

# HOW TO EXERCISE MEDIA LITERACY

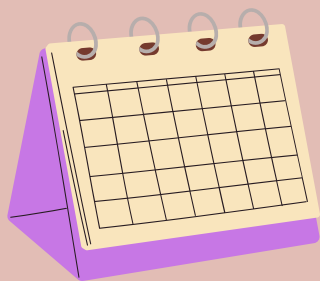
We've all been there: You see an outrageous headline and you begin to react before even clicking on the article. But once you take a closer look at the story, you notice that it was published several years ago or that the article is from a satirical or unreliable website.

In our fast-paced world, it's important to make sure we're getting our information and news from reliable sources.

## HERE ARE SOME QUICK QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU SHARE:

### WHO IS BEHIND THE STORY/VIDEO/IMAGE?

Who is behind the story/video/image? Every creator and outlet likely has their own point of view, so watch out for how their own experiences may impact how they communicate information or what claims they're making. (One thing you can do is research the website or author to get insight from trusted sources into whether they are considered credible.)



### WHEN WAS IT PUBLISHED?

If it was not published recently, are the claims being made still accurate? Are there more recent updates or new developments?

### WHY WAS IT CREATED?

What does it seem the author is trying to communicate? How are they attempting to impact the reader?



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## IS THE CLAIM CREDIBLE?

Is the information supported by evidence, either by the author or by an independent source? Does the creator or outlet have a reputable track record of reporting accurate information?



## IS THE AUTHOR OR OUTLET BIASED?

Does the piece of media consider opposing or differing viewpoints? Do they have an incentive (e.g., financial) to spread a certain claim? Is the news or media outlet owned by a major corporation that may have a vested interest in reporting news in a certain way?

## WHAT'S NEXT?

You can exercise media literacy in conversations with people in your community or congregation by asking these things about the media they are consuming and talking about. It is important that you and your neighbors ensure that you're not only learning from reliable sources, but also asking the right questions about the media that your community is engaging with. The consequences, like falling for a harmful propaganda campaign, can be damaging to spiritual and mental health, relationship-altering, and even life-threatening to some members of your community.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

To learn more about misinformation and disinformation and how you can talk to others about them, read more [here](#) and [here](#).

You can also learn more about how your congregation can have conversations across political differences by downloading Politically Divided Congregations: A Curriculum for Reconciliation and Transformation [here](#).