The Problem with Video Games

Growing up, I spent countless hours playing video games—**Kingdom Hearts**, *The Legend of Zelda*, *Skyrim*, *Halo*, *Call of Duty*, and even a large collection of retro games at one point. Looking back, I regret much of that time. It stole from my youth and hindered my development as a young man. **When I weigh the positives and negatives of gaming, the scales tip heavily toward the negative.**

Gaming Is Addictive

Video games are undeniably beautiful in terms of *art*, *entertainment*, and *creativity*. But their allure is also their downfall: they're so well-crafted that they become **insanely addictive**. It's all too easy to get lost in these meticulously designed virtual worlds.

Modern games thrive on the constant drive to *level up* and *grind*. This can become a destructive habit, consuming hours that could be better spent in real life. These systems of achievements and experience points are deliberately designed to keep players hooked.

> *"I equate playing video games to eating junk food. When I eat one Oreo, I can't stop at just one. Similarly, gaming feeds that same cycle of overindulgence."*

My Story

My first experience with gaming was through the **Nintendo 64**, **PlayStation**, and **Game Boy Advance**. I even remember attaching a light to my Game Boy because its screen wasn't backlit.

Fast forward to the **COVID lockdown**, and I decided to dive back into gaming by purchasing a gaming PC. The advancements were astounding. From the simple graphics of my childhood, games had evolved into incredibly realistic, immersive experiences.

Yet, despite their beauty, these advancements only deepened the trap. The most recent game I played, *Cyberpunk 2077*, hooked me so much that I completed it 100% within weeks of its release. The immersion made time disappear. I was so engrossed that real life outside the game felt secondary.

Ultimately, I packed my gaming PC away in a closet. It's been gathering dust ever since.

Modern Gaming: A Double-Edged Sword

The advancements in technology have made modern games breathtaking. The graphics, mechanics, and storytelling are now so immersive that they blur the line between reality and fiction. But therein lies the danger. When games become more entertaining than real life, it's easy to lose touch with reality. You spend all your time leveling up a character in a virtual world instead of investing in your real-life growth.

Art Is the Solution

In today's world, with unlimited entertainment options—video games, movies, TV shows, and social media—it's easy to get trapped in a consumerist cycle. For me, the antidote has been **art**, particularly photography and video production. Like video games, art offers endless exploration, but it grounds you in reality. With a camera, every moment in life becomes an opportunity for creation.

"The world itself becomes an open canvas, and every day brings something new to capture."

Using tools like a **GoPro** allows me to document my experiences without being pulled out of the moment. It's like creating my own real-life video game. By practicing **street photography**, I stay engaged with the world around me, interacting with people and discovering new places. Every day I come home with fresh photographs to review and enjoy.

Instead of consuming media created by others, I now entertain myself by producing my own. My advice to anyone struggling with gaming addiction is to replace it with the *production of art*. It's a far more rewarding and fulfilling way to spend your time.