

Are you a social media narcissist - Generation ME?

 By [Mfundo Ntsibande](#)

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What would life be without social media platforms? It would feel like the dark ages. Social media is part of our everyday life, nothing can function without it.

It's a way of communicating with the world, keeping in touch with friends/family/colleagues, socialising, staying abreast of the latest news and current affairs, social commentary etc.

The Oscar Trial is forever trending and let's not forget Judge Thokozile Masipa's famous ruling not to tweet during the pathologist's trial. People tweeted jokes that 'she is living up to her name'..... lol.



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The downside to social networks

It is for these reasons that when social media was introduced to us we could only see the positives and benefits - harmless and fun the new cool way of communicating.

Marketers are forever studying consumer behaviour and it is for this reason that I started observing how people engage with social media. There is however a down side that nobody bothers to talk about besides creepy stalkers etc isThe birth of a social narcissist.

The definition of narcissist is a personality disorder in which people have an inflated sense of their own importance and a deep need for admiration.

Social networks have fed to this disorder - we used to pray before we eat our food now we Instagram it before we eat. You don't have to call someone and ask "How are you" just read their status update and you will pretty much know everything you need to know.

Selfies have become the new Vanity - 'The Devils favourite sin'. Showing people how great your life through pics has overtaken "Reality TV" - EVERYONE is a celebrity, just give them a smartphone.

My theory

Here is my personal theory about why we have different social networks and why they were created. I call this the: "Mfundoism Theory"

- Facebook - guys who couldn't approach girls in varsity came up with a dating site, you can be who you wish to be behind the screen and create an ideal personality, not necessarily real
- Twitter - Celebrities who were not news worthy or making headlines needed a platform to feed off their self importance to their fans, minute by minute updates about meaningless thoughts and events
- Instagram: A life told in pictures, the new Reality TV for everyday people, a chance to become a star in your own life, fake it till you make it

According to a study by Elliot Panek and Sarah Konrath lead researchers for a University of Michigan, here are some signs that you are a social media narcissist:

1. Selfie specialist: "I'm pretty and fun" research says you choose photos that might maximise the possibility of

gaining admiration

2. Obsessive checking: Not just checking but continually refreshing your FB/Twitter/Instagram 30-60 times a day
3. Over sharing: You update your status and post photos often, resulting in self promoting and superficial behaviour
4. Tweet, Tweet: You tweet every thought you have: you tweet what you doing everyday throughout the day and pride on retweets, mentions you get - You are called a "MEFORMER" as oppose to people who follow latest news, updates "INFORMER"
5. You like to tell everyone how amazing your life is - self promote and bragging about your life developments
6. Over friending: You have a lot of friends and followers many of whom you either don't speak to or know that well, even don't know; Research says users with a higher friend count are looking for an audience rather than friendship
7. Seeking support: Your social media profiles make you feel better about yourself. Going through your Instagram/FB profile to remind yourself how great your life is
8. Strike a pose: You enlist your boyfriend or close family to play photographer while you play model, staging your own photo shoots on a regular basis - increase self aggrandisement.

Serious negative effects of social media

According to research, just to name a few: Low self esteem, attention deficit, depression, addiction, obsessive compulsive disorder.

It is also said that narcissists become easily angered by critical comments or being ordered what to do. More often they tend to have a split personality and can be quite boring in real life.

Nonetheless, social media is here to stay and how we engage with it still remains our own responsibility. So before you post, think again what message you are really trying to send out there about yourself, does your target market really care?

Go on take a selfie - and let the world tell you how amazing you are, in case you forgot.... generation ME.

ABOUT MFUNDO NTSIBANDE

Mfundo Ntsibande is marketing professional with over 16 years career of building brands, with a maverick approach to brand thinking. A thought-leader with a background in media and broadcasting (TV, Radio, Print), Advertising and entrepreneurship. A winner of Promaxbda Gold Award.

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