INTRODUCTION

The existence of the World Wide Web (www) has created a new social environment for today's generation. New relationships, realities, and identities have been formed in this new environment that redefined our social existence. Physical distance no longer matters much in relationships as friendships, for example, become more flexible and virtual. Such that friendships between strangers become possible through social media. Virtual realities have been created, and that physical presence is no longer required in the digital world. One's presence in the digital world is possible even without the physical embodiment. This paved the way for the development of a new identity as a product of digital interactions, the digital identity. This identity created the socio-digital self. This lesson will tackle this new self. Thus, at the end of the lesson, it is expected that you will be able to attain the following:

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Identify the different forces that impact the development of the socio-digital self.
2. Discuss the impact of social media on mental health.
3. Set boundaries in your online self and
4. Examine your digital self by creating a *My Self Collage*.

Let us start by doing an online survey.

MOTIVATION

Online Survey: Do an online survey with at least 10 netizens about the topics below. Ask your survey participants about the following, then summarize your findings by presenting them in a matrix in a tabular form.

1. Who goes online and why (gender, age, others)?

2. How do they present themselves online and offline (difference)?

3. What is the usual content of their posts?

4. What are the benefits they get from going online?

LESSON PROPER

SOCIO-DIGITAL SELF

With the rise of technology, ways of socializing have significantly changed. In the past, interpersonal relationships can only be established through face-to-face interactions within physical communities. Nowadays, people can interact with one another even if they are not physically present in the same place. Social media is one of the innovations that improved people's interaction and socialization processes.
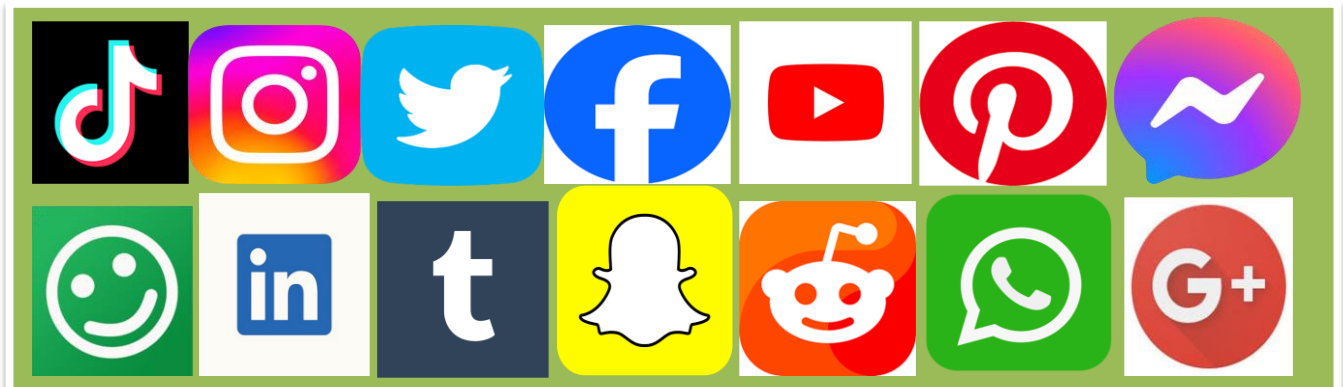
How familiar are you with the social media icons above? Let us test your knowledge. Can you name the above icons from right to left?
_____
_____

Social media refers to the wide range of Internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities" (Dewing, 2012). It makes creating and sharing information, ideas, and interests easier. It also allows people to create other forms of self-expression via virtual communities and networks. Social media has features that allow people to communicate with specific groups sharing common interests (through chat, video call, or posting status and photos) and become members

of virtual communities, locally or globally. These features make way for more efficient ways of socializing and communicating with others.

People may act differently on social media since no physical presence is required. It is called *online disembodiment.* This makes people less likely to display their real "selves" to others, especially strangers. Individuals are prone to create digital identities different from their "real selves." These selves depend on the role identities that help develop the digital identities.

WHAT IS YOUR DIGITAL IDENTITY?

Digital identity is also called online identity. It is the sum of your characteristics and interactions represented in the internet world. It results from the different interactions with each website you visited, showing a different picture of who you are and what you do. In some cases, the online self is significantly different from the offline self (the real self behind the screen outside the digital world). This difference even shows in filtered photographs presented online. What you see is not what you get, and expectations far exceed reality.

With their online identity, individuals tend to do or say things that they do not ordinarily do in their offline life. They tend to be more open, loose, limitless, and unrestrained. In Suler's (2004) study, this effect is known as **online disinhibition.** It has two main categories. Let us discuss them below.

