

Social Media and Mental Health

Social media, when used mindfully and in moderation, can be an incredibly powerful tool for supporting mental health. It offers opportunities for connection, allowing people to maintain relationships across long distances, share their experiences, and more. For some, it's even a source of income.



Social media can also pose risks to our mental health, especially when we overuse it or use it to consistently compare ourselves to others.

What are some of the ways social media benefits your mental health?

Select all that apply and add more if relevant.



Connection and support

Reducing isolation

Increase awareness of mental health

Encouragement of self expression

What are some of the negative effects social media use has had on your mental health?



What are any difficult emotions, thoughts, or behaviours that can show up for you before, during, or after social media use?

What is it about your social media use that elicits these kinds of emotions?



Identifying your “why”: Why do you engage with social media?

Use the following table to highlight your top motivations for social media use, how social media meets those needs, and how much time you spend on social media for those purposes.

	How does social media help you in this area?	How much time do you spend on social media for this purpose?
Connection and communication		
Entertainment and relaxation		
Information and news		
Self-expression and identity		
Networking and professional growth		

Motivations are deeply personal, and there's not necessarily a "right" or "wrong" motivation to engage with social platforms. What matters is understanding how it serves your needs and ensuring that your usage aligns with your well-being.



Building healthier habits

Consider the following strategies to help improve your relationship with social media. As you read through them, note which ones you think will be most helpful.



Connecting to your values

Your values are the things that are most meaningful to you—the things you want your life to center on. When you connect your behaviors, including your social media use, with your values, you can help increase your sense of well-being

What do you consider to be your values?

Select any that resonate with you or add your own.

<input type="checkbox"/> Family	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/> Adventure
<input type="checkbox"/> Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Justice	<input type="checkbox"/> Creativity
<input type="checkbox"/> Career	<input type="checkbox"/> Love	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-care
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Fun
<input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Community	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendships	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/> Growth	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

How do you want to show up for what you value?

Select the qualities you want to embody or add your own.

Adventurous

Loving

Energetic

Open

Caring

Persistent

Curious

Passionate

Engaged

Hardworking

Focused

Thoughtful

Steady

Friendly

Strong

Fun-loving

Empathic

Humorous

Now ask yourself:

How does my social media use align with my values?

Does my online activity reflect what I truly care about?

Are there habits that I have on social media that go against my values?





Assessing the impact of your social media use

What do you notice before, during, and after your social media use? Add your experiences in the table below. Try doing this for a few days to gain some valuable insight.

	Before	During	After
How am I feeling?			
How am I thinking?			
How am I behaving?			



Practical steps

Select one or two steps you'd like to try to improve your relationship with social media.

Boundaries	Curating your feed	Connection
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of timers	<input type="checkbox"/> Assess what you are viewing	<input type="checkbox"/> Limit exposure to idealized content
<input type="checkbox"/> Turn off notifications	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider the importance of what you are viewing	<input type="checkbox"/> Post for you, not for validation
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of web-filtering	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfollow accounts that aren't informative or don't uplift you	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice gratitude
<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled social media break	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider where you feel most uplifted	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage authentically

When will you try taking this step?

Do you anticipate any difficulties with taking this step? *List them below:*

What or who might be helpful when challenging this difficulty?