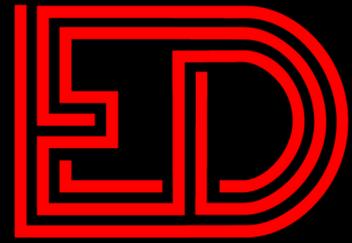


The
Emotions
Doctor

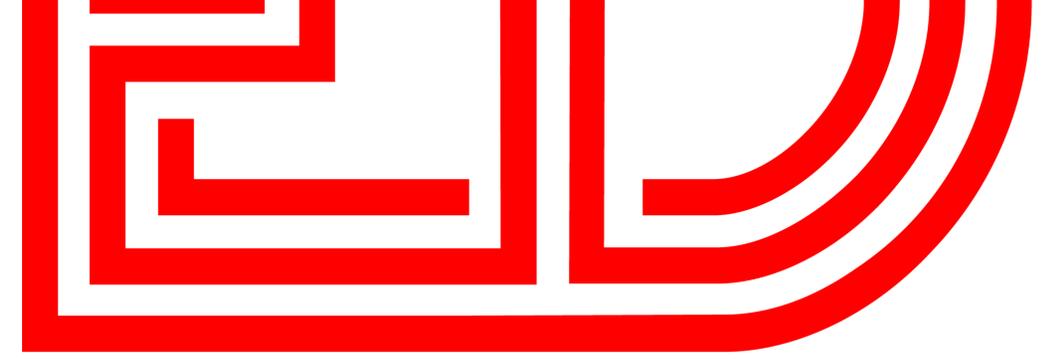


**The
Emotions
Doctor**



Peer Pressure and Depression in the Age of Social Media

Peer Pressure and Depression in the Age of Social Media



As social vertebrates, interfacing with family and friends across long distance has been a daily reality since the inception of the world. We have relied on multiple flavours of communication and connection to strengthen our relationships. One of such creative solution is social media. A neutral innovation with a double edged sword. A weapon capable of extinguishing sanity and improving your individuality concurrently.

Before I delve into the dynamics of this article, I would love to define these words: peer, pressure and peer pressure.

Peer means an equal in rank or status or what Nigerians call ‘age mate’.

Pressure means suffering, anguish; act or fact of pressing on the mind or heart.

Peer pressure means a feeling that one must do the same things as other people of one's age and social group in order to be liked or respected by them.

Interestingly, peer pressure is supposed to be a stimulant not a disempowering vibe. It is a narrative to challenge and arouse us to chase our greatness.

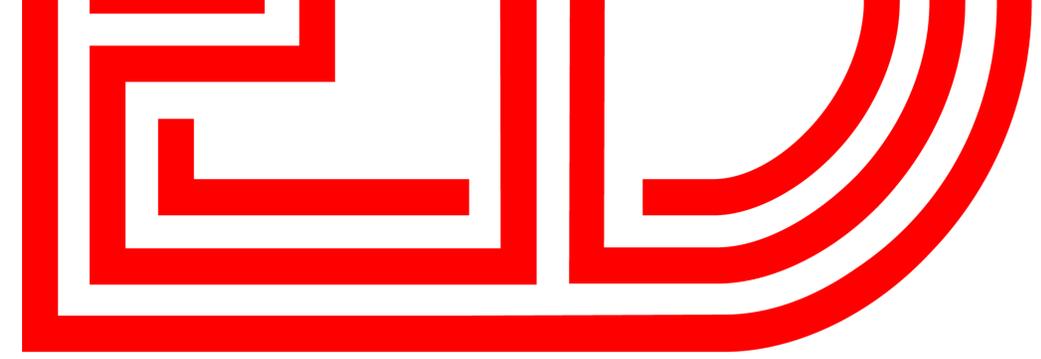
However, majority of us have demonised this inert concept. We have used it as a vice not a virtue and it has become a savage cause of depression in Nigeria and all over the world. Online peer pressure has influenced a lot of emotional and psychological trauma.



Instagram for example, is competing for the title of the greatest brewer of envy and jealousy where people photoshop their imperfections, pose in cars they do not own, model outfits they borrowed. All in a bid to mask their insecurities and to create false personas behind flawless pictures.

Social media was created to be an interactive computer-mediated technology. It facilitates the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression, via virtual communities and networks.

But, this same golden goose has laid eggs of unhealthy competition, comparison, rivalry, self-sabotage and depression.