TWO CATEGORIES OF ONLINE DISINHIBITION

According to Suler (2004), two main categories of behavior fall under the online disinhibition effect: **benign disinhibition** and **toxic disinhibition**. Implicitly, Suler (2004) defines benign disinhibition as a positive set of behavioral disinhibitions, and toxic disinhibition as negative. Individuals engage in benign disinhibition when they share very personal things like their secrets and show unusual acts of kindness and generosity. These could be their efforts to develop themselves, a "working through", a self-actualizing" attempt. In contrast, toxic disinhibition is a form of "blind catharsis", an acting out of unsavory needs (Suler, 2004). People engage in this one by rude language, violence, unethical behavior, and entering the dark web of crime, pornography, and other illegal and illicit activities that they will not usually engage in their offline life.

These inhibitions are reinforced by dissociative anonymity, invisibility, asynchronicity, solipsistic introjection, dissociative imagination, and minimization of status and authority, among others. With dissociative anonymity, one becomes more confident to engage because majority of the online world does not know them personally. Invisibility enables them to do things without the need for face-face interactions. The benefit of asynchronicity is the opportunity to delay engagement, e.g., not necessary to reply immediately to messages. While introjection make possible the characters in their virtual world "real" in accordance with their imagination. Hearing
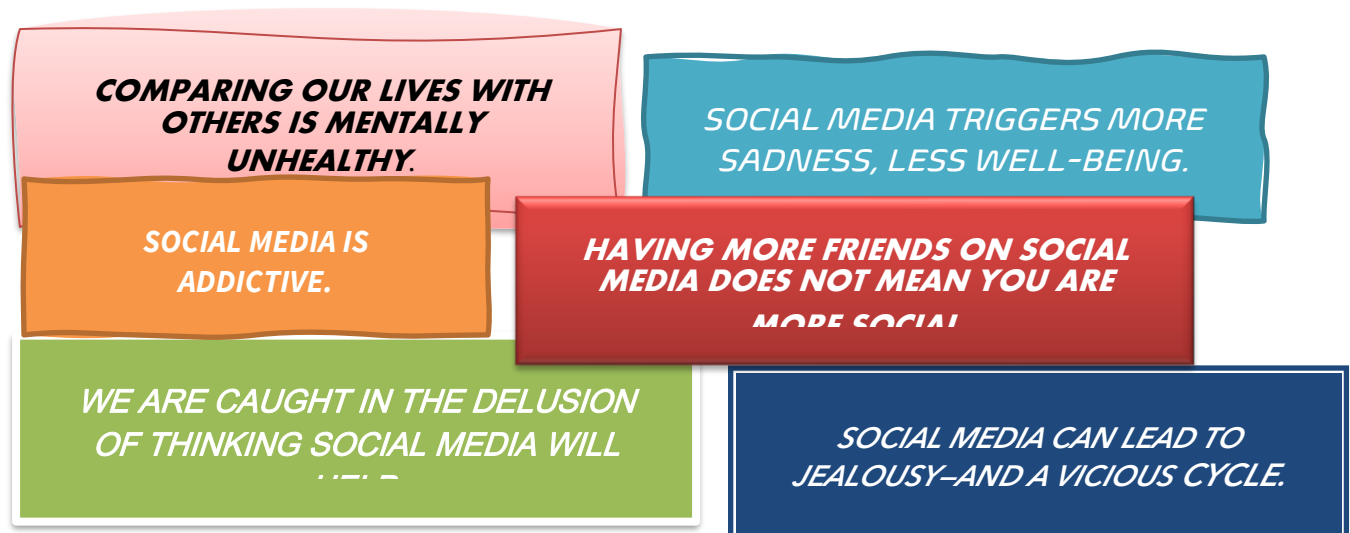
the "voices" of their chatmates while reading the messages is an example of this. With dissociative imagination, individuals could create imaginary characters they could control. Further, in the online world, the real status or character of the person in the offline world may be minimized in the online world.

While the online life has its benefits, you should be aware that it also has its cons. Social media in particular may have its negative effects to our mental health.

SIX WAYS SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECTS OUR MENTAL HEALTH (Walton, 2017)

Walton (2017) said that health experts metaphorically called sitting the new smoking. Sitting is linked to many diseases that kill people yearly. Thus, sitting is unhealthy. However, another thing that concerns our health experts considering sitting is what we do while sitting, mindlessly scrolling through digital platforms in our spare minutes (or, for some, hours). Research confirms that it is not the best habit regarding our collective psychology.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has warned about cyberbullying and "Facebook depression" as the potential adverse effects of social media on the current generation. Below are summaries of studies' findings regarding social media's negative effects on mental health.

COMPARING OUR LIVES WITH OTHERS IS MENTALLY UNHEALTHY.

