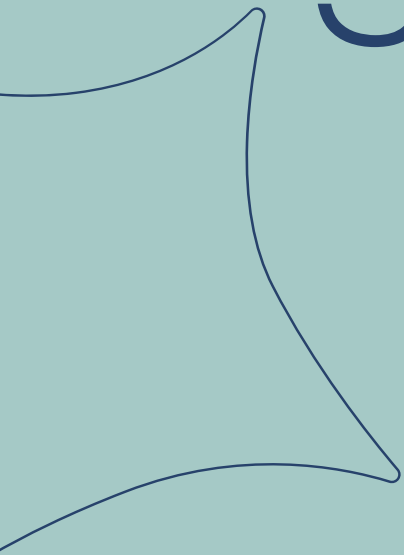


MentalHealth& Social Media

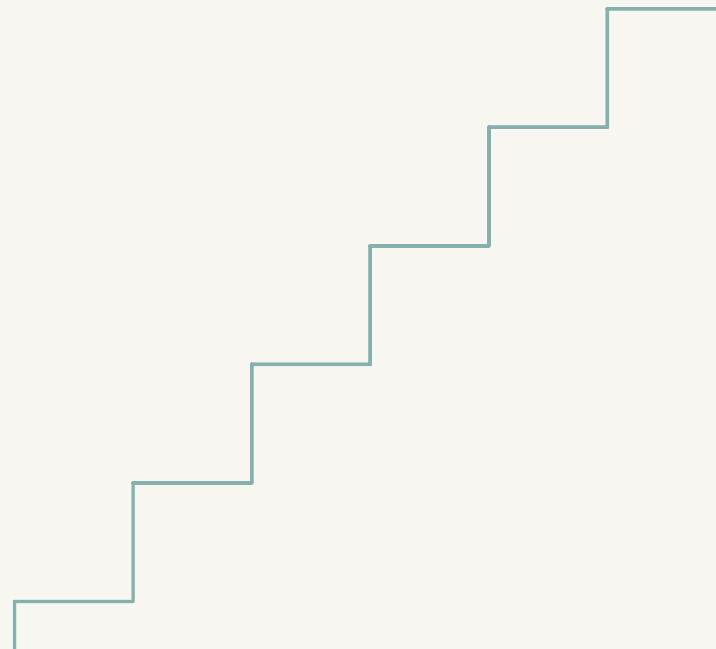


Contributing to a healthier culture of scrolling

Table of Contents



- 01 Background
- 02 Nutrition versus Calories
- 03 Quiet impact > loud influence
- 04 Design Intersections
- 05 The 80/20 Strategy
- 06 Common Mistakes
- 07 Content Directions
- 08 Research Considerations
- 09 Final Comments



Background



MENTALHEALTH& SOCIAL MEDIA

Individual therapy requires intentional goals, consideration of ethics, and informed approach. Why is the same care and empathy not given to the content that clinical experts/providers share to online spaces?

It is a sad truth that the majority of the global population, especially some of our most vulnerable communities, do not have access to mental healthcare.

With a variety of mediums, and a never-ending scope of discussions taking place simultaneously - social media can be a source of comfort, guidance, community, and even a pathway to a qualified therapist. However, many support providers feel restricted or have been misguided with how to present mental health education in online spaces.

This resource offers a brief overview of the various links between mental health education and social media.



Nutrition vs. Calories



Fuelling our bodies isn't a rigid structure of vegetables and water. A well-balanced diet includes room for enjoying calorie-dense treats, alongside the nutrient-rich meals that are vital to our health. A balanced approach to your social media content ensures that you are both contributing to a healthier scrolling experience for your social media community whilst also presenting a relatable personality that users can connect with.

NUTRITION

Content that provides education and ethical guidance.

- Thoughtful descriptors of clinical terminology.
- Frequently asked questions based on your professional experience.
- Bites of education that support the mental health journey.
- Practical translations of research and new perspectives.

