

7 Tips for Healthier Use of News and Social Media

Social media and news can help you stay connected. But all that information can also be overwhelming. It can disrupt your day. And it's easy to form habits you didn't mean to. Here are some tips for using social media and news in a healthy way.



Know your goal. If you want to use social media to stay up-to-date on community events, log off after you have the info you need. If you're trying to stay caught up on the day's events, do you need to keep an eye on the headlines all day? Maybe a check-in once a day is enough.



Notice how it makes you feel. Does seeing what friends are sharing make you happy? Or does it make you feel down? Does the daily news stress you out? When you know how news and social media affect you, you can decide if you need to make some changes to how you use them.



Don't compare your everyday life to someone else's online life. People usually post about the shiny parts of their lives instead of daily struggles or disappointments. So even if what you're seeing is a true story, remember that it won't be the whole story.



Turn off phone alerts. That way you can find information you want when you're ready for it, instead of letting it find you.



Unfollow and hide feeds as needed. If accounts you follow or friends you have post things that stress you out, get rid of them. If you don't want to "unfriend" someone, just change your settings so that you don't see what they post anymore. They'll never know.



Follow the feel-good stuff. The news can be heavy. Try to find balance by focusing on things that make you feel happy. Try following social media accounts that are focused on your interests or on things that make you laugh. And sign up for "good news" mailers. Most major news outlets offer them, or something like it.



Set a time to step away. Make time to disconnect. Close your apps, and turn off the TV. Read a book, get outside, work on a puzzle, call a friend. It doesn't matter what you choose to do. Just make sure it's something that feels supportive and worth your time.

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