A new study concludes that there is, in fact, a causal link between the use of social media and negative effects on well-being; primarily depression and loneliness. The study was published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology.

“If you use less social media, you are actually less depressed and less lonely; meaning that the decreased social media use is what causes that qualitative shift in your well-being,” said Jordyn Young, a co-author of the paper and a senior at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study included 143 students from the University of Pennsylvania. They were randomly assigned to one of two groups: one that would continue their social media habits as usual or one that would significantly limit access to social media. For three weeks, the experimental group had their social media user reduced to 30 minutes per day - 10 minutes on three different platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat).

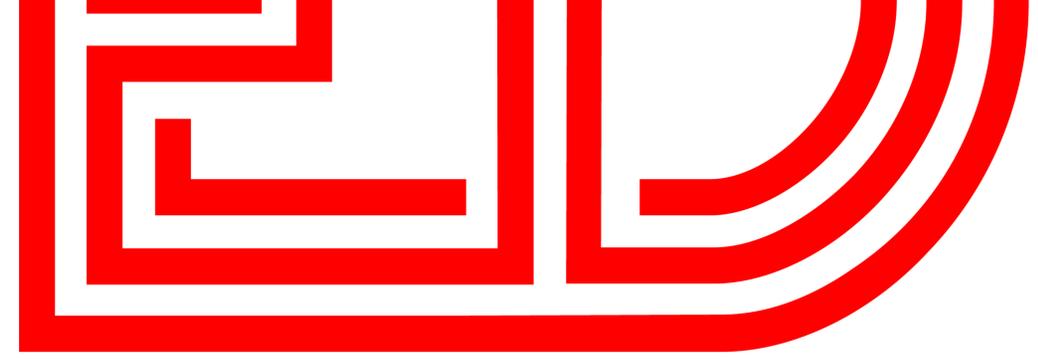
In order to keep these experimental conditions, the researchers looked at phone usage data, which documented how much time was spent using each app per day. All of the study participants had to use iPhones.



The question is, why let the experimental group use social media at all?

“We didn’t think [complete abstinence] was an accurate representation of the landscape of the world that we live in today. Social media is around us in so many capacities,” Young said. The results were clear; the group that used less social media, even though it wasn’t completely eliminated, had better mental health outcomes.

Baseline readings for participants were taken at the beginning of the trial in several areas of well-being: social support, fear of missing out, loneliness, anxiety, depression, self-esteem, autonomy, and self-acceptance. At the end of the trial, those in the experimental group saw both loneliness and depressive symptoms decline, with the largest changes happening in those who reported greater levels of depression.



“No matter where they started off, if they were told to limit their social media, they had less depression, no matter what their initial levels were,” Young opined.

The fact is, internet addiction is a common phenomenon driving many to depression and suicide.

In the United States, approximately 77 percent of all Americans have a social media profile of some kind in 2018, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) declared that approximately 103 million Nigerians had access to the Internet.

The question then is, how can systems designed to bring us closer to our friends and family be bad for our mental health?

According to Oscar Ybarra, PhD, a professor of psychology at the University of Michigan. “People don’t necessarily have to be super aware that this is occurring, but it does. You log on, you’re generally dealing with very curated content on the other side.”

The Fear of missing out, or FOMO, is a mental health effect that’s been strongly linked with the use of social media.

Although a relatively new phrase often attributed to millennial ennui, psychologists say it has real social significance.

Amy Summerville, PhD, a professor of psychology at Miami University in Ohio, is an expert on issues of regret and the psychology of “what might have been.”

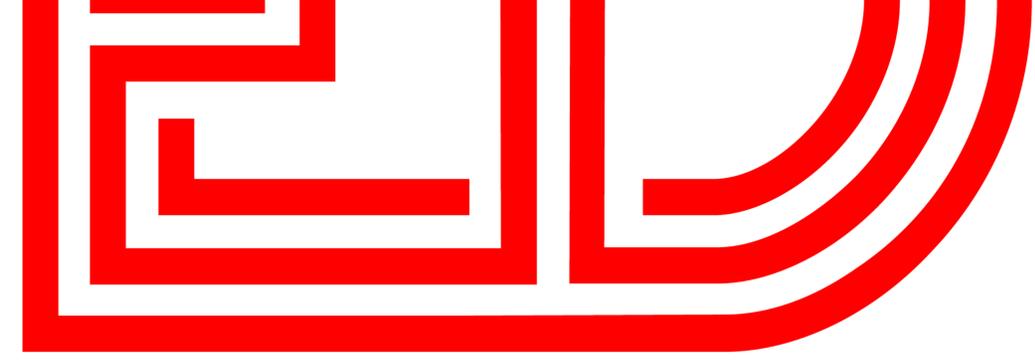
She explains that FOMO is an extension of larger issues of inclusion and social standing. Once our basic needs are met, like food, shelter, and water, the need for inclusion and social interaction ranks right up there, she says.



