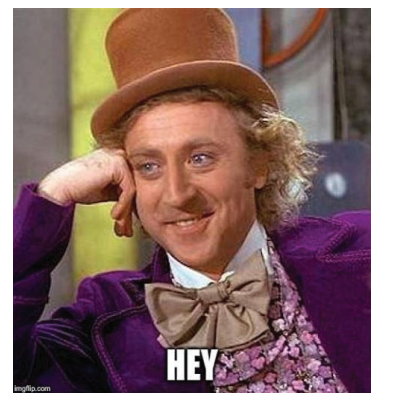
memes, some have the ability to stay around for long periods of time.

For example, the crying Michael Jordan is used whenever a sports team loses a big game or a significant player in a trade or free agency.

Another lasting meme is the guy who is walking with his girlfriend and turning his head back to watch another girl walk by, showing that he wants to leave his situation for a more exciting one, but he cannot.

One thing that people love about memes is the ability to create your own at any given time and to post them to social media.

If something happens in a person's life that is deemed "meme worthy," there are countless free apps on the App Store that offer anyone



the ability to make a meme.

In today's social climate, memes about issues ranging from North Korean missile tests, to President Donald Trump can be viewed as political satire.

One of my personal favorites was a meme portraying Queen Elizabeth and David Cameron in shock from the vote on Brexit.

Memes are essential to today's social climate and pop culture, and because of that, they are here to stay—at least for the week.