MODULE 3

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING- MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND OVERCOMING HYPERCONNECTIVITY

ERASMEDIAH
Educational Reinforcement Against
the Social Media Hyperconnectivity

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Lesson 3.2

Coping strategies for social media addiction

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Lesson Overview

Today, we're going to explore how to manage and overcome social media addiction through effective coping strategies. We'll focus on understanding the underlying causes, discovering actionable solutions, and creating sustainable plans for balance.

The workshop is organized into 4 steps:

1. Understanding Social Media addiction (10 min)

2: Exploring coping strategies (15 min)

3: Developing a personalized action plan (10 min)

4: Closing Discussion & Takeaways (5 min)

Lesson 3.2.

Coping strategies for social media addiction

Objectives:

- Recognize the signs and impact of social media addiction.
- Learn practical strategies to cope and regain control over digital habits.
- Develop an individualized plan for maintaining a balanced relationship with technology.

Key message(s):

- Social media addiction can lead to stress, poor productivity, and impaired relationships.
- Building awareness and implementing coping strategies helps restore balance.
- Consistent effort and self-reflection empower long-term change.

TYPE OF LESSON:

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

Let's start by understanding how social media addiction manifests and why it's so pervasive.

Key discussion points:

- Signs of addiction: excessive screen time, FOMO, disrupted routines.

- Emotional triggers: anxiety, boredom, comparison.

- The cycle of addiction: reward systems and overuse.

Activity:

- Watch a short video exploring the impact of social media dependency: (https://youtu.be/ykRxqzQsC0U?feature=shared)

- Reflect on how these patterns resonate with your experiences.

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-REGULATION

Did you know that social media addiction is a growing issue? Many people aren't aware of how much time they spend on social media every day. It's easy to fall into the trap of endless scrolling, especially when triggers like the ones we saw on Lesson 3.1. drive us to constantly check our phones.

Social media addiction not only affects our time but also our mental well-being. A study from the University of Pennsylvania found that excessive social media use can increase anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness.

Take a moment to reflect on your own social media habits:

1. Write down how much time you spend on social media daily.
2. Think about what triggers your social media use.

This kind of self-reflection can be the first step in understanding and, if desired, reducing social media addiction.

EXPLORING COPING STRATEGIES

Objective:
- Learn and discuss strategies to manage social media use effectively.

Activity:
- Brainstorm practical approaches:
  - Use tools like "Screen Time" or "Digital Wellbeing" for tracking.
  - Establish offline routines, such as meal-time tech-free zones.
  - Replace scrolling with hobbies like reading or exercising.
  - Leverage apps like "Forest" to focus on tasks.

Examples:
- A student limiting phone use during study hours.
- A family implementing a weekly no-phone day.

How social media addiction affects studies:
Social media addiction can significantly affect students' academic performance. Studies show that excessive use of social media leads to decreased focus and concentration, making it harder to study effectively. The constant stream of notifications, likes, and comments can cause distractions that interrupt learning and increase procrastination. Moreover, students may feel compelled to check their phones during study sessions, leading to fragmented attention and longer periods spent on homework or assignments.

EXPLORING COPING STRATEGIES

What strategies have you tried to manage your social media use? Sometimes, finding the right balance can be challenging, but there are many effective coping strategies.

In small groups, let's discuss some coping strategies that might work for you. Consider these questions:

- What strategies have helped you limit or manage your social media use in the past?
- Are you willing to try new strategies, such as setting phone limits or having phone-free hours? Why or why not?
- How could using apps like "Forest" help you stay focused on tasks?

Activity: Write down a few coping strategies that you would like to try. Share them with a partner and discuss how they could help improve your well-being and balance your social media use.

EXPLORING COPING STRATEGIES

Here are some more strategies to help combat social media addiction:

- Phone locking devices: tools like "Freedom" or "Offtime" lock access to your phone or specific apps for a set period, helping you take a break and focus on other tasks.
- App blockers: Apps such as "Stay Focused" or "Focus@Will" can block social media sites for certain amounts of time, reducing distractions during study or work hours.
- Physical tools: There are physical devices like "Yondr" or "Phone Jail", which are used to physically lock away your phone for a set time, ensuring you can focus on tasks without the temptation of checking social media.

Activity: Let's brainstorm additional strategies that have worked for you in reducing social media use. How do you manage social media during study time, and what has helped you stay focused?

DEVELOPING A PERSONALIZED ACTION PLAN

Let's take a step further and create personalized action plans to address your challenges with social media. Create your own plan:

Step 1: Identify your personal triggers (e.g., boredom, notifications, FOMO).

Step 2: Set clear goals, such as reducing screen time or designating specific offline times.

Step 3: Write down actionable steps to achieve these goals (e.g., "Disable notifications after 8 PM" or "Schedule 30 minutes of tech-free time every day").

