

3 Easy Ways to Change Your Relationship with Social Media

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It seems fairly commonplace to hear comments about the negative impact and implications of social media. Whether it is a lack of genuine, face-to-face conversation or parents disciplining their screen-addicted kids, social media is often seen as one of the many ways society is going downhill. However, with billions of people using social media around the world, it seems it is here to stay. With that in mind, here are three ways you can potentially improve your relationship with social media without totally getting rid of it.

1. Consider what social media does for you. Many of us don't ask ourselves what we intend to gain from social media. Perhaps you use Facebook to keep up with friends, you use Instagram to advertise your business, or you use Pinterest to organize your decoration ideas. If you aren't sure, just think about the purpose or intent you have next time you check your social media account. As you scroll through

posts and pictures, think about how you feel in the moment and how it may positively or negatively affect your feelings.

- * Do you find yourself feeling jealous of someone else or bogged down with drama?
- * Do you feel encouraged and connected to others through social media?
- * Do you feel mixed emotions? When do those emotions change? Are different feelings connected to specific content? What kinds of things are happening around you when you use social media?

2. Make social media something that enhances your life Following up from the first suggestion, the natural next step is to consider what can be done to change or enhance what social media does for you. If you are already positive about what social media is doing for you, then consider how you can intentionally continue that. If you are concerned about how social media makes you feel or think

there is room for improvement, start with the source of that feeling.

- * Do you feel stressed or anxious using social media? Are there people or accounts that you could unfollow that contribute to negative feelings?
- * Is there potential to incorporate extra privacy measures to avoid seeing hurtful or distressing content?
- * Do you use the content on social media as sources of inspiration or sources to compare yourself to?

3. Be mindful about the amount of time you spend on social media.

You get up in the morning, you open Facebook on your phone, and five recipe videos (or cat videos, or memes, or self-pitying posts from people you barely know) later, you realize how much time you've spent since deciding to innocently check and browse your accounts. It can be really easy to become consumed by social

media, and it can often get in the way of quality time with family and friends and much needed time for self-care. The following are suggestions that may help you be more mindful and limit the amount of time that is spent on social media: Decide on times where you allow yourself to use social media and times where you won't allow yourself. Leave your phone in another room at bedtime, so you aren't tempted to check it before bed or as soon as you wake up.

Identify if you are connecting with others more through social media or in person. If it is through social media, make more of an effort to connect with others in person or by calling them instead.

Remove the social media apps on your phone that you don't often use and see if you even miss them!

Need some ideas for how to spend all the extra time you'll have without social media?

Strike up a conversation!

Smile and make small talk with a stranger the next time you're waiting in line.

Read a book. Books can teach us new skills, take us on adventures to far-away lands or change our perspective on the world.

Write a letter. Few things are more appreciated than a written note to say hello, apologize or express condolences.

Enjoy the great outdoors.

Run, walk with a friend, rollerblade, go fishing, or dine alfresco. Sunshine impacts our mental health in positive ways.

Channel your inner artist.

Draw a photo, sing a song, learn to play an instrument, take some photos of beautiful people and places.



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New Leaf Resources promotes healthy relationships and personal growth through counseling, education, and consultation from a Christian perspective.

Tackling the Mental Load
Aneece Alicea, MA, LMHC, Licensed Mental Health Counselor



Suggestions for him:

Begin a conversation about how she feels about the workload in the home and inquire about ways you can help. Be ready to listen. She may feel uncomfortable or guilty asking for more help. Attentively engaging her in a conversation about her needs and feelings will communicate that her feelings matter. If she seems to be focused on the list of tasks, she is likely overwhelmed. Offer to take

over certain tasks completely, while being open to suggestions. It is no longer her responsibility to remind you. Be consistent in checking for what else needs to be done, and scan the room for what tasks are unfinished or what parenting duties need to be attended to.

Helping to balance household responsibilities can be achievable when both partners share in mutual respect and love. Take the time to meet each others' needs and be willing to openly communicate your own needs. Working together will lead to a healthier and happier partnership.

