

# Survey Finds Americans' Social Media Habits Changing as National Tensions Rise

Experts say controlling exposure to social media stressors is vital to mental health

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

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## NEWS PACKAGE

<b>SUGGESTED TEASE</b>	SCROLLING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS IS LIKELY STRESSING YOU OUT. COMING UP, A NEW SURVEY SHOWS HOW AMERICANS ARE TAKING A STEP BACK FROM SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.
<b>ANCHOR LEAD</b>	<p>MOST SOCIAL MEDIA SITES WERE CREATED TO HELP US KEEP IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY, BUT SOCIAL MEDIA HAS SINCE TAKEN ON A LIFE OF ITS OWN, ESPECIALLY DURING THIS CONTENTIOUS TIME IN HISTORY.</p> <p>FOR THOSE WHO REGULARLY SCROLL AROUND SOCIAL SITES, IT'S EASY TO BE OVERWHELMED BY CONFLICTING INFORMATION, OPINIONS AND ARGUMENTS, AND BEING CONSTANTLY IMMERSSED IN THIS TENSE ENVIRONMENT CAN WEAR ON OUR MENTAL HEALTH.</p> <p>BARB CONSIGLIO HAS MORE ON HOW WE CAN KEEP THIS STRESS AND ANXIETY IN CHECK AND HOW AMERICANS ARE BEGINNING TO ADJUST HOW THEY USE SOCIAL MEDIA.</p>
<b>(PACKAGE START) -----</b> <b>CG: Courtesy: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center</b> <b>:00 - :03</b> Shots of Andrea gardening	(Nats - Sound) :02
<b>CG: Andrea Koder</b> <b>Reduced social media use</b>	ANDREA KODER HAS HAD ENOUGH OF THE ENDLESS DEBATES ON SOCIAL MEDIA. :03
Shots of Andrea removing app on phone	<i>"The comment sections just get bombarded with negativity and hate-filled comments and that's really hard to see."</i> :07
Shots of social posts	SHE REMOVED SOCIAL APPS FROM HER PHONE TO LIMIT HER ACCESS AND HAS SCALED BACK ON PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS SHE FOLLOWS. IT'S SOMETHING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SAY IS A GOOD IDEA AS WE ALL

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<p><b>CG: Ken Yeager, PhD</b> Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</p> <p>Shots of people scrolling on social media</p> <p><b>Graphic:</b> 56% changed social media habits 1 in 5 take social media breaks</p> <p><b>Ken Yeager (CG'd earlier)</b></p> <p>Shots of Yeager counseling patient</p> <p><b>Ken Yeager (CG'd earlier)</b></p> <p>Shots of video chat with friends</p> <p>Shot of man voting</p> <p>Shots of Andrea on laptop with cat in background</p> <p><b>Andrea Koder (CG'd earlier)</b></p>	<p>EXPERIENCE THE STRESS OF RECENT TURMOIL, FROM A GLOBAL PANDEMIC TO RACIAL INJUSTICES AND POLITICAL DIVISIVENESS OVER THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. :15</p> <p><i>"We have seen spikes in cases of anxiety, depression, suicidality. We have seen spikes in use of mood altering substances to cope." :11</i></p> <p>IT'S AN EMERGING PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN MADE WORSE BY OUR INABILITY TO DISCONNECT, BUT A NEW SURVEY OF TWO THOUSAND PEOPLE BY THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER FINDS AMERICANS ARE BEGINNING TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS.</p> <p>MORE THAN HALF HAVE CHANGED THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA HABITS THIS YEAR AND ONE IN FIVE MAKE A POINT OF TAKING SOCIAL MEDIA BREAKS. :15</p> <p><i>"Take time to slow down. Take time to breathe." :03</i></p> <p>PSYCHIATRIST KEN YEAGER SAYS FAILING TO STOP AND RECOGNIZE HOW SOCIAL MEDIA IS AFFECTING OUR MOOD CAN LEAD TO OVEREXPOSURE OF TRAUMATIC AND STRESSFUL EVENTS. :08</p> <p><i>"It makes people, over an extended period of time, which we have had here, feel like the world is a less safe place to be in." :09</i></p> <p>YEAGER SAYS A GOOD FIRST STEP IS TO CLOSE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS AND RECONNECT WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY, EVEN IF IT'S A PHONE CALL OR VIDEO CHAT. :07</p> <p>(Nats of video chat) :02</p> <p>AND IN A WORLD THAT FEELS CHAOTIC AND OVERWHELMING, YOU CAN REGAIN A SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT BY TAKING ACTIONS LIKE VOTING AND GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE ISSUES YOU CARE ABOUT.</p> <p>FOR ANDREA, IT'S VOLUNTEERING WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND FOSTERING SHELTER ANIMALS. :12</p> <p><i>"There's such a huge need right now. And if you have the opportunity to get involved, it really helps benefit who you are and it's paying it forward in this world that</i></p>
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<p>Shots of Andrea on laptop</p> <p><b>(PACKAGE END)</b> -----</p> <p><b>ANCHOR TAG</b></p>	<p><i>desperately needs it.” :11</i></p> <p>AT THE OHIO STATE WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER, THIS IS BARB CONSIGLIO REPORTING. :03</p> <hr/> <p>IN THESE STRESSFUL TIMES, EXPERTS SAY IF YOU FIND YOURSELF REGULARLY FEELING PANICKED OR YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE CONNECTING WITH OTHERS OR REGULATING YOUR MOOD, IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO SEEK COUNSELING FROM A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL TO HELP YOU THROUGH IT AND FIND WAYS TO COPE.</p>
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### SOCIAL MEDIA