Activity: Work on your "Personalized Social Media Action Plan" and share it with a partner. Provide mutual feedback and support in refining each other's plans.

CLOSING DISCUSSION

To close our session, let's take a moment to reflect on what we've learned and how we can apply it.

Raise your hand if you've ever felt overwhelmed or stressed because of how much time you spend on social media.

For those who raised your hands, what's one strategy from today's discussion that you think could help you regain control over your digital habits?

Now, let's think about the bigger picture. How can we support each other in creating healthier digital habits? How might you encourage a friend to set boundaries for their own well-being?

Reflection:

- What is the most important strategy you learned today?
- How will these steps help you foster healthier digital habits?

Key takeaway summary

- Building awareness is the first step toward improvement.
- Small changes lead to significant, sustainable impacts.
- Support systems and accountability enhance success.
- Thank you all for your participation today!

Remember, every small step we take toward self-regulation can have a significant impact. By building awareness and making small changes, we can create lasting, positive habits. And, supporting each other along the way can help ensure our success.

Instructions for youth workers, educators, and teachers

Objective: This lesson equips youth workers, educators, and teachers with strategies to help students understand self-regulation and set boundaries for social media use. Through engaging activities, participants will explore effective techniques for managing digital habits, improving mental well-being, and promoting responsible technology use.

Materials needed:

- Projector and screen
- Speakers
- Laptop or device for video playback
- Handouts with self-regulation tips and boundary-setting strategies
- Chart paper or whiteboard markers
- Notebooks or paper
- Pens or pencils
- Access to apps like "Forest," "Digital Wellbeing," or "Moment" for demonstration
- Tools or devices for phone-locking techniques (e.g., "Freedom," "Offtime") for hands-on practice

Step 1: Understanding Social Media addiction (10 min)

Welcome and introduction
- Greet the participants warmly, ensuring a positive and engaging tone for the session.
- Introduce the session's objective: To help participants understand how social media affects daily life and how self-regulation and setting boundaries can foster better mental well-being.
- Provide a brief overview of the session's structure, emphasizing the interactive activities, discussions, and reflection time that will take place.

Video screening or discussion starter
- Suggested video: "Social Media and Mental Well-being" (Consider YouTube resources like TED-Ed, or other platforms offering content on the effects of social media on mental health).
- Explain the purpose: The goal of this step is to spark curiosity and raise awareness about how social media impacts thoughts, habits, and emotions.

Key discussion points:
- What role does social media play in your daily life?
- Have you noticed moments where social media use affects your mood, stress levels, or focus?
- Why might setting boundaries help improve your experience online and reduce stress or distractions?

Step 1: Understanding Social Media addiction (10 min)

Instructor preparation:
- Be ready to facilitate an open and non-judgmental discussion. Encourage participants to reflect on their own experiences.
- Have a few personal anecdotes or general examples prepared to help participants connect with the topic.
- Prepare a short explanation of social media addiction and its effects, focusing on mental well-being.

Materials needed:
- Projector or screen for video viewing.
- Chart paper or whiteboard to list key ideas and insights.
- Markers or digital tools for brainstorming session responses.

Activity:
- Interactive Brainstorming: After watching the video or discussing the topic, engage the group with questions to reflect on their personal experiences. Write down key responses on the whiteboard or chart paper, encouraging everyone to share their thoughts and ideas.

Wrap-up:
- Summarize the key takeaways from the discussion.
- Explain that the next steps will explore strategies for managing social media use and how to set boundaries.

Step 2: Exploring coping strategies (15 min)

Introducing coping strategies and tools
- Greet the participants and introduce the objective of this step: to equip them with effective strategies for managing social media use and creating healthier boundaries.
- Explain that self-regulation is essential for reducing stress, improving focus, and promoting better mental well-being.

Discussing effective coping strategies
1. Setting Time Limits:
   - Encourage participants to set daily time limits for social media use, such as limiting social media to 30 minutes per day or using apps only during specific times.
2. Creating Tech-Free Zones:
   - Discuss the importance of tech-free zones in the home (e.g., no phones at the dinner table, creating a tech-free space for study or relaxation).
3. Designating Tech-Free Times:
   - Recommend setting specific times during the day for breaks from screens, such as no social media after 8 PM or no phones for 1 hour before bed to improve sleep quality.
4. Engaging in Offline Hobbies:
   - Suggest replacing excessive social media use with engaging offline activities like reading, exercising, or spending quality time with family and friends.

Materials needed:
- Handouts or digital templates for creating the "Coping Strategy Plan."
- Notebooks and pens or pencils.

