

Social Media Balance

1. Schedule time to use social media and times to step away.

As with most things, balance is the key to having healthy habits on social media. You can set aside time when you can surf the web, and times when you log off and ignore notifications. It is particularly important when you're spending time with friends or family and before you go to sleep. It may be helpful to use an old-fashioned alarm clock to wake up in the morning, so you can leave your phone in the other room when it's time to go to bed.

2. Be clear about what your purpose is when logging onto a social media site and stick to it.

We've all gone online to check the time of a birthday party next week and found ourselves, an hour later, watching video after video. Be thoughtful about why you're logging into a site and then make sure you sign off when you're finished. This will also make sure you're using social media the way you want – to connect with friends or get updates on your favorite band – without letting what other people are posting take over.

3. Use other people's posts as inspiration rather than comparison.

Seeing other people broadcast their successes and post magazine-perfect moments of their lives might make your daily life pale in comparison. But remember that these moments aren't representative of someone's whole life, and the person posting them is probably struggling with a lot of the same things you are. Looking at these posts as inspiration for you to work toward your own goals, rather than directly comparing your daily life to their Instagram, is a healthier way to view posts on social media. It's also good to be selective about who you follow. If someone's posts consistently make you feel bad about yourself or get you frustrated, then consider unfriending or unfollowing that person.

4. Think before posting.

Likewise, think about what you're sending out to the world. Before you hit send on a post, consider whether it's spreading positivity. You can help make your feed an encouraging place to be by avoiding trolls or online arguments and fostering a community of support and positivity among your friends or followers – at least on your page.

5. Put your mental health first.

Check in with yourself and if you're feeling down, maybe go outside for a walk or grab coffee with a friend rather than spending time online. If getting notifications throughout the day makes you feel stressed or anxious then it would be a good idea to delete the social media apps from your phone or disable push notifications, so you only see alerts when you sign in manually.

Need additional support?
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