

Social Media: The good, the bad, and the balance

We're using social media more and more. Is that good or bad for our mental health? Does it boost our self-esteem, or cause more anxiety? The answer is—both.

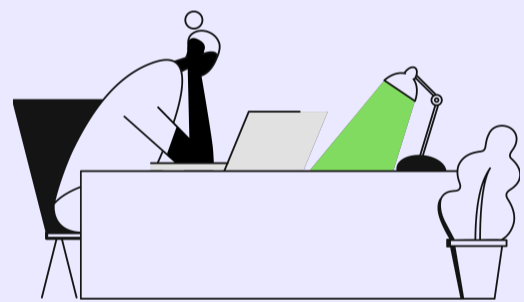
Social media can be good for our mental health because it allows us to:



- Maintain ties with loved ones across the globe. Sharing posts can help us stay connected to our culture and roots.
- Find old friends and make new ones.
- Improve our self-esteem, especially when our posts receive “likes,” “re-tweets,” or positive comments.
- Have company anytime, in any place.

But social media usage can also lead to:

- Insecurity and feelings of inferiority as others often present an idealized version of themselves by only posting positive news or what they want people to know.
- Jealousy, loneliness, or FOMO, as constant postings of other people's holidays, parties, and other social events can make us feel like we're missing out.
- Increased anxiety and even internet addiction.
- Bullying, experienced particularly by young people.



If being on social media is causing negative feelings, try to:



- Limit your time online.
- Spend time on other pursuits that bring you joy.
- Expand and cultivate your real-life social network.
- Avoid the trap of comparing yourself to others.