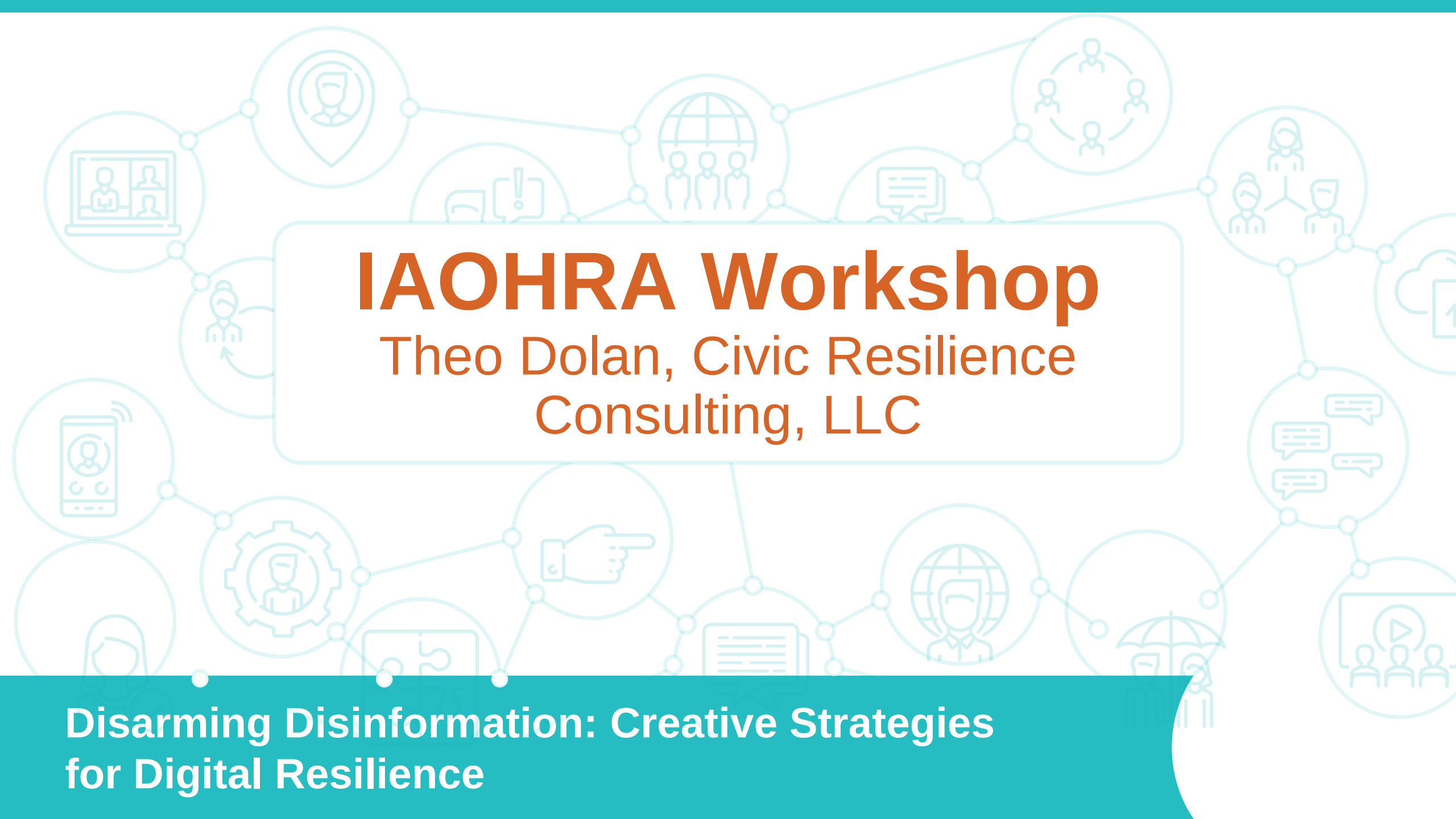




IAOHRA Workshop

Theo Dolan, Civic Resilience
Consulting, LLC

**Disarming Disinformation: Creative Strategies
for Digital Resilience**

1 | Be mindful of your information space



The first step in the campaign is to recognize your own role in today's information environment – be mindful of your information space!

Take stock of how much media and information you engage with and set boundaries to avoid being influenced and overwhelmed.

