Real Online Relationships

Stephen Marche claims that our constant use of social media actually results in us being less connected to the people around us. However, the online friendships we create can be real and the relationships can be just as real as physical ones. In order for those online relationships to be considered as beneficial as physical ones, some conditions must be met. Online relationships, just like physical relationships, should begin with a personal connection through exchanging information about each other. This might include talking about shallow things, sports or weighty things like religious beliefs. Another condition is that at some point, these online relationships should transfer to the physical world, or at least a video chat. There needs to be a way to confirm the information about each other, like: who they are, or what they look like. The final condition is that, true friendships developed online should develop over time, just as physical relationships do. Not all online friendships can become real friendships, just as not all friends in the real world can become real friends.

True friendships include a personal connection, trust, fun, and compassion. In the cyber world, all of these things are possible. For an example, you can develop a personal connection with someone in the cyber world by video chatting, sharing about your lives, and discussing ideas and interests. Interests can be discussed through Twitter threads, music forums, and through online games. Sharing interests builds a foundation for new friendships. These friendships develop as people find commonalities, become connected, and online friends can develop a sense of trust between one another. In the cyber world, it is possible to have fun with someone, and build a meaningful relationship with them even if you are not nearby. Examples of this would be playing games, sending jokes, video chat, and sharing funny things. An important thing in a relationship, especially one that is online, is compassion, which can be shown through gifts that are virtual or real and encouraging messages, though they may be far away.

Online friendships can be just as beneficial as physical relationships, even if they have different circumstances. With online relationships you can connect with people far away. Your online friends are as real as the friend sitting next to you because you rely on them when you need them. You can contact them and have help right away without having to meet up anywhere. They can sometimes be more useful because they might not actually know the same people so they give you useful advice that works no matter what the people are actually like. Many people use the online sites to keep in contact with loved ones, reconnect to long lost friends, and even find new friends. Even though some online relationships have an element of uncertainty, like those “friendships” featured on the T.V. show “Catfish,” the best internet relationships make a connection in the physical world as well as in the cyber world. Online relationships, when done safely, can be just as real as physical ones.