CALORIES

Content that provides entertainment and fuel connection.

- Light-hearted humour through tonality and imagery
- Playful reflections/reviews on trending content.
- Comedic breaks such as memes, debunking common myths, and false practices
- Ethical self-disclosure that humanises the provider and deepens connection.

Quiet Impact >

As a clinical expert, your role on social media can improve the social media space. This does not define you as an “influencer” unless that is a path you choose to follow. Quiet impact is the most ethical approach for translating your clinical knowledge into digital tools.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

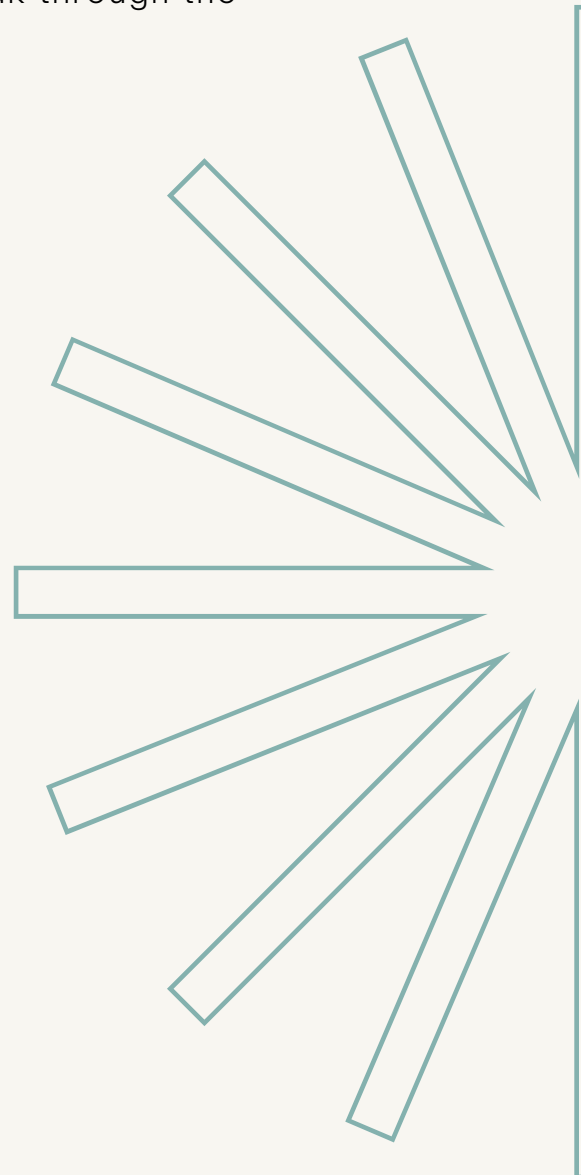
Unlike influencers/content creators, your social media presence doesn't need to be loud in order for your expertise to be taken seriously. Your knowledge and experience requires no additional frills for online communities to pay attention. Your only mission is to improve online spaces with your professional expertise, and break through the misinformation that occupies social media feeds.

COMMUNAL IDENTITY

Whilst the quiet impact approach separates your online presence from influencers/content creators; this shouldn't restrict you from participating in the trends of your online community. On the contrary, allowing yourself to share certain social identities that are important for your online community fuels connection and empathy.

S.I.D.E. EFFECTS

Considering “The Social Identity Model of Deindividuation Effects (SIDE)”, many communities find solace in online spaces that transform their personal identity and struggles into a shared social identity or experience. Whilst there is a fine-line between a community and an echo-chamber, both online and offline, your presence can safeguard the health of online connection.



Design Intersections

How do you illustrate the complexities of the mind, especially mental health symptoms that are so internalised?

→ EMPATHY IN DESIGN

Empathy in design is a challenge for even the most experienced graphic designers. Creating visual depictions of mental health issues requires clinical knowledge, empathy, and creativity. The effort of integrating empathetic visuals into your content, however, contributes to a more inclusive experience for online communities.

