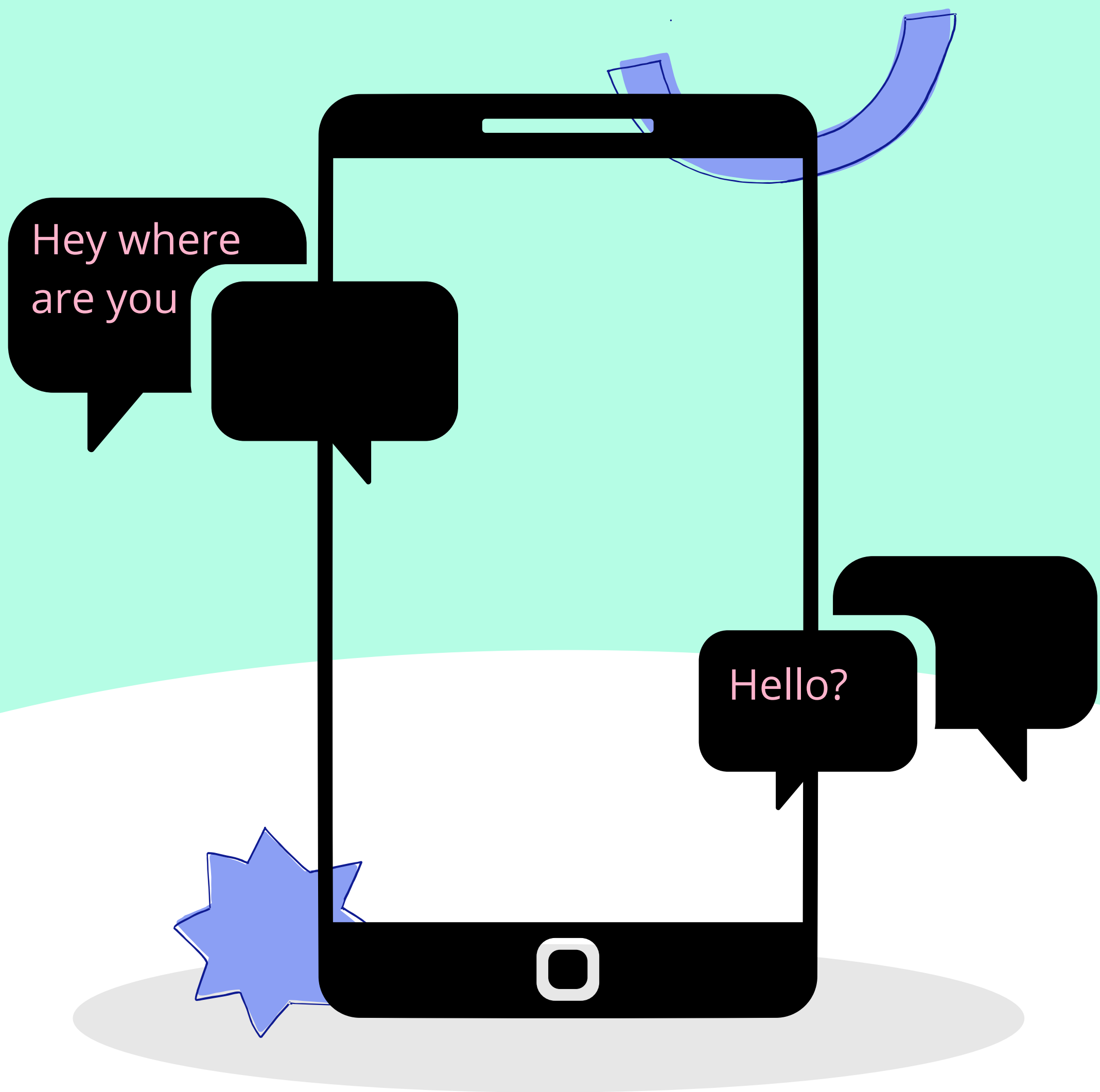


#MINUTE4ME

A Social Media and
Anxiety Helpbook



**NORMALISING TAKING A MUCH
NEEDED SOCIAL MEDIA BREAK**

INTRODUCTION

57.6 million
active social
media users

(Statista, 2022)

"Sometimes with social media, you have a fear that you're missing out"

"There have been times when i'm feeling particularly low and social media doesn't do a very good job in making you feel better"

These are just two of the thoughts of users of university students using social media. This is a very common issue that people don't tend to talk about.

