

Lisa (16) is a quite popular girl in her class. She likes to post pictures of herself on social networks and wants to do something with media or kind of later in her life. Her pictures are retouched with apps provided by her smartphone. She tries to “pimp“ every picture to make herself look more and more beautiful each time. It became a real addiction by now to create an even more perfect picture showing herself to generate more and more “likes“ each time. Lisa has got a problem...

IMAGE PERCEPTION DISTORTION

Why do we retouch pictures showing ourselves?

Text by Markus Eichel

When looking at this problem we have to ask three other questions in advance:

- Do I know who I am or am I unsure about my self-perception?
- Do I have a developed a mature self-perception?
- How do I describe or define my “self“, my “identity“?

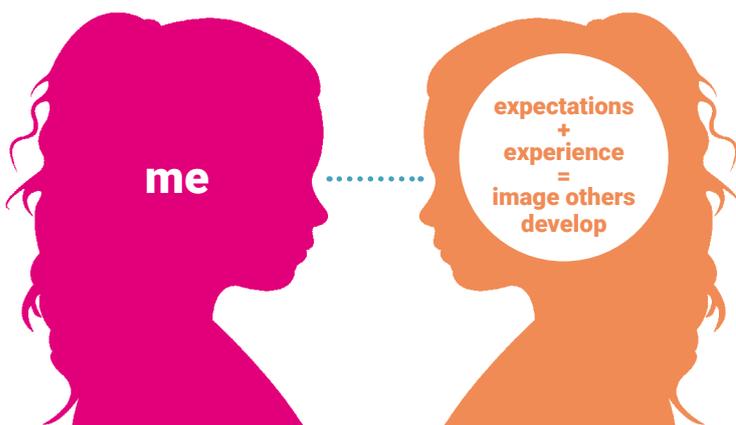
The perception of myself through others (alien image) is the sum of all perceptions, all emotions and all appraisals others have in mind looking at me. These perceptions are automatically connected to previous experiences others made with me. This picture in their mind shapes their expect-

tancy of me and also their social behaviour towards me and in a group.

Since we all just simply want to be respected and beloved :-) we hope to create the possibly best positive perception of ourselves by others and start to adjust our look and behaviour in the way, we think it should be.

Starting with parents and siblings we adapt later to the opinions of our friends in school and of course to the perception of our boyfriend or girlfriend about ourselves. But do we really know this picture of ourselves others have in mind and do we also know their real expectations towards us? Or do we only have a conception of this picture in our own mind? The caricature of the real picture?

I challenge you to make an experiment and ask others frankly and honestly about their picture of yourself and their expectations towards you. The rules of this game are, that others really answer your questions being deeply HONEST and WITHOUT JUDGING in an esteeming way. The question „How do you perceive me?“ comes not easily from our lips. When we ask this question (and it is answered really honestly and free of any judgement), we are often surprised, that this is so different from our expectations and the virtual image we created of ourselves.

