

TEXT 2

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Social media isn't bad: you're just using it wrong

Transcript:

The other day, I was scrolling through Instagram, and I come across this post that says social media is bad. So, I think to myself, "Hmm, I'm looking at a post about how posts are bad." Oh, but that's not even the best part. The best part is I click on it, and the caption says, "Save this for later as a reminder." So basically, they want me to get off social media, but to get back on so I can reread why I shouldn't have been on in the first place. This got me thinking, and I realized that it's so often taught that social media is this horrible thing.

In fact, at the beginning of each school year, most high school students are sat in a safety assembly¹. And part of the safety assembly talks about safety on social media. They tell you how you're going to get catfished or kidnapped. But they stop there. They don't tell you how you can use it in a safe and beneficial way. And unfortunately, those are very real things and do happen way more than it should. But the way to stop that is to teach teens how to use it in a beneficial way.

You know, I think a lot of people don't realize the true impact that social media has on us. In fact, I didn't realize the true impact until one day my English teacher, she said, "Class, what is the purpose of children's books?" So, I thought to myself, "OK. Well, there's multiple different reasons for children's books." But one of the biggest ones is to teach children lessons without them realizing that they're learning. Looking back, I learned not to take food from strangers because Snow White ate a poisonous apple. See, back then, it was children's books. But it's no longer just children's books. It's all the content we're choosing to surround ourselves with: TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, all of it.

I'm currently reading this book. It's called *The Things You Can See Only When You Slow Down*. And the author of this book, they say, the world is neither good or bad. It's just there. And the way we perceive the world is based on our individual experiences. So, let's think about that from a social media standpoint.

There are 7 billion people in this world. And in our day-to-day lives, we don't even interact with 1% – in fact, it's far less than 1%. So, the way we learn about life outside of just our little bubble is do things like traveling. But unfortunately, we can't always be traveling. So, another primary way we do this is through social media. Therefore, if your social media is filled with the drama, toxicity and things that make you feel bad about yourself, naturally, you're going to view the world as more of a negative place. Whereas, if your social media is filled with positivity and things that align² with your goals, you're going to view the world as more of a positive place. See, the problem isn't social media. The problem is how you're choosing to use it.

¹ *safety assembly*: informationsmøde om sikkerhed

² passer med

I hear a lot of stories about people having these bad experiences on social media, and I've had social media for a while now. And honestly, the only scary thing on my Instagram is when I look at my archived posts and see what I used to post in middle school. But other than that, it's been a pretty positive experience.

So what's my secret? How do I keep my social media this positive, uplifting place? Well, there's four groups of people you should be following.

The first: friends, family and positive acquaintances³. Now, I truly mean positive, because so often I'll hear someone say, "I don't like this person. They're so mean to me." But then, you'll go on their Instagram and guess who they're following – that person who's so mean to them. Why surround yourself with that toxic energy if you have the choice to simply not?

The second group: people who align with your goals. Now for me, my future goal is to create my own business one day so the types of people I follow are people who have started their own businesses. People who give financial advice or investing advice or just business in general. Because the easiest way to achieve your goal is to ask someone or watch someone who's already done it.

The third group: people who inspire you. Now, this is different from people who align with your goals. I was a gymnast off and on for about 12 years. I wanted to go to the Olympics. I truly thought I was going to go to the Olympics. In fact, I used to write "Dear future 'me's" to myself, and I was reading them a few weeks ago, and all of them started with: "Dear future me, are you in the Olympics yet?" Unfortunately not. But my point is, at the time, going to the Olympics was my goal. So, the types of people I would follow were people like Simone Biles, Aly Raisman, Gabby Douglas⁴. However, going to the Olympics is no longer my goal. Yet, I never unfollowed those people because they still inspire me.

The fourth group: entertainers. Now, of course, social media is an entertainment platform. And I'm not telling you not to use it as one. I'm just telling you to be mindful of the types of entertainment you're consuming. A great example of positive entertainment are your favorite artists, people like Shawn Mendes, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift⁵, whoever it may be. As long as what they're posting makes you feel good about yourself.

See, when you start to categorize your following⁶ into these four groups, not only are you going to be happier, but opportunities are also going to start to come to you. [...]

Now, before you all leave today, I have two asks. My first ask is to start being mindful of the types of content you're consuming. Start welcoming the positivity and blocking out the negativity. And my second ask: Stop participating in spreading this idea that social media is this horrible thing. Instead, educate on the dangers while encouraging people to use it in a positive way.

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³ bekendte

⁴ *Simone Biles, Aly Raisman, Gabby Douglas*: OL-vindende amerikanske gymnaster

⁵ *Shawn Mendes, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift*: popstjerner

⁶ *your following*: (her) dem du følger på sociale medier