



I have always enjoyed social media— so much so that I have the opportunity to do it professionally! By nature of my employment, I spend a lot of time on social media. During this unprecedented time of COVID-19, I have found a lot of hope, inspiration, and helpful information online. I must also admit that I have felt overwhelmed at times after constantly seeing COVID-19 related posts. I appreciate the acknowledgement of what's going on globally and the virus-related posts, but I also appreciate those that are posting their regular content so that we can maintain some semblance of normalcy.

Last week (the first week of COVID-19 self-quarantine in the United States), I spent way too much time on my phone. Between losing the structure of being in the office and just getting caught up in scrolling, I spent a considerable amount of time on social media. By Wednesday, I noticed that it was taking a toll on me.

I felt over-stimulated and overwhelmed. I felt like I couldn't concentrate on anything because my mind was filled with so much noise.

This week, I will be implementing a few things in order to maintain a healthy relationship with social media:

1 Setting a social media "schedule:" I have been working on this as a 2020 goal and failing miserably, but I am going to refocus and recommit. My main goal is to not use my phone (check my email, check social media, etc.) until after I have completed my morning routine (prayer, workout, get ready for work) which on my COVID-19 schedule should be completed by 8:30. In the evenings, I would like to put my phone away an hour before bedtime.

2 Muting accounts that do not bring me joy: I have a personal rule that if I do not smile or want to engage positively with a post on social media I need to mute the account for 30 days. After 30 days I come back to the account and reassess my desire to follow the account. Your social media feeds are yours! They should make you feel the way that you want to feel.

3 Sharing accounts and posts that make me smile: I do this in hopes of making someone else smile. I try to be intentional about what I share on my social media so that it doesn't feel noisy to others. I want people to know that when I am share something it is authentic to who I am and something that I found useful or amusing!

4 Finishing tasks before picking up my phone: I have a terrible habit of picking my phone up when I am in the middle of a task to scroll through social media. This usually reminds me that I need to do something or talk to someone and it completely sidetracks me! I keep pertinent social media notifications on for my work accounts so I know when they need attention. I am hoping to develop some discipline this week so that I can reduce distractions and work more efficiently in order to have time to myself each day.

I am hoping that implementing the practices I mentioned above allows me to enjoy social media more than leaving me feeling overwhelmed by it during this time.

There are many beautiful aspects of social media that can help me feel connected. I love seeing what my loved ones are up to. I love seeing how my fellow Catholics are building up the Church during this challenging time. I love to see what my favorite organizations are doing to aid COVID-19 efforts. I want to scroll through my social media accounts and remember why I love them rather than feeling overstimulated and too anxious to enjoy them.



Greta Haussmann is the Social Media Coordinator for the Catholic Apostolate Center

More COVID-19 resources are available online at
www.CatholicApostolateCenter.org/covid-19