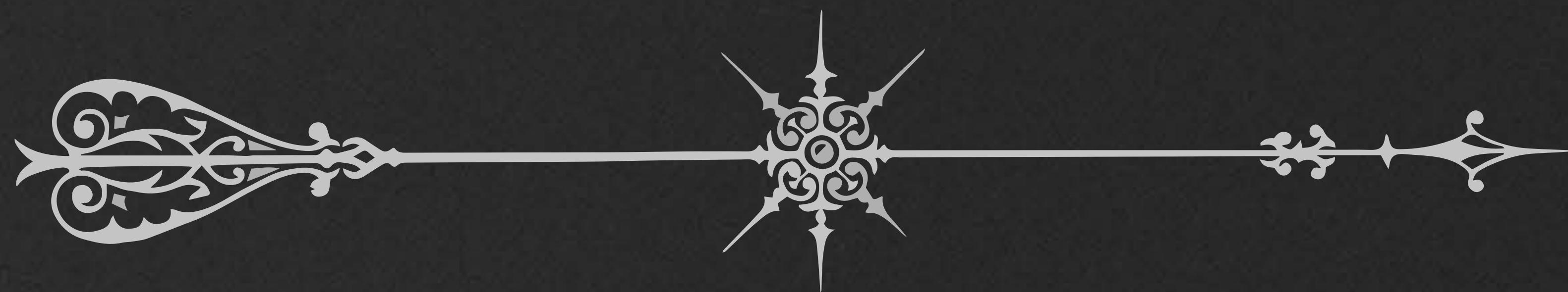


7 STEPS TO AVOID RAGE-BAIT

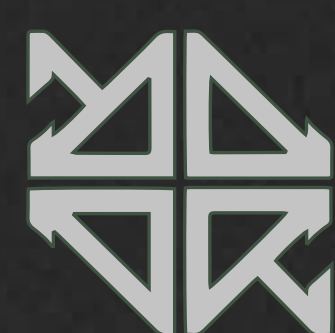
simple approaches to stay present and not let
psychological manipulation divide you



WHAT IS RAGE-BAIT?

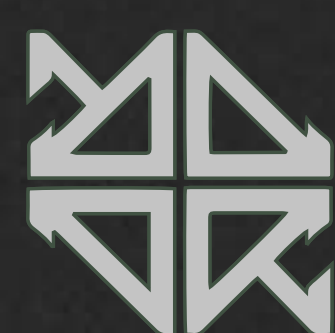
Rage-baiting is a powerful psychological technique used to purposefully provoke strong emotional reactions, usually anger and annoyance.

I've noticed a growing trend of videos/posts purposefully containing wrong information / lies, a word pronounced wrong, strong manipulative hooks, or something strange added in a video in the background, just to name a few methods. These claims and actions are designed to get you to engage at any level, following the "all press is good press" type of mindset. Increasing division and anger, especially now, has never been a wise thing for our mental health, culture, or emotional well-being, so I wanted to share a few helpful insights (not in a specific order of importance), backed by scientific research and my own personal methods, to stay grounded and peaceful, to the best of my ability.



1. DON'T ENGAGE

Don't become what you hate. Your attention is your most powerful resource when you can tune it correctly, so use it for kindness and good. Once you're aware of certain tactics to get you to react negatively, just tell yourself "this type of content isn't for me" and move on. It's often better to specifically go looking for the things that you're curious about, rather than letting the social media algorithms decide for you. Try to also curate your social media feed to uplift people / brands who do not use rage-bait techniques and focus more on truth telling, sharing information, comedy and art.



2. BREATHE

Start by taking 4-5 deep, slow nasal breaths in and out, letting yourself pause, closing your eyes and focusing only on your breathing. Even a short duration of this can start to calm your nerves and help you separate your emotions from your actions.



3. MEDITATE

A short mindfulness meditation of 10 minutes can truly help you to relax. Stepping back and allowing your thoughts and feelings to audition for your attention, without being attached to them or acting on them, helps realign your priorities. Over time, you can learn better pathways, retuning your attention to feed only the best ideas and intentions, which are often rooted in love, truth, giving, playfulness, and curiosity.

2 research papers on mindfulness meditation
reducing anger / increasing prosocial behavior:

The Associations and Effects of Mindfulness on Anger and Aggression: A Meta-analytic Review
O'Dean, S. M., & Summerell, E. (DOI: 10.1016/j.cpr.2025.102584)

Wisdom-Based Buddhist-Derived Meditation Practices for Prosocial Behaviour: A Systematic Review
Furnell, M., & Van Gordon, W. (DOI: 10.1007/s12671-024-02323-8)



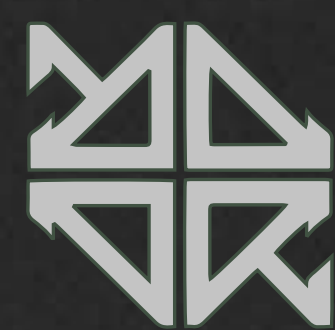
4. UNPLUG

Probably the most simple approach. Put your phone down or walk away from your computer. You have free will and no one is forcing you to use these social media platforms, even though they are designed to be insanely addictive. You're stronger than you realize and your choices matter. Live in the real world; read a book, hang out with a friend/family, make dinner, do chores, organize/plan your life, draw, make some tea, play an instrument, take a nap, take a shower. More often than not, any one of those activities will be more productive than doom-scrolling or staying annoyed and mad.



5. TAKE A WALK

A good peaceful walk of any length, ESPECIALLY out in nature, will do wonders for your mental health and staying grounded. Frequent healthy exercise of any kind will keep your meat spaceship working properly, and any pent-up energy will be able to flow and be released. Heat and movement are essential to fighting a sedentary, lethargic lifestyle, and starting small is better than never starting. Being present on walks allows me to see the subtle beauty all around me in nature, helps keep me present and grateful for everything I have, and shows me how truly interconnected and interdependent we are all.



6. FOCUS ON GIVING

Instead of spending your time consuming and reacting, realize you are valuable and capable of helping others in your own unique way! Your unique life experience gives you a powerful lens to focus on certain issues, and solve certain problems that maybe only you are able to see. A lot of suffering can be alleviated from shifting the focus off of yourself, and your desires, and instead focusing and trying to grow what you already have. What you focus on grows.



7. EMPATHIZE

We are all human, and the phrase “hurt people hurt people” exists for a reason. We are more similar than we are different, so understand that the person posting reactionary inflammatory content (assuming they’re not a bot) could be grieving, perpetuating unconscious cycles of abuse they themselves experienced, struggling with addiction, hurting financially, the list goes on. This doesn’t mean you have to reply, but try to give them the empathy that you wish you would receive if you were in pain, lonely or suffering, don’t add to it.

