

Does going for a run make you want to smile?

Yesterday, I took advantage of a gorgeous low-humidity, warm (not hot) day and went for a run along the C&O Canal in Potomac. There were several people along the trail, some walking, some biking and some running like me. Some people smiled, nodded or said hi as I passed. Some people ignored me completely (like the bikers who passed me without a warning or even a look back or the runner who pointedly looked straight ahead when passing in the other direction).



Smile! by Rob Kleine on Flickr

Some people are social, and some are not.

It's not just when you are out running on a gorgeous day. It's when you get in an elevator, walk along the street, go in a store, and so forth. Some people will always greet others, and

some will pretend they are in their own little fiefdom. Some people are naturally social and some are not. Some people feel connection to those around them, and some do not.

Some of this has to do with factors other than sociability. Perhaps someone has just received bad news or is lost in thought about a pressing problem. Perhaps there is a language or culture barrier.

The same is true on social media. Some people are naturally good at social media and some are not. You can see it by how often they post, how often they like posts, how often they re-tweet, **how often they interact**. Of course, some people will defend their lack of engagement on social media by saying they are “too busy” and they “don’t have time.”

Then there are those like someone I know named Jon, who blocked off his Facebook wall to avoid unwanted communication and has even asked me to “untag” him from a conversation because he did not care to hear what other people had to say about something he had been involved in. Or the people like Jon, who avoid commenting on posts because they don’t want to be dragged into a conversation. My question to Jon and others like him is: why are you on Facebook? Why are you on social media at all?

Here’s the thing: If you don’t want two-way communication (or even multi-lateral communication), DO NOT get on social media. It is not all about you. It is about the other people too.

People who like to control what others say or with whom they connect, are not naturally good at social media. We see the corporate CEOs who have been forced to open Twitter accounts by their communications advisers and who then do not tweet or respond to tweets.

Getting on social media is about being social. It is about being responsive. It is about interacting. It’s about (the hated, overused term) engagement. You can’t automate your

social media interactions. You need to be present, social and say hi.

Smile! You are on social media.