

Social Networks, Creators of Stereotypes

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Social networks, nowadays, play an important role, particularly among young people. We live in a society that promotes specific ways of beauty, which become an example for many, who want to follow them to fit into today's world. In social networks, such as Instagram or Facebook, the pressure that is imposed through beauty stereotypes is hard. Several users upload photos looking like they have a perfect life. Women normalize thinness as the perfect body type, but that is a lie to most people. There is no doubt that young people, who use social media the most, have a serious problem getting carried away by what they see on the internet.

Everyone around us has a power in our thoughts. This power generates an influence on us, which can be positive or negative. This happens because we have a tendency to receive and follow what we see about people. As human beings, we frequently modify our way of thinking or acting due to what we observe in our environment. But many times, we just want to show ourselves in a different way than the real one, so that others have a good impression of us. In this way, we think that we are going to be accepted, and we are going to feel included in society. In fact, that's the sole purpose.

Therefore, social networks have many effects in this situation. The technological environment in which we live is constantly changing, and this has consequences in our daily lives. The way in which technologies grow and evolve is fascinating, but in the same way, it brings with it a series of changes in people and their mental health. According to a study carried out by the National Statistical Institute (INE) (2020) through a survey on Equipment and Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Households, more than 15.5 million households with members aged 16 to 74 years have internet access. Furthermore, 64.7% of that population has continuously participated in social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. The percentage for the year 2020 is 6.1 points higher than that of 2019. This means that the frequency of their use increased over time.

Obtaining so much information from social networks has repercussions. As technology increases, people are increasingly becoming empty with irrational thoughts, which we can even call naive. This is reflected in the fact of believing everything that is on social media, even when knowing the low probability of it being true. This is the case of body stereotypes, which are currently a significant pressure imposed by an ideology of what is most seen on the internet is "what is good". These stereotypes are so notorious that most feel compelled to follow. It is a stigma that society establishes to form our own identity. It is an identity based on fairy tales and illusions. This type of content just decreases one's self-esteem and becomes a trigger to build an identity based on the set of parameters required to be part of society.

For that reason, it is important to take into account what we see on these networks and try to convince ourselves about the misconception and the virtual world that social networks want to expose to us. If we are sure that we are special, even if we are not like those perfect girls, or if we do not have the ideal life, we will stop feeling frustrated by everything. We have to recognize our value and that we don't need the dark part of social media. That is just an obstacle that does not allow us to continue our common life in complete happiness. Therefore, it is necessary to find solutions to reduce this worrying situation and make a better system, free of insecurities and full of people with self-love.

