



# The Dark Side of Social Media: How to Use Tapping to Overcome Comparison, Jealousy and Anxiety in the Social Media World

JESSICA ORTNER

[www.thetappingsolution.com](http://www.thetappingsolution.com)

Social media has made the world smaller, allowing us to stay in touch with family and friends, regardless of where they live. But social media also has a dark side, creating a space where we compare our lives with what others post online. It can bring up emotions like jealousy and anxiety. It can cause us to be distracted and unable to focus. As social media platforms have become such a big part of our lives, most of us haven't stopped to think about how we create a healthy relationship with these platforms and address the common emotions that can appear. So that is what we're going to be doing today.

In this day and age, mostly everyone has social media, everyone has a smart phone, and it's something that started in our lifetime. We are really the first to have this massive life change, and we have to take a closer look and look at our relationship with this.

## What are some of the signs that we need to work on our relationship with our phones and social media?

- You notice yourself going on social media and experiencing feelings of jealousy and anxiety pretty often.
- You might find yourself checking your phone at the slightest feeling of boredom (and we're going to talk about why that happens).
- When something becomes hard, or you need to focus on something that's difficult, and you find yourself on social media.
- You feel anxiety when you don't have your phone
- Checking your phone the moment you wake up
- You find yourself comparing your life with what you see on social media.
- Complaining that you don't have time. (I was so surprised to learn that adults in the US spend an average of two to four hours per day on their phones.)
- You find yourself becoming impatient easily



Do you find yourself doing any of these?

I checked off a lot of these boxes. Even though I'm consciously working on it, I can fall back into it, because this is the thing – our phones aren't going away. This is a relationship we have to have, the same way that I became really passionate about helping others change their relationship with food. What's tricky about this topic is when it comes to food, you're always going to need food. It's not like an addictive behavior that you can just avoid completely. The same thing with your phone. This day and age, it's very rare for someone to be able to live completely without their phone or choose to be without social media. Which you can decide, but for a lot of people they either don't want to or it's not practical, because there are some good sides.

### **Why are social media and our phones so addictive?**

When we know the science behind what's going on, we can have a bit more compassion for ourselves instead of feeling like oh, I don't have willpower, or I feel weak or I can't help myself.

There was an article by this Harvard University teacher that explained that when we are on social media and we get that notification, that little popup, someone likes a photo, we get some news, your brain sends this chemical messenger called dopamine along the reward pathway.

We often hear about dopamine because it's what helps us feel good. It's often associated with things like food and exercise and sex and gambling, and now there's proof that it's associated with social media. Now, there's an extra layer to this. It's not just the likes and the notifications that excite us, it's also the fact that they're often random. So gambling can be an addictive behavior, and there's something about the slot machine that can be addictive, because you're pulling that lever and you know that there's a potential of a reward, but you don't know when that reward is going to come, so you keep pulling.

Social media works in that same way. You don't know when you're going to get that trigger of dopamine. You don't know if there's an uncertainty, like will this photo that I posted or this caption that I posted, will it do well? Will I get likes? Will I get some validation? That unknowing



creates a circumstance in our brain that becomes this addictive behavior, where we're just waiting to get that hit of dopamine. When we get that hit of dopamine, it feels even better.

Another thing that's really interesting about the research is that there was a study from Lancaster University that showed that when someone is feeling anxious or stressed, they'll go on social media. And if suddenly they're not getting that dopamine hit, so they're there in front of the slot machine and they're pulling that lever but they're not getting that good feeling, instead of getting off social media, they'll just jump to a different aspect of social media. For example, you'll be on Facebook, you're not feeling great, you look on Facebook and you start to feel worse. Instead of getting off your phone, you'll look at Facebook stories. Eh, you still don't feel great, you'll jump to Instagram and you'll start looking at your feed. Then you'll look at your stories. Then maybe you'll check Twitter.

The research is showing that when you are stressed and that stress anxiety you feel is becoming worse with social media, we don't actually decide to take a break. Instead, we keep pulling that lever of that slot machine. We keep checking different social media platforms in search for that feel-good feeling.

