

Pros and Cons of social media: A Double-Edged Sword

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In this modern world age Robotic Surgery becoming norm, 5G about to arrive, you love social media, hate it but you cannot ignore it. Almost 5 billion people across the world are on social media. Social Media are the windows through which you can see the whole world and areas of your interest. One can make his presence felt through the social media aptly and easily. It's up to you how to use social media like - Lamp post one can use it for illumination or use it for support like a drunkard uses it i.e., for support to maintain balance. Like our Mythological Gods Brahma can be used in creative manner or Siva as a destroyer in distracting or disheartening manner. In fact it is Frenemy, it can be friendly if used in positive manner and enemy if used in negative manner. We will go into the Pros and Cons of social media.

The Pros

The Corona Era was an excellent teacher, which made us excel in usage of social media at its zenith. I was the first one to start webinars in Orthopaedics in India from 1st April 2020 which was attended by more than 4000 Orthopaedic Surgeons and now it has become a norm. I publicized the webinars on social media e.g., What's App, Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, E mails etc., which made the attendance very promising. Research has proved that knowledge is easily dissipated through social media. Patients were treated quite efficiently on virtual social media when physical examination had become prohibitive due to fear of Covid. Now it has become a norm when patient cannot come for physical examination. The regular clinical meetings are broadcasted on virtual platforms. My last physical meeting was an example of this where I

was the Chairman and one of the speakers suffered from Covid and another speaker from USA couldn't travel and they were by virtual presence, in the hall we were 100 persons and 1800 doctors from different cities of India were logged in virtually. The Virtual Conferences have become norms than an exception. There are many groups on What's App and Telegram where we discuss difficult to treat cases with perfect solutions. So much so that this Journal and Editorial you are reading on social media digitally. As an Examiner of Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, I evaluate the dissertations on E mail. As an Editor of Journals, I handle manuscripts online. The school children have virtually attended school for practically 2 years. Psychiatrists have more consultations on social media than physical. Social media have been a part of our lives for communication, healthcare, entertainment and are healthy and productive. Thus, there are benefits of global audience getting connected from varying time zones just by pressing a click button. How the technology was adopted by tech naïve older generations and how they became tech savvy...Was COVID a boon for world.

The Cons

Like every coin has two sides, social media also has its flip side. Facebook depression, social media addiction. Patients bombard with reports not properly legible and ask for opinion as if going for shopping without spending a single penny. If patient is not examined properly there could be medicolegal implications. Many institutions have come up with helping doctor and patients can communicate to each other virtually and send a printed prescription. We do a lot of Telemedicine, but for those remote areas where they

don't have proper infrastructure or no access to specialist, that's good but those who can come physically should be dissuaded for social media or virtual consultations. On What's app groups I find lot of doctors asking for second opinion or method of treatment in straight forward cases. I feel that should be restricted to interesting cases or complex case. Like it is said too much is too bad, one should keep fixed time and allot fixed duration for social media, so that social media doesn't consume your valuable time.

The Balance, Conclusion

Social media has come to stay and will find its place. One should judiciously use it and not to overuse it or abuse it. It has been and the biggest boon for all generations: The Greatest Generation (born 1901-1927), The Silent Generation (born 1928-1945), Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Generation X (born 1965-1980), Millennials (born 1981-1995), Generation Z (born 1996-2010) Generation Alpha (born 2011-2025).

"Build it, and they will come" only works in the movies. Social Media is a "build it, nurture it, engage them, and they may come and stay." Seth Godin.