There is a huge range of resources and websites on the internet and social media aiming tailored to enhance your general mental health, but very few are tailored towards addressing how you can the impacts of social media on your anxiety levels.

This workbook seeks to be your one-stop guide to lessen the strain social media can have on your anxiety.

This booklet aims to help you:

- Understand how impactful social media can be to your anxiety
- Look at ways in which you can better manage social media's impact on your anxiety



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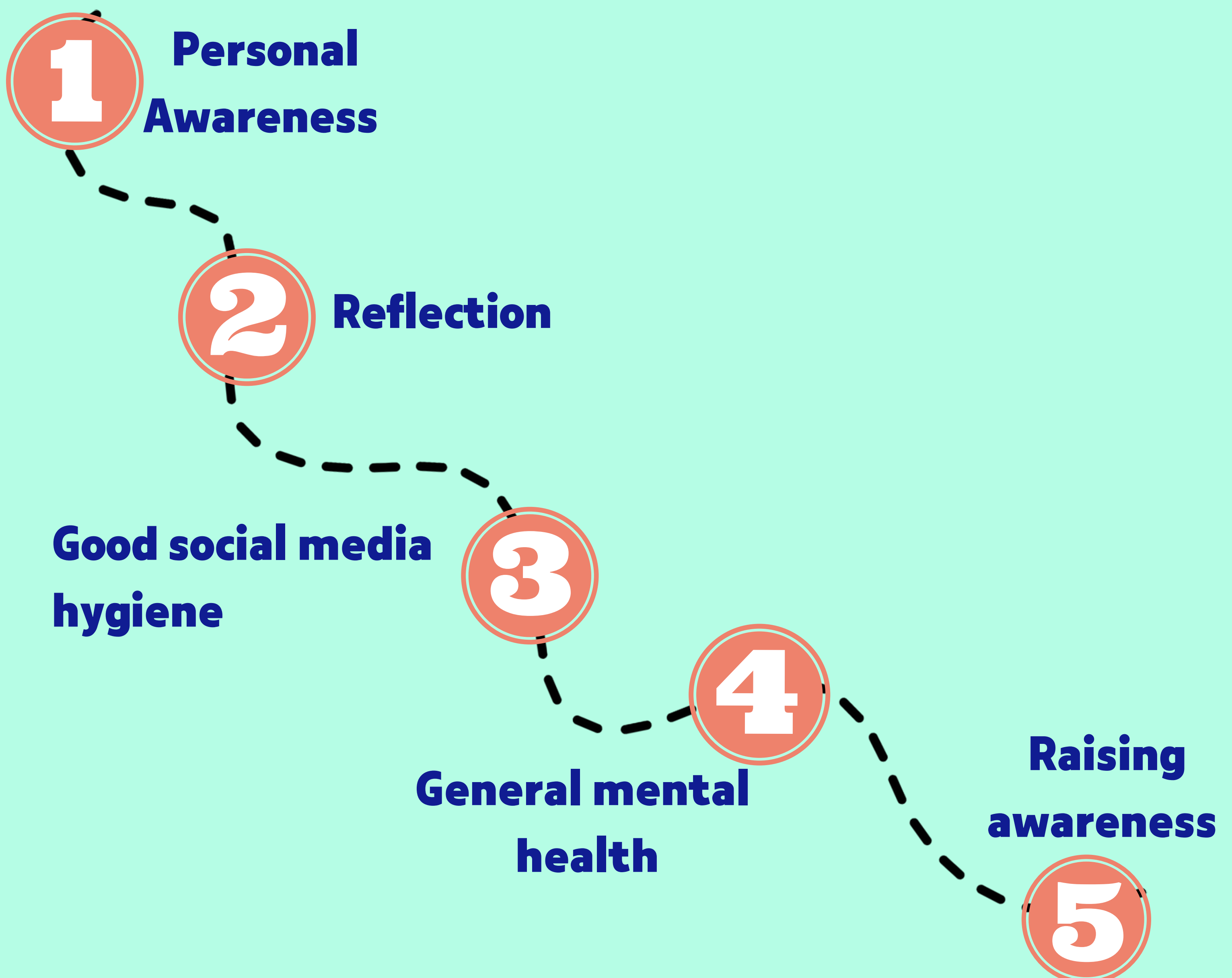
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CREATING A POSITIVE SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERIENCE THROUGH 5 STEPS

