

Social media 'destroying how society works'

14th December, 2017



A former Facebook executive has said social media is doing great harm to society around the world. The executive is a man called Chamath Palihapitiya. He joined Facebook in 2007 and became a vice president. He

was responsible for increasing the number of users Facebook had. Mr Palihapitiya said he feels very guilty about getting more people to use social networks. He said the networks are destroying society because they are changing people's behavior. Twenty years ago, people talked to each other face to face. Today, people message each other and do not talk. People also really care about what other people think of them. They post photos and wait to see how many people like the photo. They get very sad if people do not like the photo.

Mr Palihapitiya said people should take a long break from social media so they can experience real life. He wants people to value each other instead of valuing online "hearts, likes, and thumbs-up". Palihapitiya also points out how fake news is affecting how we see the world. It is becoming easier for large websites to spread lies. It is also becoming easier to hurt other people online. Anyone can hide behind a fake user name and post lies about other people. Palihapitiya said this was a global problem. He is worried about social media so much that he has banned his children from using it. However, he did state that Facebook was a good company. He said: "Of course, it's not all bad. Facebook overwhelmingly does good in the world."

Sources: *the verge.com* / *mashable.com* / *the guardian.com*

Writing

What are the pros and cons of social media? Is it good? Why / Why not?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

executive / social media / president / number / users / feeling guilty / social networks
a long break / real life / online likes / websites
/ user name / global problem / fake

True / False

- a) An ex-Facebook boss said social media is damaging society. T / F
- b) The ex-boss feels guilty about getting more people to use social media. T / F
- c) The ex-boss said social media does not change our behaviour. T / F
- d) People message each other today instead of talking face to face. T / F
- e) The ex-boss said people would benefit from a break from social media. T / F
- f) The ex-boss suggested liking online likes is a thing we need to do more. T / F
- g) It is becoming more difficult for big websites to spread fake news. T / F
- h) The ex-boss said Facebook is "overwhelmingly bad". T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1. executive | a. hold on |
| 2. harm | b. unhappy |
| 3. increasing | c. face |
| 4. wait | d. untruths |
| 5. sad | e. damage |
| 6. experience | f. appreciate |
| 7. value | g. boss |
| 8. lies | h. hugely |
| 9. break | i. growing |
| 10. overwhelmingly | j. rest |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of Facebook?
- b) How important is social media to you?
- c) What did people do before social media?
- d) What harm is social media doing to the world?
- e) What would it be like to be a Facebook executive?
- f) What things have you felt guilty about?
- g) How are social networks changing our behaviour?
- h) How much do you care about people liking your posts?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. social media is doing great
 2. he feels very
 3. people talked to each other
 4. care about what other people
 5. They get very sad if people do
 6. people should take a long break
 7. valuing online hearts, likes, and
 8. Anyone can hide behind a fake user
 9. he has banned his
 10. Facebook overwhelmingly does
- a. name and post lies
 - b. think of them
 - c. good in the world
 - d. harm to society
 - e. thumbs-up
 - f. face to face
 - g. children from using it
 - h. guilty
 - i. not like the photo
 - j. from social media

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of social media?
- c) Why would it be good to take a break from social media?
- d) What do you post on social media, and why?
- e) What do you think of fake news?
- f) Why is it dangerous for children to use social media?
- g) What good do you think Facebook does in the world?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the former Facebook executive?

Spelling

1. A former Facebook veeicetxu
2. doing great harm to tyoisce
3. rsobnlpseei for increasing the number
4. he feels very tugyli
5. use social ktweosrn
6. people sseaegm each other
7. they can exereinepc real life
8. He wants people to elauv each other
9. epsdar lies
10. this was a lalobg problem
11. he has endban his children from using it
12. Facebook ylhmlnveiorwge does good

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. a	5. b
6. c	7. f	8. d	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Making Friends

You think making friends is the best thing about social media. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): up-to-date news, shopping or sharing family photos.

Role B – Up-to-Date News

You think up-to-date news is the best thing about social media. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): making friends, shopping or sharing family photos.

Role C – Shopping

You think shopping is the best thing about social media. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): up-to-date news, making friends or sharing family photos.

Role D – Family Photos

You think sharing family photos is the best thing about social media. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): up-to-date news, shopping or making friends.

Speaking – Advantages

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest advantages of social media at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- making friends
- keeping in touch
- getting advice
- up-to-date news
- getting advice
- shopping
- sharing music
- seeing family photos

Answers – True False

a T	b T	c F	d T	e T	f F	g F	h F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.