

Cause and effect of the obsession of physical appearance essay sample

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What is beautiful? In today's society there are many different ways in which we encounter expectations of what beautiful should be. Right now there are millions of people who look at themselves in the mirror and wish there was something that they could change about their physical appearance. It's no help that wherever we turn there is a picture of a perfect woman, or man with perfect skin, perfect teeth, perfect hair, and a perfect weight. Even when we watch our favorite TV shows, and commercials we are looking at an actor, or actress who has a makeup artist to enhance their look before going on camera.

When we see the media constantly portray beauty in a certain way we begin to believe we need to look a certain way, or even begin to obsess over it. Obsessing over physical appearance can cause people to take it to the extreme by undergoing plastic surgery to drastically change their physical appearance, or even put their own physical health in danger by developing eating disorders. Others become severely depressed, and have a low self-esteem because of what they look like. People tend to become fixated on their appearance, and it can turn into a full-blown obsession.

Some people take the obsession of physical appearance to the extreme by spending thousands of dollars on plastic surgery to drastically change their look. There has been instances where people have spent over fifty thousand dollars to look like celebrities. Recently a woman spent that amount to be transformed into Kim Kardashian, and a man spent the same to look like Justin Bieber. Plastic surgery is undeniably expensive, and takes weeks maybe even months of recovery. There are people who are willing to spend their life savings, and suffer any consequences of a possible surgery gone
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wrong just to change their appearance. “ In the body’s extremities, irregular fat distribution or excessive skin secondary to the loss of fat in the arms or thighs can be treated by surgically removing it” (USA Today, 1994, p. 62). Current technology provides the ability to perform plastic surgery’s such as liposuction, or face lifts which can be customized to alter the physical appearance of a certain individual. No matter if a person wants to be skinnier, or prettier, or both plastic surgery is available worldwide to help make it happen.

In some cases people become so preoccupied with weight and food intake that they develop extreme eating disorders such as bulimia, and anorexia. Bulimia is a condition where people force themselves to regurgitate disposing of any food that has been consumed. Anorexia is a severe disorder where people become obsessive over their food intake, and eat as little as possible. Both of these disorders can potentially become life-threatening, because the people that have these disorders are not concerned with their physical health as much as they are concerned with becoming skinnier. These conditions affect many people who care way more about their body image than their physical health, and it is an unfortunate circumstance. Becoming obsessed with physical appearance can even effect a person’s mental health. There are people that become so fixated on hating how they look that they sink into a deep depression.

Those of us who are not depressed about our appearance would certainly love to change something about ourselves, but we express acceptance by being able to function in day to day life without our imperfections controlling

us. Individuals who suffer from severe emotional distress because of their appearance can become prone to Body Dysmorphic Disorder. Better known as BDD, “ Body dysmorphic disorder is characterized by a preoccupation with an imagined or slight defect in appearance that causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning” (Didie, Howes, Loerke, & Phillips, 2012 p. 345). These are individuals that look in the mirror and see something completely different than what other’s perceive them to be. They might actually be a size five, but see a size ten when they look at themselves, and this perception of themselves controls their lives entirely.

In turn, they become very unhappy with themselves containing a low self-esteem unable to accept themselves as they are. Whether or not people get plastic surgery, develop eating disorders, or become severely depressed over their physical appearance it is evident that these things happen because of an obsession with body image. Sadly, many people have such a disapproving opinion of their own body image causing them to go to extremes, or acquire different forms of depression. I believe people that go through these confictions with themselves are afraid of being judged, and therefore judge themselves. In my opinion it is important to remember that everyone is different by trying not to focus so much on what we look like, but that everyone is beautiful in their own way. Hopefully one day people will stop judging their appearances, and concentrate on what really matters by seeing their inner beauty, and letting it shine.

References

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