

Instagram removing likes won't fix its biggest problem | Vox

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I downloaded Instagram in 2012, in the spring before what would be the worst summer of my life and the best autumn I've ever had. I remember them both vividly, sulking home in July heat to an air mattress in a sweltering bedroom I shared to save money, convinced my boyfriend was about to dump me.

He did, but it was fine; we got back together a week later, and by September I was studying abroad, city-hopping around Europe with people who would become some of my closest friends.

On my Instagram feed, though, the summer and fall of 2012 are indistinguishable from one another, except for in some photos I am in Brooklyn and others I am in Prague. It is a cohesive, Amaro-filtered grid of Park Slope lattes and Czech beer cans and my smiling face, posing next to old friends and new, with nothing to suggest these two periods of my life felt any different from each other.

Instagram has a way of flattening lived experiences so that my best years look exactly like my bad ones, and that everything seems pretty good, all the time, for everyone. This, obviously, is not how life works for most people, and ever since Instagram has existed experts have debated what seeing an infinite scroll of other people's happy moments is doing to our brains.

[...]

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