SOCIAL MEDIA TRIGGERS MORE SADNESS, LESS WELL-BEING.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ADDICTIVE.

HAVING MORE FRIENDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE MORE SOCIAL.

WE ARE CAUGHT IN THE DELUSION OF THINKING SOCIAL MEDIA WILL HELP.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN LEAD TO JEALOUSY–AND A VICIOUS CYCLE.

Social media, however, is not always bad. It offers a lot of benefits. It facilitates communication across distances and even time. It helps us reach to people and friends we had lost touch years ago. It shares relevant and useful information to make us aware of all the happenings around the world. It keeps us updated. Maximizing these benefits is good. Other reasons however, like to get an emotional lift, to get entertained beyond sufficient, to kill time, and the like are too much and harmful. Depending on your purpose, you must learn to set boundaries for your online self.

THE SOCIAL MEDIA DIET: SETTING BOUNDARIES FOR YOUR ONLINE SELF

Too much use of social media may lead to online self addiction. As discussed above, this is unhealthy socially, physically, and psychologically. There are suggestions on how to detoxify your life online. Challenge yourself to do the following:

1. Do not exceed 3 hours in browsing (better if lesser).
2. Deactivate your accounts occasionally, especially during exams (unless you submit files through it).
3. DO NOT OPEN any social network site when you are engaged academically unless necessary.
4. STOP stalking exes, girlfriend/boyfriend of exes (for a happy, healthier lifestyle)
5. DO NOT REPLY to every argument you are not invited from especially if your emotions are too high
6. DO NOT POST IN FB, IG, etc. just for the sake of posting.
7. LIKE is an acknowledgment, but like should always be authentic.
8. REMEMBER that most social network pages are for business, promotions, et.al. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED to have a happy life online. Neither you have the obligation to show it.
9. FACEBOOK is not a diary. Familiarity breeds contempt.
10. PROBLEMS, PLANS, AND INCOME should never be posted online.
11. NEVER message someone to like or share (unless it imposes danger and is authentic and verified); do not beg for attention.
12. Social networking sites can develop weight gain. Your day is better without it, or at least its moderate use.
13. NEVER EVER POST SCREENSHOTS that would offend another party. This stays online forever. What about their future kids? Future partners?
14. STOP monitoring your partner's accounts as if it is your own. Honesty is genuine. If he is honest, he will always be. His training in childhood will show that.
15. Always think of your loved ones when posting. Not that you have to please them but consider their feelings for you when you plan to rant. **IT IS ALWAYS VERBAL COMMUNICATION THAT IS BEST**, not only an option.
16. Do not message your teachers during the week hours. That is their only rest.
17. You control your content. When the page is too toxic or heavy to bear, better consider options of blocking, unfriending, deleting. Sometimes, it is easier that way.
18. Your page is yours. Facebook did not create it for others' standards.
19. Always learn to log out from any device.
20. REFRAIN from checking networking sites if sleep is disrupted.

Following the above suggestions, an individual may develop online self-discipline where they will be able to take advantage of the benefits of the online world while protecting themselves and others from its negative influences. Extra precaution is strongly needed when entering online as every action done online is documented and leaves traces even when they have already been discarded.

Let us check if you can remember what you have read.

APPLICATION

Online Dos and Don'ts: List at least three things you think you should stop doing online and three things you should start doing online.

Things I should stop doing online	Things I should start doing online

BULLET IT!

Summarize your learnings into three points. Give three statements summarizing everything you have learned from this module.

❖ _____
_____

❖ _____
_____

❖ _____
_____

MY SELF COLLAGE

Create a collage of images showing your online and offline self. Caption the collage in such a way that the two selves are identified and described. Provide a brief explanation for your collage.

MOVE FORWARD

GUESS WHAT

The next topic will be about the self formed due our spiritual needs. This self is called as
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ self.

RUBRICS for A Portrait of My Self Collage Activity

CRITERIA	Needs Improvement 76 – 85 pts	Sufficient 86 – 94 pts	Excellent 95 – 100 pts
Content Comprehensiveness 50%	There are, at most, two learned concepts presented and utilized.	More than two learned concepts are presented and utilized. The presentation of content merely shows logical organization but is not reflective.	More than two learned concepts are presented and utilized. The presentation of content shows critical and reflective thoughts.
Presentation of Artwork 30%	The collage is almost meaningless. It does not reflect the key elements of digital identity as intended.		The collage is meaningful, clearly, and logically reflects the key elements of digital identity.
Organization of Explanation 20%	There are many grammatical issues. Its readability is problematic.	There are a few grammatical issues. The flow of thoughts is at least easy to follow.	There are minor to no grammatical issues. The flow of thoughts is clear. The presentation of ideas is logical.

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