

Columns

Unleashing online is both gratifying and wrong

Isn't social media great? You can bully people you don't know and expound on topics that you don't understand. You can share dubious information without verifying it and claim a righteousness that defies everything you've ever said or done. And if that doesn't fill up your day, you can post a picture of what you ate yesterday.

If you're really ornery, you might run afoul of the rules and get temporarily banned from posting anything. Then, when you are allowed back in, you can brag to the world about how you had to spend time in Facebook jail. When did it become a badge of honor to be mean, untruthful or negligent?

I'm not ready to support licensure for social media posting. Freedom of speech doesn't need to support opinions that we all agree with. It's there to protect speech that we

don't agree with. Unfavorable speech isn't always wrong.

But, gosh, it would be nice if people would exercise manners. A little discretion and social grace wouldn't hurt.

Everyone on Facebook has his own page. Think of it as your house. It's where you live on Facebook. It has information that you choose to share, like your relationship status, birthday, alma mater, etc. You might store photos of your family or other pictures. You celebrate achievements and milestones. You might list your favorite books or TV shows. It's your house; do what you like.

You might also use the platform to express your political views or your opinions on any number of topics. These might pop up on other people's "feeds;" maybe even people you don't know and aren't connected to.

I'm not opposed to any of

that. If I find that your posts show up frequently on my feed and I find them objectionable, I can easily switch them off.

Facebook allows people to comment on each other's posts. That's nice. It's like having a thousand neighbors and they all come over to your house.

That's where social decorum comes into play. When you post on someone else's page, you're in their house. You should act accordingly.

Since it's a virtual house, you don't have to knock on the door or take off your shoes. But that doesn't mean it's OK to crap on their lawn.

If I'm at someone's actual house, and we're having a lively discussion where we don't agree, I might say I disagree, and I might go into detail about why I disagree. But I don't call them a stupid libtard or suggest they should hang

Ramblin' Man

By David Porter



themselves. I might want to, but I have some couth.

I'm sometimes amazed by people who think it's OK to make snarky and offensive comments on my page. Sometimes, I want to fire back a pithy, lethal retort. I use words for a living, man. You don't want to fight me without a dictionary and a thesaurus.

But I have an effective safeguard that keeps me from jumping off that ledge. It's called a wife.

Just yesterday, I had both barrels loaded and the ham-

mer cocked. My finger was on the return key. But my wife convinced me to spare the offender. Instead, I deleted his comment and blocked him from my page. It's not quite as satisfying as the verbal thrashing I was about to unleash, but there was no need to publicly escalate the situation.

Maybe that's why people feel free to trash other people online. It just feels good sometimes to let go and wait on someone. Whatever tension or stress you have in your life can find an outlet online.

But while your comment is directed toward that one person, everyone else in the room can see it. Do you want to be that person who dresses down the server in a restaurant in front of other customers? Do you want to be the guy who yells at his neighbor across the lawn?

The first rule of social media decorum should be: If you wouldn't say it in person, don't say it online. Social media is a public space. Don't be a jerk. And by jerk, I mean something stronger, but this is a public space, too.

Just lucky for that guy that I have a wife who is a better person than both of us. Lucky for me, too.

© Copyright 2023 by David Porter who can be reached at porter@ramblinman.us. Everyone should have a wife like mine. But you can't. She's taken.

How posture effects your physical stress

Last week, I began my discussion of stress. Stress is everywhere, all the time. There are four different kinds of stress (Chemical, Physical, Mental and Social). The crazy thing is your body truly can't tell the difference between these four different kinds of stress. To your body, stress is stress. So, when you learn to address one or more areas of stress in your life, you can make positive changes in all four areas of stress.

This week, I want to address an area of stress that is not often talked about...postural stress. We have heard the saying, sitting is the new smoking. Many of us sit in front of screens all day and

then go home to get on our phones and tablets while we are watching TV. All this sitting and looking down has a huge effect on our posture. When your posture begins to deteriorate, your physical ability to handle stress also suffers.

The biggest problem with sitting is that you aren't circulating your lymph fluid. Lymph fluid is your body's trash collection system. When you have cellular trash to pick up from cellular metabolism, lymph fluid collects that trash and takes it back to the liver and intestines to recycle or get rid of. Lymph fluid is only pumped through your body when you are moving. When you sit, lymph fluid is stagnant.

Another big problem with sitting all day is your organs inside of your body gets pushed together. When your stomach, liver, small and large intestine, gall bladder and pancreas don't have enough room to work properly, they function poorly. Combine crunched organs and poor lymph flow and you have just added more stress to your body. We don't need more stress!

Further physical stress comes from having a forward head posture for most of your day. By now, everyone has heard of "tech neck." This refers to tipping your head forward and down to look at your phone or tablet. The farther your head goes forward,

Real Life Wellness

By Dr. Bill Hemmer



the greater the strain put onto your neck and midback muscles and joints. I have personally seen a huge increase in younger people having severe neck, shoulders and midback problems over the last decade because of "tech neck."

But the one part of postural changes being neglected is the positive or negative effects

your posture can have on your emotional health. In general, the better your posture, the better your emotional stability. This idea is something new to most people. But if you don't believe me, try this little experiment for yourself.

Sit up straight and tall in your chair right now. How does it make you feel? For

most people, it makes you feel better, less stressed and you have clearer thoughts. Now slump down into your chair and hang your head. How do you feel now? Most people will feel worse and if you stay in that posture for long, you will likely become depressed.

This is the physical response coming from your lymph fluid and organs becoming free to do their jobs or being cut off because of being crunched by poor posture. In other words, if you want to feel better, sit up straight! You will be amazed at how much better you will feel when you do this consistently!