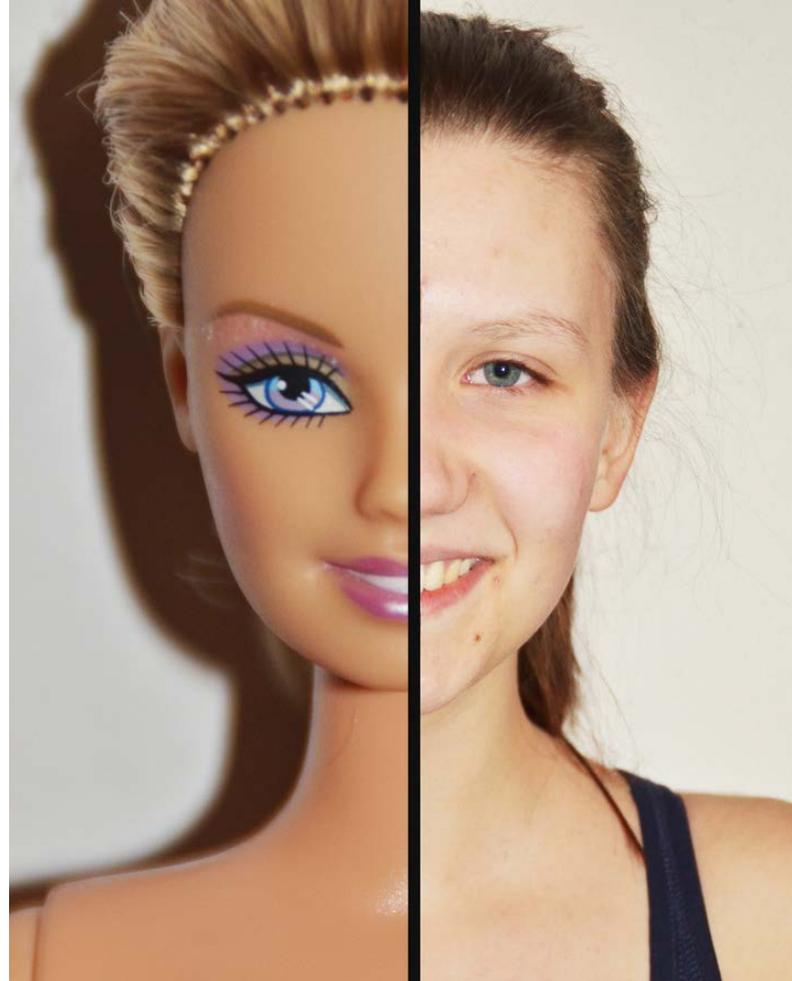


Positive and appreciative different images of ourselves strengthen our self-confidence and our self-esteem. „Likes“ on Facebook, Twitter and other social media really are not reliable and helpful feedbacks for our self-perception and our behaviour, they react just to an artificial snap-shot of our ideal. Which, of course, seldom is reached.

So my self-perception, my self-image, in contrast to an alien perception, is a conception CREATED only by myself. It is grounded on noticings and behaviours and is subject to fluctuations and alterations. I show this self-created image to others by the way I behave, by my communication and my appearance.

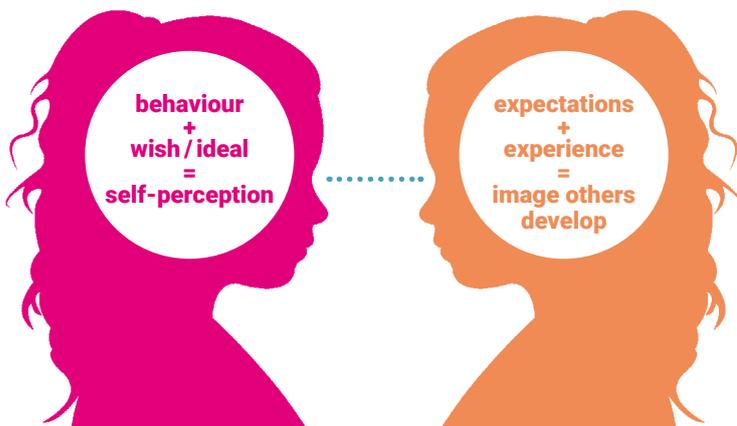
I scale this self-created personal image on my ideal, on the way I wish to be. Self-image and ideal are summarized in the self-concept. Generally each human strives for a stable, positive and coherent self-concept and is working steadily on it.

Pacifying is, that self-image and alien-image are always different and also must be so. Both viewpoints and the resulting differential – leading to the conclusions both sides draw out of it – develop the social intercourse among each other driven by the own self-concept of the participants.

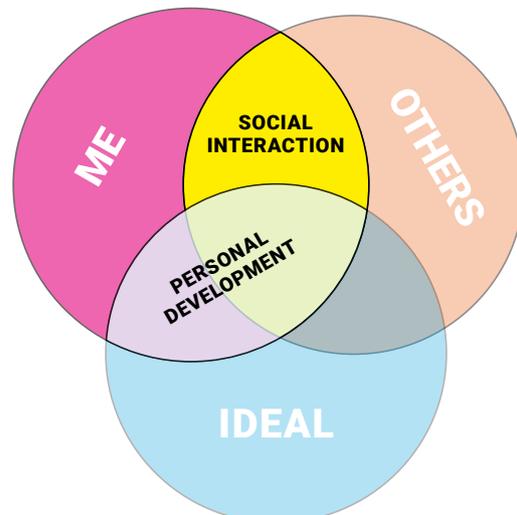


The own identity although is the totality of peculiarities and features characterising a person, making this person unique, distinguishable from others and precious.

