Online Wellbeing for Women Over 40

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Meet the Trainers (1)

Gary Parker

BA (Hons) Social Science

- Chair of Future Communities
- 20+ years of experience in community engagement and fundraising
- future-communities.org.uk

Meet the Trainers (2)

- Digital Advisor at Future Communities
- Providing web design and a range of related digital services to small businesses, helping them to make the most of technology
- Worked with businesses from a variety of industry sectors

Sybil Mayard

MSc Computer Science

Workshop Outline

1. Introduction to online wellbeing
2. Positive ways to use the Internet
3. The dangers of social media overuse
4. Offline activities to improve mental health
5. How to deal with harmful content
6. Tips to improve your online wellbeing
7. Managing digital overwhelm
8. Online safety
9. Contact info

Introduction to Online Wellbeing

What is online wellbeing?

*"Online wellbeing, or digital wellness, refers to maintaining a **healthy**, **balanced** relationship with technology that supports your **mental**, **physical**, and **emotional health**."*

Positive Ways to Use the Internet

- Entertainment
- News
- Finding information
- Education
- Keeping in contact with others
- Meeting new people
- Running a business
- Shopping
- Online banking
- Booking appointments

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The Dangers of Social Media Overuse

- Doomscrolling
- Addiction
- Information overload
- Feelings of isolation, depression and anxiety
- Comparing yourself with others
- Sleep disruption
- Reduced productivity
- Shortened attention span
- Sedentary lifestyle

UK users spend an average of **1 hour 37 minutes** per day on social media.

Source: Global Web Index

Preventing Feelings of Isolation and Loneliness

- Find groups that align with your interests and values
- Avoid toxic communities and harmful content
- Develop meaningful relationships offline as well as online

Offline Activities to Improve Mental Health

Walking

Meditation

Hobbies

Nature

Friends/family

Reading

Exercise/sports

Laughter yoga

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Tips to Improve Your Online Wellbeing

- Set limits on screen time
- Avoid going online immediately after waking up, or 1 hour before bedtime
- Maintain good posture when using phones/computers
- Take regular breaks
- Restrict the types of content you interact with
- Customise your social media feeds
- Avoid toxic communities
- Seek support

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Start your digital detox today!

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Managing Digital Overwhelm

Email Management

- No need to respond immediately
- Check email only at specific times
- Flag important messages
- Reduce frequency of newsletters
- Unsubscribe using unroll.me
- Regularly check spam folder
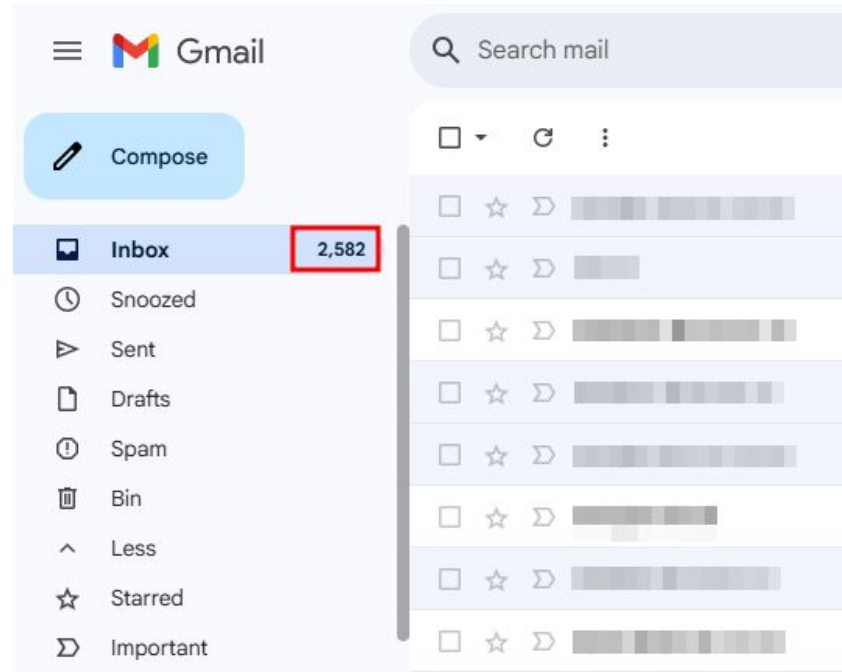
Make the Most of Your Mobile

- Delete apps you no longer need
- Mute WhatsApp groups and other noisy communities
- Customise notifications
- Use Do Not Disturb or Airplane Mode
- Leave your phone in another room when around others
- Switch your phone to greyscale
- Or, get a "dumbphone"

