

Anxiety, Social Media, and the Believer

How to Live with the
Elephant in the Room











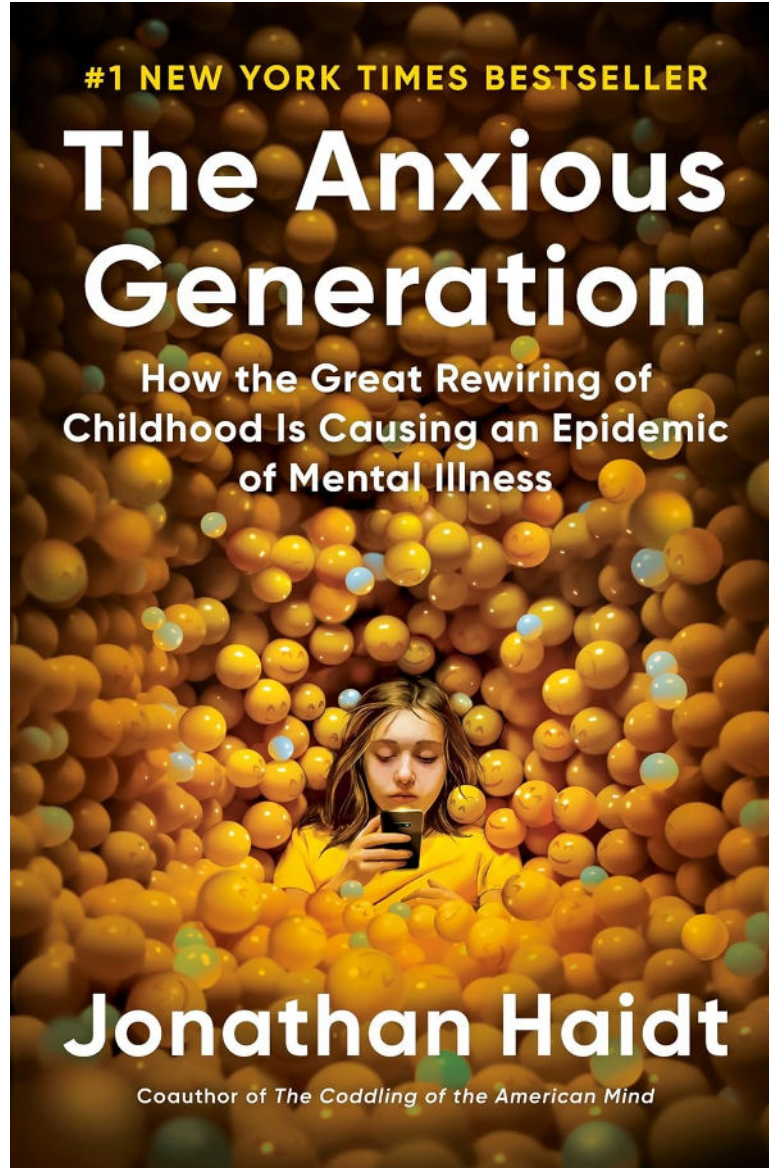
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

The Anxious Generation

How the Great Rewiring of
Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic
of Mental Illness

Jonathan Haidt

Coauthor of *The Coddling of the American Mind*



Play-Based Childhood to Phone-Based Childhood

- Between 2010 and 2015, the social lives of American teens moved largely onto smartphones with continuous access to social media, online video games, and other internet-based activities. Based on this, Haidt, argues that this phenomenon is the single largest reason for the tidal wave of adolescent mental illness that began in the early 2010s.
- The first generation of Americans who went through puberty with smartphones (and the entire internet) in their hands became more anxious, depressed, self-harming, and suicidal.
- No other theory has been able to explain why rates of anxiety and depression surged among adolescence in so many countries at the same time in the same way.

What threat does social media pose on one's anxiety?

What steps can be taken to lessen anxiety associated with social media use?

Anxiety grows as your awareness
of God's presence and power
diminish, leading you to take
greater control of your life.- Ed Welch,
A Small Book for the Anxious Heart

Deuteronomy 31:1-8, 23

Psalm 23:4

Isaiah 41:10

Joshua 1:5,9

Matthew 28:16-20

UNHEALTHY REACTION TO ANXIETY

Peace

A hand-drawn diagram illustrating an unhealthy reaction to anxiety. It features two lines: a straight line on the left and a curved line on the right. The straight line is labeled 'Peace' in bold black text. The curved line starts below the straight line, rises to meet it, then curves downwards and loops back up to cross itself, ending with a small flourish. This visual metaphor suggests that while peace is a straight path, an unhealthy reaction to anxiety is a path that loops back on itself, indicating a cycle of negative thoughts or behaviors.

