



# Junior Officer Advisory Group

## Readiness & Deployment Committee

### Behavioral Health Team

# Practicing Wellness

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## Social Media Habits to Support Mental Wellness

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Do you feel like you are constantly connected to your electronic devices, whether it be your laptop or smartphone? Has scrolling, liking, clicking, and commenting become a natural part of your daily routine on one or multiple social media platforms? The evolution of computer-driven technology, including milestones such as the “introduction of Broadband in 2000, which allowed faster internet access, the launching of online platforms like LinkedIn and Friendster in 2002, Pocketbucket and Myspace in 2003, Facebook and Flickr in 2004, YouTube in 2005, and Twitter in 2006” (Srivastava, et al., 2020) have contributed significantly to the present-day social media phenomenon. The increased existence of social media has created opportunities to obtain real-time news, promote information and knowledge-sharing instantly, connect with others globally, and stay connected with distant family and friends. However, research has also indicated that the adverse effects of excessive social media use are damaging to mental health and well-being and include increased internet addiction, depression, loneliness, anxiety, and even self-harm.

The following are practical strategies to consider for being more mindful of practicing constructive social media habits and creating a positive online experience:

- Be cognizant of your current social media usage habits and use your time wisely. Ask yourself “How much time am I spending online?”, “Am I passively scrolling through content and how does it make me feel?” Pay attention to your emotions; and consider changing your habits if you are experiencing a negative impact on your mental or physical well-being.
- Be intentional. Consider and reflect on your intentions before opening an app.
- Remember that social media feeds create algorithms based on content that has previously been viewed. Be intentional in tailoring your algorithm with content that uplifts you. Consider cleaning up your feeds (yes, even deleting those “friends” and “followers”) to remove any unnecessary negativity contributing to your algorithm(s).
- Support and engage in a healthy online community. Use your social media platforms as a tool for active and positive interaction. Follow accounts and groups that align with your genuine interests and passions.

### References:

MindHandHeart. (2020, Jan 23). Nine tips for healthy social media use. MIT News. <https://mindhandheart.mit.edu/news/nine-tips-healthy-social-media-use>

Srivastava, K., Chaudhury, S., Prakash, J., & Dhamija, S. (2019). Social media and mental health challenges. *Industrial psychiatry journal*, 28(2), 155–159. [https://doi.org/10.4103/ipj.ipj\\_154\\_20](https://doi.org/10.4103/ipj.ipj_154_20)