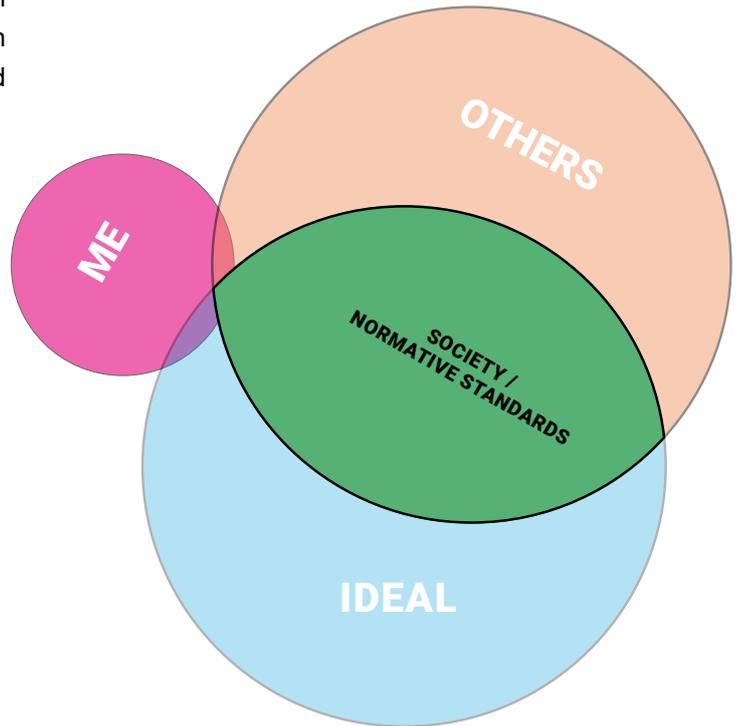
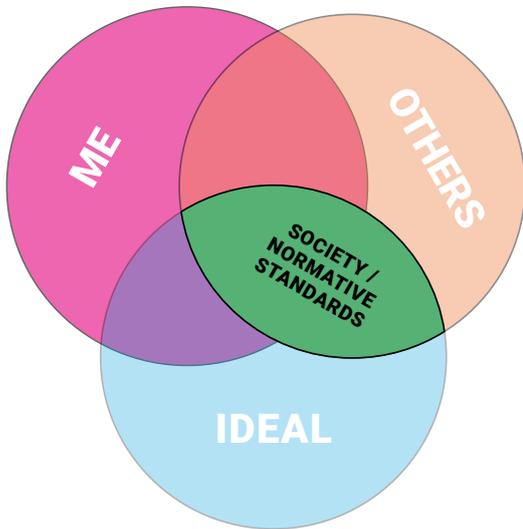
The clearer and more differentiated I develop my self-image and the more it is conforming with various other alien images, the better I can perceive the difference towards my ideal image. This enables me to derive personal, positive and sound developments for my Identity and to seek improvement in my being.



self perception – alien image



A distorted personal self-image can result from an unnaturally altered ideal in society in interaction with a not yet maturely developed self-image and self-concept.



Donatella Versace

Michael Jackson

Advertising and social media with their artificial and escapist images can compromise a sound self reflection. The creation of my own identity is a steady process taking place every day in interaction with other people and dealing with my ideals. When in this process, my own personal development and social interaction does not any longer correlate with distorted and just mistakenly as normal perceived social standards with their false “likes”, my sound self-confidence and social behaviour will get out of balance very fast as well.



To develop our self-confidence, our self-image and our identity, we now can play a game called "What would be, if ..."

What would be, if I do not longer need any likes from social networks for my self-esteem...

What would be, if I always get honest answers to my questions about myself...

What would be, if I love and appreciate myself just the way I am...

What would be, if not only my look and appearance is perceived by others but also all my other great skills, qualities and characteristics...

What would be, if my ideal is identical with my self-perception and the way others see me, and what do I need to achieve this...

What would be, if I were the last human on earth and what would I do...

This is just an example of the way the game can go. Of course you can continue the game with a positive "Yes, and..." instead of a negative "Yes, but...".