### **What does tapping have to do with this? How can tapping help?**

There are two reasons why I feel tapping is so powerful. One is that when we are feeling anxious, we're going on social media to try to feel good, because we're feeling anxious. What we're doing instead is turning to tapping. The reason I think it's so easy to turn to is just to be very practical, you're actually physically doing something. Instead of tapping on your phone, you are tapping on your body. Just the physical thing of doing something different means that this is a modality that's easier than just getting off your phone and trying to meditate. Although I love meditation, and I think it's so powerful, tapping is an easy transition when you catch yourself.

The moment we gain that awareness, we have something to turn to, to do some tapping, to address the anxiety that we're feeling that's causing us to kind of search for that hit, for that dopamine. Tapping is very helpful in that way, and the other thing is it brings you back to your body. It lowers the stress hormone. It lets you think clearly. I often hear people saying, 'I don't feel like I have willpower. I don't have control.' What's going on is that when you're feeling really anxious you don't feel like you have much control. You are in either that fight or flight mode, you're stressed out, you're not creative, you're not innovative, you don't do what you know is good for you. Because when we're in those disempowered states, we don't make good decisions. Our goal isn't to force ourselves to try to make better decisions, it's to



start by addressing the stress. Then we can begin to look at things in a new way, and then we feel like we're in control.

People always ask, "Okay, but what do I say? Where do I start with my tapping?" It's important to start with where you are, whether you're dealing with anxiety around food or anxiety with social media, we have to start with the anxiety, with the physical feeling we have in the moment. Then we can dig deeper, we can see if there's anything else going on below the surface, but we always have to start with that anxiety and that overwhelm that comes from checking our phone and from social media.

There's also an extra level to this. We feel anxious sometimes when we're not allowed to check social media. This is why it's complex. It's not just we're on social media and we're anxious, sometimes you find that you're disconnected from your phone and you have this anxiety because you think, what am I missing out on? Whether it's with my social group or another big aspect is the news. A lot of people are getting their news from social media. So you're wondering, well what's happening now? What's happening now? Well, what's happening now?

### A Tapping Experience

Let's start the process by taking a nice, deep breath in now and just get grounded. Go inward, check in with your body, and notice any anxiety that you feel. We're going to tap on how we feel and this pattern of anxiety and checking our phone.

Give the anxiety a number from zero to ten. 0 is having the least amount of intensity, you're feeling no anxiety, and 10 is the highest level. Write your number here:\_\_\_\_

Starting on the side of the hand, simply tap:

Side of Hand Even though I feel this anxiety in my body  
I honor how I feel  
And I give my body permission to relax  
Even though I've gotten into the habit  
Of checking my phone  
Any time I feel uncomfortable  
I acknowledge this habit  
And I give my body permission to relax now  
Even though I have been holding on to this anxiety



Because life feels overwhelming  
I honor how I feel and it's now safe to relax

Eyebrow All this anxiety  
Side of Eye There is so much going on  
Under Eye And I don't want to miss out  
Under Nose I am scared of missing out  
Under Mouth I am scared of being disconnected  
Collarbone But I acknowledge all this anxiety I feel  
Under arm I have been stuck in this pattern  
Top of Head I feel anxious

EB So I check my phone  
SE And then I feel more anxious  
UE I am searching for these good feelings  
UN I recognize this pattern  
UM I recognize this stress  
CB And I give my body permission to relax  
UA Right now and right here  
TH I am safe

EB Right now and right here  
SE It's safe to relax  
UE It's safe to take a break  
UN It's safe to slow down  
UM It's safe to disconnect  
CB I'm exactly where I'm meant to be  
UA I am safe  
TH I am exactly where I'm meant to be  
And I give my whole body permission to relax

Take a deep breath in, and exhale.

Check in with how you feel. Give yourself a rating from 0-10 again and write it here: \_\_\_\_

Sometimes we begin to tap and we notice ourselves beginning to relax. Other times as we relax, we get other ideas. We notice oh, you know what, I have been checking the phone because I have been comparing myself to others. That's why I'm feeling this anxiety, or this need to keep up. Just notice the experience that you just had with tapping.



