

The feed is not for everyone

My relationship with Instagram is toxic and the reason is simple: **FOMO**. Basically, I don't have a good week if I know my friends have had a better one.

Jessica is enjoying a restorative massage at a spa retreat in the Blue Mountains? *Ugh, why didn't I also go?*

Aditya is sipping an iced tea from a beach house in Maui? *Fuuuuun. What the heck am I doing at work?*

Dave is in Rome eating the best pizza of his life? *God, how do you keep going on vacations, Dave? When do you work? How do you afford it? Who takes care of the kids? TEACH ME YOUR WAYS!*

I don't enjoy this feeling, and to be clear, I don't hate my friends. They're just out to live their best lives and share it with their social circle. It's not a them problem, it's a me problem.

There's tons of websites out there that would tell you that therapy and a break from social media is great for your mental health. And it is! I've done it! I've sought help in the past and also deactivated my Instagram account for a week or two.

It doesn't work long-term though. I realized why I kept coming back:

- My friends still want to tag me when we do things together.
- My friends still want to DM me some stories and posts.
- I still want to tell the world about what I'm doing.
- I want to share socials with a new friend I just met.

And so the cycle repeats: I get annoyed, so I deactivate my account. I need my account, so I turn it back on.

See, if you're like me, sometimes the only part of Instagram you don't want is the feed. The feed shows you how great your friend's lives are and I automatically compare theirs to my own. Is that healthy? No, but I'm working on it. Until then, I have a recommendation for the Instagram team: **allow us to disable the feed**.

Yep, I say if you launch Instagram, you should be able to go right into the camera. No feed. No posts or stories from the people you follow. None. Nyet. Nada. Zilch.

You can make your own posts and stories. You can still get notifications when you're tagged. You can still get DMs and reply to them. But you don't see the FOMO-inducing content posted by your friends. Everyone is muted, if that's what you really want.

It's weird, it's not for everybody, but it makes sense to me. I think taking a break from just the feeds might be a great way to find that balance between having the whole app and having none of it.

Side note: I recently found out that you can kinda do this with iOS. You can set up a shortcut on your home screen that goes right into the Instagram Camera, effectively skipping the feed. You can still swipe back to the feed, so it's not a great solution, but something is better than nothing.