#WashYourNews



My Media Landscape

		Morning		Afternoon		Evening	
My daily routine (list activities like work, driving, childcare, cooking, etc.):							
Select type(s) of media from below:		Name of source, program, platform or topic?	Time spent	Name of source, program, platform or topic?	Time spent	Name of source program, platform or topic?	Time spent
Print 	newspaper						
	magazines						
	books						
	billboards						
	other						
TV 	local news						
	broadcast news						
	cable news						
	entertainment						
	sports						
	other						
Radio 	news/talk						
	music						
	other						
Web/ Mobile 	news sites						
	social media						
	texting/messaging						
	email						
	collaboration platform (e.g. Slack)						
	podcasts						
	other						
	social interactions (talking with friends, neighbors, family, others)						

Results and Discussion

What were your results?

Are you surprised? How?

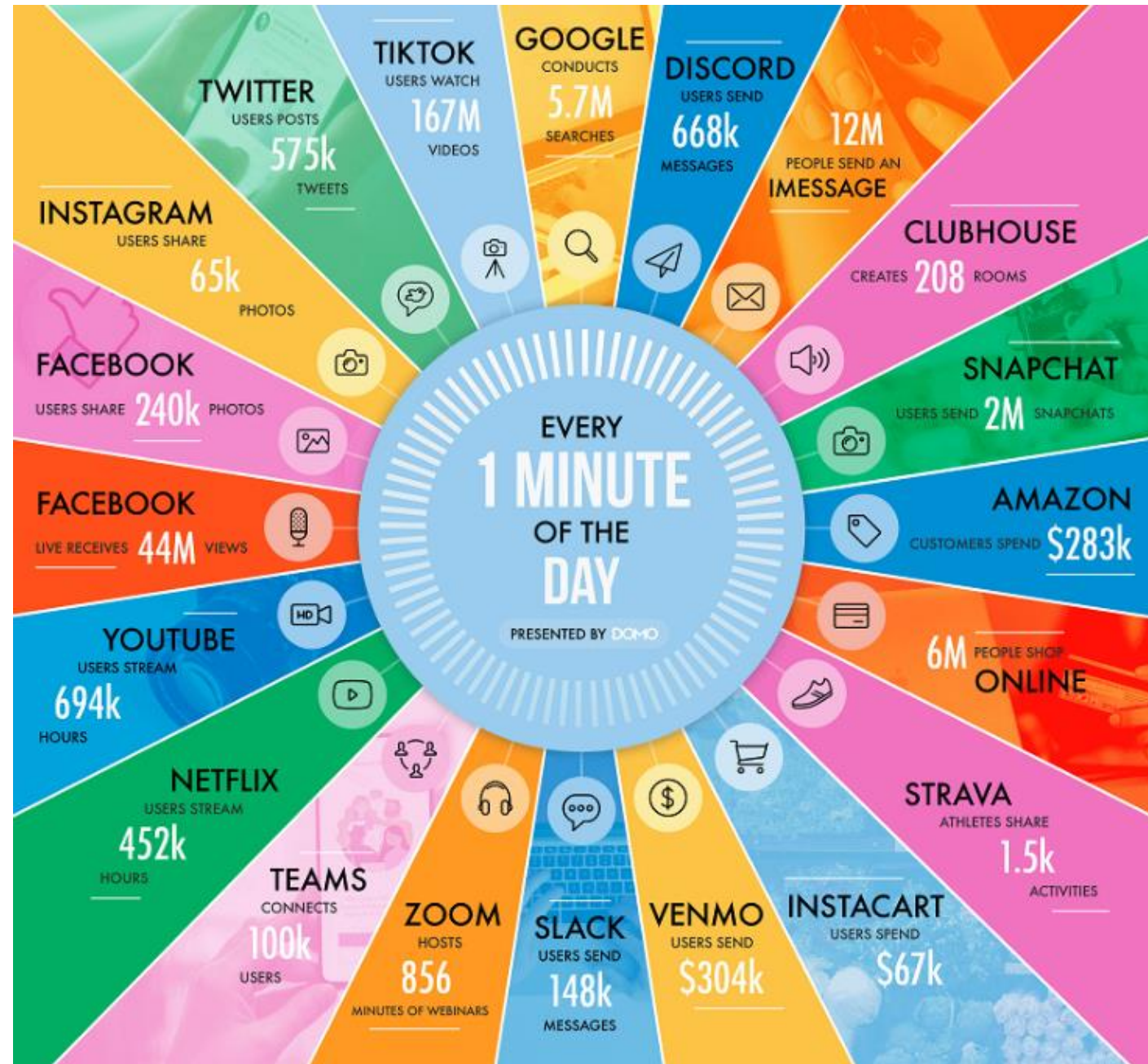
What conclusions can you draw about your media consumption habits?