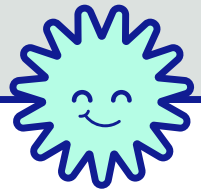
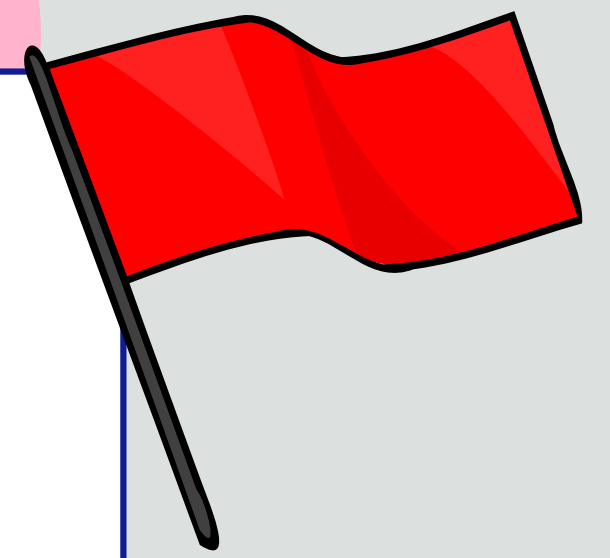
Through our research and external resources we have come up with 5 steps that you can take to make your social media experience a positive one. Each of the steps will be detailed across the following pages with actions that you can implement.

As with all our advice, please ensure that you seek help through your General Practitioner or mental health charities if you find that you cannot manage your mental health by yourself.

This is not medical advice, but just suggestions that you can incorporate.



SOCIAL MEDIA - THE HARSH REALITY



The use of social media has skyrocketed in the past 20 years, becoming a staple in everyday life in a very short period of time. It is estimated that the average person is projected to spend 6.75 years of their life on social media! Combining this with the fact that more than 98% of university students have at least one social media account, it is important to understand more about such a commonality in our lives. Social media poses the benefits of instant discussion, relationship maintenance, relaxation and etc., but it is just as important to remember the possible issues it provides. Here are some potential 'red flags' you may have experienced, alongside the millions of users online. Can you relate to any of these red flags?

Comparison



We have all found ourselves comparing ourselves with someone on social media. Whether it is the comparison of their looks, day-to-day life activities, academic achievements or even just their relationships. However, it is crucial to remind yourself that much of what people are posting are the highlights of their day and so paints an unrealistic image of their daily life.

FOMO



FOMO or the 'fear of missing out' is a common feeling that's experienced whilst on social media, such as when you see your group of friends meeting up or a party that you weren't at. With social media it's easy to see what everyone is doing and hard to distance yourself from it. Understanding and noticing when these feelings arise is the first step you can take.