“The FOMO experience specifically is this feeling that I personally could have been there and I wasn’t. I do think that part of the reason that’s really powerful is this cue that maybe we’re not being included by people we have important social relationships with,” she told Healthline.

The now ubiquitous use of social media and technology has created a world in which we can gaze into our own crystal ball to see what our friends are doing at almost any time of day. And that’s not necessarily a good thing.

This freedom has impacted and adversely affected nations.



According to the World Health Organisation, Nigeria is Africa's most depressed country and the 85th happiest country on global happiness report in 2019.

The World Health Organisation also posits that there are 322 million people living with depression in the world. In the WHO suicide ranking, Nigeria, leads with 15.1 suicides per 100,000 population per year and is ranked the 30th most suicide-prone out of 183 nations in the world.

As a matter of fact, World Bank states that not only do, 22% of Nigerians suffer from chronic depression, Nigeria rates 10th in Africa after countries with higher rates of suicide such as Togo (ranked 26th in the world), Burkina Faso (22nd), Cameroun (19th) Zimbabwe (16th), Central African Republic (13th), Sierra Leone (11th), Angola (9th), Equatorial Guinea (7th), and Cote D'Ivoire (5th).

Mental health disorders (particularly depression and substance abuse) are associated with more than 90% of all cases of suicide of Nigeria.

In truth, Daily Trust newspapers rendered that seventy-nine people committed suicide in Nigeria between April 8, 2017 and May 12, 2018.

The question therefore is, will we disengage our hearts from this unpleasant realities?

If we won't, how can we help Nigerians develop the capacity to alter their state and move from a state of unhappiness to happiness effortlessly?

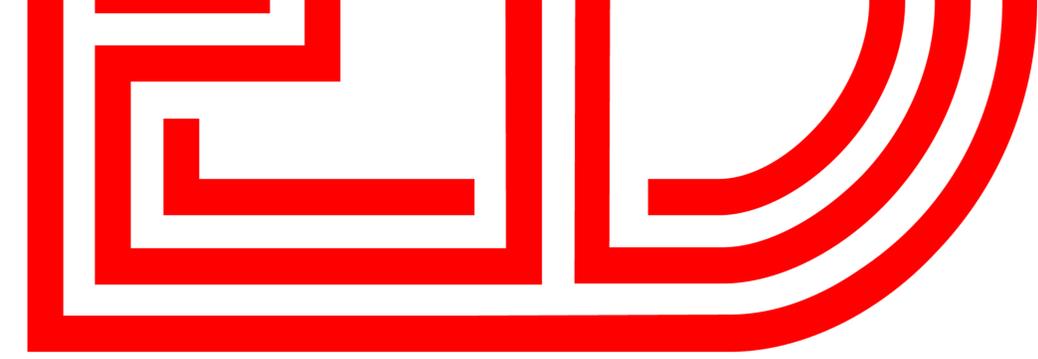
The formula for happiness as defined by Anthony Robbins, is when your life's conditions (LC) match or equal your blueprint, your story, about what it should be.

Happiness simply means one word, PROGRESS. PROGRESS equals HAPPINESS. But when your life's conditions do not match your blueprint, your story, or how your life is supposed to be, you are going to have disappointments and may end up depressed.

Mild Depression is an outcome of wrong thinking or cognitive dissonance.



A mood disorder marked especially by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration, a significant increase or decrease in appetite and time spent sleeping, feelings of dejection and hopelessness, and sometimes suicidal tendencies.



Every time we experience insecurity, unhappiness and suicidal ideation, we have three choices.

The first choice is to blame something / blame someone / or blame yourself.

