

Social Media Addiction

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Social Media has changed the way that people communicate throughout the world. It’s growth has occurred so rapidly that we nearly cannot imagine a world without social media - even though that world existed less than 20 years ago. With social media taking hold of our daily lives in this way, should we be concerned that we may be developing a global addiction to digital social media? If so, what does this mean for the future of society? These are questions we asked when preparing our interactive documentary: “Social Media Addiction”.

“Social Media Addiction” examines the topic by presenting the rapid growth of major social media platforms, and the expeditious way in which social media has become a part of many people’s daily routine worldwide. In recent years, studies have been published showing the effects of social media on the human emotional state finding that as social media usage increases, negative emotion also increases. Further, social experiments have been conducted by major social networks to intentionally alter the moods of unknowing users to gauge the influence that social media content has on people.

If social media can have such negative effects on so many people, yet those people continue to use it, why is it not discussed as addictive? We’ve likely all seen examples of friends and family declare that they are leaving social media forever...only to return a few weeks later. Is this not the behavior of an addict?

Our documentary includes interviews with subjects falling in a wide range of ages. The goal was to glean insight from all types of social media users. The information gained through these one-on-one interviews provides authentic commentary to our documentary from real people. It is interesting to see the patterns that emerge in usage rates, and how the subjects feel about the idea of social media addiction in general. However, we do not want the conversation about social media addiction to end with our interviews. On our interactive documentary page, visitors will be met with a section that contains external videos for further learning, and the opportunity to continue the conversation by providing their thoughts using the hashtag #SocialMediaAddiction on Twitter. We are excited to follow the conversation.

We hope that our documentary opens some eyes and makes people think about their own social media consumption, as well as that of those around them. Social media has created a human network unprecedented in human history, but is the increased manner in which we are using social media actually disconnecting us from society? Are the emotional impacts of social media usage worth the value gained from time spent scrolling endlessly through newsfeeds. We feel that these questions are important for all people to ask when in pursuit of healthier social media usage habits.