Dependence



With everyone on social media it is easy to become dependent or addicted to it. Most people will often start and end their day with some form of engagement on a social media platform and end-up mindlessly scrolling for hours unknowingly. This can then go on to have further detrimental effects such as taking over your social life and getting in the way of your other daily activities.

Stresser



Have you ever noticed that social media is contributing to your stress levels, so that you leave the platform feeling a lot of stressed than to start with? This can often occur with platforms such as Twitter where there are active debates and controversial opinions or other social media platforms that display distressing news. Knowing where to find credible resources can be helpful to mitigate this.

Judgement from others

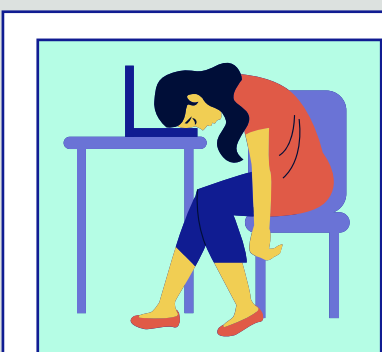


It's easy to constantly feel as though you are being judged based on what you post or share on your social media platforms. This can also involve being invested in the likes your posts have got and the comments you receive. For example, have you ever worried about posting a picture because you think other people won't like it? This is a commonly felt emotion.

Worsens mood



Sometimes people say that they leave social media feeling worse than they originally did. This could be because they feel guilty about all the time that they spent on the platform or they see content that makes them upset or have negative interactions with people on social media. It is key to be mindful of how you feel after you use your social media platform and identify which ones in particular are affecting you.



Are you using Social Media Safely?

Questions to ask yourself as you scroll

Are you using Social Media Safely?

It is important that you reflect on your social media use, be intentional, and make sure what you're taking in is good for you!

What emotions do you feel when are on social media?

How often do you check your social media notification?

How much does social media take away time from your other tasks & activities?

How much time do you spend on social media?

How is Social Media benefiting you?

Do you compare yourself to people you follow on social media?

Do you feel safe/How do you feel when you post content on social media?

What content do you view on social media?

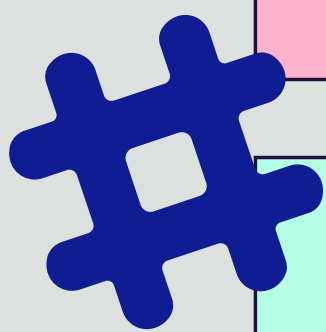
How often do browse social media when you should be sleeping?

Have you been connecting with people meaningfully on social media?

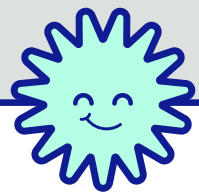
Do you feel that if you don't check social media all the time, you will do something incredibly important?

If you had no access to social media at all, how do you feel?

Finally, what do you want to do about your social media use?



GOOD SOCIAL MEDIA HYGIENE



Social media hygiene is the umbrella term for all the practices and behaviours, that are conducive to your health, associated with your use of social media. Below are a bunch of steps that can help you maintain good social media hygiene. Simply pick one and try it!

1. Conscious Scrolling

Try being intentional with your use of social media. It is easy to fall into the 'auto-pilot' trap when scrolling through your social media feeds. The next time you go on social media, try ask yourself how a certain post makes you feel and behave. Here are some practical tips:

- Set your intentions prior to using social media
- Remind yourself to stay present
- Practice non-judgement

2. Account Cleanse

Making an effort to 'cleanse' your social media accounts can be a refreshing experience. Carefully monitor the accounts you follow on all your social media platforms. Consciously decide which accounts you want to follow and perhaps some accounts that do not bring you as much value as you had initially thought it did. If you need further pointers, it may be helpful to unfollow accounts that...

- aren't relevant to you anymore
- no longer bring you happiness
- post too much + clog up your feed

Sometimes less is more!

