

# How social media is destroying our society

 By [Chemory Gunko](#)

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I was an early adopter of social media... my Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn accounts all kicked off around 2006/7 - and once again I find myself an early adopter as I join the ranks of millions of people around the world who are shutting down their social media profiles.

In fact, a recent Princeton University [study](#) estimates that Facebook will lose 80% of its users by 2017, likening Facebook and other social media platforms to an infectious disease that the societal immune system is finally fighting back against.

Then in my research to verify the Princeton article and understand all the sides of the story before writing this article, I found the following interactive piece, which, if you have 15 minutes to spare is an eye-opening take on how social media is devastating the world we live in and creating the societal problems we face: [Take a look here](#).

I'm an avid video [avoider](#) on the Internet, but this had me transfixed and is well worth the time to watch. It also gave me the encapsulating theme for the thoughts I'd gathered and a perfect way to angle this piece. (Thanks for that [Guardian!](#))

## The Seven Deadly Digital Sins

### 1. Greed

*It's not about real connections any longer; social media has made us greedy for an audience.*

If you're on someone's friends' list and you haven't sat down around a table with them, or even shared a Skype or call in the past three years, that's all you actually are - their audience.

It's all about popularity nowadays: how many people on my friends' list, how many people liked what I just posted, how many people have liked my company's page?

*The greatest threat somebody can make in today's digital age?*

I'm removing you from my friends' list... because you dared to push back, disagree with me or expect more of me than my self-importance allows me to think I should give you.

Well go ahead please, because unless I spend evenings and weekends alongside you, not having you in my audience on social media is actually just plain not going to affect my life.

And it's really sad that you think it will.

### 2. Wrath

*Haters of the world unite - because your hating and shaming is taking over the world.*

Just as you can be lambasted and attacked for anything you dare to publish in digital media, now you can be attacked for anything you say in disagreement in real life too.

*I blame the like button personally.*

You can like or love something, quietly disagree or comment - but those are your choices really: *agree or shut up*.

If you don't agree and you dare to voice it, you'll be attacked, called rude and confrontational and even a hater yourself; you'll be shamed, classified difficult or impossible to work with - or those near and dear to you will pay the price.



Pieter Bruegel the Elder: The Seven Deadly Sins or the Seven Vices – Wrath. In his day wrath was expressed up close and personal. Nowadays, too often it is expressed very personally - but at a distance... via social media. (Image: Wikimedia Commons)

Have a question about a policy at your child's school? Don't dare ask a question or voice an opinion because the teachers will take it out on your child. Disagree with something your boss says? Well keep quiet in case you get fired.

Social change does not happen unless we have debate - and debate is usually hot, heated, and passionate.

However, we've lost the ability to be passionate about the facts - now we argue the person and not the point.

We are killing ourselves by eliminating controversy and alternate opinions, and paralysing ourselves into societal inadequacy as a result.

### 3. Lust

*Attitude is everything according to the many overflowing motivational posts that we are bombarded with every day - and a good attitude means that everyone likes you and lusts to be in your presence.*

Um, except it's not.

The attitude they're referring to is the attitude that lies inside you - are you at peace when you fall asleep at night? And can you fall asleep without sleeping tablets?

Are you awake, energised, and refreshed when you wake up in the morning - and can you get going without artificial stimulants and antidepressants?

Can you bounce back from failure and adversity and [get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done to feed the children?](#)

*Or are you a miserable wreck that is secretly falling apart at the seams because you're so desperate to have people "like" you and lust after being around you (i.e. on your friends' list) that you cannot live aligned to your truth or walk your talk?*

As a coach and marketing person, day after day I deal with people who are entirely not aligned to what they truly want, who make decisions based only on what people around them think - even when it is in total contradiction to what they really want.

There's been a lot of research done into this, including the [Spiral of Silence theory](#).

This and similar experiments show that 75% of people will agree with a point of view - even if they know it's wrong - for fear of being isolated from the crowd.

Some will even go as far as electrocuting people that they know this bears a health risk to, because they have been "given permission" to do it by a crowd (peer pressure) or an authority figure, as is the case with the [Milgram experiment](#).

If you live your life for other people, you will never know peace because you aren't walking your talk.

If you live your life making decisions based on what other people will think of you then you have no right to think of yourself as special. You will never be a leader because what you are is a "sheep".