By simply tapping on our anxiety and how we feel, we begin to gain more insights on why we're turning to our phones. What's really going on? We can either feel good, and that's it, and then we go, or we begin to gain other ideas, other insights, on what's really going on below the surface. Then we can go deeper, like you're sharing here. Let's go a little bit deeper and look at how we might be comparing our lives to others. This is a really big issue with social media.

### **Comparing Yourself to Others**

When you are comparing yourself to what you see on social media, you have to remind yourself that what you're seeing is not a reality. It is people showing their best. You don't often see what's happening behind the scenes. You're comparing your entire life with an image that's been edited and well thought out.

The other thing to keep in mind is that when we see someone succeeding or really happy on social media and we suddenly compare ourselves and have this feeling of judgment, and then suddenly start having some thoughts of well, it's so easy for them or they're just lucky or whatever judgment that is. What we're doing in that moment, and this was groundbreaking for me. I will say, because every time I saw someone, I would always compare my body to others. When you have that habit, social media is your worst enemy because you have every opportunity to compare your body to others.

But when you look at someone and you're like, "Ugh, that person." You know, you suddenly get triggered by someone else or you see someone have a lot of money and you just think like oh, well they actually must be a horrible person. They have all this money, but I'm sure they're greedy and mean. When we make judgments about other people's success, what we have to understand is that we're telling our unconscious mind, we're letting ourselves know that it's not safe for us to have that success. So if you are criticizing someone else for having something that you want, what will happen is as you begin to make steps towards that goal, you will begin to sabotage your own success because a part of you will feel that it's not safe to succeed. Because if you succeed, you will be a victim of that same judgment, so it's safer to play small.

Is there a time in your life that you felt you have "played small"?



## A Tapping Experience

It's about seeing that pattern and then addressing what's really going on under the surface. Let's do some tapping around the constant comparing and judgment that often becomes an extreme when social media is involved.

You can get specific on this if you have something in mind. If you know something specific that triggers you like the person you follow, or the issue, whatever is going on.

So keep that in mind because I have found that when people create an intention, even if they're saying different words because everyone is repeating after me, your mind will make the connection because you've already set that intention. Are you comparing yourself to a certain person or is there something in particular that is triggering to you? Just notice what that is, and maybe just by noticing what it is, you're already feeling a physical sensation. You're feeling some anxiety. Comparison is not an emotion, but it triggers emotions.

If something comes up for you, write it here, along with the emotion that accompanies it.

Give that a number from zero to ten. Maybe you think of a specific emotion or maybe it's a strong body sensation. Whatever it is, measure it, and we're going to begin with a nice, deep breath.

Write your number here: \_\_\_\_

Okay, tapping on the side of the hand:

Side of Hand Even though I've been comparing myself to others  
And not feeling good enough  
I honor how I feel  
And I give my body permission to relax  
Even though I've been stuck in this pattern  
Of comparing myself to others  
And not feeling good enough



I accept myself and how I feel  
Even though I've been stuck in this pattern  
And it's created a lot of anxiety in my life  
I acknowledge this pattern  
And I'm open to a new way

Eyebrow All of this anxiety  
Side of Eye I compare myself to others  
Under Eye And then I make these judgments  
Under Nose That I should be further along by now  
Under Mouth I should be doing more  
Collarbone I should be healthier  
Under arm I should be happier  
Top of Head I should be better

EB All of these shoulds  
SE I recognize this pattern  
UE And then sometimes I judge them  
UN Life must be so easy for them  
UM Life feels unfair to me  
CB They must be selfish  
UA They must be greedy  
TH All of this judgment

EB I recognize this pattern  
SE I take a step back  
UE And I recognize this pattern  
UN All of this anxiety  
UM All of these judgments  
CB I judge them  
UA And then I judge myself  
TH All of these judgments

EB All of this anxiety  
SE And I just can't turn away  
UE I keep looking at my phone  
UN And not feeling good enough  
UM I recognize this pattern  
CB I take a step back





UA And I'm ready to look at this in a new way  
TH Right now and right here

EB I am doing something good for myself  
SE Right now and right here  
UE I am safe  
UN I am exactly where I'm meant to be  
UM I have come a long way  
CB I have been through a lot  
UA And I'm further along than I realize  
TH I honor my journey

EB I honor my progress  
SE I honor my unique path  
UE I am where I'm meant to be  
UN And every day I'm feeling better and better  
UM Every day I'm learning  
CB Every day I'm growing  
UA I am exactly where I'm meant to be  
TH And I honor my unique journey

Take a deep breath in, and exhale. Check in with how you feel. Sometimes I like to move my shoulders a little bit. Take another nice deep breath in, and again, let's check in with that feeling, with that anxiety you felt before, with that comparison.