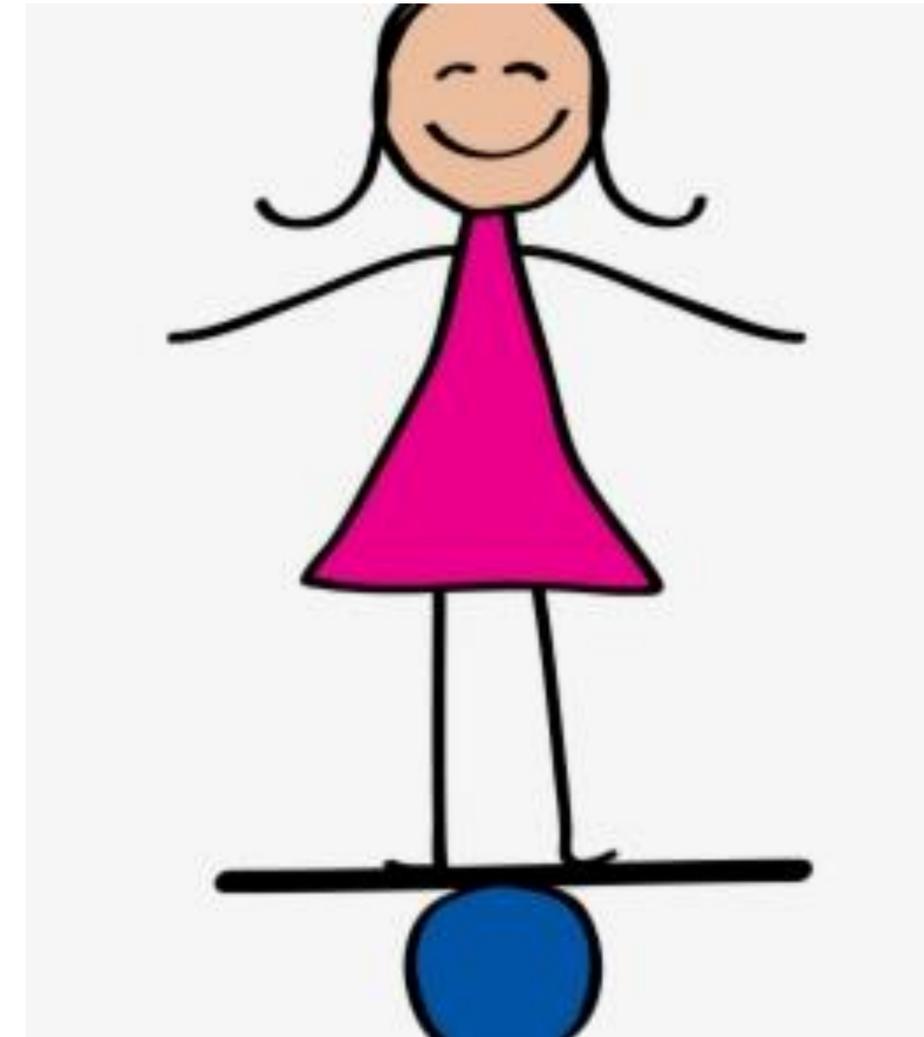
The second is to Change it.

The third is to change your blue print if you don't desire to keep having an intercourse with depression or being overwhelmed by life.

Changing your STRATEGY, STORY and STATE furnishes you with the capacity to move from a state of unhappiness to happiness.

So the next time you show up online, remember that

- ❖ There will always be someone richer than you and someone you are richer than.
- ❖ Pressure only reveals content and social media only has capacity to amplify your intrinsic state of mind.
- ❖ Decide to Nurture and sustain your self- awareness skills.
- ❖ You can fumigate your timeline by unfollowing everyone whose handle tensions you.
- ❖ You can observe regular social media detox and reduce the time spent online.
- ❖ You can connect with the offline world more.
- ❖ You can develop a habit of contentment and gratitude.



