

Unspoken Rules of the Internet

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Suppose you pass by someone's house and you find their front door open. Do you just walk right in? No, right? Because that would be super creepy. Like this, there are many social etiquettes that we follow in our lives which now have transcended onto our digital lives. There isn't a handbook or a manual on how one should behave, but it's just common sense to behave politely. Unfortunately, common sense isn't that common, so it is necessary to reiterate some of the unwritten rules of social media.

Here are five things that'll help you scale up your social media courtesies.

TEXT BEFORE CALLING

Shooting a text before calling someone is a decent gesture. Just because the person is online doesn't mean they are up for taking a call. In instances where you think the conversation can be wrapped up in a text, wrap it up in a text. If you have something very important to say, then don't keep calling them on their social media rather give a ring on their personal number.

GIVE CREDIT

Maybe you stumbled upon a great quote you saw on the web or perhaps you found something very pretty and decided to put it up on your profile but you did not reference the original poster. Give credit where it's due. Ask the owner for their permission. Stealing is bad.

SELF-PROMOTION

Advertising for a new business is toilsome, and

it may seem like an easy route to gain more followers by bombarding self-promotional comments on someone else's page or blog. But before sharing your accolades it is important to be aware of the place you are publicising in. Actions like this seem inappropriate and might also trigger the original content creator who worked hard to build their audience.

DO NOT SPAM

Social media has become a great place to share countless photos and videos in an instant. You have the right to share whatever you want on your account, but that does not mean that you'll exploit that power by posting 25 pictures of your face, 50 stories of your cat or unending screenshots of memes you saw on the internet. The email you sent probably reached the receiver. There is no need to send a second email. Don't spam. Keep some of the photos to yourself.

BE RESPONSIVE

It is the general rule of thumb that when a person you know tags or comments on a post you shared, you respond to them. Acknowledgement is necessary, be it a simple emoji or a reaction. Acknowledging someone doesn't make you look uncool rather it builds reliability. Get back to them within a span of 24 hours maximum, however, the sooner the better.

What do you think are some of the other unspoken internet rules?

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UNPLUG YOUR ADDICTION

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What does binge-watching Netflix, listening to music and playing games have in common? These activities trigger a special part of the brain and cause the release of a hormone and neurotransmitter called dopamine. So, what makes dopamine related to addiction?

Dopamine is released in situations in which the human brain experiences pleasure and is also responsible for motivation, promising that a certain action would yield pleasure. Suppose you are playing your favourite game and your brain releases dopamine. This cycle is repeated when you are indulged in more gaming sessions later on. At a certain point, your brain associates "gaming" with "dopamine." Since the brain loves these doses of dopamine, addiction develops.

Some software developers have expressed guilt and admitted to designing their applications in such a way that the user is hooked into checking their status quite frequently. They use the addiction mechanism of the human brain to their commercial advantage.

To test the role of dopamine in addiction, Christian Lüscher, a professor at the University of Geneva in Switzerland and his team designed an experiment. The experiment consisted of small levers that the mice



could press at their convenience. Upon pulling the lever, special sensors within their brains would release dopamine. In a very short while, it was observed that the mice were showing addictive behaviour as they kept on pressing the lever. Lüscher observed that the mice had stopped eating and drinking. He concluded that, if left for a couple of hours, the mice would die quickly, but very happy. This is just the

nervous system at work and is not much different from ours.

How can I "unplug" my addiction?

There is not a particular rulebook when it comes to getting rid of addiction. However, now that we understand what causes addiction in the very first place, we can use it to mitigate its effects. Withdrawal is one of the many useful solutions. Early withdrawal symptoms can include

increased anxiety and a strong desire to use gadgets. Upon continuation, there is a good chance that one may find themselves more efficient and less inclined to use these devices. Control is the key.

Recently, there has been a wellness trend called "dopamine detox" on social media that has gained some momentum. It follows the same principle as withdrawal but somewhat lands on the extreme end of the spectrum. This technique encourages its users to withdraw anything that releases dopamine altogether, including some foods. This is not entirely wrong but there are people who take it one step ahead and go into starvation and/or self-isolation as talking to your loved ones releases dopamine as well. However, doing this does not "reset" your body's dopamine system and is a very common misconception with little scientific backing.

The end of the line is that one can unplug their addiction by reducing dependency on what causes the addiction itself without resorting to self-harm and by appreciating the good things in life.

Osaman is a curious mind always wondering about AI, simulations, theoretical physics and philosophy. To discuss nerd stuff DM him on www.fb.com/osaman.binahmed