Rate how you feel again on a scale of 0-10 and write it here: \_\_\_\_

Comparing yourself to others is a pattern, so tapping like this can help us break the pattern. It means that when we catch ourselves, instead of criticizing ourselves or judging ourselves or feeling a victim to that pattern, we can come right back to this tapping. Because when we compare ourselves to others, when we're feeling not good enough, we do ourselves a disservice. We don't acknowledge how far we've come. We don't acknowledge the progress we have made. We don't acknowledge all the growth that we've made and where we are on our own unique journey.

We miss out on a lot, and so the intention of this tapping is to get us back to feeling grounded, to get us back in our body, to get us back to realizing that we are on our own unique spiritual path that we can't compare our journey to everyone else, but we can take a moment to stop and recognize ourselves and how far we've come.



## Social Media Disconnect

Something I've been thinking a lot about recently is how this digital world has really disconnected us from nature. And not just being outside and connecting with nature, which I know is very good for us, but also what we learn from nature, how everything has a season, how we need to experience some patience. Our ancestors knew that they would plant a seed and what they would need to do is have patience, water that seed, make sure it got enough sun, and eventually they could harvest that crop. There was this connection with the rhythms of life that we're not always meant to be blooming. That there's times when we're supposed to go in and focus on ourselves and other times when it's spring. That rhythm of nature, we have become so disconnected from because we're in this world of instant gratification.

What happens is we often have trouble with focus and with patience, because imagine someone plants the seed and the same way they think about well, when I want to order food I literally grab my phone and click three times and food is delivered to my house in an hour. If I want to feel good or look something up, we get that instant gratification. But when it comes to working towards something and having that focus and that patience, we don't often feel that instant gratification. It is uncomfortable for a moment. There is a level of us having to be patient.

We have to really look at bringing ourselves back to that mentality that you're not going to get results all the time right away, that there is a level of focus and patience towards achieving your goals. We have to do some tapping around that to help us stay focused. Obviously there is one element which is just it's hard to focus, because we're distracted. But there is the other element of we are constantly looking for pulling that trigger and getting that dopamine.

## A Tapping Experience

We'll do some tapping on focus and patience, but then also take a look at how do we create these deeper emotions in our lives that are so much more fulfilling.

Take a nice deep breath in, again checking in with your body. I want you to notice any frustration you feel, any impatience that you feel around your life and around making progress. Notice any feelings that you feel there, notice any sensations in your body, and you can give that a number from zero to ten and we're going to start doing some tapping on this.

Write your number here: \_\_\_\_



Starting on the side of the hand:

Side of Hand Even though I've been feeling frustrated  
Because change isn't happening fast enough  
I honor how I feel  
And I trust my journey  
Even though I feel frustrated  
Because it's hard to focus  
And I'm ready to make some changes  
I honor how I feel  
And I'm open to looking at this in a new way  
Even though it's been hard to focus  
And I have trouble following through  
I honor how hard this is  
And I'm open to looking at this in a new way

Eyebrow I've been checking social media  
Side of Eye And seeing everybody else's results  
Under Eye I see the end product  
Under Nose And I want to have my end product  
Under Mouth I just want to be there  
Collarbone I want to have the success  
Under arm I want that end result  
Top of Head But I have trouble focusing

EB I have trouble following through  
SE Because I often get discouraged  
UE It seems easier for everyone else  
UN And I get frustrated with myself  
UM Because it's not happening fast enough  
CB I have trouble focusing  
UA Because sometimes it's uncomfortable  
TH And it's easier to check social media

