

Tips for Navigating Social Media

Social media is a significant part of our daily lives. At its best, social media can provide a source of connection and community. At its worst, social media exposes people to negativity, toxicity and unpleasant interactions.

A lot of people, especially younger people, get a lot of things from social media- information, connection, validation, you name it. But in times like these of heightened anxiety and conflict, it can be hard to get our news and community from social media when it means exposing ourselves to hateful and bigoted language. Below you'll find a few tips for engaging with social media during this challenging time.

Engaging with Social Media Content: How we engage with social media can really shape what kind of content we see and interact with online. Interact with content that speaks to you by sharing, liking, or commenting. Sharing content increases the possibility might speak to other people. Find a post that makes you happy? Share it! Comment so you see more posts that spark Jewish joy. Conversely, commenting on harmful posts will ensure that you see more similar content. Consider quickly skipping harmful content and not reading the comments. If possible, look at thumbnails before watching full size videos to see what you're going to be watching and allowing you to be more intentional about what you consume.

KNOW your audience: Think about who you're connected to in your social media spaces. You can't speak to everyone. If you want to post, think about what you can accomplish by posting and who you're actually trying to influence. It's hard to change the minds of people who aren't open minded. It's especially hard to change the minds of people who aren't open minded and are strangers on the internet. Don't get in a fight with strangers in the comment section. Do assume that there may be some open minded people watching what people are posting and sharing online. Think about how you can add context, nuance, and other perspectives that might help the silent open-minded observers be more empathetic to your perspective. Decide whether you have the energy for a tough conversation before sliding into someone's DMs.

Share YOURSELF: Social media is relational. Share stories that create opportunities for connection. It's ok to be vulnerable. Share your Israel story, personal experience, a song, poem, picture or helpful article. Elevate positive content. Don't just focus on the negative. We all have complex relationships and experiences- if we can communicate those on social media it can help others better understand Israel in the ways that we, as Jewish people, relate to all the different things that Israel can mean to us.

Respond and Educate: Below are some examples of how to respond to toxic or factually incorrect messages.

- "From the River to the Sea" – This is a slogan calls for destroying Israel and the Jews, Arabs, and others who live there.
- "Liberation by any means necessary"- Terrorism doesn't free anyone and justifying "any means" is calling for the killing of innocent Israelis.
- "Israel is targeting innocent people"- In accordance with International law Israel warns civilians about impending attacks and that Hamas encourages people to stay in harm's way.

Get Good Information: Make sure you're sharing content from reliable sources. Try to verify before you share new info. These sources are good for content:

Content Creators: [A Wider Frame](#), [BlackJewishMagic](#), [RootsMetals](#), HeyAlma, [Kveller](#), [Alex Edelman](#), [Tablet](#)

News sources: Times of Israel, Haartzet, Jerusalem Post, JTA News

You are in control of what you post: Don't feel compelled to post about everything. Choose when you want to contribute to the conversation. Social media moves quickly and it is important not to react in the heat of the moment. Think about waiting an hour or two before posting to make sure you don't post something you'll later regret.

Intentionality and Limiting Content

Think about when and where you're consuming content- is before bed a good idea? Or before you start your day?

Part of being intentional is thinking about unfollowing accounts, avoiding unsolicited or unvetted content- like on the "for you" page on TikTok, or even setting up a fresh account for looking at news and only following carefully curated pages. [There is also guidance on how to filter and/report content on twitter, Facebook, and Instagram](#), but that's a bit more of a reactive strategy.

Sometimes we're on autopilot and doom scrolling – asking yourself a few questions can help bring you back to being intentional- ask yourself:

- Why am I watching this? What is my reason for wanting to see this?
- How might watching this help or hurt me?
- If I want to understand what is happening, is there a different medium available for acquiring information or understanding?
- If I do decide to watch, can I limit the potential harm or distress by watching it outside of my bedroom so as to keep that space comfortable for sleeping?

If you do choose to view content, consider limiting the harmful impact by keeping the sound off until you're aware of what you're watching.