**The positives of using social media.**

Jake Main - CLE 10 – September 23/20

Sometimes it takes the perspective and insight of teenagers to see the usefulness and positivity in something I would otherwise dismiss as wasteful.

It’s fascinating how views and opinions on something can swing so wildly in the course of an afternoon. My views on social media coming into the day were largely negative and I felt it was large a waste of time. By the time school dismissed at 2:10 however, I was rethinking my previous conceptions. While I still feel that apps like Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook can be extreme time wasters and that overuse or misuse can lead to horrible social consequences, I now see more positives than before when social media is used, created or consumed in a responsible and healthy manner.

Social Media is an outlet for creativity. Applications like Tik Tok, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter can help foster the creativity of its creators. Creators on Tik Tok can upload dances, songs, skits or even their artwork and expose their skills and abilities to potentially millions of viewers. YouTube has revolutionized the way we go about problem solving and troubleshooting issues. A quick search on the site, and there are often dozens, if not hundreds of different experts willing to share their expertise and experiences. For those creators, it is a way to share their talents, and in the case of businesses, drive more work their way. Instagram can give artists a platform to display their photography or painting, while twitter can allow anyone, famous or not, a chance for others some insight into their views and personal lives. In every case, creators on these social media platforms can be creative and share their talents with the world for free.

By publishing content on social media, creators also have instant access to millions of other people, and can gauge their audience for their opinion, feedback, expertise, or even their help when in need. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook can help spread the word of a person, family, community or country in need of help. More commonly however, social media gives creators an opportunity to seek out the advice or opinion from thousands of people they would otherwise never likely canvas for their thoughts. It can be a challenge to weed through the variety of good, bad, well-thought out and irrational comments, but for someone with the time, a thick skin and an eye for improvement, those comments could be hugely beneficial.

While it is true that social media does have its pitfalls and issues, if it is used or consumed in moderation, and with an eye on only taking the positive from it, then it can be a powerful force for growth and learning. If its user are aware of the telltale signs of misuse, like mood swings, sleep deprivation, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem and they have the proper supports around them then social media can and will continue to be a fantastic tool to help others communicate, find new virtual communities and support groups, and foster and grow creativity.