3. Track and manage your time

If you are struggling with social media time management, you are not alone. The time people spend on social media has increased to over 136 mins on average per day. To solve this issue, you may try:

- Track your time with Apple 'Screen Time' or similar
- Place daily time limits on certain apps
- Create a designated social media time slot into your timetable

4. Privacy Settings

The privacy settings on social media is your tool to protect your online health. Adjusting and deploying simple privacy measures can prevent users, who don't play by the same rules, from ruining your social media experience. Here are a few useful techniques you can use:

- Ensure your accounts are private
- Ensure your location isn't shared on your posts
- Avoid clicking on social media links
- Use different passwords on all your different social media accounts
- Clear your cookies
- Block anyone who harasses you immediately

5. Detox

The constant pressures that social media bring can often plague your anxiety. Sometimes it is okay to take a break! A social media detox is a period of time where you refrain from using all of your social media platforms, and it is essential to declutter your mind. Try these ordered steps to help aid you in your own detox:

1. Set a target time period for your detox - e.g. 30 days is a reasonable place to start
2. Consider telling your network that you are on a break
3. Delete all social media apps from your phone
4. Devote some time to reflect - e.g. use a journal to document your emotions through your detox journey
5. Enjoy the results

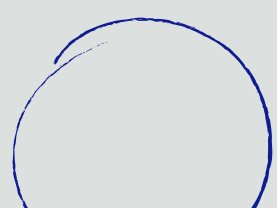
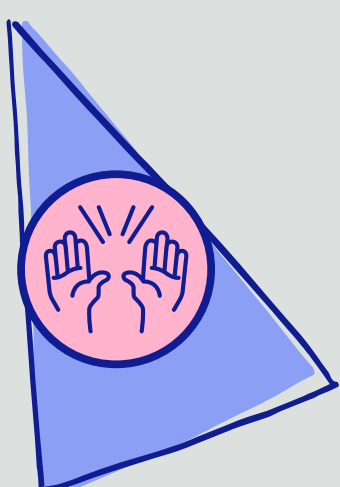
6. Avoiding Distractions

Have you ever looked at the clock and realised that you spent the last two hours scrolling through TikTok? Well, you're not the only one. Social media can disrupt your work productivity, disrupt your personal life and steal the time you could be spending on hobbies. Moderation is key, and removing the distractions associated with it is your best bet in achieving this. Have a go at...

- Turning off your social media notifications
- Not using your phone 30 mins before you go to sleep and after you wake up
- Try using mindfulness techniques to improve your focus

7. Balancing your online and offline life

Striking the perfect balance between the amount of time you spend online and offline may often feel like an impossible task. By limiting your social media time, you increase your opportunity to get some time back in the day to aid you in achieving your bigger goals in life. To fill the 'void' you assume social media has on you, make yourself busy! Look to take on hobbies that build genuine long-term satisfaction (e.g. cooking, going to the gym or playing a new sport)



LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Looking after your mental health is a vital part of making your social media experience a positive one! Below are a series of tips you can try to help you maintain good mental health. Some may work better for you than other, so give them a try and see what works for you!

Connect with people

Evidence has shown that building key relationships with people can really be beneficial. Try to seek out ways in which you can engage with those around you whether that be family, friends, co-workers or different people in your community. Meeting people in person and doing activities will be much more beneficial than just relying on social media.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of focusing in on the present moment. Practicing mindfulness regularly can lift your overall wellbeing. You can incorporate mindfulness through activities such as meditation, journaling and breathing work.

Other activities

Good mental health is a combination of factors and so making sure that these factors are considered is key. Looking after these areas has shown to have positive impacts:

- Physical activity
- Getting regular and adequate sleep
- Eating well
- Pursing hobbies and interests to learn new skills

'Me' Time

Taking some time to yourself is key! Ways in which you can do this is by reading a book, putting on a face mask, listening to your favourite music or going for a walk. Just make sure that during this time you are intentionally checking in on yourself.

