

Written by Allan Besselink
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[Water Flow](http://www.flickr.com/photos/33629628@N03/3271493595/)
 Social media is rapidly becoming a part of our daily [reality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reality). We now have many ways to share our world online ♦ our photos, our current thoughts and activities, and even our current geographical location. All in real-time.

We have access to data like never before. We also have the ability to share that data ♦ like never before. Lo and behold, we now have the ♦ [status update](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microblogging) ♦.

But this data can also come at you like a fire hose stream of water. It can feel like you ♦ are swimming upstream, against the current, in a fast-flowing river. It never stops. It flows past you while you stand there, up to your knees in it.

Sometimes you can dip your toes in it, then pull away from it. Other times, you ♦ are sucked into the oppressive flow of random thoughts, irreverent at times, irrelevant at times, utterly stupendous at others.

We now update our status ♦ regularly. But we ♦ are faced with the challenge of separating the signal from the noise. And there are definitely times when the noise rules the roost. Much like a bear, you bury your head in the stream, then grab a fish and pull it out. There. Got it. Now on to the next fish. In the meantime, the stream flows around you.

At times, you have to wonder - what value does this add to our existence? ♦ ♦

There are some hugely valuable streams of data that can expand our knowledge, our consciousness, our awareness. Your friends and followers can serve as a filter for material on the web. If a trusted source thinks the post or article is worth reading, then I suspect I will be more apt to read it. Yes, there is a tremendous value to swimming in this stream of social media.

But at times, even with my closest friends, the noise becomes deafening. Does *anyone* really need to know that you ♦ are cleaning the kitchen after making pancakes? Or that you discovered some mold on the week-old loaf of bread? Does any of it provide context to our world? Sometimes, one has to wonder.

What I find most interesting is that scurrying about with the goal of updating your status real-time can add a cognitive pause to the flow of a life experience. But it ♦ s hard to *be in the moment* of the experience when you ♦ are flying along in a stream of data, trying to share the experience. Or is it?

The social media stream can also be used to create a lifestream - a personal flow of social media to document your existence in the timeline that is your life. Images, video, conversations, feeds, status updates, and the like add a digital context to your time on the planet. It might even enhance and provide a framework for those ♦ analog ♦ memories and thoughts. And time is a wonderful measuring stick, benchmark, and road map. But in this instance, a lifestream has a *context* ♦ your life.

As [Stephen Covey](http://stephencovey.com/) notes in ♦ [First Things First](http://www.amazon.com/First-Things-Stephen-R-Covey/dp/0684858401%3FSubscriptionId%3D0JTCV5ZMHMF7ZYTXXGFR2%26tag%3Drhub-other-20%26linkCode%3Dxm2%26camp%3D2025%26creative%3D165953%26creativeASIN%3D0684858401) ♦, people have an inherent need ♦ to live, to love, to learn, and to leave a legacy ♦. Perhaps that is one of the greatest values of swimming in the social media stream. It helps us create a digital legacy of our lives ♦ time stamps and all. ♦

Now, let me jump back into the stream. I have updates to make.

Note: A great resource for lifestreaming can

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be found at [Lifestream Blog](http://lifestreamblog.com/).
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