

## Facebook "selfies" can harm relationships

18<sup>th</sup> August, 2013



A study from the U.K. indicates that people who post too many "selfies" (photos of themselves) on Facebook and similar social networks risk damaging their real-life relationships.

Wikipedia says a selfie is "a genre of self-portrait photograph...typically taken either with a camera held at arm's length or in a mirror." The report, from Birmingham University, analysed the impact of these photos on the relationships of 508 participants. The study found that excessive photo sharing and sharing certain types of photos makes almost everyone like you less. Head researcher Dr David Houghton said: "People, other than very close friends and relatives, don't seem to relate well to those who constantly share photos of themselves."

Wikipedia explains the rise in popularity of selfies. It says: "In December 2012, Time magazine noted that selfie was among its top 10 buzzwords of 2012." Celebrities such as singers Rihanna and Justin Bieber are famous for uploading hundreds of pics of themselves. Many people who post selfies will be surprised, perhaps shocked, by the Birmingham research. Wikipedia explains: "The appeal of selfies comes from...the control they give self-photographers over how they present themselves. Many selfies are intended to present a flattering image of the person, especially to friends whom the photographer expects to be supportive. The research may suggest the exact opposite is true."

Sources: *Daily Mail* / *Huffington Post* / *Wikipedia*

### Writing

*People who post too many photos of themselves online have a problem. Discuss.*

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*study / social networks / relationships / photograph / photo sharing / close friends / Wikipedia / popularity / buzzword / shocked / control / flattering / supportive / opposite*

### True / False

- An American study looked at the phenomena of selfies posted online. T / F
- A study says posting selfies on Facebook does no harm. T / F
- Researchers looked at the relationships of 508 people. T / F
- The study suggested close friends are OK with looking at selfies. T / F
- "Selfie" was Time magazine's word of the year in 2012. T / F
- The research won't surprise people who upload lots of selfies. T / F
- People like selfies because they can control how they look in the photo. T / F
- People think others will like the photos of themselves they upload. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. study       | a. attraction    |
| 2. risk        | b. too much      |
| 3. genre       | c. always        |
| 4. excessive   | d. meant         |
| 5. constantly  | e. jeopardize    |
| 6. rise        | f. report        |
| 7. appeal      | g. encouraging   |
| 8. intended    | h. complimentary |
| 9. flattering  | i. category      |
| 10. supportive | j. increase      |

### Discussion – Student A

- Do you think constant uploading of selfies could be a form of illness?
- What do you think of the word 'selfie'?
- Is it OK for celebrities to upload hundreds of selfies?
- Is it better to take a selfie or get a friend to take a photo of you?
- Do flattering selfies give a false image of a person?
- What would you like to say to some?
- Do you have a favourite photo of yourself?
- What questions would you like to ask the researcher?

## Phrase Match

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. risk damaging their             | a. held at arm's length       |
| 2. a genre of self-                | b. opposite is true           |
| 3. with a camera                   | c. share photos of themselves |
| 4. excessive                       | d. popularity of selfies      |
| 5. those who constantly            | e. photo sharing              |
| 6. the rise in                     | f. buzzwords of 2012          |
| 7. among its top 10                | g. real-life relationships    |
| 8. The appeal                      | h. image of the person        |
| 9. present a flattering            | i. portrait photograph        |
| 10. research may suggest the exact | j. of selfies                 |

## Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'photo'?
- What do you think about selfies?
- How often do you take selfies?
- Are selfies a good idea?
- Do you get fed up with looking at other people's selfies on Facebook?
- Is taking and uploading many selfies a sign of being vain?
- Do you think people could like other people less because of selfies?
- What's your favourite pose for a photo?

## Spelling

- a egner of self-portrait
- lpyctila taken either with a camera...
- the relationships of 508 isacriatptpn
- xecesisiv photo sharing
- close friends and sitreva
- those who nyslntaoc share photos
- the rise in lpiaurtpyo
- top 10 zwbzosudr of 2012
- the paplea of selfies
- present a aelgtfintr image of the person
- expects to be vppuesrtio
- the exact ieotspop

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. e	3. i	4. b	5. c
6. j	7. a	8. d	9. h	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – Selfie poster

You love taking photos of yourself and uploading them on Facebook. Tell the others three reasons why. You don't understand why people don't like selfies. You think the research in the article is totally untrue. You think everyone should upload hundreds of selfies.

### Role B – Researcher

You are worried about people who upload hundreds of selfies. Tell the others three reasons why. You think Facebook should limit the daily number of photos people can upload. You want to set up a help group for selfie posters. Ask the selfie poster to join to recover from his/her illness.

### Role C – Facebook owner

You love selfies. Tell the others three reasons why. You're happy if everyone uploads thousands of selfies a day. You think it's great people like themselves and want to share their photos. It makes the world a happier place. Tell the researcher that the exact opposite of the research is true.

### Role D – Ex-selfie poster

You used to post thousands of selfies. Now you regret it. Tell the others three reasons why. Warn the selfie poster he/she will lose many friends. Tell the Facebook owner he only wants more people to look at Facebook ads. Tell the researcher the help group is a great idea. Posting selfies is an illness.

## Speaking - Photos

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| • yourself | • your family |
| • flowers  | • people      |
| • sights   | • food        |
| • beaches  | • your hobby  |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.