Every minute of the day, people worldwide...

- Watch **167 million videos** on TikTok
- Share **240,000 photos** on Facebook
- Send over **half a million tweets**
- Stream almost **700,000 hours of video content** on YouTube

... and in the process interact with a huge amount of false or misleading – manipulative - information



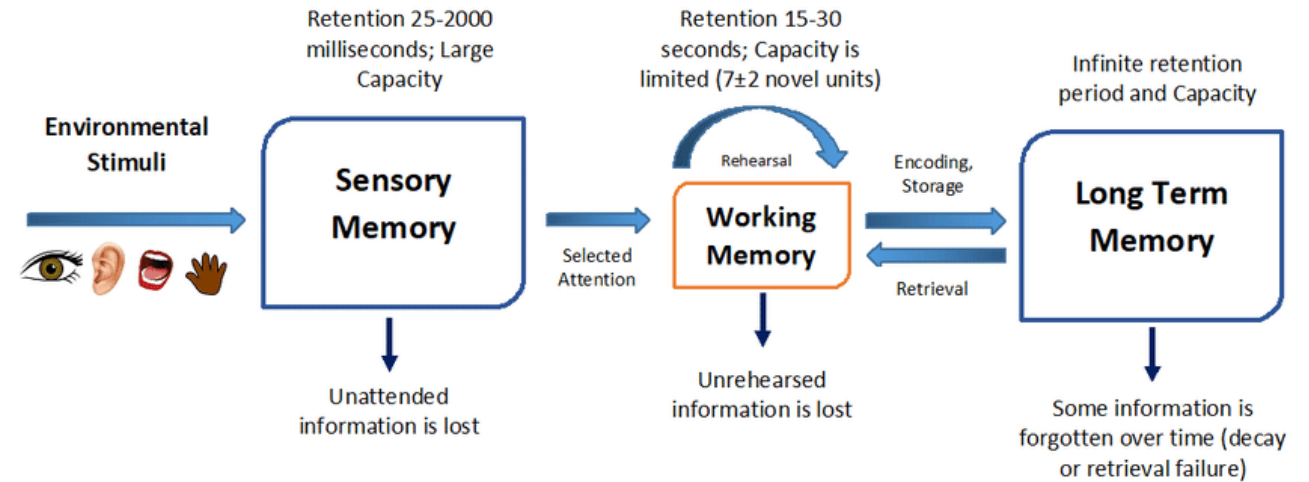
Information & Cognitive Overload

Our memory has three main parts: sensory, working, and long-term.

Sensory memory filters out the noise and passes on select information to the working memory for additional processing.

Working memory can process 5-9 pieces of information at any given time, and either discards or categorizes it for storage.

Long-term memory stores information in structures called "schemas," which organizes it based on how we use it, and schemas are more developed over time and use and become easier to recall them.



[Noushad & Khurshid, 2019](#)

Cognitive load refers to the amount of information our working memory can process at any given time.

When there is too much information to process, you may feel **cognitive overload**. This happens when you reach a point of paralysis of information — not being able to process and then act on what is heard.

[Cognitive Load Theory, MCW](#); [Cognitive Overload, Mayo Clinic](#)

Information & Cognitive Overload

Reactions to Cognitive Overload

You may respond to cognitive overload in different ways based on external factors and internal behaviors, including:

- **Paralysis** -- Being unable to deal with a topic or issue because it's more complex than you're able to manage.
- **Anger** -- If information doesn't fit with the way you think or feel, you may become angry at having your feelings or beliefs challenged. Repeated attempts to address a topic may lead to feelings of upset or anxiousness.
- **Passivity** -- Simply going along with others is a way of dealing with cognitive overload. Forming an opinion on a topic may feel overwhelming, while following someone else's lead is the easiest way to cope.
- **Understanding** -- You may process information by relying on input from trusted sources, such as your health care team. Increasing your knowledge of a topic can be exciting when you are confident in the validity of the information. Look for ways to gather details in your preferred learning style, whether that's visual, auditory or written.

