

## **It's Almost Over: Social Media Sanity as Election Season Ends**

As the election season enters its final weeks, many people are feeling a sense of exhaustion from the non-stop barrage of political news and opinion. The craziness of political squabbling has left us searching for relief, but luckily there are many ways to avoid getting caught up in the political slug-fest on social media. Here are some tips for making it to the finish line on Nov. 8 while preserving your sanity and relationships, both online and off.

### **1. Log Out Entirely**

Make use of the obscure little button labeled "Log Off." Take a break from social media and commit to spending time offline every day. Remember that there is a whole world out there beyond social media. Go for a walk. Take your children to a pumpkin patch. Dress up your cat in a Halloween costume.

### **2. Ignore the Political Noise**

With two weeks to go until the election, you have probably already decided what you believe and who you're voting for. You also know everything your mullet-headed high school friends think about politics. The surest way to survive the online political cacophony is to tune it out. Seek out photos of cats in Halloween costumes and cute kids in pumpkin patches instead.

### **3. Moderate Your Exposure**

Decide if you need to be on numerous social media platforms right now—maybe just one will be enough to scratch your itch for political dysfunction. Rest assured that photos of cats, kids and pumpkins will still be posted after the election. Get your political news from sources outside social media, like The New York Times, The Huffington Post, or Fox News. Choose your political media consumption based on whether it is more or less likely to raise your blood pressure.

### **4. Avoid Doing Battle**

At this point, do you really think your posts will change anyone's mind? There's nothing wrong with expressing your political opinions but engaging in contentious back and forth is more likely to ruin your peace of mind than change some else's mind. If you just can't resist the lure of online political debate, remember to be kind, be considerate, and be respectful—the internet is already a cesspool of mean-spirited, offensive commentary. Your civility will be appreciated by people innocently searching for posts about pumpkin patches full of cats and kids in Halloween costumes.

### **5. Unfollow and Unfriend**

Most of us probably like our online friends and family better when we are oblivious to their beliefs. If you have valued connections who frequently post opinions you find offensive, unfollow or mute them until after the election—this blocks their content without letting them know they're being ignored. For the more egregious offenders of your sensibilities, you can unfriend them and cut ties completely, unless of course, you can't live without their precious

posts of Halloween cats and pumpkin children.

## **6. Vote**

The best way for you to express your political conviction is to vote: it's the only time your opinion will make a difference.