



BROOKLYN_BORN

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“Smarter than the av-er-age bear” was a favorite saying of Yogi Bear.

Tuesday, March 26, 2013

Often I feel that way about the posts and comments on SP at least when compared to the comments I read on articles about health and fitness in the general press.

I thought about this when StriverOne commented on the intelligent responses I receive on my daily blog. She's absolutely right. I look forward to the thoughtful, insightful input of those who read my entries, even when we don't completely agree.

This is so different from the comments you read in the general press.

For example:

When spinach was found to be the source of an e-coli infection, there were many comments about how bad vegetables can be for you. They just missed the part about carefully washing produce?

When someone tragically dies in a marathon, immediately the comments appear about how crazy and stupid distance runners are.

When modest attempts are made to change the choices in school lunch programs to healthier fare, the naysayers come out in droves to tell us that “kids won't eat that stuff,” “they'll eat what they like.” The “food police” should mind their own business

When warnings appear about the dangers of smoking and restrictions being put in place, comments appear about “free choice”

It seems that everyone knows someone who:

Smoked heavily and lived to be 95

Ate fast food their whole lives and lived to be 95

Never exercised a day in their lives and lived to be 95

Weighed 300+ pounds and lived to be 95

Etc.

In addition, every single one of these people was all perfectly healthy.

Maybe they really did know such people and weren't just making it up, but outliers don't predict results for whole populations. People posting here, while including their personal experience, tend to know that.

If we expand the topics to include politics or religion, the comments get worse. I'm glad we don't have those debates here.

There's been some research on this which discovered:

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"The facts put forth in a scientific article were distorted when seen through the lens of nasty commenters. But users didn't recognize the lens."

Full Article:

The "Nasty Effect" of comments distort perceptions of what an article really says

living.msn.com/li

fe-inspired/the-daily-dose

-blog-post?post=c2533087-b

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As I remember Yogi, he always managed to outsmart both the Forest Ranger and clueless visitors, but never in a nasty way. Yes, I know he was after "goodies" but it was the 60s after all.

So thank you Sparkers. Even though we all have pseudonyms, the civilized nature of our conversations lend themselves to carefully examining the issues, weighing the facts, vetting the experts and working toward our goals.

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LIBBYL1

Never thought of it, but you are right! I avoid the comments in online news articles for example as the vitriol is so vicious and actually often hate speech (against women, people who raise different view points etc, racist). It makes me despair about society. But on SP I love reading the comments.... They affirm, and inspire. As do many of the blogs..

3001 days ago



WILSONWR

I get turned off when the arguments turn personal - to me, this means that you can't argue based on the merits of your argument - you have to turn on the person to "win." While I don't mind a little disagreement, it should be done with respect, and in such a way, to further understanding. You're right about many of those who comment here - it is always done with respect. Even if you don't necessarily agree with another person, at least you can understand where they are coming from!

3001 days ago



WUMPASTAR

Awesome post, and thank you for it! I totally agree. Even though I never comment on your articles I always read most of the comments and it's just so interesting :D

3001 days ago



DR1939

Very nice post.

3002 days ago



AUSFAM

I once heard someone say something to the effect of: "My grandfather lived through Hamburger Hill during the Vietnam War, but that doesn't mean it was safe." The statement was made to move the conversation out of the weeds and back to the big picture. While I do believe all sides of an issue need to be discussed and weighed into the equation, there needs to be a realistic balance between minute exceptions and the majority's experience.

In all honesty, I think both the naysayer and exception arguments are a symptom of forgetting or lacking critical thinking and listening skills. When listening to or reading other opinions one must always remember to look deeper than the obvious and listen to what the other person is stating, then digest and formulate an opinion.

Thank you for your thought provoking blogs!! :)

3002 days ago



TIGGERJEAN

I always cringe at non-SP article comments. The vitriol is toxic. It's so nice to have a positive online community with comments ranging from encouraging to constructive criticism.

3002 days ago





SOPHIEDO13

I have definitely have been eating healthier and I rarely eat fried food, fried food that is one kind of a stickler with me. But I do get concerned with all these rules and regulations that are coming about sure Trans fats were bad and we learn all these new developments all the time, I guess I just question a lot of our choices being taken away. I do think more time on the playground is needed, and more time given to each child to read would help the school system and the



children's weight. Thanks for the Blog.
3002 days ago



MISCHAKEO

That was an interesting and all too true blog. I tried to get our school food program to get rid of sugar cereals and chocolate milk. I was told that the carbs were good for you and that there was no waste as kids loved the sugar. I got nowhere.



I also like the civilized discussions here, where people are willing to learn and are genuinely seeking ways to stay healthy.



3002 days ago



CELIAMINER

Good article and interesting insight. I find I skip over the nasty comments (often starting with "your" in place of "you're," a grammatical transgression I can't excuse) and anything typed in all caps. Even after I weed those out, I tend to give more weight to comments that agree with my position. After all, I'm human.
3002 days ago



SLENDERELLA61

Brilliant blog!! I could not agree with you more. Keep those clever blogs coming so I can read the clever response, too!! -Marsha
3002 days ago



NELLJONES

It used to be that we listened to "old wives tales", "wisdom" passed down from people we knew, correct or not. With the advent of easy computer comments, we seem to listen to everyone with no filter. However, that same internet that gives us comments from everyone also gives us the easy ability to do our own research and make up our own minds.
3002 days ago



COCK-ROBIN

Great post!
3002 days ago



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