Information & Cognitive Overload

We all experience information and cognitive overload.

And we are all susceptible to manipulative information.

Manipulative Information

- Misinformation
- Disinformation
- Malinformation
- Propaganda
- Information operations
- Weaponized information
- Information disorder
- Fake news
- Clickbait
- Conspiracy theories
- Online hate
- Manipulation of context and sentiment



Why are we vulnerable to manipulation?



Digital devices are **designed to be addictive**



Humans filter information through our **emotions and biases**



Distribution of information is very **easy, fast, and far-reaching**



Manipulative information is cheap and easy and therefore **very profitable**

Manipulation of Information in the Digital Age

- Traditional formal and informal **education structures (schools, family, etc.) do not prepare** young people to deal with easily accessible, incessant stream of information
- Manipulative information **polarizes** communities, **erodes trust** in democratic institutions, **threatens** integrity of elections, and can lead to **conflict and radicalization**

Developing Strategies for Managing Information & Cognitive Overload

Developing Resilience Strategies

- **Media literacies** (deeper knowledge, critical thinking skills, and healthy behaviors and attitudes around all media)
- **SIFT** (and other information seeking and lateral reading strategies)
- **Critical ignoring**
- **Digital wellness & emotional regulation**
- **Digital citizenship**

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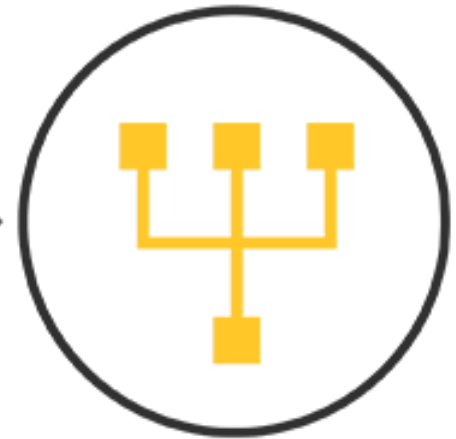
Stop



**Investigate
the source**



**Find better
coverage**



**Trace claims,
quotes and media to
the original context**

The news affects my mood.

- 1 - Agree
- 2 - Partly Agree
- 3 - Partly Disagree
- 4 - Disagree



Name It to Tame It

Emotional Regulation

Developing strategies for your physical
and mental wellbeing...



