

## STORIES OF HUMAN INTEREST - 3



Sameer and Tara were soaking in the beautiful sunset from the hilltop. They were on a vacation with their cousins. Their parents had not accompanied them, so it was even better for the siblings.

Tara said, “I must **quickly upload these pictures on Facebook**. I got so many *likes and comments* when I updated my holiday status. Made me feel so good. I am sure all the pictures and videos I am uploading will make my friends envious of me.”

On their way back to the hotel, they stopped at a souvenir shop. Such beautiful stuff. The store was loaded with items and the duo picked up a lot of random items, not sure who they would gift them to. **They went berserk as there was no budget**. The credit card limit was pretty decent.

Next morning the entire group left for another holiday destination. They all were having a great time, **enjoying fast food on the go as they had loaded their car with assorted goodies to munch on**. But there was one general concern; that of adding additional weight during this 2 weeks long vacation. Tanya – Samir and Tara’s cousin – mentioned that she would join a slimming center soon after the holiday. **The gym claimed that it helped shed 7 pounds in 7 days**. Tara said, “I can’t wait to join it too. Let me look for some smart fitness and gym gear online. **I can place an order right away.**”

The youngsters were on a high as everything they desired – appreciation, prestige, material luxuries – was just a click or a swipe away. The holiday was superb.

Can you guess what this kind of indulgence is called? **Instant Gratification.**



## What is Instant Gratification?

Instant gratification is the desire to experience pleasure or fulfillment without delay or deferment. Basically it's like this: when you want it, you must have it. It's an impulsive desire to have things instantly. Instant gratification is expected in many contexts.

- We gain instant feedback from our **devices**, because we're constantly plugged in and turned on. Social media gives us instant ability to upload videos, photos and status updates. We receive instant feedback from our social followers.
- Instant gratification is very obvious in modern day society in the way many people **spend money**. Many of us like to buy things for the instant feel good factor not taking into account the long term ramifications like spending on things we really don't need, over spending and getting into debt.
- Another very common example would be **over eating or eating unhealthy food**, again this will reduce the overall quality of life in the long term.

Many businesses and advertising companies are very aware of the human basic need to get instant results. For example fast foods which taste good and are cheap and fast to prepare, they provide instant satisfaction but they're generally not healthy. Banks constantly offer credit cards and also offer to raise the limits so that we spend more and without thinking. Advertisements make unrealistic promises.

## Ways to counteract instant gratification.

1. Understand and realize that instant gratification will reduce the quality of your life in the long term.
2. Understand that achieving great things takes time, effort and perseverance. Instant gratification keeps us distracted.
3. Accept that we cannot always have what we want instantly, this type of acceptance can be very powerful and is an effective way of loosening the control instant gratification has on many of us.
4. Spend some time thinking about your future and what you want to achieve long term, also what sort of person you want to be in the future (self-reflection). This may help you look beyond the now and that instant need for gratification.

*Have you witnessed, been a victim of or are engaged in Instant Gratification?*

You are most welcome to share your views or experiences with SSETU at [ssetu@ahduni.edu.in](mailto:ssetu@ahduni.edu.in)



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