

# Social media - there are always two sides of the same coin

By AIMEÉ SERRÃO

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Social media has become an integrated part of everyday life. The proliferation of social media sites has caused technology to radically adapt. This means that it is now possible to access social media sites from the palm of your hand via your smart phone.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to readily accessing the social media world and this can have positive and negative effects on your relationship. Here are some advantages and disadvantages of using social networks that you may not have realised.

## Advantages of social media

So, we have all witnessed those annoyingly cute couples on Facebook. They are the ones constantly pouring their hearts out to each other via status updates and wall posts... not to mention the continual schmaltzy couple selfies they are always posting. If this is you and your partner, give yourself a pat on the back.



According to researchers Toma and Choi, this is beneficial to a relationship and couples that do this are more likely to embark on a long term relationship. But... why? This is due to something called the public commitment theory. According to this theory, if people publicly claim something they are more likely to internalise it making it part of their reality. In addition, partners feel more loved and secure when feelings are announced publically.

So, posting photos together and exchanging mushy wall posts may strengthen commitment as it makes couples feel closer to each other. This usually leads to longer term relationships. Similarly, messaging apps create the same sense of commitment. This is because couples like to know their partner is thinking about them throughout the day.

## Disadvantages of social media

So, on one side of the coin it's all peaches and cream where social media can strengthen your relationship commitment, but on the other side of the coin, social media could be the acid that disintegrates the commitment in your relationship. This is because; if you do not feel appreciated by your partner you may find yourself searching for emotional support from someone else in your social media network. Your heart may flutter when you receive a new text message or Facebook post from that 'someone else' causing you to stalk their profile (snooping) at every opportunity. This may give you an ego boost for a while where you may feel worthwhile, wanted and needed, but you are cheating on your partner emotionally.

Remember that messages and photos can be saved and used against you in the future, so think carefully before you take the risk. Do not give in to the temptations that present themselves over social media channels.

## ABOUT AIMEÉ SERRÃO

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