

The Peace Screening

“Buzz, ping, ring, POP!” The sound of notifications that rushes through one’s body like adrenaline. Telling you that “Ashley_V” went live on Instagram. Or your friend Dante just sent you a snap on Snapchat. But you see, where does our focus lie? The question and concern aren’t “Who/What’s trending right now?”. It’s “What impact does social media have on my life?”. Or

“Does social media build up or break down peace in today’s busy world?”. Many may agree that social media brings about the three C’s: Corrupt, careless, character. But others may say it brings a calm, courageous, community. Well, here’s what I think!

Have you ever heard the saying, “You are not required to hang every detail of your life online”? Well, maybe you haven't, because I made it up. But it’s important to me, so I live by it. I believe that social media can be an outlet for easy information, updates, connectivity, awareness, and other “noble” causes. But at the same time, misinformation and distrust spread. When you think about it, social media is like a drug. You become addicted, and in each moment it brings you a feel-good feeling, a sense of reward and that everything around you is good. But after you devote yourself to endless scrolling, posts, likes, and shares, and take the spotlight off your face, the reality of life stands before you.

Let’s take a look at adolescence. Three stages that youth “find themselves” and a majority of the time give in to peer influence and society. A study taken in 2020 found that 50% of teens feel addicted to their mobile devices and social media. These growing obsessions and addictions bring about anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, shifted eating habits, and bullying.

Slowly comparing themselves to these so-called “influencers” who post their bodies and speak their minds for self-validation, advertisement, and many times, money. Many even find themselves talking to people whom they don’t know, but these interactions somehow bring satisfaction. Social media also opens the door for cyberbullying and many other worst-case scenarios.

It’s a little hard to say that social media promotes peace and brings people together after going through the list of its negative aspects. Only to name a few. But a prime example of its peace-building was seen during the lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic. With the inability to see everyone face to face, social media became the outlet for support groups, stronger relationships, and health information. Unlike those who abuse social media and use it to harm others, a study taken in 2020 shows that 93% of people found social media useful in receiving Covid-19 updates and other peace-led, activities going on.

As I mentioned before, you should not feel the need to “hang” every detail of your life online. I personally don’t own apps like Instagram, snapchat, Tik, Tok, discord, twitter, Facebook etc. because eventually, I will try to become someone that I am not. Putting out a false image of myself, feeling empty and dissatisfied after continuous posting and scrolling. We must always understand that everyone is not sane and mature behind a screen. But at the same time, not everyone is immature and insane behind a screen. So, when it comes to social media, at the end of the day, let's think wisely. Striving to be a calm, courageous community. Negative attributes create divisions and build walls. Not break them. A wise person once said, “Divided we stand, United we fall”. Save a life, through a like.