

Social Media Mayhem

Social networking is everywhere. Nearly everyone belongs to a social network on sites such as Twitter, MySpace, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn etc.

An average user would spend from one to several hours per day, posting photos, instant messaging, tweeting, etc. While social networking has become a staple form of social interaction, it comes with a host of potential dangers.

Does social media augur well for society or has it made people insensitive and lethargic? Statistics prove that inconsiderate use of social media has been responsible for numerous crimes, marriage breakdowns, absent mindedness, road accidents, divorces, murders and other social problems stemming directly from indulgence on social platforms.

Researchers are of the view that social media affects one's mental health and impacts seriously on the way one thinks, speaks and writes. Many children and teenagers are less likely to leave their houses and interact socially in real life due to their absorption in the virtual life of social media. It has created a generation of 'addicts' to instant feedback.

The reality is that the social media platforms are new methods of interaction. They cannot be wished away!

However, when social media is used responsibly it can have beneficial and positive results. Importantly, there has to be a sense of responsibility in the usage of social media which can be harmful and can have an adverse effect on the user.

Moreover, for a Muslim, the greatest challenge is to avoid committing sins through this medium. Sadly, it has become so easy and tempting to backbite, slander, spread false information and injure the feelings of innocent people by the mere press of a button.

If social media is to be used as a tool for communication the following must be kept in mind:

- Be conscious of Allah Ta'ala at all times. Using the bounty of Allah for His disobedience is sheer ingratitude.
- Adults should set an example by responsible usage.
- Parents need to do regular checks on their children. Allowing children uncensored use of technology is opening the road to various problems.
- Social etiquette must be adhered to. Texting and showing indifference to one's spouse, or to people in a gathering is disrespectful and a sign of bad manners. It is absolutely annoying when people are involved with texting during social gathering.
- Do not become addicted to your phone or ipad. Do not enslave yourself to the 'ping ping' sound of a message or email. Control your phone and do not let it control you.
- Do not communicate with ghayr mahrams, (persons with whom marriage is permissible). This is destructive to one's chastity, Iman and marriage.

Darul Ihsan's Social Dept. counsels people on social and marital matters. email: social@darulihsan.com



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