Step 2: Exploring coping strategies (15 min)

Activity: Creating a personalized coping strategy plan

1. Distribute handouts or use shared worksheets: Provide participants with a worksheet or template where they can outline their personal coping strategy plans.
2. Reflection prompt: Ask participants to write down the following:
   - Triggers: Identify the most frequent triggers for their excessive social media use.
   - Boundaries: Set specific boundaries they want to implement.
   - Goals: Write down the benefits they hope to achieve.
3. Group sharing: Have participants share one boundary they plan to implement with the group. Encourage them to discuss how implementing these boundaries could positively affect their well-being and daily routines.

Facilitation tips for instructors:

- Be supportive as they brainstorm strategies and help them refine their boundaries to ensure they are realistic and achievable.
- Create a safe and open space for sharing, where everyone feels comfortable discussing their challenges with social media use.

Wrap-up discussion:

- Summarize the key takeaway: Developing a personalized coping strategy plan empowers you to take control of your digital habits and prioritize your well-being.
- Encourage participants to revisit their strategies regularly and refine them as needed to continue fostering healthier habits with social media.

Step 3: Developing a personalized action plan (10 min)

Objective:

- Help students create clear, actionable digital boundaries to improve their well-being and manage social media use.
- Introduction:
- Explain that digital boundaries are key to balancing tech use with other activities and relationships.
- Emphasize that setting boundaries helps foster healthier habits, not limit enjoyment.

Activity: Creating a digital boundary plan

- Reflection: Have students identify their personal triggers for excessive social media use (e.g., boredom, stress).
- Boundary Setting: Distribute "My Digital Boundary Plan" handouts. Ask students to set one clear boundary (e.g., no screens after 9 PM, phone-free meals) and think of strategies to overcome challenges (e.g., asking for support or setting reminders).

Discussion questions:

- How will these boundaries impact your daily life?
- What challenges might you face, and how can you overcome them?

Takeaway:

- Setting digital boundaries creates space for more meaningful activities and improves mental well-being. Encourage students to revisit and refine their plans regularly.

Materials needed:

- "My Digital Boundary Plan" handouts
- Pens or markers
- This step encourages students to identify their triggers, set boundaries, and implement strategies for better managing screen time.

Step 4 Closing discussion and takeaways (5 min)

Objective:

Reflect on key strategies learned and discuss how they will help students maintain healthier digital habits.

Introduction:

- Gather the students for a closing reflection to solidify the lessons learned in the session.
- Emphasize that small, mindful changes to digital habits can lead to long-term benefits for mental well-being and focus.

Activity: group reflection

- Ask students to reflect on the session and share their thoughts with the group.
  - What is the most important strategy you learned today for managing your digital habits?
  - How do you think these steps will help you develop healthier relationships with technology?

Key takeaways:

- Building awareness of digital habits is the first step toward improvement.
- Small changes, like setting boundaries and monitoring screen time, can lead to lasting, sustainable impacts on well-being.
- Support systems and accountability (e.g., sharing your plan with others) can enhance success in sticking to digital boundaries.

Closing message:

- Thank students for their participation and insights throughout the session.
- Encourage them to apply the strategies discussed and model healthy digital habits within their communities. Remind them that making small adjustments today can lead to significant improvements in the future.

Follow-up and at-home activities

- Track your social media use for a week and reflect on changes.
- Partner with someone for mutual accountability in maintaining healthy habits.
- Try a 24-hour tech-free challenge and journal your experience.

Tips for teachers:

- Create a safe space: Encourage open sharing by making the environment judgment-free, allowing students to express challenges and successes with digital habits.
- Foster peer collaboration: Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss and share their digital boundary plans, which helps with accountability and idea-sharing.
- Support overcoming challenges: Acknowledge the difficulty of setting boundaries and suggest strategies for overcoming obstacles, like reminders or accountability partners.
- Monitor progress and encourage: Check in regularly, celebrate small wins, and offer positive reinforcement to keep students motivated.
- Adapt to individual needs: Recognize that each student may need different strategies and encourage flexible, personalized plans.
- Encourage regular reflection: Promote revisiting and adjusting digital boundaries to adapt to changing habits and keep improving.

Tools

Screen Time (iOS)

Apple's Screen Time feature provides insights into daily device usage and allows users to set app limits, schedule downtime, and manage notifications. It's a powerful tool for creating healthy digital habits by helping users monitor and control their screen time.

Access: Go to Settings > Screen Time on any iOS device.

Forest App

The Forest App helps users stay focused by growing virtual trees as they avoid distractions. The longer users stay off their devices, the more their virtual forest thrives. It's an engaging way to encourage mindfulness and manage time effectively.

Download: Available on the App Store and Google Play.

