



# Social Media Detox

I took a month off social media.

As an active user for 10 years, and an advocate in my business, Social Media was like another limb to me. Clients began asking about digital fatigue and, in my research, I realized that I too, was showing signs of it.

Here's what I did, and what I learned, from a **personal** standpoint.  
*Professional learnings are for another Infographic.*

## Negatives

### ANXIETY

I had so much anxiety leading up to this detox, that I started an afternoon early... cold turkey. Once I did, the anxiety began to dissipate, until it was gone completely within a couple days.

The relief that I felt was confusing, as I had always preached the positives of social media and had ignored my own anxiety. The U.S. political landscape has weighed greatly on me and social media feeds into the disheartening frenzy for me.



### FOMO

My Fear Of Missing Out was high before I started, but it also became less and less with time (and was gone completely within the first week). This surprised me because I was missing so many big events: births, weddings, anniversaries, etc. that normally I would want to be a virtual part of.

I realized this fear is irrational, as my friends still let me know their important news via other comms methods and it was easy to reengage after the detox.



### RE-EVALUATION

I took time to re-evaluate what social media means to me personally (not professionally). In the beginning, it was all about re-connecting with old friends, former colleagues, etc.

Then, when I moved to Europe, it seemed to become more about remaining connected. Feeling as though I hadn't lost my friends back home (or deeper, who I was there). While also working to embrace a new home (and sharing the positive changes in me/my life).

Today, my goal is to find the best balance of engagement without becoming overwhelmed.



### SCREEN TIME

I filled my smartphone screen time with searches for timely news, articles of interest and watching videos. It only decreased by 10% over the month of detox.

To me, that is a failure: I didn't put down my phone, I just found another reason to use it. This was a missed opportunity to change my behavior pattern.



### POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

As a giver, I'd recently realized that my thirst to provide positive reinforcement was heightened most with Instagram. In the past, I had found it hard to sleep unless I had liked everyone's posts. I had to post 'Happy Birthday' on my friends' Facebook daily or I didn't feel good about myself. I wanted to like and comment on everyone's posts to show that I cared and they were important (and not forgotten) by me.

It became unruly, as I look back. While I didn't post to receive positive reinforcement, I have always felt that others deserved it from me. If they were sharing, then I needed to show that I was caring. Now, I've realized that this was an unnecessary stress I placed on myself and must work to overcome.



### LOSS OF FRIENDS

I detoxed from 6 social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest. And I lost friends and/or followers on each, but lost the most on Twitter (not surprising as its the most volatile platform). Were they friends, anyway, if I fell silent for a month and they left?

The loss was minimal (at under 1% per platform) but the inability to see WHO I lost was annoying. I would venture to say these are normal leakage rates, and that I lose a similar amount monthly, but am uncertain as I have never tracked it before now.



## Positives

### TIME

I re-allocated two hours per work day (estimated from what I'd previously spent on both work and personal social media) to achieving other things.

I created a list and scratched them off one-by-one: Clean out closet and donate, create personalized gifts, make new recipes, spend more time with friends & family, innovate on business ideas, clean up email, be a tourist in my own city, go to the ballet & museums, read more and binge watch a TV series that I had wanted to see (This Is Us).



### JOURNAL

I created a journal to track my progress and my thoughts. In the beginning, I was quite diligent about listing all of the things that I had done to fill the time... but as the weeks wore on, I felt the need to write it all down less and less.

I took fewer pictures and lived more in the moment – feeling less need to capture a great shot to share the experience online.



### COMMUNICATION

I had a heightened response to all other communication efforts than I'd had before. I appreciated the hand-written letters received a bit more, responded more quickly to emails, texts and Messenger messages and even calls. I didn't communicate less, just differently and probably with fewer people overall.



### GR&AT IDEAS

Our Company's Name is GR&AT (for our family's initials: Glenn, Rana, Aube and Thybo). Because he did the detox with me, my hubby and I spent time thinking about our future and our next steps. We came up with some creative (maybe crazy) ideas and are beginning to work towards them.

Creatively we were in synch ... and that has a lot to do with the fact that he did the Detox with me. Having a partner, colleague or friend to do it along side is incredibly helpful (as you are less tempted to cheat if your partner is offline too).



### CHEATING

I cheated only once: I received an email from LinkedIn with a business opportunity. So, I had to log into LinkedIn once to respond to the Speaking request – but I only answered the message and asked that we move the communication to email, then immediately logged back out. I had told all contacts that I was offline and to email me, so comms were not interrupted.

TIP: Deleting all APPS, shortcuts and email notifications, makes it easier to not cheat!



### FUTURE

My husband has decided that he will not re-add the social media Apps to his phone and will only engage online over the weekends.

My return has been more full-on, to catch up on what I missed. But, I will limit my time to an hour a day and work to make the most of it – focusing on work first, not personal.

We will no longer allow smartphones at the dinner table and will keep them out of the bedroom before bedtime. When face-to-face and alone with someone (like in a car), personal communication will take priority.

My desire to inspire travel and to remain connected continues, but I will work to be healthier and more creative in its pursuit.



Digital fatigue and its psychological impact is real. If you're feeling tired, overwhelmed, stressed or anxious while on social media, then taking a break (whether for a day, week or two or even a month) is a healthy way to respond. It allows you time to reflect, reevaluate its benefits and work on engaging online within your own set of healthy limits.

Want My Free Social Media Detox toolkit?

[Click Here](#)

I'd love to hear from you! Have you tried a detox yourself? What are your thoughts? What healthy limits have you set for yourself and your family? What benefits can you share?

If you want tips, advice or articles of reference ... just send me a message!