

# A Guide to Having Your Parents on Facebook

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It was a fine summer day when I noticed a certain red '1' flashing on my Facebook dashboard. While my heart pondered the possibilities of the friend request being from a fair maiden whom I'll eventually meet and live happily ever after with, I clicked the friend request tab only to find that it's from my father. And there he was, with his passport picture on his profile. After discarding the possibility of changing my profile name to "Cyberboy Bobby Deol", I realised that this is something I have to face if I want to keep my last name. What could go wrong, right?

Turns out, everything if you don't play your cards right. So here I am trying to guide you through the process.

The first thing you need to familiarise yourself with after adding your parents on Facebook is that little 'privacy' button. As long as you're not posting something to the tune of "Studying all night today :D #Blessed" you're better off adding your parents in the 'Hide this from' section. I learnt this lesson the hard way when I carelessly shared a "Cigarettes after Sex" song with my privacy set to public and had my parents give me the 'talk' for a long uncomfortable hour. That magical button has the power to make your profile full of dank memes look cleaner than the



autumn sky and trust me you'd need it.

Another thing you need to get used to is the oncoming flood of malware soon to invade your PC or theirs as was in my case. I don't blame them for it. It's not their fault that they still have faith in the world. Don't be surprised as they click on every misleading pop-up adware they come across after diving into a Facebook 'news link' rabbit hole.

Speaking of 'news' on Facebook, it's always a good thing to let them

know that any viral news on Facebook has less credibility than the gossip your next-door-neighbour aunty brings. Because if you don't, you'll be seeing your parents' political belief swing like a pendulum from extreme right to extreme left and with absolutely nothing in between. By explaining to them how it's always a good idea to double-check a news before sharing it on social media, you can earn yourself some good netizen points as well.

One more thing which you might have to face once your parents are added is the constant wall posts. This one in particular is a weird issue. I mean the fact alone that the first thing your parents thought of after reading an article or such is you, is something to feel proud of. But I think I could have done without my father sharing a 'Research Article' about "How Aloe Vera Can Help to Clean an Upset Stomach" on my wall. And also the baby pictures. Oh I won't even get started on that one. Privacy is once again a decent solution here as it might be better to make sure only you can see your wall posts.

Honestly our parents mean well when they try to use social media to further stay connected with us. But the social links we have with people on Facebook is a convoluted one. There are some things that we can say in front of some people but not others. So sometimes it's complicated to have our parents on Facebook. The problem is that our parents are technologically adept enough to realise if we've blocked them but not

reasonable enough to figure out why. Perhaps the best way to deal with it is to help them by letting them know of some online norms that they might not be aware of. The interweb is a compelling world. As long as you can make the concept of online personal space clear to them it can be an entertaining experience for both sides, without compromises.

*Nur Ismail's dream is to be a Kulfi salesman by day and a jazz guitarist by night, a dream undeniably hard to achieve since he can neither play the guitar or make kulfi. Talk about existential dread and v a p o r a v e with him at n.iftekhar18@gmail.com*

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