Act of care

Research has shown that acts of kindness and consideration towards others can have a positive impact on your mental wellbeing. You can try things like offering to help a friend, volunteering in your community or simply complementing and uplifting others.



Physical activity

Regular physical activity has shown to

Hobbies

Seeking-help

Sometimes these tips and tricks may not be enough. So remember that it's okay to seek help! There are lots of people willing to talk. Check out some of the individuals or organisations that you can contact. Anonymous helplines also exist should you prefer this. Other people may be going through the same things too!



Sleep



Do things that interest you



Diet

Contacts

- Your General Practitioner
- Student Wellbeing/ Welfare reps
- University tutors
- Student Mind
- Mental Health Foundation
- The Samaritans
- Anxiety UK

AUTHORS

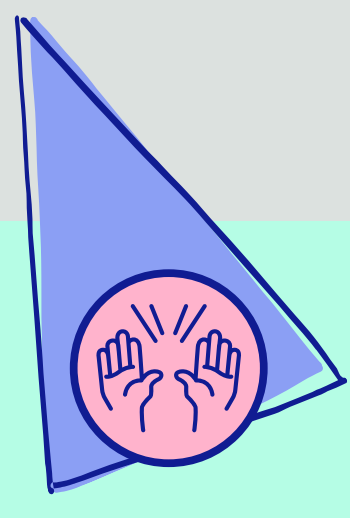
REFERENCES

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WEEKLY CHECKLIST

Tick off what you've achieved each day



	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	WEEKEND
Enough sleep						
Physical activity						
Hobby						
Mindfulness Practice						
Time with people						
'Me' Time						
Act of care						

SELF-REFLECTION

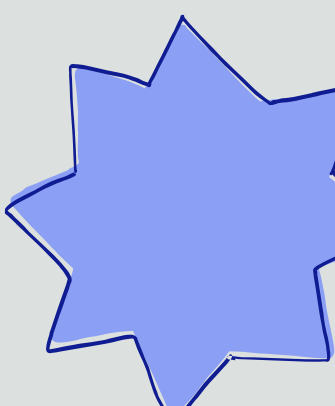
Here are some prompts you can use for self-reflection.

- What am I grateful for?
- What am I proud of?
- What can I learn from?
- What memories did I make today?

OTHER RESOURCES

Here are some great apps you can use to help you aim for better mental health.

- Moodfit
- Calm
- Headspace
- Reflectly



DAILY REFLECTIONS

#Grateful

What are 5 things you are grateful for?

1	2	3	4	5
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#Affirmations

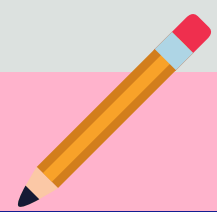
My affirmations for the day

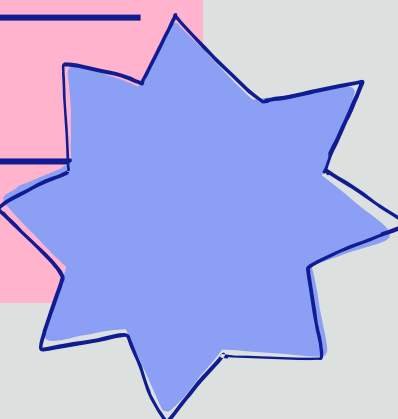
#Goals

What do I want to achieve today?



#Notes





#MINUTE4ME

One of the ways you can better your social media experience is to create a positive online bubble. This means having an online community that uplift you and support your need to take a social media break.

Many people find taking a break from social media really helpful, but feel as though they can't due to pressures from friends and the need to constantly reply.

You can use this picture to let people know that you're taking a break and normalise taking a break from social media.



Scan this QR code to download this image onto your phone!

RESOURCES

Here is a quick summary of some resources that you could use to help you on this journey to a more positive and healthy social media experience.

Student Minds:
<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/>

Mental Health Foundation:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Anxiety UK:
<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Mindful:
<https://www.mindful.org/>

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