

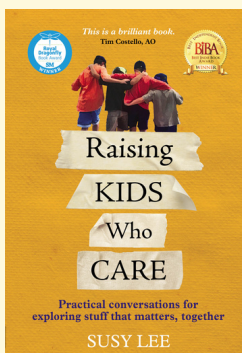
'Sustainable Socials'

...a practical family conversation



Communication is the best tool we have for life and love. Below you'll find a fun conversation to help your family work out how to use technology well without it taking over your lives.

Just follow these conversation steps to help you talk knowledgeably, honestly and practically. If they're up to it, let the kids lead you by reading out the instructions. Enjoy!



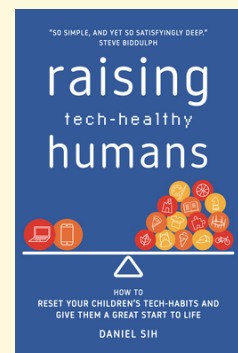
Susy Lee

'Raising Kids Who Care: Practical conversations for exploring stuff that matters, together'



Daniel Sih

'Raising Tech-Healthy Humans: How to reset your children's tech habits and give them a great start in life'



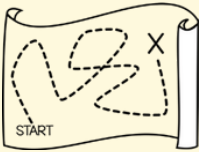
'Sustainable Socials'



1 Where the conversation's headed



2 Stimulating ideas to get started



3 Reading the instructions to prepare



4 On the road: talking together



5 Unpacking what we've learnt



6 Making it matter by taking action!

1 Where we're headed



The aim of this conversation is to help us make informed decisions together about the way we use our social media - to make sure we're in charge of it - not the other way around!

2 Getting Started

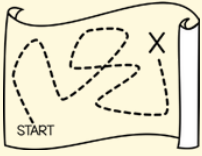


Research shows that excessive time on our devices changes our brain chemistry. It interferes with our sleep, our moods, our behaviours and our social skills. Daniel quotes these researchers in his book:

- According to psychology expert Jonathan Haidt, *"Girls who use social media heavily are about two or three times more likely to say that they are depressed than girls who use it lightly or not at all... We should start treating social media a bit like smoking or drinking."*
- Summarising her research, Jean Twenge says *"Teens who spend more time on screen activities are more likely to be unhappy... non-screen activities are linked to more happiness"*

That's big stuff! It helps to know this so we can decide for ourselves what's worth it and what isn't. The good news is social media can help us connect with friends and help us strengthen some friendships. But passive doom-scrolling... not so good!

3 Your Instructions



- **Make a list of all the social media platforms you use. Why did you join them? What do they add to your life?**
- **Can you find examples of what's good, what's bad and what's just ugly in socials?**
- **Estimate how much time you personally spend connected to social media.**
- **Do you use social media more when you are happy or unhappy? How do you feel after a scrolling session?**
- **Is your use of social media more active (posting and directly communicating with friends) or passive (just consuming content)? *(Hint: research says active is better than passive because it's more creative.)***

4 Talk about this...



Talk together through these questions and see where they take you:

- What did you learn from your reflections on social media here?
- What's the difference between what you **NEED** social media for and what you **WANT** it for?
- Are you worried about your time on social media? Are you worried about someone else's?
- Why do you use social media and how do you feel after a scrolling session?
- Are you 'addicted'? What does this look like? How do you think it's affecting you?
- How can you help each other become more balanced so you can use social media in a helpful way?

5 Unpacking...



What changes might you need to make and how confident are you that you can make these changes?

How will you keep each other accountable to any decisions you've made?

What might get in your way and how will you deal with that?

6 Moving forward



Set up a method for checking in with everyone each week. You could keep a diary, or use technology itself to measure your time on different sites.

You could watch the film 'The Social Dilemma' together to see what other families do and share their ideas.

Could you talk to your friends about this stuff?
