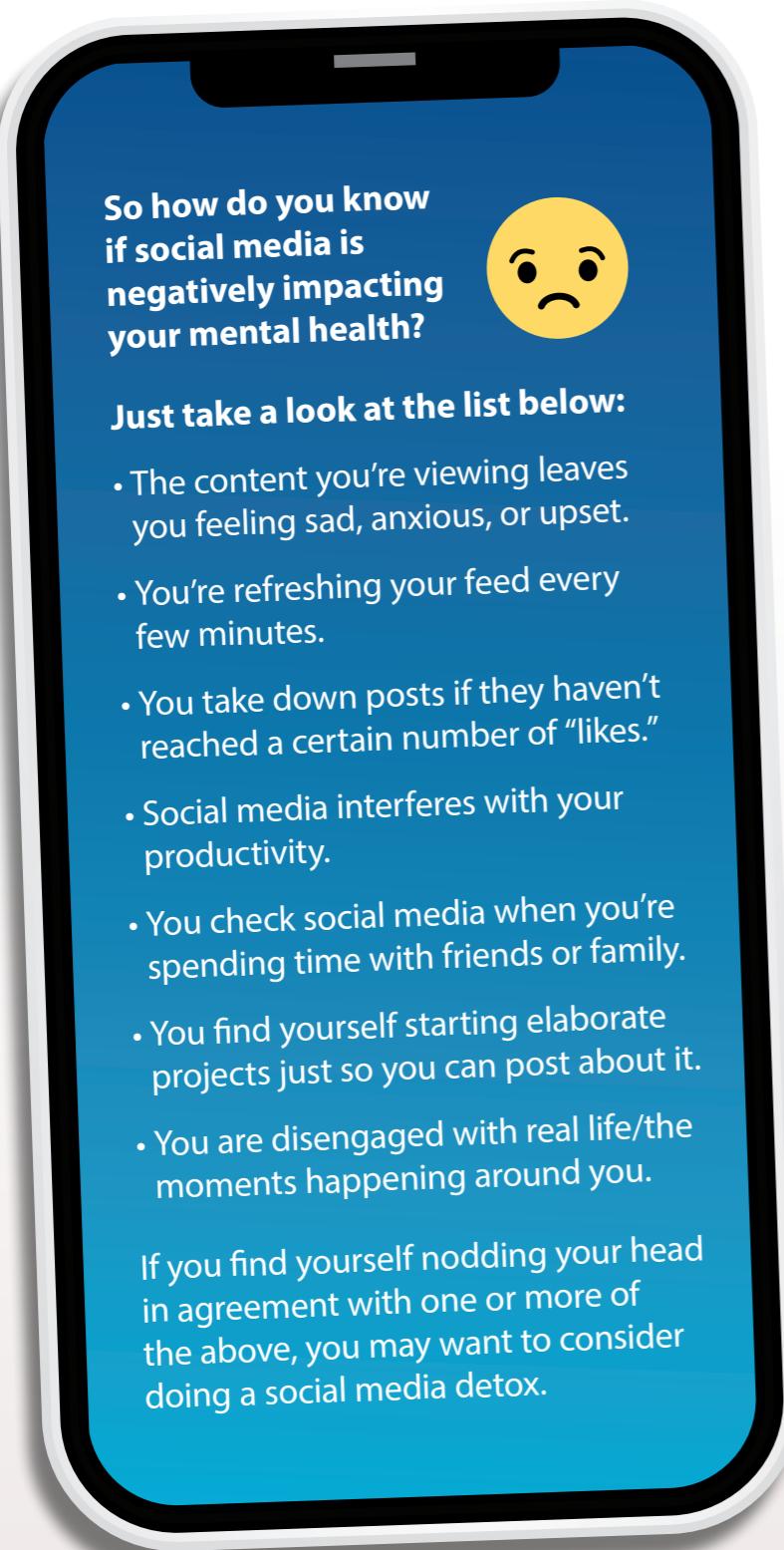




HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIP WITH

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media offers many positives. Digitally connecting with friends, families, and communities can be a wonderful way to maintain important relationships—but these platforms also have some drawbacks that can outweigh the benefits.



Here's how to get started.



Be Mindful

Pick the same time every day for checking social media. Be mindful about when and how long you use it. Consistency is key. Pick a reasonable amount of time and stick with it... and don't forget to turn off your notifications!

Say you decide to allow 30 minutes of social media at 7:30 p.m. every night. That means no checking Facebook as you're sitting in the fast-food drive-thru or posting a selfie while you're bored at work. Be engaged with the moments happening around you—even if it's something as simple as strangers walking past or birds chirping in a nearby tree.

Whatever you do, designate your social media schedule for a time when you don't have much going on. This way you aren't disengaged with moments happening in real time during the buzz of the day.



Be Intentional

There are other ways to use technology outside of social media. Here are a few ideas that may be worth exploring:

- Download a game to play with family or friends.
- Listen to audiobooks to learn new things.
- Have a fitness competition with your friends and family using fitness apps.
- Participate in a virtual book club.

Another way to be intentional with social media is to unfollow people or groups who consistently leave a sour taste in your mouth or frustrate you. You can control who you follow and the content you consume.



Find Balance

Like most things in life, everything is fine in moderation. You don't need to say good riddance to social media altogether... just find a healthy balance. Know where you get sucked in and try your best to avoid becoming consumed by those things. By remembering the positive aspects of social media and realizing that it can also cause addictive behaviors and negative consequences, you can achieve a healthy balance to your social media use and ability to enjoy those moments you share with others.