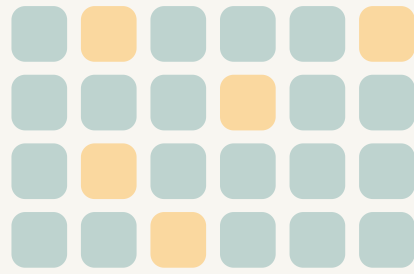
→ COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY

Colour palettes are an important storytelling tool. They inform our emotional interpretations of the visuals in front of us. By carefully choosing colours that resonate with themes of well-being and trust, you can foster a sense of connection and safety, enhancing the engagement and relatability of your content.

→ MINIMALISM

In a world of noise and opinions, the objective of providers when adding clinical guidance (even generic in nature) on social media platforms should be to quieten an already loud space. The intention of content design should focus on readability and minimalism. Successfully translating clinical knowledge into accessible language and formats is a challenge worth the effort.


80/20

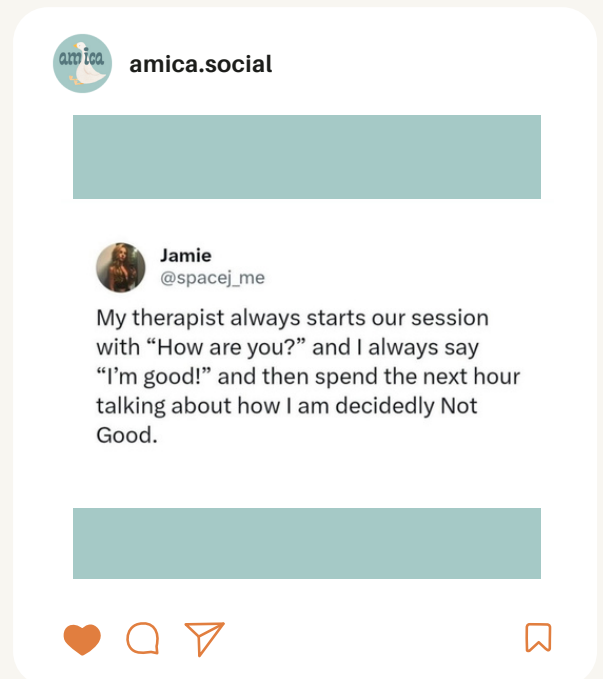



CONTENT STRATEGY

Referring back to the “Nutrition vs. Calories” approach, a content strategy that encompasses both “food for thought” and opportunities for connection with in-groups/communities using anecdotal trends is an important consideration for clinical experts.



80% 
NUTRITION



20% 
CALORIES

~~Mistakes~~



There is some rhythm to the social media noise. Online spaces have their own etiquette to be met and, whilst sometimes blurred, presenting your knowledge politely can make a profound impact within your online community.

RESHARE MANNERS

The rise of “meme accounts” and their success at growing loyal communities ignited a trend of professionals also leveraging anecdotal formats to nurture stronger followings. Revisiting the 80/20 strategy, clinical experts should not shy away from memes or resharing relevant content from “meme accounts”. Do so respectfully, however. **If you did not create the content, then include a clear credit to the creator.**

DISCLAIMER DUTY

Ethical social media content, just like individualised therapy, has a duty of care. Even educational content that is generic in nature should always include content disclaimers that give users transparent parameters regarding the risks, benefits, potentially triggering discourse, and limitations of their content. **Content disclaimers are an ethical standard across industries, and vital to public safety.**

TEXT WALLS

Walls of text are not just displeasing to the brain - they lack inclusivity. Designing content that has carefully considered the comprehension and literacy abilities of a variety of social media users is a positive reflection on your clinical knowledge and ethics. **Be fair to your audience and share your expertise inclusively.**

~~OVERARCHING~~ ← BITE-SIZE

Break overarching topics into bite-sized pieces. Careful planning of your social media content can look very similar to structuring an individualised treatment plan. Goals/objectives cannot be reached unless your approach and timelines align with the audience’s needs/abilities. **Introducing larger concepts without nuance is an increasingly harmful tactic on social media.**

Content Directions

Stylised and polished content may be a general impression of how to successfully show-up online. Influencer culture has created a false perception of what makes “good content”. The objectives of influencers primarily centres around hyper-virality, selling/promotion, and click-bait. Nutritional content can direct away from this culture in the following ways.



