

# The Psychology & Impact of Digital Influence & Manipulation

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[Intro] Stuck? Wish you knew more? Well listen up. The information landscape is changing rapidly and the communicators of today want the latest and greatest insights for action fast and at their fingertips. Listen Up! is a new podcast series brought to you by CDC's Division of Communication Science and Services. In this series, we highlight hot topics with insights from thought leaders, academics, innovators, practitioners, and more. You can learn tips and takeaways that you can use. So, listen up and lean in as we share information to help you grow your knowledge base and improve your practices. And don't forget to tell your colleagues about us.

[Betsy Mitchell] Today we're going to be exploring the concept of influence in the rapidly evolving world of artificial intelligence and importantly how our audiences might fall prey to emotional manipulation in this landscape. To help us unpack this I'm delighted to be joined by three distinguished guests, Dr. Connie Sehat, Claire Leibowicz, and Dr. John Cook. Dr. Sehat is principal investigator of the Analysis Response and Toolkit for Trust project or ARTT, an initiative that aims to support trust building online conversations. Connie also leads the news quality initiative and serves as researcher at large for Hacks/Hackers, a global grassroots community of journalists and technologists who collaborate on shared projects focused on innovation in journalism. For the past 20 years she's focused on the intersections of technology and democratic life. Claire Leibowicz is the head of the AI and Media Integrity Program at the Partnership on AI where she's worked since the organization's inception. She's worked in AI and society for almost a decade developing multi-stakeholder strategies, researching responsible AI, and informing technology practices and policies. Through convening research and policy making, the AI and media integrity program focuses on generative AI misinformation, interventions, responsible recommender systems, and the sustainability of local news. And last but certainly not least, Dr. Cook is a senior research fellow with the Melbourne Centre for Behavior Change at the University of Melbourne, where he researches how to use critical thinking to counter misinformation. He's created the Cranky Uncle Game combining critical thinking, cartoons, and gamification to build resilience against misinformation. He currently works with organizations like Facebook, NASA, and UNICEF to develop evidence-based responses to misinformation. Welcome everyone. So, Connie, I remember the first time we met at the National Conference on Health Communication Marketing and Media last August and after hearing your talk, I cornered you and said I love to hear more can we please connect, and thereafter we had a series of rich discussions about the power of influence in its origin. Given the prominence of miss and disinformation, we're all talking about this I think a lot of people may think that this is a new concept, but persuasion isn't new; it's as old as time. Can you tell us a little bit more about how we've experienced the art of persuasion historically and what's new now?

[Connie Sehat] Sure. Examples that come immediately to mind are advertising which does have a rich history. Did you know that you could find examples of English ads in the 1600s that promoted migration to Virginia? Or think about there are these handbills that explain how

wondrous coffee was even back then. Which we may feel a little bit more this morning but anyway, so persuasion though doesn't have to be limited to items or individual possibilities, especially when considering the mass media of more recent centuries they can be about large stories touching on who we are. So, my background is as a German historian. I will often think immediately then about propaganda during the Nazi. In terms of an example there's a style and elegance to not see aesthetics if you're familiar with the films of Leni Riefenstahl, you can see there a whole lot of visual power to these essentialized ideas about the German people as well as those to be considered enemies of the folk. Or in another example, in advance of the Spanish American war of 1898 there's a famous purported quote and there is some debate about this, but that the newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst said to an illustrator, "you furnish the pictures I'll furnish the war," so persuasion through mass media may also motivate large groups of people to act in a unified way. Which certainly can be concerning when it comes to the question of war.

[Betsy Mitchell] And so thinking about current day, how are you thinking persuasion is different now as you've just described we've been experiencing this as audience members for forever now.

[Connie Sehat] Yeah, so how about we talk about social media. There are a lot of metaphors to describe social media but one that I like to use is that social media can be like a funhouse. If you think about for example the funny shaped mirrors when you enter into that space there's distortions in that space it can be polarizing. We know that being on social media can increase mental health challenges for example. Another way that I recently encountered in a paper by philosopher this is CT Wynne at the University of Utah. He talks about, for example, how social media can kind of gamify communication. So, if you think about Twitter and you might want to sort of think about that you know how do you squish that really insightful idea that you have into a very limited number of characters. But in fact, right, it's not just about these exchanges that are happening online? You have to rack up likes or retweets or follows. In fact, there is a game to it as well right, not just about one human trying to communicate to another human but we're actually embedded into a larger game which lends itself for example to potentially be more outrageous trying to think about what is going to catch someone's eye? So given that social media landscape, I think differently now what we're faced with as a large question about what it comes to generally available information and how, especially in our context right, how democracies are supposed to work, how are they supposed to function.

