

Dr. Reef Karim, Transformational Neuroscientist, Speaks about Social Media Addiction and Social Media Regulation Bill

"The need for dopamine driven validation can lead to mood changes, higher stress, and a dependency for constant and habitual social media use."-Dr. Reef Karim

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Reef Karim](#), an international expert on the human condition, has coached, consulted and written extensively on the topics of digital distraction, creative power and the epidemic of conformity and online validation. Now, he has some thoughts to share on Senator Hawley and his proposed "Social Media Addiction Reduction Technology Act."

Josh Hawley's bill, the Social Media Addiction Reduction Technology (SMART) Act, would make it illegal for social media companies such as Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat to use infinite scroll, autoplay video or techniques like Snapchat's "streaks," which reward a user with badges for repeated use. Senator Hawley states the intent of the bill is to remove psychological tricks prevalent in these apps, along with encouraging true innovation.

"Our technology advances faster than our ability to regulate or study it's impact on the human condition; social media is no different," says transformational scientist Reef Karim, a neuroscientist, psychiatrist and addiction medicine physician who specializes in the science and application of creativity, flow and performance, "Similar to the food industry, casinos and the gambling industry, tech companies study the neurobiological effects of their products and how to amplify, extend and promote the brain reward of their products. It's online seduction."

Dr. Reef Karim is an accomplished neuroscientist, speaker, and life strategist. He is a double board-certified psychiatrist, addiction medicine physician and relationship expert as well as a writer and media personality. He served as an Assistant Clinical Professor at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and founded a personal transformation and recovery outpatient treatment center in Beverly Hills for mental health, digital dependency, toxic relationships and addiction recovery. Reef's mission in life is to help people tap into their innate creative power and expression to overcome self sabotage, fear conditioning and the stress of online technology. (reefkarim.com)

"Social Media regulation is a difficult topic because of the diverse nature of how these platforms are used," warns Dr. Reef Karim, "people use social media in healthy and productive ways for business, friendships, family, and many other things.



Dr. Reef Karim, Prominent Brain Scientist & Transformational Healer

But, it becomes a problem for those people who utilize these platforms to fill an emotional void or to use it as an unhealthy escape from a real-life problem or for those who develop a dependency to online validation. I always ask clients, "what is your relationship to social media?" For some, the need for this consistent rapid spike of dopamine driven validation can lead to mood changes, much higher levels of stress and/or a dependency or addiction to constant and habitual social media use. The additive effect of our daily relational stress combined with our needs for online validation, digital filtering of information and divided attention make up our chaotic madness."

Meanwhile, Senator Hawley has harsher thoughts on social media consumption. He has called social media a "parasite on productive investment, on meaningful relationships, on a healthy society" and once asked during an NBC interview, "should these platforms exist at all?" The bill doesn't go as far as outright banning social media platforms, but it proposes regulatory measures that would force users to actively choose to engage for prolonged periods rather than being mindlessly sucked into the void. It would require platforms to implement "natural stopping points," or places where a video or post stops and the users are prompted to click or select another piece of content, rather than it appearing or playing automatically.

"We are dealing with challenges right now, from a neuroscience perspective, that I don't think most people saw coming," continues Dr. Reef Karim, "people are struggling with having to filter too much information (information overload), the constant stress of decision making of what information to let in and what to dismiss and then of course, digital distraction and divided attention. From a societal perspective, individuals now have massive platforms to express themselves but very few people have creative, original and well thought out ideas to share."

A 2018 Pew Research Center study found that 89 percent of teens surveyed that year said they were online "almost constantly" or "several times a day." Of that 89 percent, 45 percent said they were online "almost constantly." A different study published in 2019 in the Journal of Behavioral Addictions found that those who reported spending excessive time on Facebook were more likely to take risky gambles, performing on a psychological test with the same impulses as someone addicted to drugs.

"I believe social media to be a powerful platform, if used wisely and with full awareness, but its power also extends to amplifying psychological unrest in some of its users. Thus, something must be done to help those users who are struggling" concludes Dr. Reef Karim, "What's the solution? To become fully aware and mindful of your digital use habits; to know what you are doing online and why you are doing it and what you could be doing instead. And perhaps a warning label "user beware!" and a timed interruption "You sure about this?" Either way, Senator Hawley may be on to something; a digital check in to break up robotic scrolling"

**Dr. Reef Karim is a highly sought-after thought leader, speaker, coach and performer as his work has been profiled in Forbes, Time, Business Insider, The New York Times and many others. As a frequent guest on television talk and news, he's been interviewed on many shows and programs including: Oprah, ABC World News, CNN International, Dr. Oz, Larry King Live, Dr Phil, Anderson Cooper 360, The Today Show, Good Morning America and others. He hosted the television shows Broken Minds on the Discovery Network, House of Clues on Court TV and Outrageous Acts of Psych on the Science Channel.

Reef developed a platform to help people overcome self sabotage, find their purpose, and tap into their creative power. He spends time speaking, coaching and blending neuroscience, philosophy, psychology, spirituality and creativity. He is also the co-author of the dating psychology book "Why Does He Do That? Why Does She Do That?", and his research on human

behavior has been published in many prestigious academic journals including, The International Journal of Neuroscience and The Journal of Addiction Medicine. Reef Karim is also a content creator and award winning performer; he creates message driven content at his production company, Madlab Media, for digital media, broadcast television, and independent film. Finally, Reef was recently awarded as one of the top 100 most fascinating people in Los Angeles and for his work in medicine, advocacy, research and entertainment, he was voted one of People Magazine's Sexiest Men Alive.

Website: <https://www.reefkarim.com>

Aurora DeRose
Michael Levine Media
+1 310-396-6090
[email us here](#)

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