

# **SOCIAL MEDIA-STRESS AND YOUR WELL BEING**

**In April, of this year 2019, the big boss of Instagram took the stage at Facebook's annual developer conference to give the announcement of upcoming changes to the massively popular photo-sharing app. Mr. Adam Mosseri revealed that Instagram (which Facebook is the owner) would be testing a version of the social media service that will hide the number of likes a post receives. The user that uploaded the content will be the only one that can see how many people double-tapped there post. We don't want feelings of competition with Instagram, said Mosseri at the event.**



ye   
@kanyewest



we should be able to participate in social media without having to show how many followers or likes we have. Just like how we can turn off the comments we should be able to turn off the display of followers. This has an intense negative impact on our self worth.

10:16 AM · Sep 20, 2018 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

---

**46.3K** Retweets   **216.1K** Likes

My friends, it was an unprecedented acknowledgment of the possible mental-health repercussions of chasing likes and follows. For us who are on Facebook daily, making our posts, are sometimes guilty of making this chase. Investing so much of our time in social media can increase stress levels through like jealousy, envy about friends, experiences, someone who is doing well with there internet business, feelings of inadequacy over having fewer followers than one's peers, or even fear of exclusion.



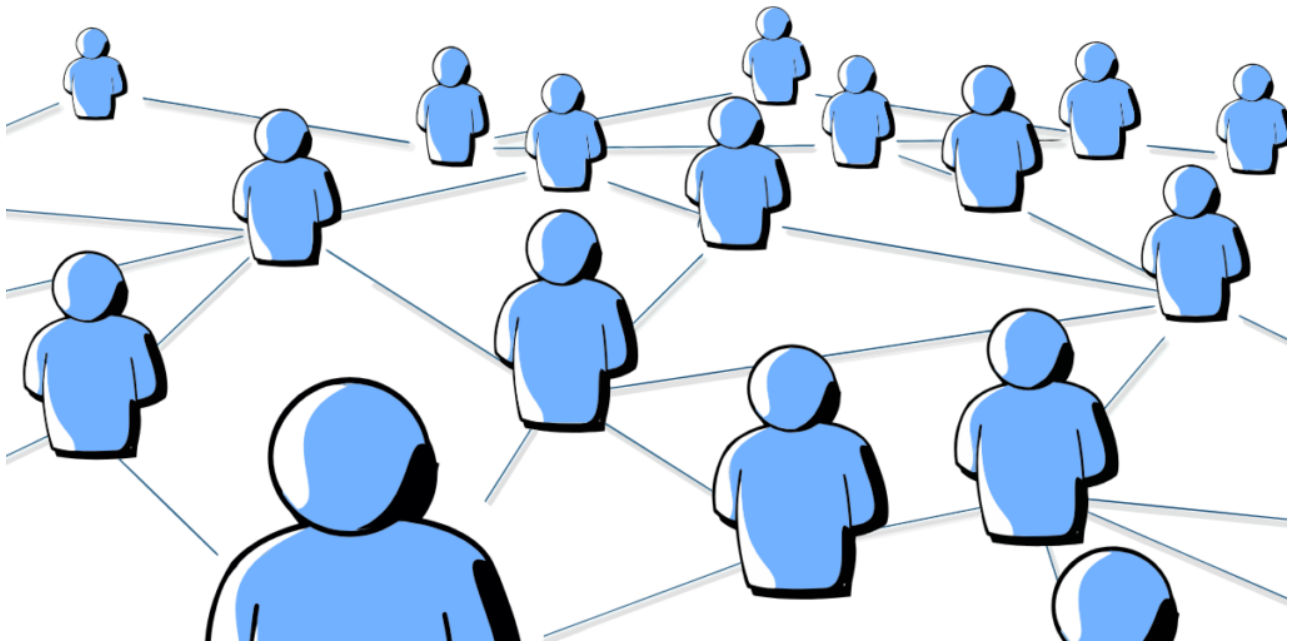
"YouTube tops the table as the most positive, with Instagram and Snapchat coming out as the most detrimental to young people's mental health and well-being."

In a 2017 report from the Royal Society for Public Health in the U.K. discovered that among nearly 1,500 teens and young adults, (this is going to blow your mind), Instagram was the WORST-ranked social-media platform for well-being and mental health, (WOW). Though it scored well in the terms of self-identity and expression, however, it was associated with very high levels of depression, anxiety, bullying and the fear of missing out. Twitter was ranked with the second-best network in the same survey, being only surpassed by YouTube.



However, Twitter co-founder and CEO Mr. Jack Dorsey has stated

that there is always room for improvement. If I had to start this service again, I would not emphasize the “like” in the first place, he said at the TED2019 conference earlier this year. Mr. Jack Dorsey also pointed to issues like harassment, abuse, and misinformation that have become extremely rampant throughout Twitter.



Despite the potentially bleak consequences, however, social media shows no sign at all of slowing down: Instagram is now hosts over a BILLION USERS, and Twitter had roughly in the neighborhood of 330 MILLION active users each and every month. Social media is one of the most rapidly growing technologies on this planet of all time, says Mr. Brian Primack, the dean of the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas. And it’s not just something that most people use now and then. Its tremendous exposure, however, it is also a very emotional exposure.