[Betsy Mitchell] Claire can you tell us about what artificial intelligence is generally speaking and then more specifically tell us about generative AI. What is that?

[Claire Leibowicz] So, AI is in essence all types of computer programs that take in data, they access data and they use that data to learn for themselves in some way or spit something out. And generative AI in particular is a type of AI that makes it possible for machines to create so they can write, they can code, they can draw, and make even audio, something like a podcast let's say.

[Betsy Mitchell] So interesting it sounds like there's a lot of potential utility for generative AI. Certainly, lots of pros but it sounds like there are many cons that we need to be considering as well. So, Claire, let's talk a little bit more about artificial intelligence and its role in future in communication practice. And importantly in our human experience what are your thoughts on this.

[Claire Leibowicz] So first, it's really important to define or explain what AI is because the term gets thrown around often and I like to think of it as in essence computer programs that access data and use that data to learn for themselves and oftentimes, we describe this in very human terms. We say AI can do things that humans do like see patterns or sense the environment to make predictions. And while it can't be human and a game called Go as of 2016 or write poems today it still can't do a lot of things, like drive a car or deliver an empathetic speech let's say. And I think what's interesting about this moment is that people are questioning whether or not we're at this paradigm shift in the synergy between human and machine and of course communication practice is one component of that and that's with the particular evolution of a class of AI called generative AI, which is a class of machine learning models that use text, large data sets, with text and images to make it possible for machines to write, to code, to draw, and to create, and as with any technology there's both in enormous capacity for good for something like communication practice but also enormous capacity for harm and navigating that duality is super important. And just to give an example of AI 's use in communication both the positive I'd say on the negative, we have a synthetic media start up at the partnership on AI where I work which I'll probably explain in a second that uses generative AI for speech production and their idea is that they can empower people with voice issues who may have had a laryngectomy or suffer from cancer to speak normally and to synthesize their voice which is an enormous opportunity but at the same time you can imagine that technology being used to imitate a world leader as though they're saying something they did not and causing a ton of you know geopolitical chaos. So there is a wonderful example of how this class of generative AI used to do the same communication tactic to synthesize speech might be used for harm in one case. And for good in the healthcare case.

[Betsy Mitchell] AI is something new for most of us it's evolving so quickly and we're all trying to just get a handle on this revolution. What should health organizations like CDC be doing to prepare for what's coming?

[Claire Leibowicz] The first thing I would suggest is paying attention to your core values so there's often this this may sound counterintuitive, but AI is both novel and many of the challenges it presents could benefit from postures towards transparency and values of how you convey transparently different health information that you've relied on in the past. It's also really important to know how transparency would work in the new generative AI era so it's not just maybe linguistically but they're also signals around content that we might be able to pay attention to that provide to end users or audiences depending on the context some signal of that content authenticity. So even the logo of this CDC in the AI age, people might be able to generate content that has that logo and really easily pretend to be the CDC. And there are a lot of technologies proposed right now to be able to bake in signals of authenticity into the web so that people can know that they're actually communicating with the CDC for example. So that's called the Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity and that's a standard that will ensure that brands like the CDC are able to verify that their content actually is what it says it is. So, I think both remaining aware of the core values of transparency and honesty, scientific rigor, that needs to be brought to bear on the AI age and then also making sure that those methods for transparency adapt to some of the new threats and opportunities like generative media like, brand manipulation and like even text that might be generated falsely to pretend that it's a scientific article or some piece of evidence.

[Betsy Mitchell] That's fascinating and frightening. So, thinking a little bit about AI and algorithms in particular, how are they contributing to our information ecosystem can you talk a little bit about that?

