Tips for Managing Social Media

Top Tips

When it comes to social media and body image/wellbeing, the research (and experience) is clear - social media engagement and content often leads to lowered mood, greater body image dissatisfaction, poorer self-worth and greater disordered eating behaviours. It is vital to consider some strategies for reducing the negative impact social media can have. So here are some tips!

1 Change the Algorithm

This is all about being **intentional** with social media use and the **type of content** that you consume. What is shared in feeds is based on a few factors. Having a **clear out** of your search history, selecting things you want to **view less**, interacting more with content you want to see, and **selecting feed preferences** can all help with what is in your feed.

2 Avoid the Discovery Page

This can be hard at times, but social media platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat can become a slippery slope down an unhelpful rabbit hole when exploring the discovery pages. It can be **helpful to steer clear** of these, at least for a little while. Because the people/ accounts in the discovery page are not the ones you have selected or follow, **there is less say or influence over what you see** and often this means more triggers.

3 Diversify Your Feed

Unfollow hashtags, pages, people and accounts that trigger comparisons and make you feel bad about yourself. You can then focus on **boosting your feed** and **increasing diversity** of what you see (including bodies) based on who you follow and interact with. Follow more **body positive** and **body diverse** individuals/pages to help challenge the internalised thin/ muscular ideal and other narrow representations of bodies!

4 Social Media Literacy

Arming yourself with knowledge and information is crucial in knowing how to interact with social media and how to protect your wellbeing. You can become social media savvy by using a critical eye and being curious about what you see. For example, asking questions such as "*Who is the target audience here and why? Does anyone profit from this message? What information is missing? Does this cause harm or reinforce harmful messages? How do I feel after interacting with this content? Does this benefit me in any way?*"

5 Focus on Coping

We live in a world where it is hard to avoid social media and it is often unrealistic and sometimes unhelpful to just opt out altogether for long periods. The strategies listed here can be useful, but sometimes triggers will show up. In those moments, it can be helpful to **plan in advance how best to cope** so that it minimises the impact on your wellbeing. This might include using **self-compassion, seeking support, journalling, taking a break, connection with loved ones IRL, focusing on other things you enjoy and self-care.**