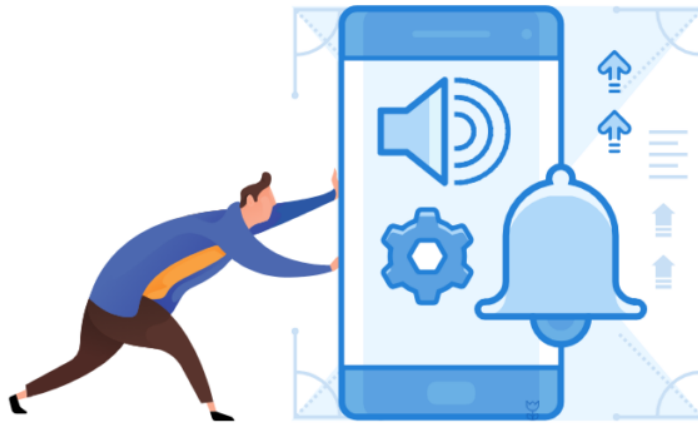


Our teenagers, according to Pew Research Center's in their 2018 report "Teens, Social Media & Technology, have some mixed views on the impact. This survey found that 45% of U.S. teens felt social media was neither positive nor negative, 31% felt it was mostly positive, and 24% felt that it was mostly negative. Other research has yielded much more consistently negative, and some times detrimental, effects. Since 2012, it had been a pronounced rise in depression, unhappiness, stress, suicide attempts and suicide among adolescents and the young adults, Jean Twenge says, who is a professor of psychology at the San Diego State University and the author of *iGen: Why Today's Super-connected Kids are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood*.



**"...as social media use increases, well-being decreases. There was one exception; light users scored higher in well-being than the ones who didn't use social media at all..."**

Twenge investigated individual associations between social-media use and the happiness among adolescents and young adults in her 2019 study, "More Time on Technology, Less Happiness?" This study concluded that, as social media use increases, well-being decreases, it was one exception. Light users scored higher in well-being than the ones who didn't use social media at all. However, just weeks earlier, Primack (at the time was the director of the Center for Research on Media, Technology and Health at the University of Pittsburgh) found an even more straight forward correlation between social-media time and the likelihood of anxiety, depression and social isolation.



**"...with this comes the constant day in and day out internal nagging to check on those all-important notifications and that is the kind of thing that can have a much more dramatic effect on overall anxiety and stress..."**

And those who had some negative experiences on social media showed higher levels of social isolation. (However, almost all the research conducted to date has only focused on social media use among those between the ages of 18 to 40. So far, there is very little data on what, and how effects differ based on age.) Still, the 24/7 slew of push notifications and all the distractions are almost seemingly impossible to ignore. It is right there in your pocket, or in your hand or somewhere very near at all times, and it's buzzing every few seconds, says Primack.



With this comes the constant day in and day out internal nagging to check on those all-important notifications and that is the kind of thing that can have a much more dramatic effect on overall anxiety and stress. Stress can also come from our tendency to measure or compare ourselves with what we see on our news-feeds, ( other people's posts) which is often just the best part of other people's lives. (very rarely will the bad appear in the posts of someones private life). People are so able to curate various personae that they develop and truly maintain online, says Primack. Social comparison is hardly a recent idea, he says, however, social media's distortion of how we actually view ourselves and others online can exacerbate it.





**"...40% of respondents who believed social media had a positive impact said that was because it allowed them to connect with other people. For users who are experiencing isolation or loneliness in real life social media may, very well might be a lifesaver for some..."**

Yet the case of social media and stress may not be entirely grim. In a Pew Research survey, 40% of respondents who believed social media had a positive impact said that was because it allowed them to connect with other people. For users who are experiencing isolation or loneliness in real life, says Primack, social media may, very well might be a lifesaver for some.

After spending too much time, engaging in scrolling through the Instagram stories and all the Facebook highlights, one may be tempted to remove there selves from the social-media grid, however, Twenge recommends to simply set some limits. In a 2018 study in the Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology found that when college students set limits of no more than 10 minutes per platform (Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat) per day, they showed significant reductions in depression and loneliness. Additionally, Primack and his colleagues published in 2018 a study in the American Journal of Health Behavior that had divided participants into five groups of increasing social media connectivity:



Unplugged, Diffuse Dabblers, concentrated Dabblers, Connected and Wired. The Wired and Connected groups had the highest risk for anxiety and depression, while the more moderate groups, did not show any association with these kinds of feelings. It's when use becomes excessive that the negative outcomes are brought into the picture, says Twenge.

Moderation just may be the key to staying connected while combating social media-induced stress. Just take control and limit the amount of your time on social media, says Twenge, so you will have the time to notice the world that is around you, get yourself enough sleep, talk to people face-to-face, and do all those other very important things.

My friends, I believe social media to be a very important part of our lives, however, please let us not cut ourselves off from the real world. May you be always in good health, humbly your Paul Earl.