Next week, we are going to discuss mental stress.

Update on streaming TV venture and seeing-eye cat

An update on my adventure into streaming TV: It has been a few months since I switched from cable TV to Roku free streaming and although I love saving the \$125 a month, I can honestly say I have not figured it all out. The thing I miss the most is the real-time local news but I did finally get "CBS," which is free, so that gets me set up for some of the new fall TV shows. The drawback is that on streaming one has to wait until the next day to see the major network shows.

Thank goodness for some of the "YouTube" videos on streaming for dummies and the fact that I like to research the things with which I am unfamiliar or I would really be up a creek. I think I should have done a bit more research before actually diving into the streaming game. (Hindsight you know.) The free streaming sites are great if you don't care much about what you are watching but I am sort of hard to please concerning my TV shows and most of what I am interested in is not free. Luckily, I have not made the mistake of buying multiple subscriptions before learning the way around the streaming game and I have talked to a few friends who did make that mistake.

It is also a good thing that I like watching the older TV series shows because the couple I have been watching have kept me interested allowing me not to become too disenchanted with streaming. There are still some of my favorite series that are not free so I will

Memories and Musings

By Cheri Sims



have to bide my time until they become free.

I started my adventure with "Hell on Wheels" only to discover after season three that one has to pay to see the rest. NOPE, I am not going to pay, so I will just wait. It was great to see "Lost," "Hawaii Five-O" with Alex O'Laughlin and the Canadian series "Republic of Doyle" but there are a couple others I am still searching for and eager to locate. There are just too many TV streaming channels and it takes a lot of time to surf all of them to locate interesting shows.

Right now I am engrossed in the Billy Bob Thornton series "Goliath" which aired on "Amazon Prime" from 2016-2020. "Goliath" is a lawyer/crime drama with 32 spellbinding episodes; each year being a different case with a running story line about the lawyer and his staff. The writing and acting are superb but I will have to say it is a little weird. If you liked the TV series "Fargo" then I think you would like "Goliath." There are some objectionable features so be sure to read up on the series before you start to watch it.

I knew I had an "Amazon

Prime" membership (hubby set it up and controlled the TV tuner) but I did not know it included streaming TV until a few months into my streaming journey. I was pretty thrilled when I discovered that information which opened up a whole new surfing world. Now I feel like I am getting my money's worth out of that membership. I know we had a "Netflix" membership a few years ago but I can't seem to access it and my charge card bill does not show any monthly charges from "Netflix" so if I decide to venture into "Netflix" I will have to sign up again.

I think the thing I dislike the most about streaming is the length of time and the number of clicks it takes from turning the TV on to getting to a show I want to watch. I never surfed channels much on regular TV so this is another new adventure.

A Pitou cat update: I think I have a seeing-eye cat. A couple weeks ago I dropped a hair roller clip and could not see it anywhere on the floor. I decided to get the dust mop and run it over the floor to see if I could locate the clip and I still did not find it. Suddenly I

heard a strange meowing from the corner of the room and, lo and behold, there was Pitou looking down at something and it was the clip I could not find. This same scenario has happened three times in the last couple weeks and each time Pitou finds the lost object. Someone is looking after me.

Summer cooking update: I was gifted a huge box of cucumbers, onions and green peppers after a neighbor sprayed our back fence with an herbicide of which I am allergic and I lost all my veggies. My friend also included a recipe for freezer cucumber relish and a link to the site "Blue Flame Kitchen" where she found the recipe. I thought you might like to look at the site and try the relish.

Freezer cucumber relish

3 cups finely chopped seeded English cucumber
2 cups finely chopped celery
2 cups finely chopped onions
1 cup finely chopped green bell pepper
1 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
2 cups pure white vinegar
2 cups granulated sugar
1 tbspc celery seed
1 tbspc mustard seed
Salt*

Combine cucumber, celery, onions, green pepper and red pepper in a large bowl. Working in batches, place vegetable mixture in a potato ricer and squeeze firmly until all excess moisture is removed; set vegetable mixture aside.

Combine vinegar, sugar, celery seed and mustard seed in a non-reactive Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium

heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Add vegetable mixture and return to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer; uncovered, stirring occasionally, until most of liquid is evaporated and vegetables are softened, about 12 - 15 minutes. Remove from heat and season to taste with salt.

Cool relish quickly by placing Dutch oven in a sink of ice water and stirring relish frequently to allow steam to escape. Do not allow ice water to enter Dutch oven.

Spoon cooled relish into freezer containers and freeze for up to 4 months.

Thaw relish in refrigerator. Thawed relish may be refrigerated for up to 1 week.

<https://www.atcobluflamekitchen.com/en-ca/recipes-menus/recipes/freezer-cucumber-relish.html>

View the rings on Saturn at sunset

Last Sunday marked the planet Saturn's "opposition" date. This means Saturn is on the same side of the Sun as we are and thus it's close by and appears bright and large through a telescope.

Look for it rising at sunset in the east-southeast. If you own a telescope, this is great time to get it out of the closet and look at Saturn. The rings are pretty easy to see!

Tonight's full Moon is the second one of the month, plus the Moon is at its closest point to the Earth. Does that make it a "Super Full Sturgeon Blue Moon?" Don't worry about labels, just check out the Moon tonight just below and left of

In the night sky

By David Leake



Saturn. You know how I feel about "supermoons." Yes, the Moon technically appears larger but the amount is small enough the human eye doesn't notice the difference. And if it does appear larger, that's not a "supermoon," but an optical effect called the "Moon illu-

sion." Even star constellations look larger near the horizon. Look it up if you wish!

David Leake is retired Planetary Director of Staer College Planetarium at Parkland College and co-founder of the Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc.