

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERDOSE: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

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The social media stories are not only stunning but shocking as well as we keep on hearing them from different sources. A 19-year-old teenage boy attempted suicide because he was not able to get the “perfect” selfie. He was spending 10 hours every day to take 200 selfies each day from his iPhone. He got disconnected from all his friends, family and even his education. He was totally engrossed in posting his best pics as well as on commenting on social media.

A young woman started using Facebook and was immediately hooked onto it spending long hours on the site. This habit irked the parents who scolded her and tried keeping her away from social media. The woman got so heartbroken that she hung herself from a ceiling fan.

A young woman who was visiting Australia took this distraction to a whole new level. Unaware of the things around her she walked off the St. Kilda pier and fell into the chilly waters of Port Phillip because she was too engrossed looking in Facebook on her phone.

All the above incidents have one thing in common, Social Media Addiction. This is all that we have been reading lately and it certainly is a matter of concern to ask ourselves “How much is too much on social media”?

Social media in its nascent stages was a harmless platform for having fun. However, now it has not only become a part of our life but is ruling our lives too. With all of us living in the world called the “new normal” interactions are happening virtually and human connections have taken a back seat. The virtual world has become our actual world and social media usage has gone up rapidly wherein every individual, irrespective of their age has got addicted to picking up their phones and checking their notifications at regular intervals. On one hand, we are enveloped with the feeling of loneliness and uncertainty and on the other hand social media has triggered us to overthink, compare, react and feel insecure.

Over the past few years, the number of cases related to depression, anxiety and stress have grown in magnitude because of social media addiction. Social Media displays a false reality where everyone shows-off their happy side of life. This increases the despair of not able to cope up

with the supposedly desirable lifestyle. Social Media encourages narcissism where getting a ‘like’ on a post becomes the biggest reward. Social Media has the ability to make one a close-minded person too. We generally see what we wish to see and ignore the rest. This gives cues to the system algorithm to present us more of that content which we wish to see. Social Media puts us into a potential risk of sharing our confidential information including address, sexual orientation, political views, and financial details which can potentially put us into grave danger. Finally, Social Media uses-up our precious time away from creativity, knowledge, exploration and socializing with real people.

Do you reach out for your phone first thing in the morning to check your social media notifications? Do you check your notifications in the middle of the night? Do you constantly have an urge to check your social media multiple times during the day? When on a vacation, are you focused on taking the best selfie to upload on Instagram or Facebook rather than enjoying your time? After posting on social media, do you keep checking for the number of likes or comments to see your popularity?

Well, if the answer to all the above questions is a “yes”, then it’s time for you to take a social media detox!

How to do Social Media Detox?

1. Recognition and Determination:

It is important to recognize and accept that you have a problem with Social Media addiction. The next stage is to be determined to continue the detox exercises for the necessary time. One good way is to inform your family and friends that you will be out of social media for some time. This way, your family and friends can remind you or reprimand you if you deviate from your plan.

2. Resolution:

Depending on your level of addiction, you can take various resolutions towards Social Media detox. One way is to remove all your Social Media applications from your Smart phone or from your browser. The other way can

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be to stay away from any Social Media platforms for a considerable time.

3. Replacement:

It is crucial to replace the void created by removing Social Media from your daily routine. The void can be filled-up by exercising, reading, writing, travel or any other creative work or hobbies.

You can detach yourself from social media for 30 days and see the difference in you. To start with, you should try doing it for 7 days and create a whole new “real world” for yourself and see the difference in you to find the answer, how much is Too much!!