<p> <b>Share it! Suggested tweet:</b></p>  <p> <b>Suggested post:</b></p>	<p>Are your social media feeds stressing you out? You're not alone. A new survey by <a href="https://twitter.com/OSUWexMed">@OSUWexMed</a> finds Americans are adjusting their social habits as national tensions continue to rise. <a href="https://bit.ly/3hD6Mrz">https://bit.ly/3hD6Mrz</a></p> <hr/> <p>We are living in stressful times, but your social media feeds may make it worse. Being constantly immersed in a world of conflicting misinformation and opinions can wear on your mental health, and a new survey by <a href="https://www.ohio-state.edu/wexner-medical-center/">The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center</a> finds Americans are beginning to adjust their social media habits accordingly. <a href="https://bit.ly/3hD6Mrz">https://bit.ly/3hD6Mrz</a></p>
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### EXTRA BITES

<p><b>CG: Ken Yeager, PhD</b> Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</p>	<p>Yeager says unprecedented exposure to events is causing trauma: <i>“As things progress, people are exposed to them in ways that they have never been exposed. Which is now leading individuals to what we call vicarious trauma. They're not there in the event, but they see the event in real time.” :16</i></p> <p>Yeager recommends looking for positives in your day to share: <i>“What we recommend is that people really take time to look for a minimum of three positives in the day, what they did well, how that works for them, and that they share those with others.” :13</i></p> <p>Yeager says take stock of how social media is affecting you: <i>“It's dependent upon how the individual is responding to the news feeds. Is it causing anxiety? Is it causing depression? That is a way that then we can understand the best way to manage the input that's coming toward us.” :14</i></p>
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**CG: Ken Yeager, PhD**  
**Ohio State Wexner Medical Center**

Yeager explains when it is time to seek professional help:  
*“When you find that you are having difficulty in regulating your mood, you’re having difficulty connecting with others, when you feel so out of sorts that you’re having anxiety or panic, these are the times to reach out to that mental health professional.” :17*

**CG: Andrea Koder**  
**Reduced social media use**

Andrea lists things she has done to limit her use of social media:  
*“A couple of things I’ve done are limit the people that I’m following anymore. I don’t really follow any of the news sites anymore. I try really hard not to look at the comments sections. I’ve removed Facebook off my phone, just so I have less access to it. I’ve even taken breaks where I’ve just paused my account for a little bit to get some mental clarity.” :20*

Andrea describes how negative social media has become:  
*“It just feels like everything is so negative. And then you get into the horribleness that is the comment section and it just makes you feel horrible about yourself and you don’t want to acknowledge that that’s humanity anymore.” :21*

Andrea says the social media world seems much worse than reality:  
*“In reality, I feel like I’m around a lot of really good people and there’s not so much hate and I feel like the focus on social media is the downtrodden of our country right now, and it’s very difficult.” :14*

**For viewer information on this story contact:**

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