[Claire Leibowicz] I love how you frame that question, Betsy, because at PAI we think about the whole pipeline of institutions and actors who make up the information ecosystem so to backtrack the Partnership on AI work, we're a global stakeholder nonprofit devoted to the huge mandate of responsible AI development and deployment and we were founded by the heads of AI research and some of the largest technology companies, Facebook, now Meta, Apple, Amazon, DeepMind, IBM, Google, Microsoft. Based on this sense that the challenges in the AI space transcend any one of those institutions. So very quickly they became a partnership per the name of over 100 institutions, ranging from the ACLU and civil society, to the New York Times, the BBC, and OpenAI. And I think that shows us this sense in which AI systems are impacting and implicating the entire chain of knowledge and information generation in society, ranging from the technical institutions that build AI systems that might allow you to generate code to write a string of text like ChatGPT in the form of open AI, to the institutions that help you create it. So, there are a lot of synthetic media startups that allow you as an end user to use that technology or to actually encounter these tools. And of course, there's also distribution, the media institutions, the agencies, the governments, the tech platforms, even the Facebooks of the world who share this content. So, I often think that AI touches this entire pipeline. There's the creation of content, the generation of an even local newsrooms. We have a whole program on AI, and local news are using AI to do things like transcribe or to edit or to do audience analytics to help them build out meaningful content. So those institutions are using AI, but at the same time when you're on a platform what you search on Google, what you get fed on Twitter is being distributed algorithmically. Often as I'm sure some of the others might talk about optimizing for engagement and not other values like accuracy or fairness and at the end of the pipeline there are people who encounter these tools who have their understanding of AI and those systems so it's fundamental that we understand AI is already deployed in the information ecosystem it's not new. Many of the technologies that power our encounters are fueled by AI but right now in this generative AI ecosystem with the creation of text and audio and video there's kind of an amplification of the capacity to have so much of the information undergirding the ecosystem being artificially generated in the first place.

[Betsy Mitchell] John from a psychological perspective what are the tenants of the manipulation that we should be thinking about? Can you help set the stage for us?

[John Cook] I find that a useful framework for understanding the different ways that we might be manipulated is the FLICC framework. FLICC standing for fake experts, illogical fallacies, impossible expectations, cherry picking, and conspiracy theories -- these are very persuasive techniques and you see them in misinformation across all different topics help misinformation. Climate change misinformation, really any topic these techniques are quite persuasive and the reason why is because psychologically they really appeal to how people think. We tend to rely on experts that we agree with and that makes us vulnerable to fake experts. We tend to exercise confirmation bias or we gravitate towards evidence that confirms our beliefs and that causes us to cherry pick. Possible expectations, cherry picking, and conspiracy theories -- these are very persuasive things you see them in this information across all incomes help this information climate change misinformation. And the reason why is because psychologically they really

appeal to how we exercise confirmation bias or we gravitate towards evidence and confirms our beliefs and that causes us to cherry pick. So understanding these techniques is the first step towards being resilient against being misled.

[Betsy Mitchell] What does history and psychology tell us about how people are making decisions about their health?

[Connie Sehat] I think that maybe one way to think about this is about what helps or hinders us related to decision making. Because right, to just take a step back there as you were mentioning in terms of this two-wayness now that we have in terms of social media but let's just talk about more broadly Internet communication overall, the ability for anyone pretty much to generate a beautifully crafted website, a wonderfully edited podcast for example, this power is now in the hands of many people. And so one of the things that I think about in terms of what history or let's just say also the humanities and the social sciences have to offer here is the observation that what helps decision making is trust right trust is a shortcut and so one of the things that sociologists psychologists but also philosophers have noted is that one of the functions of trust is that it simplifies things you don't have to for example second triple guess every part of you know certain information that you might learn or hear because you trust that information or you trust that speaker. So, this makes sense to us right that we can understand why an increased environment distrust can be stressful. Because now you have to make many more choices about what to believe or not. And sometimes I think that these shortcuts to trust might be part of a larger system. So for example, we say that one trusts science it's kind of interesting to note that we're able to trust science because it's a system that inherently mistrusts as it were our individual perspectives you know if you think about what it takes to reproduce results or having a network of peers that judge this and so yeah I just find that one of the things that we can bear in mind as we continue to move forward in these spaces it's just the acknowledgement that trust is a very helpful tool in terms of those shortcuts. That how that trust is built is complicated.

[Betsy Mitchell] John, in terms of how people make decisions about their health are there things that help or hinder decision making what are your thoughts?

[John Cook] People are very complicated. Different factors can help or hinder their decision making when it comes to health. To have decisions about everything, so some examples of factors that are quite important, ideology and belief systems whether it's religious beliefs or political beliefs, can have a big influence, for example whether we'll listen to health experts on wearing masks or getting vaccinated. Misinformation is a big factor and it can cause people to not only hold false beliefs but also it influences how much we trust information sources once people start going down the conspiracy theory rabbit hole. Then they become very distrustful of institutions as well as scientific experts are that makes it makes it harder for people to follow the advice from experts.

