Why do workers feel “tied” to their mobile devices? And is this a bad thing?

In an iLEAD-funded study that was conducted in 2013 at a multispecialty group practice and healthcare provider of a large Midwestern teaching hospital, Drs. Jenny Hoobler (UIC) and Wendy Casper (University of Texas at Arlington), and Morgan Wilson (Mount St. Mary’s University), discovered that workers with

• Stronger relational identities
  (“My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am”)

• A higher drive to manage their impression with others
  (“Stay at work late so people know I am hard working”)

• Who were higher in conscientiousness
  (“efficient; organized”)

were the ones who felt the most psychologically and physically dependent on their mobile communication devices.

Other findings:

The more responsive workers were to smartphone interruptions from work while not working, the more they reported

• Higher job stress
• Greater work-to-family conflict
  (the job interfering with their personal life),
  which decreased their career satisfaction;
  and the more their family members reported
• Work-to-family conflict.

Which employees were the most likely to respond to a smartphone interruption from work while not at work?

• Workers with the highest workloads
• Those with the strongest work identities
  (“I invest a large part of myself in my work”).