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QUIZ

1. Which of the following is a common sign of social media addiction?
A) Increased productivity
B) FOMO (fear of missing out)
C) Reduced screen time
D) Improved personal relationships

2. What is a helpful strategy to limit social media use during study time?
A) Checking your phone every 10 minutes
B) Using an app like "Forest" to stay focused
C) Increasing the use of notifications
D) Posting on social media before studying

3. What is the recommended first step in creating a personalized plan to manage social media addiction?
A) Deleting all social media apps
B) Identifying emotional triggers
C) Buying a new phone
D) Setting unrealistic goals

4. Which of the following is a recommended alternative activity to replace excessive social media use?
A) Unlimited scrolling on other apps
B) Reading a book or practicing a hobby
C) Watching more content on social media
D) Messaging on multiple platforms

5. What is a key benefit of implementing strategies to manage social media use?
A) Increasing social media usage throughout the day
B) Creating more effective distractions
C) Improving overall well-being and reducing stress
D) Maintaining the same digital routines
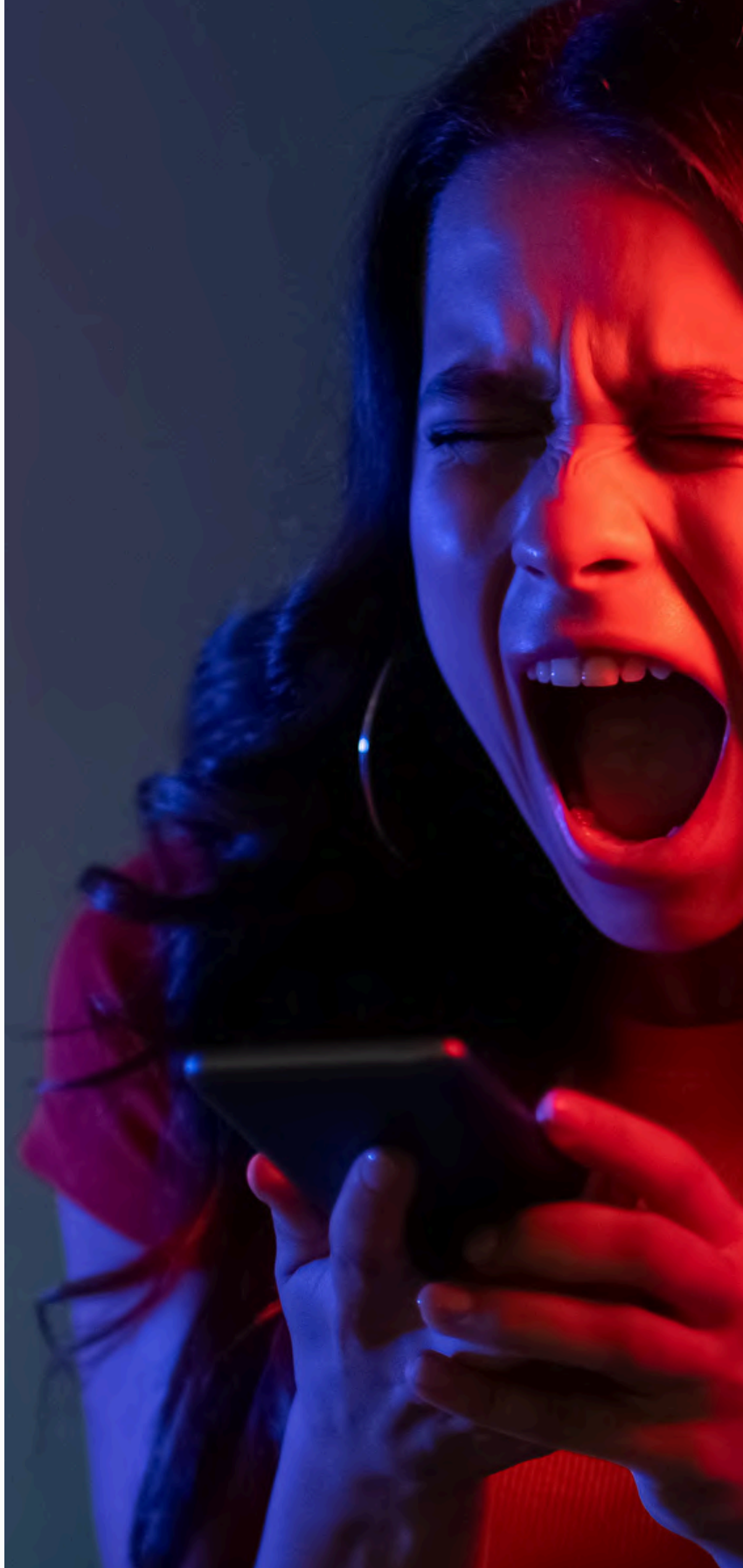
Solutions

Question 1: B
Question 2: B
Question 3: B
Question 4: B
Question 5: C