[Betsy Mitchell] Connie what happens when trust is lost?

[Connie Sehat] In terms of when trust is lost this is a big question I think before many of our minds right now and I guess one of the ways that I think about this currently is actually to think about the importance trust and integrity overall. So, there is a moral philosopher, Sissela Bok, and she once described trust and integrity as precious resources for society. That when it comes to being in public life lies basically intentional or not have a corrosive effect on our ability to

trust one another and even our ability to be sociable. So , if that's the case, how can we talk to each other without fearing conflict let alone make decisions together I think that conceptualizing trust and integrity as these resources that we should be guarding is a really powerful image right and so if it's lost if we think about those as being precious resources then what are the activities that we need to do to rebuild or to restore some of that resource?

[Betsy Mitchell] And John what do you think? Are there any ways that health systems can regain trust once it's lost or is it rather hopeless.

[John Cook] It's not hopeless. There's always hope. But it's also challenging. A lot of misinformation really targets trust. As in it tries to reduce the public 's trust in scientific experts some of the research we've done has looked at misinformation about climate change on different sources like blogs and social media like Twitter and we find that ad hominem attacks or attacking scientists is the biggest category of climate misinformation and the purpose of that misinformation is simply to erode public trust in scientific experts and climate science itself So what do we do about that given such a great focus in reducing trust basically we need to neutralize the misinformation that is trying to erode trust then we need to also rebuild trust that has been nice weather from misinformation or unfortunately sometimes missteps from scientists and there's lots of different ways that scientists can rebuild trust with the public I think transparency is a big step so I just need to be transparent after the research they do they need to explain how their science works the more the public understand just the process of science the better and I think that scientists have to be willing to be humans we kind of have our humanity sort of trained out of us that on the quest for scientific objectivity I think we do need to find a way to be scientifically objective but also ingratiating humanity and one way to do that is to be honest and talk to the public about how our science affects us as people

[Betsy Mitchell] Really important points. Connie, are there any frameworks or insights that we can draw from? What do you think? [Connie Sehat] I think a very important framework is actually the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That foundational document along with his sibling documents is the basis or the foundation upon which the United Nations has been created and one of the things that those documents do is to stress the importance of self-determination of people need to be able to determine their own paths. That's a very strong framework for me as a person who comes from a humanities perspective but also one that thinks about what it means to blend technology and democracy together. A second framework actually I think to jump back a little bit to that reference I made about science we can also think about politics and our own government. There are checks and balances and so again I'm curious or I think about these frameworks that go ahead and acknowledge trust is a very difficult tricky thing. Sometimes the choices before us are very impactful and so what do we need in order to make those choices potentially there's something in the structures that we need to support that just goes ahead and recognizes that it's difficult to trust one another, what are the things that it can be put in place to make that trust.

[Betsy Mitchell] So this is a question for all of you some practitioners may feel a little discouraged at this point. What can we do to empower audiences to make informed choices. Connie?

[Connie Sehat] So to come back to this concept of persuasion. Which we started our conversation with or maybe even just thinking about all the rumors that are floating around in

social media right now and I think about them right, in terms of that are trying to get us to think a thing or choose some specific action make some specific decision. I would say that to truly live with one another we need to respect each other's ability to make informed choices for oneself. Oftentimes inaccurate persuasive misleading information right it robs people of the ability to make true decisions it stacks the deck as it were what I think is key is first to commit to this to begin with that our audiences are deserving of making informed choices So what are the ways that can better understand what they need in order to make a choice.