EB Looking for that hit  
SE But the real work I need to do  
UE Is harder than that  
UN And that's okay  
UM I have been judging myself



CB Every time something feels hard  
UA I'm willing to look at this in a new way  
TH It's okay if it feels hard

EB I am safe  
SE I am focused  
UE And it's okay to be a little uncomfortable  
UN It's beginning to feel better  
UM This might not be fun  
CB But I'm creating more ease  
UA This might take a lot of hard work  
TH But I'm creating more ease

EB By accepting this process  
SE Surrendering to this process  
UE Being with this process  
UN I can stick with it  
UM I can stay focused  
CB Because it will feel so rewarding in the end  
UA I acknowledge my progress  
TH I give myself permission to make mistakes

EB I give myself permission to experiment  
SE I give myself permission to learn as I go  
UE I give myself permission to stick with it  
UN It might not always be glamorous  
UM But I am so proud of myself  
CB I am so proud of myself  
UA I honor my progress  
TH I celebrate my journey

EB And I stick with it  
SE It's safe to focus  
UE It's safe to disconnect from other things  
UN I know what matters  
UM I've become clear on my priorities  
CB And I give myself permission to move forward  
UA It might not always be glamorous  
TH But I am so proud of myself



Take a nice, deep breath in, and exhale. Notice how you feel. Check in with your body and think about a project that you've been putting off. When you think about taking action, notice how it feels different. Maybe you feel like it's going to be easier, or maybe you feel like, you know what? This might be hard, but I am ready. Notice how that feels to you.

Give it a rating on a scale of 0-10 and write it here: \_\_\_\_

It's so important when we do the tapping to acknowledge the progress that you've already made and also be proud of yourself for the steps that you're taking. If we only judge ourselves or feel good when we have an end product, it's very hard to stick with anything. But when we really allow ourselves to feel pride for the process, even before we have that final result, it is so much easier to stick with it.

### **Tips to Improve Our Relationship with Social Media:**

- Become really aware of your relationship with your phone. A lot of times we fall into patterns and we don't even realize them.
- Have limits on when you're using your phone. For example, after a certain time, after 8 o'clock I don't want my phone in my hand. I have it plugged in, in the kitchen, while I'm doing other things.
- Think about not having your phone out when you're with your kids (I made this decision with Enzo when he took my phone out of my hand while playing). Also, kids are learning from what they are seeing, so be careful about how much time you have your eyes on your phone.
- You have control over social media. If there is somebody that annoys you every time you see their feed or some news thing that stresses you out, most platforms have the ability to mute someone. You don't need to unfollow them or unfriend them, in case you're scared that they'll notice or say something. There is an option to mute. You are in control of your space and who you let in. So have pride in the space that you're creating, not just in your own life but on social media. You wouldn't let anyone just walk into your house, so don't let anyone just jump on your feed if they're disempowering you or triggering you in any way. Mute them, be protective of your space, and your energy and your time.
- The last thing is to give yourself time to disconnect. I'm talking about creating some rules to be away from the phone. I think social media detoxes are great, giving yourself an entire day where you're off of it. But just notice when you disconnect how it feels. In the beginning, for most people, there is a level of anxiety, which is very interesting and also shows the addictive behavior we have around our phone



But then once we get past that, we realize that we can be really present and notice so much more in life. We can start to enjoy our own life because we are present with what is.

These are things that I invite you to look at, to think about, and it's never about perfection, but it is about being conscious of the choices that we make.



**JESSICA ORTNER**, is a producer of *The Tapping Solution*, the breakthrough documentary film on EFT/meridian tapping ([www.TheTappingSolution.com](http://www.TheTappingSolution.com)). She has led more than 10,000 women through her revolutionary Weight Loss and Body Confidence online program, and she is also the host of The Tapping World Summit, an annual online event that has attracted more than 1,000,000 attendees from around the world. She has been interviewing experts in the personal development field since 2007, having conducted more than 200 broadcast interviews to date. Follow Jessica on Twitter [@JessicaOrtner](https://twitter.com/JessicaOrtner) and on Facebook at

[www.facebook.com/followingjessicaOrtner](https://www.facebook.com/followingjessicaOrtner).