

Facebook creates new issues

BY ANNE REBAR
Columnist

Facebook has become an integral part of many people's daily routines. Wake up, shower, eat breakfast, check e-mail, check Facebook and go to class. With more than 300 million active users, the site's popularity is undoubtable, and although it makes staying in contact with old friends easier, it can also create new problems in relationships.

A 2009 study published in *CyberPsychology and Behavior* found that Facebook can intensify jealousy within a relationship. I don't think we needed a study to show what seems pretty obvious to me, but hey, now we can be official about it.

Although jealousy has been a problem in relationships probably since the beginning of relationships, the constant — and sometimes addictive — ability to check up on significant others' Facebook pages has given couples a whole new set of things to be jealous about.

Now, beyond checking each other's profiles, a live news feed can give the update right away if your boyfriend or girlfriend has just become friends with one of their exes or has written a seemingly flirtatious wall post to someone else.

I have witnessed to the jealous rampage of a girlfriend logging on to her boyfriend's profile to check his exes' pages and make sure he hasn't sent or received any ques-

tionable messages. It's not pretty.

Facebook can't be blamed for a lack of trust and honesty in a relationship. Any relationship lacking those is probably doomed, whether the Web site is thrown into the equation or not. However, the constant flow of information it offers makes it difficult to resist the temptation to "check-up on" your significant other, leading to more opportunities to foster jealousy.

Another issue Facebook has created for couples these days is that of the "relationship question." Couples now have to discuss whether to broadcast their romance to hundreds of their closest "friends" via the relationship status on their pages. Whether "it's complicated," "open," or just "in a relationship," many couples have decided to use Facebook as a way to solidify their status as a couple.

I'm not sure who would seriously want to proclaim to the entire Facebook community that their relationship is currently "complicated" (your relationship issues are for the two of you to work out together, I don't really care to know about it), but announcing to all that you are "in a relationship" on Facebook is now much more official. It has become a new relationship milestone along with the first date and meeting the parents.

Taking the step to change your relationship status on Facebook is a big one because not only does everyone know you are officially taken, they will also know as soon as your relationships ends. That little "John Smith



is now single" next to the broken heart on the news feed — whether a tragedy or cause for celebration — can lead to millions of awkward messages and calls from nosy "friends" wanting to know what happened. It's like the less serious equivalent of returning the engagement ring, except in public.

Facebook has allowed users to publicly display their lives like never before, from up-to-the-minute status updates about how you are feeling, to posting religious and political views. However, this can be a bad thing when it comes to a relationship. Going through a break-up is tough enough without having to go through the pain of announcing it to the entire online community.



BY ELIZABETH NECKA
Columnist

Any infant will giggle with delight in response to a high-pitched voice, smile and a game of peek-a-boo. They get quite the kick out of watching your face disappear behind your hands and then magically re-appear. Believe me, as an ex-babysitter, this game can go on for hours.

Wouldn't it be nice if adults were so easily amused? Our entertainment needs to be more stimulating because peek-a-boo isn't nearly as mystifying to us as it is to someone without object permanence. Object permanence is the ability to mentally maintain that an object exists objectively in reality even though you can no longer see it. When I lose my keys for the third time this week, my object permanence will help me to remember the keys still exist, and I will try to track them down based on the last place I saw them. A baby, theoretically, would quickly

The Truman Experiment:

Denial rejects object ability

lose interest because he believes the keys have ceased to exist.

Psychologist Jean Piaget developed his theory on the four developmental stages of the individual in the 1960s. The first phase of development, the sensorimotor stage, is characterized by egocentricity and a lack of object permanence. In other words, they believe the world is centered on them and what they can't see or what doesn't pertain to them doesn't exist. Can you blame them? They've just spent nine months truly in their own world, and now they have absolute attention and focus at their every little cry, fart or giggle. No wonder they think they're the sun that everyone orbits around — most likely, they are.

Infants' brains don't have the capabilities to understand the properties of objects or abstract concepts. To test this assumption, some recent researchers are conducting experiments in which they show babies a toy, then hide it behind a screen, secretly remove the toy without the babies' awareness, and then remove the screen. The babies who look away, content with the impossibility of an object simply disappearing, are still in the sensorimotor stage. The babies whose eyes bulge and fixate on the location where the object should be with an awed expression on their face clearly realize that disappearing toys are not normal and exhibit the beginning stages of object permanence.

Piaget argued that this sensorimotor stage lasts until about two years of age, though these recent psychological studies find evidence that it can end as early as three months of age. Although quite non-empirical, I look at myself and the people around me and beg to differ.

To a degree, many of us adults still exhibit a degree of object impermanence and egocentricity. Of course, I'm speaking metaphorically. We often tend to adopt an "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" mentality. Think of the girl cheating on her long-distance beau. Or the guy smoking pot the day before his drug test for the new job. The birthday girl blacked-out from shots the night before a huge midterm. "If I can't see it, it doesn't exist!"

Rather than deal with a problem with a friend, you can avoid them. Although I normally pride myself on being up-front and open about issues that bother me, I recently found myself restrained by this infantile manner of thinking. By pretending I wasn't bothered by what I perceived to be a friend's betrayal, the problem faded from existence. Although I had my reasons, I effectively ignored my friend and reverted to a very base level of small-talk when we were forced to see each other in group situations. Clearly, this is not a healthy way of coping or dealing with a problem.

My friend approached me, and I realized how much I had regressed. Instead of acting like the fully-functioning adult that I am, capable of logical and abstract reasoning and thinking, I refused to see the problem from any point of view other than my own. If I had, I might have been able to circumvent a lot of hurt and frustration, possibly speeding up the healing process.

As adults, it's expected we know that just because we've hidden our faces, noses, eyes and mouths, they haven't vaporized to nothingness. So why is it that we think hiding our hurt or disappointment behind smiles and formalities abolishes the realities of our conflicts? We should gawk like babies at this impossibility: a problem disappearing because we don't want to deal with it. It's still there! Your boyfriend will be devastated at your infidelity, you won't get the job and you'll fail your midterm.

We have object permanence, and the ability to see the world through another's perspective, and we should use this good fortune to our advantage. Our problems only will nag at us if we ignore them. Prove yourself to be a fully-developed individual, instead of being stuck in Piaget's sensorimotor stage. It's much better in the long run to get everything out in the open and work through or past it. Trust me, you'll be happier dealing with things like the adult that you are.

K i r k s v i l l e

Allergy ● Asthma

Lary Ciesemier

D.O., FAAAAI, FACOI

Board Certified

Pediatric and Adult

Allergy Asthma Immunology

“I have not had allergies this severe until I moved to Kirksville.”

2004 North Baltimore, Suite B, Kirksville, MO 63501

Phone (660) 627-2553

Fax (660) 665-0448



FREE Tobacco Cessation Classes!!!

-FREE Patches, FREE Quit Classes and FREE Pharmacist and Physician Consultation-

Who- ANY Student, Staff, or Faculty member

What- FREE help to quit smoking or using tobacco products

When- 8-9p.m. Thursdays- October 22, 29;

November 5, 12, 19; December 3, 2009

Where- Pershing Building Rm. 301

Why- FREE Patches, Gum, Quit Classes & Physician Consultations

How do I get FREE Cessation help????

Just show up to the classes, or e-mail ccox@truman.edu to make individual appointments (if you can't attend the scheduled classes)



ETA SIGMA GAMMA

CASE
www.casemo.org

MPH

