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National UnFriend Day calls on Facebookers to cull their lists



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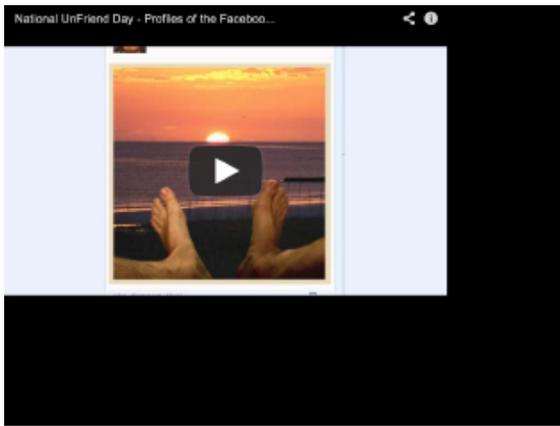


(REUTERS/Valentin Flauraud/Files)

It is time to put the end in friend.

This season brings about one of the best holidays, when you trim the fat from those turkeys and hams and lose those last friend pounds you've been dying to get rid of: National UnFriend Day.

Initiated by Jimmy Kimmel, National UnFriend Day encourages you to sort through your list of Facebook friends and cut anyone who's not actually a friend.



“Un for all and all for Un,” as the mantra states.

The talk show host created the now international day of action in 2010. From the start it was a huge success, as Kimmel said on his show: “We killed off millions of LOLers and OMGers.”

And there are many more to go.

A Pew study finds the average friend list has accumulated 245 people, but recent British research suggests we only need five friends to be happy. If that’s true, most Facebook users have at least 240 candidates for UnFriend Day. Delete! Delete! Delete!

Just keep in mind the word friend is now a euphemism for contact, and you never know when that person you cut ties with could connect you to someone you need to know.

Evan Randall looks at his friend list as a Rolodex, so he’s reluctant to take any action that might upset someone who can possibly offer assistance down the line.

The idea that Facebook is like a Rolodex makes Randall even more annoyed when he’s the one unfriended.

In what he calls a “confession,” the 35-year-old says in the past he created an Excel file to match his Facebook inventory. When he’d notice the number fall, Randall would scan through the spreadsheet to identify the culprit. “I needed to know who no longer wanted me in their lives that badly that they would unfriend me.”

Matt Kruse is the developer of Social Fixer, a free browser extension used by about 350,000 Facebookers. It adds nifty tools, such as one of its most popular features, “Friend Tracker,” which lets you know when you’ve met the delete reaper.

Kruse says there was definitely demand for it. “I noticed a lot of people who were interested in knowing when someone unfriended them.”

So how do you know whom to axe?

Though the social network allows you to tailor the frequency of updates you receive from people (its IPO prefers that you have more BFFs – best friends faux-ever), sometimes you just feel the need – the need to delete.

If you must edit Johnny’s “Time for a nap” type updates to “Most updates,” then to “Only important,” maybe it’s time to put Johnny to sleep.

If you have a harder time recognizing Jenny than one of your provincial cabinet ministers, it’s perhaps time to oust her and her posts.

If you’re “happily” married, but your relationship status reads, “It’s complicated,” it may be time to unfriend your spouse (and call a divorce attorney).

Though National UnFriend Day’s official date is Nov. 17, celebrations and eliminations continue throughout the week. And with more than 1 billion active Facebook users, no matter what your faith, this is the Festivus for all of us.

Facebook friendly:

According to ComScore, four in five Canadians online use Facebook, spending an average of about eight hours on the site every month. (Likely more hours than they spend with their friends offline.)

What do you think of the practice of 'unfriending' people on Facebook?

It's an effective way to manage one's social network.

I'm OK with it...so long as it's not me that's being unfriended.

It's mean/rude.

I don't care.

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