PRE-INTERMEDIATE UNIT 11

1 **Work in pairs and discuss. What are three advantages and three disadvantages of using social media?**

2 **Read the essay about social media. Does it mention any of your ideas from Exercise 1?**

To be or not to be on social media?

It seems impossible to go anywhere nowadays without feeling the presence of some form of social media. At work or at play, when you meet someone new, the chances are they'll tell you to 'look them up' on their chosen social network before offering their telephone number. But what are the positives and negatives of social media?

Let's start with the positives. Social media has the ability to connect more people more quickly than any other means of communication in history. But what's so good about that? Well, for those people who have a strong **social conscience** and want to be **outspoken** about it, they can reach a large audience and hopefully gain support for their cause, for example through sharing a **petition** for people to sign. People also use it to raise money for charitable causes or to fund new business ideas. It's also a great way to find out information about what's going on in your local area, for example, groups to join or new fitness classes to try. Again, it's all about bringing **like-minded** people together, not only virtually, but physically.

Now onto the negatives. Social media sites can be extremely addictive, and people waste a lot of time online, for example, looking at photos of people they hardly even know. While it can be a great way of arranging meet-ups in the real world, a lot of people also spend so much time talking to their online friends that their face-to-face relationships **suffer**. It is also thought that using social media increases anxiety in young people because they feel under so much pressure to **maintain** their online presence.

Love it or hate it, one thing is for sure: social media is here to stay ...

3 **Read the essay again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?**

1 Connecting on social media is now more common than by telephone.
2 Social media helps raise awareness of social issues.
3 Social media can help people get money to start new companies.
4 Some users of social media spend too much time online.
5 People only look at pictures posted by people they know well.
6 Social media is only used for meeting people online.

4 **Match the words and phrases in bold in the essay with their meanings 1–6.**

1 get worse
2 knowing and caring about problems in society
3 keep going
4 a letter from lots of people asking for something, usually political, to change
5 thinking the same as you
6 not afraid to tell people your opinions

5 **Work in pairs and discuss. Do you agree with the author of the essay? Why/Why not?**

6 11.1 **Listen to two people talking about social media and circle the correct answer.**

1 Rachel
   a) knows people living far away.
   b) only knows people close by.
2 When Rachel moved to a small town she
   a) knew lots of people there.
   b) didn't know anyone there.
3 Rachel bought ___ on a social networking site.
   a) new things for her home **b)** a second-hand car
4 Gordon
   a) uses social media a lot.
   b) uses social media less than he used to.
5 Gordon ___ to keep up with all his social networks.
   a) didn't have enough time **b)** had plenty of time
6 Gordon ___ in the evening.
   a) goes online. **b)** doesn't go online.

7A **Complete the extracts with the correct words/phrases.**

1 I found out loads of really useful information about what was _____ on ...
2 ... people trying to get _____ of you ...
3 I was spending so much time _____ checking messages ...
4 I feel so much better having had a bit of a digital _____.

B **Listen and check.**

8 **Work in pairs and discuss. Would you like to have a digital detox? Why/Why not?**

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