

# Doom Scrolling

The term “doom scrolling” first caught on in early 2020 describing our tendency to spend a lot of time consuming negative online news. As you might have guessed, doom scrolling is terrible for your mental health. It reinforces negative thinking, loneliness, feelings of exhaustion, and builds a habit-forming negative mindset. Doom scrolling is also linked to increases in insomnia, depression, and anxiety.

## Tips for stopping doom scrolling:

- **Limit and localize it** – Set parameters for when, where, and how long you plan to read online news. Also, set a cap on the number of news articles you read per day.
- **Move your phone** – Turn it off or put your phone in a different room during the time of day you are most likely to surf social media.
- **Control your algorithm** – Unfollow negative news sources and those filled with disinformation. Limit your time reading articles that raise your anxiety, cause you fear, or contribute to feelings of anger. If all you read is emotionally charged articles, then that’s what will show up in your news feeds.
- **Avoid catastrophizing** – Catastrophizing is a thinking trap that leads to negative emotions. It is when your mind jumps to the worst-case scenario and creates over thinking and rumination. Instead ask yourself, “What is the most likely, probable, and realistic outcome?”
- **Only check your phone when you need to** – A lot of us pick up our phones and unconsciously scroll whenever we have a spare second. When you recognize this, put your phone back down and do something different. Take the time to be in the moment! For example, begin a conversation with your partner, take a few deep breaths, or do some self-care.
- **Seek out positive media and remind yourself what your grateful for** – Instead of doom scrolling, watch something funny, look at family photos, or read a story about something good in the world. Practice gratitude... if you seek out the good, you will find it!
- **Ask yourself, what is within your control** - “Can you do anything about the day’s news?” In other words, does the information you’re reading truly help you plan for your future? Or is it merely creating negativity about a topic that you have no power to influence?

Breaking the cycle of doom scrolling starts with determining the patterns that lead to it becoming a habit and then developing solutions that work for you to minimize its effects.

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