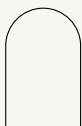
TENTATIVE LANGUAGE

There are no completed circles of knowledge. Your language should never present absolute certainty on any topic.



EVIDENCE OVER OPINION

You are one clinical expert among many. Use evidence to support your knowledge rather than positioning yourself as the source.



HONESTY/AUTHENTICITY

Your community does not need you dress up your knowledge in flamboyant costumes. Honesty amongst inauthenticity is hard to miss.



RELATABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

Self-disclosure in moderation is a trust-building practice on social media too. Use it as wisely as you would in individual therapy.

Further Reading

Bailey, E., Boland, A., Bell, I., Nicholas, J., La Sala, L., & Robinson, J. (2022). The Mental Health and Social Media Use of Young Australians during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(3), 1077. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031077>

Vaingankar, J. A., van Dam, R. M., Samari, E., Chang, S., Seow, E., Chua, Y. C., Luo, N., Verma, S., & Subramaniam, M. (2022). Social Media-Driven Routes to Positive Mental Health Among Youth: Qualitative Enquiry and Concept Mapping Study. *JMIR pediatrics and parenting*, 5(1), e32758. <https://doi.org/10.2196/32758>

Vaingankar, J. A., van Dam, R. M., Samari, E., Chang, S., Seow, E., Chua, Y. C., Luo, N., Verma, S., & Subramaniam, M. (2022). Social Media-Driven Routes to Positive Mental Health Among Youth: Qualitative Enquiry and Concept Mapping Study. *JMIR pediatrics and parenting*, 5(1), e32758. <https://doi.org/10.2196/32758>

Naslund, J. A., Bondre, A., Torous, J., & Aschbrenner, K. A. (2020). Social Media and Mental Health: Benefits, Risks, and Opportunities for Research and Practice. *Journal of technology in behavioral science*, 5(3), 245–257. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41347-020-00134-x>

For more information regarding social media & mental health, please visit my website.



Final Comments

Whether it be for the sake of upskilling due to industry demands, or a drive to serve the diverse needs of your clients & community...

Social media is a space that needs your clinical knowledge, unique professional skillset, ethics, and empathetic capacity.

If you are overwhelmed with the idea of translating your clinical knowledge into digital tools, then support is available. Collaborating with a freelancer who has experience working with Allied Health practitioners is both beneficial to you and your clients/communities.

READY TO DIVERSIFY?



Table of Contents

- 01 [Background](#)
- 02 [Nutrition versus Calories](#)
- 03 [Quiet impact > loud influence](#)
- 04 [Design Intersections](#)
- 05 [The 80/20 Strategy](#)
- 06 [Common Mistakes](#)
- 07 [Content Directions](#)
- 08 [Research Considerations](#)
- 09 [Final Comments](#)



Nutrition vs. Calories

...the consequences of the mind, especially mental health are so intertwined

DESIGN INTERSECTIONS

...the most experienced graphic designers or mental health issues require clinical expertise. The expert of integrating aesthetic and functional design contributes to a more inclusive

PHOLOGY

...they inform our emotional state. They can foster a sense of calm and consistency of your

...breaks such as... the provider that... and

...it provides... and less connection... content... reviews on... about common... false practices... the provider that... and

...tables and water. A well-balanced diet, alongside a balanced approach to a community that also connects with