

Why do we take selfies?

1. Discuss the questions below.

- What is a selfie?
- How often do you take selfies? Why do you do that?
- How might people perceive someone who is known for posting a lot of selfies?

2. Complete the sentences below with the correct form of the words in brackets.

- The employee of the month awards are intended to be incentives for performance **enhancement**. [ENHANCE]
- He has the **confidence** to walk into a room full of strangers and immediately start a conversation. [CONFIDENT]
- A minor **modification** to the aircraft's door has been made to increase its durability. [MODIFY]
- Strict **conformity** to harsh social norms was demanded of everyone, regardless of status or wealth. [CONFORM]
- The Johnsons were faced with fierce **competition** and that's why they went bankrupt after a few years. [COMPETE]

3. Look at a list of motivations for taking selfies and complete the gaps with the words you wrote in ex. 2.

- **Attention seeking**
Example: taking selfies to gain attention from others.
- **Self-confidence**
Example: taking selfies to feel more positive about oneself.
- **Environmental enhancement**
Example: taking selfies in specific locations to feel good and show off to others.
- **Social competition**
Example: taking selfies to get more 'likes' on social media.
- **Mood modification**
Example: taking selfies to feel better.
- **Subjective conformity**
Example: taking selfies to fit in with one's social group and peers.

Adapted from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/in-excess/201905/the-psychology-the-selfie>



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4. Discuss which aspects from the list above you think mostly motivate people to take selfies. What would you add to that list?

5. Watch a [short video](http://bit.ly/SelfieInNYC) [http://bit.ly/SelfieInNYC] and find out what motivates people to take selfies.
 - a) to have proof that something important has happened
 - b) to post on social media and get likes
 - c) to gain popularity on social media and compete with others
 - d) to create their personal brand and market themselves
 - e) to build an online reputation and show how interesting or cool they are

6. Look at the sentences from the video and match the underlined words and phrases with their meanings (1–6) below.
 - a) With people falling off the Grand Canyon and being struck by trains, it begs the question just how far people are willing to go for their personal brands. 5
 - b) Essentially, you want to up the ante, so you take more and more amazing photos in more and more risky places because those draw views. 3
 - c) With social media and stuff, people are sort of always trying to one-up each other. 6
 - d) Once you build this up over months, weeks, years, all these pictures of you doing a certain thing, then all of a sudden, it's like: "Oh, I can maybe market this". 2
 - e) Anything that I love, I consider my brand and I just showcase it. 1
 - f) It's the norm now to pop a picture of wherever you're at mostly with your face in it. 4

MEANINGS:

- 1) show the best qualities or parts of something
- 2) advertise or promote (something)
- 3) try to get a greater advantage from a situation by taking a bigger risk
- 4) take a photo
- 5) raise a point that has not been dealt with; invite an obvious question
- 6) outdo somebody

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7. Discuss the questions below.

- Have you heard of any selfie-related accidents which turned deadly or in which people were seriously injured?
- What do you think about the idea of branding oneself through posting selfies?
- Do you know any people who post a lot of selfies and photos on social media and make a living from it?

8. Look at the words below and their definitions. Have you heard or used any of them?

PHOTOBOMB

to spoil a photograph (of a person or thing) by unexpectedly appearing in the camera's field of view as the picture is taken

SELFIECIDE

an accidental death that has been caused whilst trying to take a dangerous selfie

UG

a short word to call something ugly

SHUTTERBUG

an avid photographer; derived from "shutter," the camera's light-admitting mechanism

#NOFILTER

describes a photo that hasn't been photoshopped or tampered with in any way to supposedly look as it does

INSTAGRAM HUSBAND

a person who helps a partner manage their Instagram social media channel, especially by taking photos