[Betsy Mitchell] Claire what are your thoughts? [Claire Leibowicz] That's a great question and I wanna make sure that when we focus on media literacy and the end user or the audience being empowered we don't lose sight of the profound role of institutions if you again as David and Goliath notion is important that we don't lose sight of the role institutions have to help empower audiences. So, there's a lot of kind of individual agency but also there's a whole ecosystem that might help support that. And I'll use an example from the synthetic or generative media space which I work in and just this year we put out a framework that we launched with several institutions that care about the health of the information ecosystem ranging from bumble a dating app that of course wants there to be authenticity and transparency on their platform to the BBC in the UK to witness a video on human rights nonprofit and even open AI and TikTok and in that set of guidelines we are really focused on this question you asked which is how do we better enable audiences to understand when content has been AI generated and we suggest several opportunities for disclosure on the part of the institutions and creators of this content both directly in terms of labels and context and metadata that should be baked in to the way content flows around the web but also underlying technical signals that others might be able to rely upon to vet that something is real or not so we think it's really important for these kind of provenance or disclosure methods to be baked into the content and I'll give a shout out to an effort called the coalition for content provenance and authenticity that striving to bake these signals into the web that has a huge component devoted to technology but also another component devoted to user experience how do we enable audiences to actually care about these signals take them to heart and use signals about the entity to make a judgment for example if you saw a video and it was manipulated but we're able to click into that video and see that the video it was built upon came from three years ago you might be more empowered to make a decision about whether or not to trust that video and of course we need to reconcile that that may be used for satire for positive purposes and at other times it may be used nefariously or purely to cause harm so there's this kind of dual responsibility I see for institutions and technology builders to bake in these signals and also for audiences to care more and the fundamental idea that I advocate for is not just proving content false but proving that content is real or true a lot of times audiences have to rely on retroactive signals what we'll call it detection methods but we want to be able to show that the content is what it says it is not just that it's not what it says it is which I know seems like 2 sides of the same coin but can make a real difference for an audience and the last thing I'll say is how important it is to understand where audiences are coming from at PAI we did a study two years ago on how different audiences across the partisan spectrum think about labels conveying that content has been AI generated or manipulated so you may have remembered a few years ago especially during the height of COVID there were a lot of labels affixed to content on technology platforms and we asked one individual about his thoughts on the Twitter manipulated media label which was only designed to say that the content had been edited and this individual suggested that he thought it meant that Twitter was telling him the media as in the institution was

manipulating him so there was of course really noble intent with offering this label to empower audiences but we have to remember that there are lots of different members of that audience who are coming with different backgrounds to make decisions about the provenance or disclosure label about AI content.

[Betsy Mitchell] John, what are your thoughts here.

[John Cook] This has been one of the main practices of my own research which is empowering audiences in particular in the face of misinformation. And the way that I do that is by educating them on the different techniques used to mislead. Once people understand the various tricks and rhetorical techniques that are used to manipulate. Once they are able to see those tricks then they're much more resilient and less likely to be misled by misinformation. What I find is when I teach people the techniques of misinformation they report feeling empowered and they feel less vulnerable to being misled and also they feel empowered to talk about the issue with their friends and family because they better understand the types of counter arguments they might encounter.

[Betsy Mitchell] And we often see in public discourse the temperature quickly rising how can leaders depolarize conversations, Connie?

[Connie Sehat] To begin with I would say that if you communicate in a receptive manner even if you disagree with the view that this can be helpful not just for depolarization but for deescalating a conversation. Because right, sharing information without using the buttons of outrage or trying to create doubt trying to cause people to question these are the things that a communicator I think now is trying to share accurate information these are things that we're up against. But we are human and it's hard not to feel affected by evocative or provocative content. So, I think in addition to just sort of at the out-front understanding that here are some ways that one might deescalate a conversation I think it's important to recognize that when we're entering into these contentious conversations we might end up raising the stakes let alone feel a whole host of other emotions. I think basically it takes a certain amount of internal preparation before entering into these kinds of conversations that can be helpful too just to recognize that maybe there's that internal preparation to make before trying to think about what it means to depolarize or deescalate a conversation.

[Betsy Mitchell] So do you have any specific tips that you might offer communication practitioners as they wrestle with this?

[Connie Sehat] Yes so I have a few thoughts. I think to begin with we should acknowledge that this is a really harsh challenge. I've been thinking recently myself operations wise that when it comes to an organizational level response or engagement we may need a new kind of playbook or model that helps organizations think about what it means to do this depolarizing this deescalating or informing altogether. But let's think about this for the moment individually because I think we're all in for a very long slog ahead when it comes to engaging others online. And so first I would say taking a long view of the world can help right I mean this is why I think about that history piece to know that we've been in very messy times before and we've been able to emerge. So one is actually I would say philosophically trying to ground oneself and understanding that that teams have come and got times. And we're gonna take that long view and sort of know where we wanna go. Second thought I have is that understanding how people make decisions and how to empower their decision making knowing that audiences are awash in social



media this can be helpful too right, because my understanding more about this decision making and how to empower it potentially then we can look for the right tools to build the right. Messages that we wanna communicate. Finally I think that there is a strong need to rebuild trust and this is going to require some thinking for example about when it's OK to be transparent about what we don't know what we do know and that also we can learn about what it means to have two-way communication with each other about empathy or perspective about listening. But in the end again I just think we need to recognize that this is super hard work and so one way that I've thought about this is that in a way are we or is social media in fact asking communication practitioners to be hopeful visionaries for us to keep providing that information to set examples for us as to how to communicate online to try and figure out what works and what doesn't work because this is so needed and we all need to be doing this.

