“TV addiction” is an imprecise term, but it is a real phenomenon where people spend a significant amount of time watching television, often excessively. Formally, addiction involves: spending too much time using something, using more than desired, thinking about reducing use to no avail, giving up important activities for the sake of it, and feeling withdrawal symptoms when you stop. These criteria may apply to heavy TV viewers, but TV viewing itself is not necessarily a problem. The difficulty arises when people feel that they cannot reduce their television viewing even though they would like to. Understanding how television can become addictive can help viewers regain control of their lives. People spend a surprising amount of time watching television, an average of three hours a day, more than any other activity besides work and sleep. While some worry about the amount of time they spend watching, television can also be educational, relaxing, and an important escape. The challenge comes when people feel that they cannot stop watching it even if they wanted to. To study people's behavior and feelings toward television, researchers conducted experiments in which they measured brain waves, skin impedance, and heart rates in television viewers. However, to study behavior and feelings in a natural way, they used the experience sampling method (ESM), where participants wore an alert device* and were asked several times a day, at random, over the course of a week to write down what they were doing and how they were feeling. As expected, those who were watching TV reported feeling relaxed and negative. However, brain scanning studies have shown that mental stimulation is actually less while watching TV than while reading. The real problem appears when watching TV ends and the negative and lethargic feeling continues. People report feeling tired and having difficulty concentrating after watching television, while they rarely report such problems after reading. *Note: The original text uses footnote symbol (ESM) and is not supported in this summary. I've replaced it with "whistle" for this summary. Summarized in 0.3% of the original text: Television can be educational, comforting, and an important escape, but it can also become addictive for some people. This happens when people feel like they can't stop watching it even if they wanted to. Understanding how this happens can help binge watchers regain control of their lives. People spend a surprising amount of time watching TV – on average, three

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