



FACEBOOK Limits

Facebook is probably the most widely used social networking site. It is used to connect, communicate, and share life's experiences. There are many positive uses of Facebook including:

- **Maintain relationships**
- **Initiate relationships**
- **Connect to others**
- **Share your life story**
- **Blogs**
- **Share memories**
- **Chatting**
- **Inspirational messages**
- **Connect to music, art, businesses, and organizations**

While Facebook can be a positive social experience, there is the potential for Facebook to have a negative impact on your life. Here are some warning signs that Facebook may be a problem for you:

- ❖ **Losing Sleep**: Staying up late at night to be on Facebook and feeling tired the next day.
- ❖ **Ignoring Responsibilities**: Not doing your homework or job responsibilities because you're on Facebook.
- ❖ **Anxiety**: Feeling anxious about not being able to check Facebook for updates or comments.
- ❖ **Depression**: Feeling depressed when you don't receive new comments or messages.
- ❖ **Reduction of Activities**: Spending less time with friends and family or doing fewer normal activities because you're on Facebook.
- ❖ **Virtual Dates**: Instead of meeting or calling friends and family, you use Facebook to interact with them.
- ❖ **"Checking"**: You check Facebook first thing when you wake up, throughout the day, and the last thing before going to bed.
- ❖ **Being Offline**: You think about Facebook when you are offline and worry about what you are missing.
- ❖ **Daily Use**: It's difficult to go one day without using Facebook.
- ❖ **Fantasy Life**: Facebook feels like an escape from the reality of your life.
- ❖ **Reliving the Past**: You spend your time looking at old photos as a way to re-live past loves and friendships.
- ❖ **Loneliness**: You have tons of friends on Facebook, but still feel lonely and isolated.
- ❖ **Others are Concerned**: Friends and family have commented on your use of Facebook or believe you spend too much time on Facebook.

How to Overcome a Facebook "Addiction"

- Set a reasonable amount of time to be on Facebook and stick to it.
- Avoid "checking" Facebook throughout the day or set a limit on the number of times you will log in each day.
- Have a set time in the day that you will check Facebook.
- Question what you are doing on Facebook. Is this a valuable way to spend your time? Are there other things to do right now that are more important?
- Make sure your homework and work responsibilities are done *before* logging in to your Facebook account.
- Use Facebook as a reward for finishing your goals for the day.
- Set aside times in your week that you will not use Facebook at all and plan to do something else.
- Change your status once per day or less.
- Turn off Facebook updates for your cell phone and avoid using your phone to view Facebook.
- Accept friend requests from those individuals who you know and have met in real life rather than "friending" strangers.
- Instead of saying, "I'll Facebook you later," say "I'll call you later."
- Seek counseling if you feel that you need help with Facebook and the negative effect it may be having on your life.

Facebook Safety

Many people share very personal information and forget that Facebook is a public arena. We include pictures, quotes, videos, blogs, and personal data on our Facebook profiles. However, doing so can be dangerous and lead to a variety of consequences. In order to protect yourself, consider taking the following steps:

1. Make sure that your profile is set to the strictest privacy settings.
2. Protect your identity by only accepting friend requests from people you know and trust.
3. Think carefully about the pictures you share on Facebook and use discretion. Once those pictures are out there, anyone can see them, copy them, and distribute them.
4. Never disclose your address, phone number, or email address to people that you do not know.
5. If you do choose to meet someone who you've met through Facebook, make sure you meet in a public place and let friends and family know where you will be.
6. Block people who you do not want any contact with.
7. Change your password often and never share your password with anyone.

Professional Help Available

The University of Idaho Counseling & Testing Center offers free confidential counseling for full time UI students. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the Counseling & Testing Center (Mary E. Forney Hall, Rm. 306, 1210 Blake Ave.) at 208-885-6716.

Website: www.uidaho.edu/ctc

All appointments are confidential.