[Betsy Mitchell] Claire what tips or advice would you have for communication practitioners?

[Claire Leibowicz] So based on my earlier longer answer it's definitely show your work show where things are coming from if you are using AI which is not a bad thing in and of itself it's a novel technology that can be deployed for enormous good, be transparent about how it's being used why it's being used. Transparency is really beneficial. Also, to my earlier point meeting people where they are of course is really important and making sure that you understand audiences priors and being respectful of allowing audiences to kind of both choose their own adventure and also be given the truth of course at the same time reconciling those is very important. And the last thing I'll say is i think there's often this sense amongst we feel this a lot in the journalism field but I think it's very related to communication and that is a form of communication practice I'd argue there's this sense that AI creates this entirely new world for the standards and methods for communicating to folks, so journalists are worried about what does it mean for our journalistic standards to have AI guidelines and I realized how much the AI field can actually benefit from understanding the tactics and guidelines of communication practitioners so all that to say is that to some extent don't reinvent the wheel and rely upon these inaugural and historical themes that I'm sure Connie and John will talk about related to transparency and you know this idea of speaking to the audience in a tailored and specific way and you don't need AI to disrupt that but rather just you know amplify those values that already existed so meet people where they are remember that they're coming from many different perspectives be transparent and then frankly return to your core values and ethical practices around transparent and frank and honest communication

[Betsy Mitchell]John what tips or advice do you have for communication practitioners.

[John Cook] I would recommend just being aware of the different frameworks or tools that are out there for helping build public resilience against misinformation. So, frameworks like the FLICC taxonomy. Again flick standing for the five techniques of science denial from faker experts to cherry picking to conspiracy theories and so on but also there are some great tools out there for helping inoculate the public commands message information in from fun engaging ways. There's been an explosion of research and development using games to build resilience. There was an online game, Bad News, developed by scientists at Cambridge and more recently I've been working with UNICEF to develop a game Cranky Uncle Vaccine which is about inoculating people against vaccine misinformation. The idea of these games is to use something that's fun as gameplay elements uses humor, it's very visual it's very engaging but ultimately it

still has these benefits of helping people spot misinformation better and be less likely to be misled. And they're great educational tools and they can be used in training public engagement campaigns. So, yeah, I would point people towards game it's like Cranky Uncle or Bad News.

[Betsy Mitchell] So, I think what we've said is that we all have to be in it together as helpful visionaries as you put it, Connie. To that end who do you draw inspiration from to meet the challenges that we've discussed today?

[Connie Sehat] As a historian I do think to the past actually isn't often compared to the present and so two people that I've been inspired by in the post-World War 2. Are Martin Luther King junior and Hannah Arendt. And especially because these 2 individuals the disenfranchised African American man and a German Jewish philosopher fleeing from Nazi Europe created yet still these writings, these speeches, these reflections about what it means to talk to one another and what it means to be in community one another. Given that background they yet had this ability to paint a picture of how we could be together. I think that what we know now related to influence persuasion I think we know a lot about what we don't like on social media or we don't like in terms of public conversations. But one of the things that I'm more interested in seeing now is how do we actually know more about what we do want, what we do want to build together. And this because what exactly are we asking ourselves in terms of social media. I think that especially in these last years one of the things that has become so clear to me is that we are all in it together. The choices we make individually do affect how we are community wise how we are as a country and so we are still in this country together. We want to be together that's what's at stake so that nobody is left behind.

[Betsy Mitchell] Thank you so much Connie, Claire, and John what a thoughtful conversation and I love ending with some inspiration and hope.

[Connie Sehat] Thank you so much Betsy for having us it's been so great to be having these conversations with you.

[Claire Leibowicz] Thank you.

[John Cook] Yeah my pleasure to talk to you.

[Outro] Findings and conclusions in this discussion do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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