The grass is always greener... with a filter

by Carly Travis

How was your summer? I'm only being half sincere. I saw your pictures; everyone did. You posted to Instagram all three days of Lollapalooza (whereas, you normally post once a week), graded every college visit by their location filter on Snapchat, went to a trendy restaurant …once, and even took a family vacation.

I know what you did over the summer and I also know what Gigi Hadid did. She and Joe Jonas went to Disneyland for a casual "day date," then she jetted off with her squad (I.e. Kendall Jenner, Taylor Swift, and Cara Delevingne) to a whirlwind of music festivals across the pond.

I know that Jennifer Lawrence and Amy Schumer became quick friends this summer, too. They documented their trip to the Hampton's on Instagram. In fact, the two are reported to be working on a screenplay together similar to the comedian stylings of Amy Poehler

and Tina Fey (Vanity Fair).

If you're unlike me and don't keep up with pop culture, that's okay, you don't have to. In fact, you're probably better off. But chances are, you keep track of your friends and your friends' friends like it's your job. With the use of social media, it's easy to see where your friends are, what they're doing, and who they're amongst within seconds.

Take Snapchat for example. The feed is live, unfiltered nonsense that's only creative capacity is occasional location filters and a timer. Therefore, when I open a friends 'story,' there's not much room for them to fake what they're doing because they had to capture it in the moment.

Instagram, on the other hand, is interesting in which it only highlights the exciting, colorful (filtered or unfiltered) aspects of our lives. What I mean by this is Instagram, contrary to what its name implies, is not instant. Rarely do you see someone pull open the app, snap a picture, adapt the filter, and post it in real time.

Social media has allowed us the ability to deceive our audience. Our goal on media is to heighten our actions and make everyone who isn't around us feel as though they should be. This feeling is commonly known as FOMO, or the Fear Of Missing Out.

Our culture is obsessed with the now. We feel the need to capture every moment as it unravels in time, making social media platforms an extension of our lives; a virtual, self-made reality show. Our main concerns are relative to where we are and if that place has a good photo opportunity or not.

Although these outlets can be a great way to express oneself, it creates what I've coined as the reverse FOMO effect. Rather than obsessing over being left out, we're now obsessed with the need to make others feel left out. Our personal satisfaction comes from other people's animosity towards 10 second videos and filtered images.

No one is perfect and we all fall victim to FOMO and reverse FOMO but it's time we start paying a little closer attention to our social habits. Provoking change in yourself is challenging because it forces you own up to a weakness that you may face. In terms of social media, we can all aim to share less.

I think establishing a sense of mystery in yourself is important. It creates more questions to be queried and a desire to learn about one another through insight and eye contact rather than a screen. If we share less through our tablets, we're sharing more through great conversation and story.

The virtue of saying yes

by Camille Baer

No. It's amazing how just two letters have the power to completely close a person off. You can feel the negativity oozing from it. No. Look at it...It even looks limiting.

Saying no is easy. It's safe. It's the obvious answer. Hiding behind a wall of no's is comforting because you've immediately protected yourself from anything that could be potentially good or bad. I'm stubborn so I've been mastering the art of no since I could speak. But the problem is the things I initially would have said no to, were actually amazing experiences that ended up shaping who I am.

People say no for many reasons: you're afraid you'll be disappointed by the results of saying yes, you

don't feel like making the effort to try something new, or maybe you're shy or nervous in new situations. There are countless excuses that could be used to protect yourself.

A few years ago, I realized that saying no became my default response to everything, and that I was beginning to miss out on things that I probably would have enjoyed. So I started forcing myself to say yes. It can be scary not knowing how something will turn out.

I'm talking specifically about school related opportunities. There are so many clubs, sports teams, music and theater classes, so many things that could potentially fulfill what's missing in your life. This school has so many opportunities available, you just have to be willing to look for them.

What I've learned over the past couple years, especially at New Trier, is that saying yes opens up unexpected doors. A year ago, I decided to take journalism as my elective because I enjoyed writing and needed something to do during 8th period.

Towards the end of the year, my

teacher suggested I apply for a senior editor's position for the newspaper. I was hesitant at first because I knew it would be a large commitment, but once I agreed to do it, I knew it was the right choice. I get to write about something new every week, and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

Taking risks has benefitted me because the more I do, the more I have learned from those experiences.

Here's my theory. The more you say yes, the more things you try right? So let's say you end up trying knitting club. It makes you feel good to be knitting this cool scarf because you've picked it up pretty fast and it doesn't look half bad. You've made something in just a few weeks, and now you have a new skill too. You're actually becoming a happier, more positive person in general, and that benefits everyone around you.

Just say yes. It won't hurt you, I promise. The worst that can happen is that you won't like what you tried, and then you move on. That's just how life works, so learn to roll with it.

Student Perspectives:
We asked Trevians about the unique things they did this summer:

"I worked in a surgical research laboratory at the University of Illinois Chicago." -Emma Alter, Senior

" I went to Buenos Aires, Argentina for two weeks." -Jacob Imber, Sophomore

"I went to China with my family for two weeks. We visited eight cities." -Talia Harrington, Senior

"I lifeguarded and was a counselor at Camp Echo in Michigan." -Emma Fitzgerald, Junior

"I went on tour for a week in France with Swing Choir." -Kevin Parra, Senior

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