Tip #2: Check Your Emotions

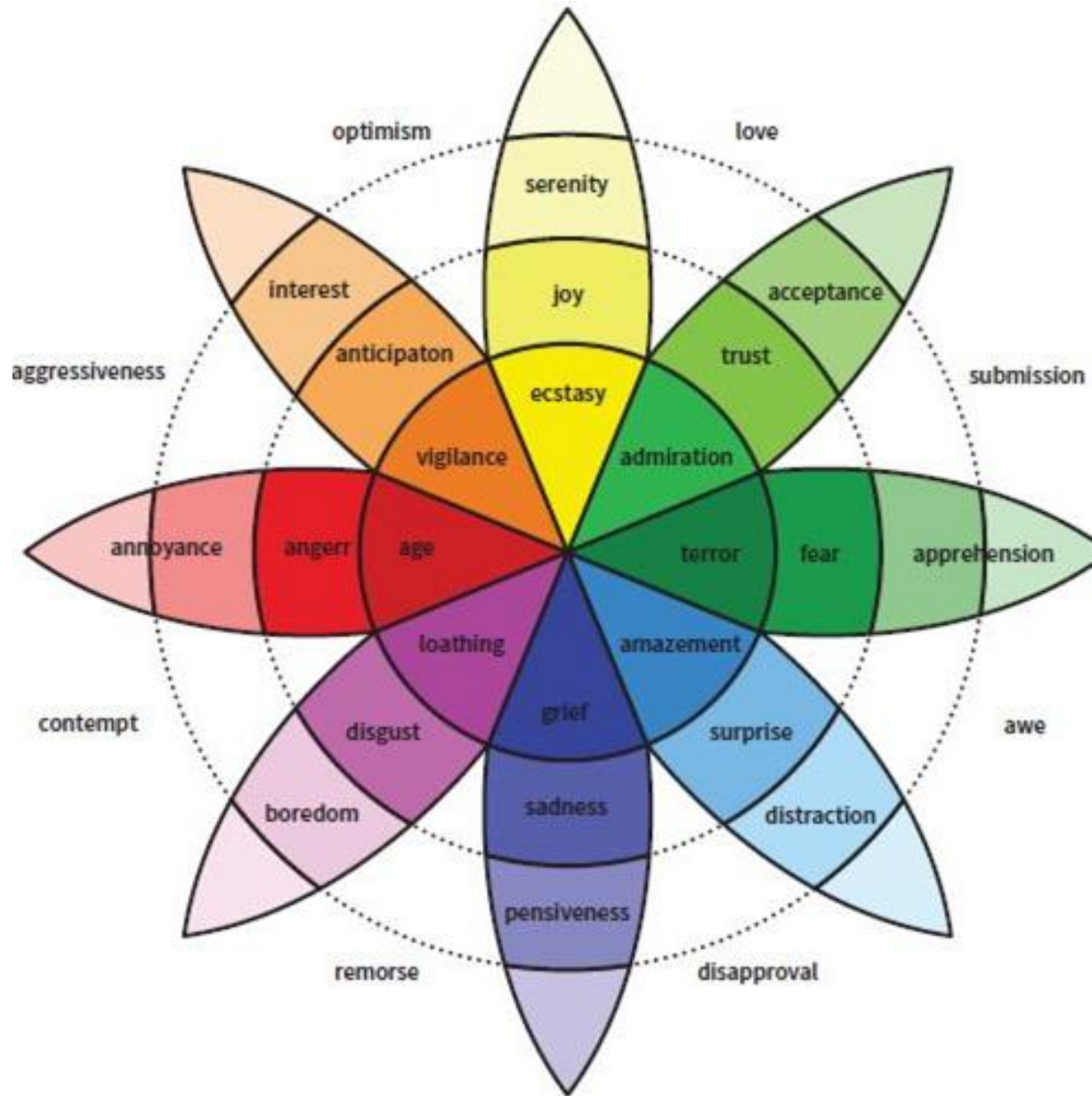
- Use of highly emotional narratives, language, or graphic images often signals an attempt to manipulate
- Enrage to engage – getting us angry - drives up our clicks, shares and comments on social media.
- Strong emotions are a key factor in making online content viral.
- Let's practice a technique to help us check our emotions when engaging with media!



Regain Control: Name it to Tame It

Three Steps to **NAME IT
TO TAME IT**

- **Pause:** Turn your head away from a screen after viewing an image or article that provokes you. Take a deep inhale, and a deep exhale.
- **Ask:** How am I feeling?
- **Say:** Name & accept your emotion – regain control of your logical brain!



Wheel of Emotion

What emotions do you feel when looking at the following photos?





Nicki Minaj 

@NICKIMINAJ · [Follow](#)



My cousin in Trinidad won't get the vaccine cuz his friend got it & became impotent. His testicles became swollen. His friend was weeks away from getting married, now the girl called off the wedding. So just pray on it & make sure you're comfortable with ur decision, not bullied

5:44 PM · Sep 13, 2021



138.5K



See the latest COVID-19 information on X

[Read 37.8K replies](#)

← **Post**



Elon Musk  
@elonmusk



We spent the weekend feeding USAID into the wood chipper.

Could gone to some great parties.

Did that instead.



Mike Benz  @MikeBenzCyber · Feb 2

it ain't dead yet, but already, and for the very first time, a hole has been put in the Terror Titanic x.com/Nero/status/18...

1:54 AM · Feb 3, 2025 · **25.7M** Views

 8.5K

 23K

 167K

 2.9K



Read 8.5K replies

The Role of AI and Disinformation

- **AI as “force multiplier”** – AI assists in the production and spread of manipulative information
- **TFGBV** – deepfakes and other content target women and marginalized groups
- AI generated content can easily be used by **malign actors** and can **erode trust** in traditional media
- **Mitigation factors** – tools to identify deepfakes and machine learning tools to track the spread of disinfo are emerging



Fake photos of Pope Francis wearing a large white puffer coat, created with AI-image generator ... [+] MIDJOURNEY / REDDIT

Trump supporters target black voters with faked AI images

5 days ago

[Share](#)

By Marianna Spring, BBC Panorama and Americast



This image, created by a radio host and his team using AI, is one of dozens of fakes portraying black Trump supporters

Donald Trump supporters have been creating and sharing AI-generated fake images of black voters to encourage African Americans to vote Republican.