In today’s cyber immersed world, it is easy to forget the definition of friendship. While social media keeps everyone in touch and only a few clicks from instant communication, one would think that interpersonal relationships would be strengthened between people. There are billions of people to contact and connect with, and the ability to engage in instant conversation is available to mainly everyone. How is it then that interpersonal bonds are being weakened by this total immersion in a social world? Alex Pattakos makes a common argument in his paper “The Meaning of Friendship in a Social-Networked World.” He states that our constant and over-use of media has affected our definition of and ability to achieve friendship. Specifically, he argues that computers deter your focus to a topic that isn’t part of the natural world. This world is called cyberspace. Many people, as Carr would point out, get sucked into cyberspace because they believe that it is easier to have instant contact to many people in the world around them. In this way, the people, which usually have many “friends” on their social media pages than they could possibly have in real life.

While Wendell Berry argued that all technology is detrimental to the environment, Nicholas Carr argued that technology can be a problem to the intelligence of society, but Pattakos took a different approach. His perspective on the effect of cyberspace to human relationships seems quite accurate. Also, the definition of “friend” has become very different from what people from the 90’s would have acknowledged. Older individuals would describe friends as people that you either talk to a lot or know well. Today’s individuals would most likely define the term friends as anyone that has been or is your acquaintance. This unparticular terminology is defined very well by the section of friends in most peoples’ social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, and many other social networking sites have the capability to have “friends.” Why, then, do people feel as if they are more lonely when they have so many “friends” on social networking sites?

This problematic question has a very simple answer. People that have many “friends” on social networking sites don’t technically interact with many of their “friends.” They don’t have much contact with the world outside of cyberspace. Without the interactions that face-to-face conversations include, people could feel very lonely and depressed. For instance, Angela in “The Net” is so secluded from the world outside of her house that, when her identity was stolen, nobody could vouch for her. At this level, there is a high chance that Angela felt forlorn and lonely. Aristotle, as Pattakos points out, has the opinion that true friends are people having a personal relationship with you. In agreement with Aristotle, you can’t trust people unless you know about their personal life and vice versa. At this conclusion, it is easy to solve the problem of why people feel lonely and depressed when they have many “friends” in the world of cyberspace.