“**W**hat do you need me to do?” he asks during the evening routine. The list of a thousand things that need to be completed that evening, while thinking of the endless list for the month, runs through her head in the matter of seconds. She is feeling the mental load, which many experts define as the process of being aware of all the needs in the home. This includes items that need to be purchased, scheduled appointments, chores, and social events. In many heterosexual couples, it’s the woman in the home that carries the majority of the mental load. Not to mention that for many couples, women tend to complete more household tasks than their male partners despite having outside employment. Carrying the mental load can cause a variety of issues like anxiety, relationship dissatisfaction, exhaustion, and frustration. Mental load is work that is necessary but is unacknowledged. There are some solutions to tackling this common issue.

Suggestions for her:

Begin with open and clear communication. Male partners

are sometimes unintentionally unaware that their partner is overloaded, which is not a sign of lack of care. He may recognize your busy routine but may conclude you are not stressed or may believe you are happy with the arrangement, especially for routine activities. Communicating needs and feelings to him in a respectful way will improve his understanding of your experience. However, communicating in a critical or demanding way will be ineffective and may cause more distance and resentment. Another recommendation is to properly delegate tasks. Ask him which tasks he prefers. Understanding and accepting that he may complete those tasks differently than you is essential. Taking the tasks back over may cause confusion and feelings of under appreciation. Noticing and expressing appreciation for his actions will be more effective than criticism. Focusing on each other’s strengths while trying to work around each other’s weaknesses will make for a happier relationship. Setting realistic household goals and expectations, while prioritizing tasks, will be helpful for both him and her.



* Aneece Alica, MA, LMHC



You Hold the Pen

Connie Brott, Development Director



Have you ever read or heard a familiar Scripture passage or saying which caused an “aha” moment. Then you think, “I have read/heard that many times before but have never thought of it ‘that’ way.” I had one of those moments this summer when I attended a leadership conference.

Julliete Funt (remember *Candid Camera* with Allen Funt? Julliete is his daughter) presented a session on communication. During her talk, she provided her definition of “legacy” as it is a major communication tool. If you are reading this article, then I know you, as well as I, have read about “legacy” on multiple occasions. However, I share and focus on the second half of her definition which was my “aha” moment.

“Legacy is the story about you to be written, **but YOU hold the pen.**”

You are quickly thinking, of course, we do! But, first, let’s take legacy a step further than our usual thought of **what**, namely assets, we are going to leave for our heirs and for the Christian organizations we support. True, that discussion is an important facet of our legacy.

However, there are other important facets that may not get the attention that our assets do. Are you trying to determine what beside assets makes up a legacy? I know that is what I was doing while listening to Ms. Funt. Let’s pause and view legacy beyond “assets.” What about...

* our attitudes? Do we see the glass as half empty or half full as we interact with others?

* our beliefs? Do family members, friends, and co-workers understand our faith is important to us, understand what our faith is, understand why we support Christian organizations?

* our morals? Are we trustworthy, honest, kind, and caring with all we encounter?

* our values? Are we aware of our environment, aware of diversity?

* our communication within and outside the family/work? Are we thoughtful, helpful in building up and empowering others to make a difference in God’s world?

We certainly control the “pen” for all of these facets of our legacy. Consciously or sub-consciously with each day and action we are penning our story...our legacy...it is who we are. In the days ahead, be consciously transparent for your family, friends, and co-workers. Let your legacy facets inspire and help make a difference in their lives.

And, to all who support New Leaf Resources as part of your legacy, thank you! As the season changes to fall, and you begin to plan for your annual philanthropic

gifts, we appreciate your including New Leaf. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, November 27, for #GivingTuesday; your gifts received on that day will be

matched again this year. Your prayers and your dollars make a difference in the lives of our clients and are a witness of your legacy which inspires others.



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One of New Leaf’s clients recently wrote to share words of appreciation for her therapy experience.

“I am doing better than I deserve thanks to His grace. Life has been rough, but God has been so faithful and He shines through my brokenness. I am very grateful to you for being one of my spiritual roots and for always treating me with compassion and care as I went through some of the most painful memories.”

- “Kathy”

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