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Online Safety

Protect Your Passwords

- Use a password manager e.g. lastpass.com - no more forgotten or lost passwords!
- Create strong passwords using a password generator
- Don't write passwords down or share them with others

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2-factor Authentication (2FA)

- 2FA requires a user to identify themselves in two ways, before gaining access to a system
- Also known as 2-step verification (2SV) or multi-factor authentication (MFA)
- It provides an additional layer of security
- Download/print the recovery codes and store them in a safe place
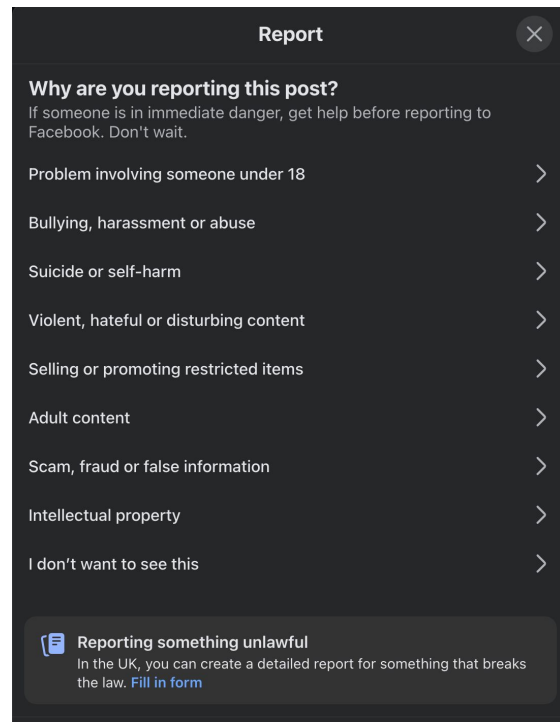
Free authentication apps:

Beware of Scams

- Social engineering: phishing / smishing / quishing, tech support scams
- Impersonation / identity theft
- Malware
- Brute force attack
- AI-driven threats e.g. deepfakes, vishing (voice cloning), advanced email phishing campaigns

How to Deal with Harmful Content

- Report the content using the platform's reporting tools
- Use a service such as Action Fraud for online scams
- If someone makes you feel uncomfortable online, report and/or block them

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Example of a Smishing Text

- Smishing targets individuals through SMS (text) messaging
- Often impersonate legitimate organisations such as banks or delivery services
- Do not click suspicious links

Your local courier (luna) was delivering your EVRI parcel but was unable to complete the delivery as the system could not recognise your address details. The parcel has been temporarily stored at a local depot. Please update your address details in the link below to expedite delivery. If you do not update it in time, the parcel will be returned to the place of dispatch.

https://evri.psocywwc.icu/upaddress

(Please reply with a 'Y' and then exit the text message and reopen it to activate the link, or copy the link and open it in Safari) We hope you are happy with the items you have received. Have a great day, EVRI Team!

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E-commerce Scam

- Products can be found at heavily discounted prices
- Check that the web address begins with `https://`
- Look for reviews, company contact information
- Contact your bank if you think you've been scammed
- If it's too good to be true, it probably is

Romance Scam

- The scammer builds a romantic relationship with you over time to gain your trust
- They will attempt to extort money or personal information
- Beware of unrealistic stories, emergencies and sudden financial needs
- Be careful when sending money to someone you haven't met in person

sky news   ● Watch Live ≡

Elderly woman conned by romance scammer posing as stranded astronaut

Police said the victim was told the fake astronaut's spaceship was "under attack" - and warned people should be suspicious if they are asked for money from someone they have met online.

◷ Wednesday 3 September 2025 13:54, UK

Online Safety Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Keep all of your devices up to date
- Check the URL in the address bar of the browser
- Lock your phone/desktop/laptop when not using it
- Report harmful content or scams

Don't:

- Share personal information publicly, including your whereabouts
- Enter personal information into an unsecured website
- Save login details on public/shared computers
- Accept connection requests from people you don't know

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FAQs

- Any questions?

Contact Information

This resource was produced by Future Communities

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Useful Links

- Future Communities resources: future-communities.org.uk/resources/
- Doomscrolling dangers:
  www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/doomscrolling-dangers
- Blog post: It's World Social Media Day!
  future-communities.org.uk/world-social-media-day/
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk/
- Which? Scams: www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/scams
- The best dumbphones for a digital detox, tried and tested:
  www.telegraph.co.uk/recommended/tech/best-basic-phones-dumbphones