Meet the Emotions Doctor

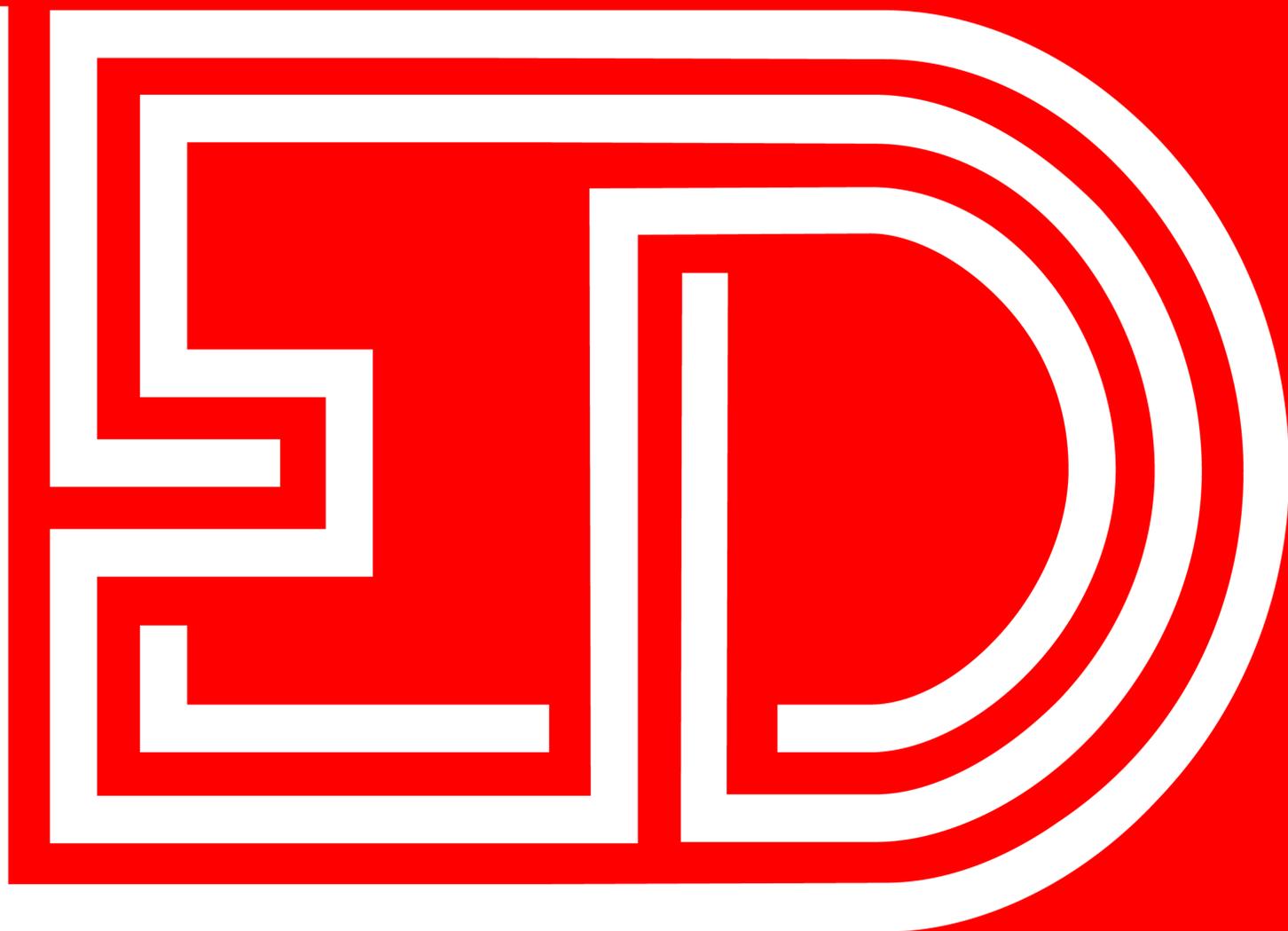


Oyinkansola Alabi, popularly referred to as the Emotions Doctor, is the lead researcher and facilitator at Emotions City, Africa's leading emotional intelligence centre.

She is the only female founder of an Emotional Intelligence Academy in Africa and is the convener of Africa's first Emotional Intelligence Week. Oyinkansola is a high impact trainer who has taught tens of thousands of executives in organisations such as KPMG, Guinness, Multichoice, Interswitch, First Bank, Stanbic IBTC and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture among others.

Her work has taken her to 30 States in Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, UAE, United Kingdom and the United States. Oyinkansola is the first African to attend the Yale Centre for Emotional Intelligence. A Cornell University-trained Human Resource Executive, a Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapist, a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, a Six Seconds Network Licensed Emotional Intelligence Practitioner, A Goldman Sachs Scholar, one of the 100 most influential women in Nigeria in 2019 and a Pastor at the Fountain of Life Church.

She is a member of the International Coaching Federation (ICF), & the British Psychological Society.



Contact Details.

www.emotionscity.com

www.oyinkansolaalabi.com

www.thementalhealthmall.com

www.ednegotiations.com

ed@oyinkansolaalabi.com

+2348125116740

Head Office:

110 W Randol Mill Rd Ste 240
Arlington, Texas 76011 USA