

- Social networking

## MANAGING SCREEN TIME AND SOCIAL MEDIA USE

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THE pandemic and consequent lockdowns have put greater weight on the ways and degree to which we use our smartphones daily. We have been separated from most of our friends and family members due to social distancing measures. Many of us now have to rely on platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet to keep in touch with our relatives and friends.



Activities like virtual classes, video chats, and the constant scrolling through social media have increased the time spent by each person on their phones. Unfortunately, however, this remains overlooked.

Given that many people are using their media to interact with others during these uncertain times to stay well-informed on the news and seek out distractions, how should we manage our screen time?

Efficient use of screen time

Our screens have become a gateway to reach out to people and reconnect.

Many people, myself included, have to do more work on their screens than they would have before. This is just how it is in modern times. We should try to be aware of how much time we spend in front of our screens every day, separating regular breaks from on-screen activities.

Depending on the content you're consuming, social media can do more harm than good. If you feel anxious when using social media in the current climate, you need to assess how you spend your time on Twitter or Facebook.

Are there accounts or people that are building up your worry or anxiety? You can consider muting hashtags (#) or unfollowing accounts that make you feel anxious.

Filter what you consume online. At times like these, remember why you need social media in the first place and consciously try to avoid unnecessary distraction.

If you're the one sharing content, be careful that it also doesn't affect the mental wellbeing of your people online.

There is a lot of false information online. Some people pose as experts posting opinions and ideas that may or may not trigger others in a bad way.

Being cautious about the number of times you spend on social media and conscious of the impact specific accounts have on your mental wellbeing is especially important given the unprecedented circumstances.

As much as social media and the internet in general keeps us updated of the current situation in our community, it helps to consume in moderation.

Try to lessen how much you watch, read, or listen to news that makes you feel uneasy or distressed. Explore the latest information at specific times of the day, finding a balance if the news is causing you huge stress.

But it is also important to not avoid news entirely and to keep on informing and educating one's self. Balance is the key. Having access to quality, relevant, and recent information can make you feel more in control. This way, it would be easier to handle situations on a personal level.