UNHEALTHY REACTION TO ANXIETY

Peace

Negative obsessive/intrusive thoughts

Doubt God's Presence

Doubt God's Power to Provide

Situation
ANXIETY



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Negative obsessive/intrusive thoughts

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ANXIETY

TAKE GREATER CONTROL

(**FALL,**
Physically/Spiritually
/Emotionally)



What are child and teens most concerned about?

Identity

Adolescent identity is developed, in part, based on relationships and feedback received from others. As young people move from early to late adolescence and their brains continue to develop, their adolescent identity is also likely to change.-Psychologist Joanna Williams, Center for Parent Teen Communication

Begin to imagine their own adolescent identity and role in the larger world

Actively explore adolescent identity alternatives — trying on different hats to see which one fits best

Consider themselves and their beliefs in relation to broader social-cultural groups like gender, race, and religion

Take stronger stances on social, ethical, or moral issues

Increase stability in how they see themselves across different places and social groups

The Internet, Screens, and Social Media are a **BIG** part of our daily lives: (Pew Research Center)

Screen time averages are up to 7-9 hrs per day.

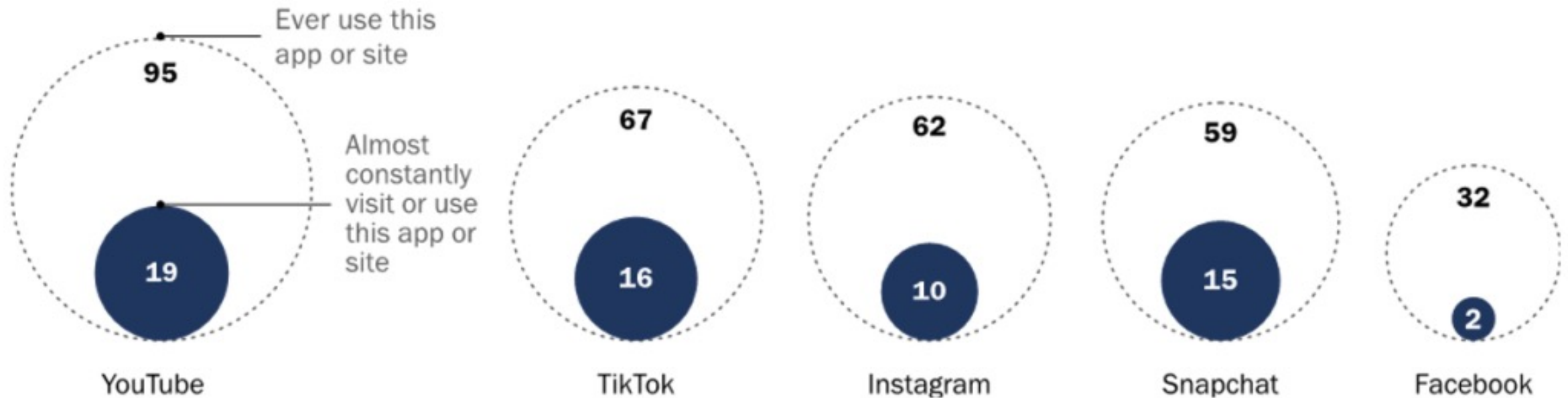
Nearly half of teens now say they use the internet 'almost constantly.'

Since 2010, there has been an alarming drop in mental health. With 62% of teens rating their mental health as average, poor, or very poor.



About one-in-five teens visit or use YouTube 'almost constantly'

% of U.S. teens who say they ...



Note: Teens refer to those ages 13 to 17. Those who did not give an answer or gave other responses are not shown.

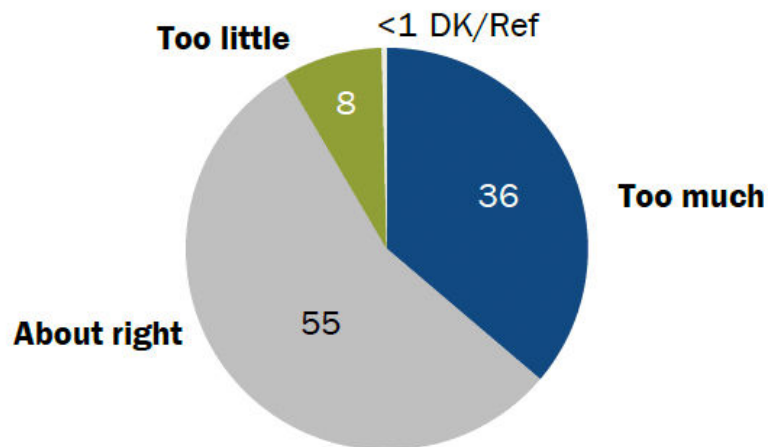
Source: Survey conducted April 14-May 4, 2022.

"Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022"

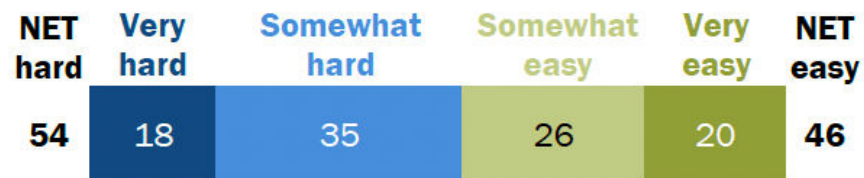
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

54% of teens say it would be hard to give up social media

% of U.S. teens who say that overall, the amount of time they spend on social media is ...



% of U.S. teens who say it would be ___ for them to give up social media



Note: Teens refer to those ages 13 to 17. Figures may not add up to the NET values due to rounding. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 14-May 4, 2022.

"Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022"



Infiltrates
Isolates
Indoctrinates
Integrates



Why does social media have so much pull?

But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be **lovers of self, lovers of money**, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, **lovers of pleasure** rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Paul names three excessive loves:

1) Lovers of self-**Narcissism**

2) Lovers of money-**Materialism**

3) Lovers of pleasure-**Hedonism**

Narcissism-To be Something

Materialism-To Have Something

Hedonism-**To Feel Something**

To be something-**Fame**
To have something-**Fortune**
To feel something-**Freedom**

**Social Media appeals to the heart of
mankind by offering...**

Fame

Fortune

Freedom















FOMO
Fear of
Missing
Out

It is human nature to make comparisons, we do it in real-life and we do it online. But online, we are often comparing our reality to an illusion, an image of a life, an image of perfection. Students across Ireland tell me, “we know the images are edited so it doesn’t really affect us”. Yet in the same breath they tell me they use filters on their pictures daily and take multiple pictures from different angles before deciding on the “best” picture to share –we are constantly **striving for perfection.**

Maureen Griffin, Forensic Psychologist writing for **Laya Healthcare**

In Excess Fame, Fortune, and Freedom lead to sin. Genesis 3

⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it **your eyes will be opened [Freedom]**, and **you will be like God [Fame]**, knowing good and evil **[Fortune]**.

So when the woman saw that the **tree was good for food [Fortune]**, and that **it was a delight to the eyes [Fame]**, and that the tree was to be **desired to make one wise [Freedom]**, she took of its fruit and ate.

In Excess Fame, Fortune, and Freedom lead to sin. Luke 4:3-7

The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this **stone to become bread**.... **[Fortune]** ⁵ And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “**To you I will give all this authority and their glory**, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” **[Fame]** And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, **throw yourself down from here**, ¹⁰ for it is written, “**He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,**’ **[Freedom]**.”

God Gives Us Three Core Loves:

- **Fame**
- **Fortune**
- **Freedom**

Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread **[Fortune]**.

¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors **[Fame]**.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: **[Freedom]**.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. [God is supreme not digital tech. Our wealth, glory, and freedom come from him].

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

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¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
[God is supreme not digital tech]

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i.e, a large sum of money or assets

Mark 10:29-30, "Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life."

Matthew 6:9-13

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¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. [**Fame**]

Romans 8:30, And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also **glorified**.

Matthew 6:9-13

¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. [**Fame**]

Proverbs 19:11b, “it is the **glory** of a man to overlook an offense.”

Matthew 6:9-13

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Romans 6:17-18

“But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been **set free from sin**, have become slaves of righteousness.” [feeling/sense/pleasure of freedom]

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UNHEALTHY REACTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Healthy Screen time/Social Media Usage

Love of self, love of things, love of pleasure, 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Man's importance is exaggerated and God's presence and power are diminished

ANXIETY
(Isolation, FOMO,
indoctrination, DYSPHORIA
integration) SEPARATION

TAKE GREATER CONTROL
OF ONE'S FAME, FORTUNE,
and FREEDOM (THE SELF/IDENTITY)
(Grow in Despair)

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(Isolation, FOMO, indoctrination, DYSPHORIA integration) SEPARATION

TAKE GREATER CONTROL OF ONE'S FAME, FORTUNE, and FREEDOM (THE SELF/IDENTITY)

(Grow in Despair)

(Grow in Peace)

1. Confession & Repentance of Lust and an inflated view of the self and a diminished view of God)
2. Childlike trust in your identity in Christ
3. Limit or remove apps, limit time, redirect your usage to healthier content
4. Spend more time outside and spend more time with people

RESPONDING TO ANXIETY THAT IS RELATED TO SOCIAL MEDIA

(Grow in Peace)

1. Childlike trust in your identity in Christ
Confession & Repentance of Lust and
Pride in relation to my identity (holding
an inflated view of the self and a
diminished view of God)
 2. Limit or remove apps, limit time, redirect your usage
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