*If I have to choose between character and reputation, I choose character every time - because the only person in my head when I go to sleep at night is me.*

#### 4. Envy

*Oh how beautiful people's lives look from the outside: their curated, filtered, edited lives, where you never see the messy bits and the difficult choices they have to make.*

That's pretty self-explanatory; but what's arisen from it is this expectation that somehow the beautiful and successful people are responsible for making the rest of us feel better about our own existence.

*Huh? How and when did that happen?*

If someone has done or achieved something in their life, whether it's losing weight, building a business, quitting smoking, building a successful relationship, they are **not** obligated to pass that onto you.

You can do it the hard way too - in fact you **have** to do it the hard way, otherwise it will never work! *This* is the secret that successful people know.

This idea that we have to uplift and improve people who will not do so for themselves is killing us economically, financially, spiritually, and emotionally.

If you want to build the economy you do it by giving money to rich people, because they'll do what they've always done - create jobs.

When you give money to the poor man, he just comes back for another handout the very next day.

*Teach a man to fish I believe the Bible calls it.*

#### 5. Pride

*The Internet - and especially social media - runs on content, and so content creators proliferate and abound.*

This means everyone has a voice.

You don't have to produce great writing anymore, you don't have to have achieved anything in life and you don't have to make it past journalists and editors anymore - if you can write something you can publish it.

*This has vastly exaggerated people's own sense of self-importance.*

Nowadays people believe that their opinion always matters, that people don't have the right to disagree - and when they do, they're haters.

But get out into the real world and your boss is going to come back at you for not having communication skills or being a team player or doing your job properly.

So what can you do except complain bitterly about it and retreat further and further into your cocoon of one, surrounded by your community of Internet friends - all likewise rotting away on their couches under a pile of junk food wrappers and ice cream tubs.

One day though you're going to snap and go on a shooting rampage and killing spree - because the messaging that's being reinforced is not what you're experiencing in the world out there.

*A prime example? Elliot Rodgers. (Read more at [2014 Isla Vista killings](#))*

## 6. Sloth

*Likewise, this idea of motivation and that everyone's opinion matters and that everyone is special has made us slothful.*

*In short, we're breeding a society of lazy, entitled people.*

You don't have to work hard to be heard anymore, you don't have to develop yourself or grow as a person, overcoming trials and tribulations - there's nothing left to aspire to.

Fat and unhappy? Don't change your body; go find a tribe who will tell you that fat is sexy and beautiful and that many people find fat bodies sexy.

What do they care when you're still single and lonely and miserably unhappy under your pile of empty ice-cream tubs and antidepressant containers 5 years later?

They'll still be there to love your post ranting about how unfair the world is - because their lives are equally as miserable as yours.

## 7. Gluttony

*I want everything and I want it now - and I don't want to have to lift a finger to work for it.*

*Or simply put, instant gratification.*

People must love my pictures and call me beautiful in droves. I don't have to meet society's standards for beautiful and sexy - the world must adjust its views to meet what I look like.

*Or, my personal favourite, they must love me for who I am on "the inside."*

Well, here's a wake-up call: people are on the outside what they are on the inside. The most beautiful people I've known are beautiful inside and out.

The ugliest people on the inside can usually be spotted a mile away by their countenance and appearance.

I've opened a business - where are my clients? Why aren't they rushing to my company in droves just because we've opened the doors? And why do I have to do the legwork and show value just to get them to come?



We want it all... Now! (Image: Wikimedia Commons)

Unhappy in your relationship? Don't put time and effort in and grow your communication skills - hit up on that ex of yours who's just broken up with her boyfriend because he was also a useless louse, of course.

Or better yet, declare yourself polyamorous so that you have person B to run to when the going gets tough in your primary relationship.

## **We're digging our own graves...**

*And I, like many millions of people around the world, won't stand by quietly and watch it happen anymore.*

People are standing up and speaking out and demanding more and more and more from life, more from their relationships and more truth in their worlds.

And yes - for the haters who are going to research this and come back saying I'm still on Facebook - I did keep one social media profile because it's linked to the most amazing virtual and international Mastermind group I could ever hope to be a

part of. And I love taking on haters publicly in cyber space ? So let's debate.

*Social media has maybe been an eye opener and built a global village, but its time in the guise that we've known it is coming to an end.*

Personally, I'm really glad to see it go.

## ABOUT CHEMORY GUNKO

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