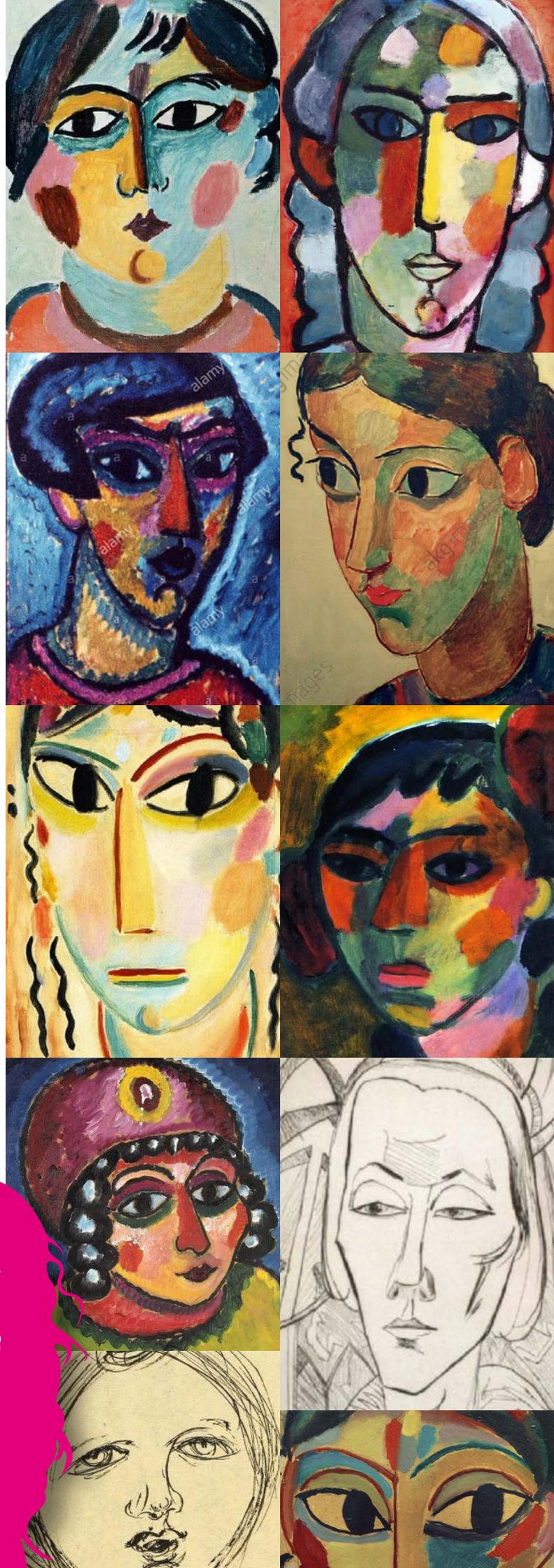
Yes, and why do you still think these "likes" are real?

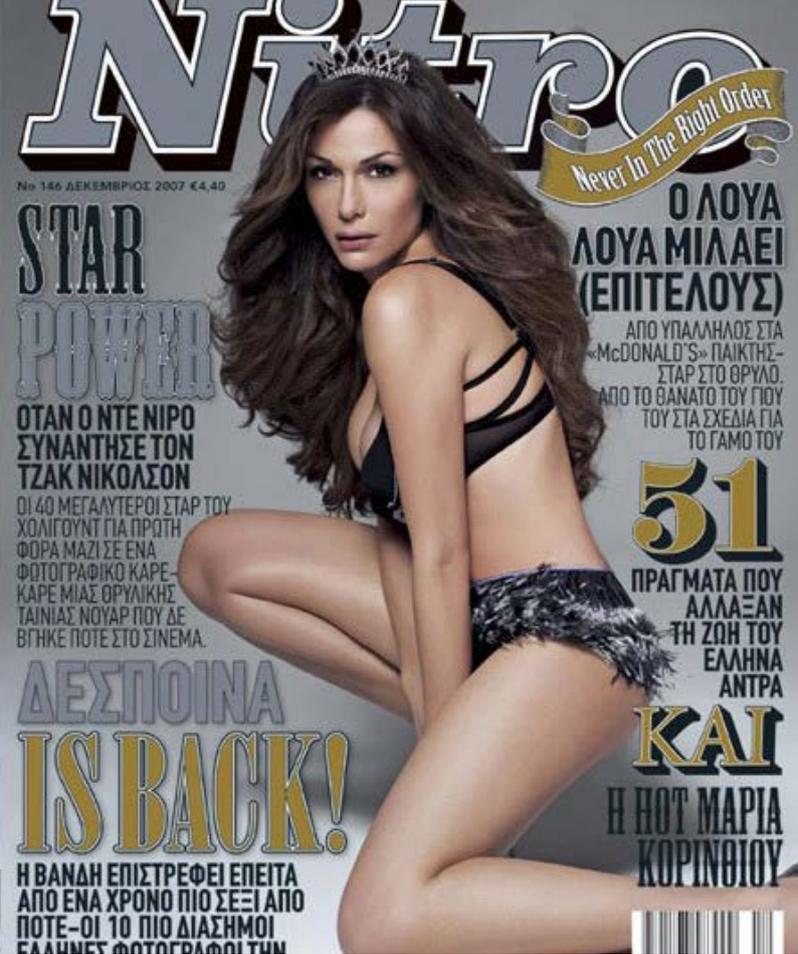
Yes, and could you really stand a honest answer?

Yes, and what hinders you to just like yourself the way you are?

Yes, and show us for once how you like to be and what you like to do...

...





The beautiful shine alters the way we look at things until we cannot longer differenciate fake from reality.

Have fun to discover mistakes, which happened by empty-headed picture manipulation :)

