FoMO and Your Mental Health
CHALLENGE!
FOMO noun

\ˈfō-mō\ plural FOMOs

Definition of FOMO

informal : fear of missing out : fear of not being included in something (such as an interesting or enjoyable activity) that others are experiencing

// Probably nursing a massive case of FOMO. That's what they're calling it these days: FOMO—Fear of Missing Out. Kids use the term to express concern about missing parties featuring phosphorescent pacifiers and music that can be heard all the way from Neptune.
— Martha Beck, O: The Oprah Magazine, June 2013
AGENDA

FoMO Facts
Are you addicted?
What is Addiction?
Fighting FoMO
Awake and Online
Practical Steps
Questions?
HELLO!

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I am here because I love to give presentations. 
I have no conflicts of interest. 
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1. FoMO FACTS

Fear of Missing Out
“Silence is God’s first language; everything else is a poor translation.”

- Thomas Keating
FoMO Facts

» FoMO drives social media use
» FoMO levels are highest in young people
» Low Satisfaction is linked to High FoMO
» FoMO is high with distracted drivers
» FoMO is high in students who access social media during class
Potential for a different connection

Not too close. Not too far. Just the right distance.
2. Are You Addicted?

Fear of Missing Out
Do you feel absorbed in your devices - you remember previous activity or long for the next opportunity?

Yes

No
Do you feel satisfied if you spend more time on your devices?

Yes

No
Have you failed to control, reduce, or give up your devices?

Yes

No
Do you get nervous, temperamental, depressed, or sensitive when you don't have your devices?

Yes A

No B
Do you stay engaged in posting, editing, playing games longer than intended?

Yes

No
Have you put a significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity at risk because of social media?

Yes

No
Have you lied to your family members, therapist, or others to hide or minimize the truth of your online presence?

Yes

No
Is your phone a reliable escape from problems or an anxious mood - feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression?

Yes

No
How many online profiles do you routinely maintain?

1-3
4-6
7-9
10 or more
Do you take your phone to the bathroom?

Yes

No

Ew...no comment
How quickly would you replace your phone if it was lost, damaged, or stolen?

WHAT!? I don't have my phone!? We need to get to (CELL CARRIER) NOW!

It can wait until after work.

I'll get to it this weekend.

Good riddance.
3. What is Addiction?

Fear of Missing Out
Traditional Views

» Over-activation of the reward system
» Lower levels of self-control
» Drug Addiction
» Behavioral Addiction
» Disease
What is a reward?

» Something that is administered/given

» Reinforces behavior

» Leads to satisfaction, pride, accomplishment
Can a reward be a reduction of harm?
Loss of Impulse Control

» Ability to resist strong urges
» Will Power
» Delayed gratification
» Short lived satisfaction
Drug Addiction

The Old Terms
» Addiction
» Abuse
» Clean or Dirty
» Addict
» Smoke
» Quit with the patch/gum

The New Terms
» Substance Use Disorder
» Use
» Abstinent
  ◇ Sober means ALL substances
» Patient or Client
» Inhale
» Nicotine replacement
Behavioral Addiction
Non-substance-Related Disorders

- Only Gambling Disorder has formal diagnostic code
- Internet Gaming formally discussed in DSM-5
- Not explained by mania
- Not explained as part of the criteria for another disorder
  - Impulse control, DMDD, ODD, CD, MDD, Pathological Anxiety
- Always check for underlying medical causes
  - Thyroid, metabolic (diabetic), infection, hydration
Disease

» Genetic component
  ◇ Schizophrenia – physiological changes in the brain
  ◇ Bipolar Disorder – data suggests it but no biological link
  ◇ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder – data yes, bio no
  ◇ Alcoholism – increased affinity for alcohol at receptor

» Transmitters vs. Receptors
  ◇ Bad at making them?
  ◇ Bad at breaking them down?
  ◇ Bad at turning them on/off?

» Epigenetics – can we inherit expression?
Seeking and Addiction

» Eating, Sleeping, Reproduction
  ◦ Reward?
  ◦ Hormonally Driven

» Relatedness as the measuring stick
  ◦ Self (Emotions)
  ◦ Others (Models and Objects)

» Substances as barriers
  ◦ Coping mechanisms?
  ◦ Path of least resistance
4. Fighting FoMO
Fear of Missing Out
White is the color of milk and fresh snow, the color produced by the combination of all the colors of the visible spectrum.

Black is the color of coal, ebony, and of outer space. It is the darkest color, the result of the absence of or complete absorption of light.

the cake is a lie!
FoMO is Based on LIES

Cherry Picked Status
Only the best/worst experiences make the cut.

Troll Bait
Ensnaring arguments designed to provide opportunities for abuse.

Say it Out Loud
OMG I’m missing EVERYTHING that happened in the past two minutes – my BFF is hiking Siberia, my college roommate just started his own NGO, my third cousin is at his daughter’s recital while all I did was sit here and breathe.
Fight FoMO with FOMO

» “Feel OK More Often”
» “Find One Magnificent Object”
» “Forget One Meaningless Occasion”
BE STILL.
“This photo is gonna get so many Likes.”
5. Awake and Online

Fear of Missing Out
Children's internet consumption by age

Estimated weekly hours, 2007 to 2017

- Aged 5 to 7
- 8 to 11
- 12 to 15

Source: Ofcom
Children's use of social media and depression

Daily usage, UK 14-year-olds

- All boys
- All girls
- Boys with depression
- Girls with depression

Source: University College London
“Media use among kids is so pervasive that it is time to stop arguing over whether it is good or bad and accept it as part of children’s environment. Like the air they breathe, the water they drink, the food they eat.”

-Director of Center on Media and Child Health, Children’s Hospital Boston
6. Practical Steps
Fear of Missing Out
Object Relatedness

» Good and Bad in the Same Object
» Instability in relationships
» Insecure about what makes them safe
» Polarized perspective
The Fight is Rarely About the Phone

» Power or Control?
» Lack of meaningful relationships?
» What cannot be said is more important
» Examine the relationship between the people arguing
Reality Checks

» Critical thinking
» Self-confidence
» Regulating Emotions
» Physical Fitness
» Upswing of ‘Mood Disorders’ and ADHD
Questions?