

IF YOU WANT TO BE BETTER AT STARTING CONVERSATIONS, TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media has helped many people connect and reconnect. People who have not seen each other since high school or college are now striking up conversations on Facebook. But, there is something lost when connecting in this manner. We may have become more isolated due to these channels, making it more difficult to meet people face-to-face.

There is nothing like a physical meet-up with people. Emoticons aside, there is no replacement for seeing someone's smiling face. Also, the more we engage in a social media conversation, the less we make ourselves available to chat one-on-one.

The appeal of social media is understandable. Where else can you strike up instant conversations with friends you haven't seen in ages? We can share pictures, listen to music together, and keep each other up-to-date with what is going on in each of our lives. When we have struggles, we can turn to our friends and hope someone can help. At the very least, we can get emotional support from them.

The internet has made us less connected in some ways. The next time you find yourself in the presence of several people, note how many of them are typing away on their smart devices. There isn't much need to start up a conversation since people are already in the process of speaking to someone else. In fact, if you decide to try, you'll probably find people getting annoyed because you interrupted their conversation online.

Before the proliferation of smart devices, people constantly chatted with each other. It was all fair game on trains, in the subways, and even at the bus stop.

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These days, if you want to stand out from the crowd, strike up a conversation with a stranger. In fact, you can talk about the technology the person uses for his or her smart device. This can be a great conversation starter. Simply go up to someone and say, “Excuse me. I am currently thinking about buying a new smart device. Can you tell me about the one you have?” Even if you aren’t in the market for one, this conversation starter will get them talking for a while.

Social media isn’t going away. However, it can’t hurt to connect directly with people face-to-face. You can determine within a few moments whether the person is worth continuing speaking to. You don’t have this luxury with social media.