

This publication is being released as the second component of Greater Good Media, LLC's campaign to combat hate in all forms entitled:

## **"We Can Do Better"**

### **I KNOW YOU HEAR ME, BUT ARE YOU LISTENING?**

The primary reason for the ever-widening division between Americans and people worldwide is due to the way we communicate on social media platforms. Social media policy limits what we can detail or include in a post. These restrictions originated when bandwidth was not as readily available to handle the traffic on the internet before it mushroomed, morphed, or developed into what we experience in technology today.

This has dramatically allowed prejudice to advance into what has become a stagnated and altered way of communication. Look at the reliance on social media outlets in place from being shuttered in much larger numbers over the past year and change. The phrase "social distancing" has created "emotional distance". The uptick in frustration has taken hold because we are without the warmth, or satisfaction we so desperately need from "in person" gatherings, meaningful discussion, and plain old human interaction.

When I receive a "like" from something I post directed to a particular individual, or someone I regard as a person of intelligence, it irks me. That's all you've got? I'm not posting things about cute dogs, or a picture of the salami sandwich I just plated.

It is turning an entire generation and segments of the world's population into non-feeling, non-caring people to varying degrees. In no way am I encouraging anyone to stop using social media. Yes, technology will continue to evolve, and this is deemed progress in one vein, but much more needs to be contemplated if we are to grow. We must adapt, realizing what we need as human beings (mostly for safety) in a myriad of ways. There is more to who we are and will end up being.

If you are a parent, do you ever scratch your head about how younger people fail when responding to you in a text, let alone speak to you on the phone? Now turn that around for a second; if you receive a text from your kid and do not reply immediately,

they wonder; what's up. They quite often think you might be angry with them, or something is amiss.

Return for a moment to the earliest communication you exchanged with your child. When you make a funny face or have those cute and giddy moments with a newborn smiling at them and making eye contact; the baby responds. If you do not return some form of gibberish, or noise - maybe the "raspberries", the baby will begin to get confused as to why there was no return banter with a puzzled expression. That never leaves us.

The black cloud hovering above us is evident. What is happening now is the icing on the cake, or the overlie of what is achieved to limit free speech which has been wildly effective on many levels in a sense. It is also dangerous on many levels. Is this the new "book burnings" that governments likened to fascists and dictators who achieve power and eliminate their opponents.

Social media has tuned much of the younger generations into non-feeling individuals. Many have dramatically decreased the use of verbal communication. Think about that. They have no clue that this may be rude, or inconsistent with comity, the "golden rule", or courtesy for another's feelings. In my opinion, this is an erosion of our overall being. Not our physical being, but emotional growth; the ganglia tying intelligence and deductive reasoning through communication. What we have achieved over centuries is being cut from us without recognition. It is happening.

These actions, or inactions allow hate to flourish quicker because there is no analysis. This is all hiding in plain sight.

Where do you encounter fair and meaningful discussion? When was the last time you engaged in balanced dialogue over a topic? All we do on social media is put our positions forward in a Tweet, Facebook - Instagram posting limiting the verbiage to characters severely limiting or undermining deductive reasoning.

Getting together for a conversation is not like a Zoom meeting. When outside, you may comment on how nice the weather is, etc. Now, you are on a screen to discuss subject matter without nature's intention and interaction as human beings. Evaporating is empathy, sympathy, healthy debate or understanding through human contact. Free thinking, discussion and fair argument is what shaped this country. Read the

Declaration of Independence if you'd like to see how a "position" is developed through intelligence and elements necessary to come to a conclusion before taking action. It requires thought. How many of us do not know what "syllogism" is? Time to go back and see what Aristotle had in mind when he recognized what was required for understanding from start to finish.

The pitfalls attached to all this in present time deals primarily with the sense of accomplishment in how many "comments", or "likes" you've received from a post as if they had real value. Is that what matters to us?

Most of all the disintegration of communication which is totally outside of what nature intended is to answer in an "emoji" - Really? What are you conveying to someone without real human expression? We are left to our own interpretation as to what an emoji answers. Even Hieroglyphics contained distinction in their characters used for over 4,000 years by civilizations long gone. An "emoji" leaves one to interpret individually without translation, or explanation from the sender. In large part it says "Hey I don't really have the time to understand, nor do I care enough to give you any more than a few seconds of time because I really don't give a crap.

Does this boil down to, "If I want your opinion, I'll tell it to you".

I have many friends and acquaintances that voice concern with the belief that the government is watching or think that vaccines contain tracking devices. Another popular thought is that through other sources, the government is watching your movement. With our interaction and what we share on social media, the government doesn't have to do any of that. We are doing it to ourselves.

We are a marketing tool for the social media giants; A play-toy. This was not intended, but now leaves us in a place like a pharmaceutical company. They test the ingredients for a new liver pill and find out it grows hair. Same approach. The social experiment started way-back-when did not see what was coming decades down the road and was not anticipated to this magnitude. I am sure their original mission statement contained nothing about circumventing communication making us less of an individual. Forming opinions and beliefs which could result in

consequence should require us to do it in more than one hundred and twenty-eight characters.

Look at how this influences society; the prior administration used Twitter to make executive decisions. James Comey was most likely the highest level individual to be digitally fired in the U.S.A. Comey had no idea he was terminated until someone told him he saw it on Twitter.

In a situation as mentioned above, wouldn't the Chief Law Enforcement Officer heading the FBI deserve detailed information about why he is relieved from his position? Gone is the biggest question in the English language; **[W]hy**. We are eliminating why as a factor in our daily lives dropping down a notch in the evolutionary chain stymying us from becoming better thinkers and most of all, better people.

Short messaging creates immediate action without time to evaluate or think.

When you blink your eyes once or twice getting ready to focus, it is a preparatory reflex in order to look at something. We are replacing focus with the blink. Not good at all. I'm not a "Big Brother" conspiracist, but these actions taken by corporate social media have implications for us all.

What about the outcome when an individual relies on short messaging? A young man who read tweets that Democrats are abusing or eating children in a pizzeria decided to take a fatal step when he accepted a fictitious account of events and ended up killing people for what was advanced as fiction.

It is time to re-evaluate what is happening to us so "We Can Do Better".

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