
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN MODERN TIMES OF THE CONCEPT “LOOKING GLASS SELF (1902)” BY CHARLES HORTON COOLEY

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ABSTRACT

Influence of other's assessments on individuals in society and their reaction is an amusing topic, given Cooley's Looking Glass Self concept concerning this, simultaneously being the subject of this critical analysis. The fact manifesting an opinion that an individual's true self changes due to other perceptions is often subjected to various critical considerations, creating the impression that in reality the concept is infeasible. The purpose is determining the “hole” in the third component, proving that the true self is occasionally susceptible to constant change, depending on other's perceptions and the individual himself. Regarding the methodology, several methods were used to prove the critical attitude towards this topic. Applications of comparative analysis, descriptive and historical methods are present. Our result is concluding the individual develops a certain attitude influenced by different experiences, being crucial to whether he will be ready to change his true self or not.

Key words: perception, society, true self, ideal self, change

INTRODUCTION

Looking glass self is the idea that *“our self-concepts are formed as reflections of the responses and evaluations of others in our environment”* (Gecas and Schwalbe, 1983, p. 77)

An individual is often trying to find his place in the world, and to do so, he must first get to know himself with his personality. But not always the individual finds it or if he does, he changes it under the influence of the people in his immediate surroundings. Although Cooley with his concept Looking Glass Self considers this, exceptions are possible. Namely, if a proper analysis is made specifically of the third component of the concept, and if the implementation of this concept is related to the concepts of socialization and the virtual self, the difference can be seen. Individuals who are part of a particular society, react and behave

in different ways depending on how they are perceived. While with the emergence of the virtual world many things have changed for individuals, such as options that haven't been previously. And precisely because of the emergence of the virtual world, the way in which individuals are represented is quite different, as it further emphasizes the "need" to be someone who the individuals aren't at the cost of losing the sense of self. Also under the topic of discussion will be the active role that the individual plays when creating other's perceptions about him and whether he is going to step back from his intended role in the public society and in which cases he would do so. Things that may have happened to individuals for a long time, under certain changes in behavior and perception, change very easily and lead to completely different situations, also making a turn in the minds and lives of individuals in a certain society.

THE CONCEPT OF LOOKING GLASS SELF BY CHARLES COOLEY

Looking Glass Self is a sociological-psychological concept presented by Charles Cooley in 1902. It describes the development of one's self and the identity of an individual through his interpersonal interactions in society. There are three main components that make up the theory of Looking Glass Self:

1. We imagine how we must appear before others;
2. We imagine and react to what we feel about the judgments about our appearance;
3. We develop our self through the judgmental of others;

Using verbal and non-verbal responses of others, the individual imagines a mosaic picture of himself and his response to the world. In short, the notion which the individual learns about the essence of his identity in the reflections of the eyes of others and in the echo of others' voices is suddenly provocative. Moreover, Cooley's idea is taken to the next logical level-the individual tends to become the person that others say is. Cooley goes beyond the basic definition of Looking Glass Self and contrast the basic idea that other people have the greatest impact on individual's self-concept. He focuses on *"the active participation of the individuals in forming his/her self-concept and the self processes in motivating behavior and social interaction"* (Reitzes, 1980, p.631)

It is possible to explain three aspects of Cooley's concept of Looking Glass Self

1. The individual's active role in the interpretation of the perceived responses to others.
2. The selective application of the individual on Looking Glass Self
3. Using the Looking Glass Self for the individual to control and manipulate the responses and estimates of others

Cooley's Looking Glass Self appears more realistic than the overly socialized view of the previously given Looking Glass Self. Showing that individuals have an active role which they must play and perceive how they are viewed by others. In Reitzes' critique about Looking Glass Self by Cooley, he seems to emphasize the relevancy of Cooley's *"active organization and interpretation of the perceived responses"* and discusses about how Cooley pays no attention to *"this one-way internalization of the perception of others"* (Reitzes, 1980, p.634) to which other textbooks are focused.

I connect Cooley's concept with the notion about the ideal self and real self. The real self is viewed as "*an individual's perception of how he/she actually is and the ideal self is that perception of how he/she would like to be*" (Dolich, 1969, p.80).

It's assumed that this concept is related to the true self by the individual's ability to internalize someone's perceptions and take them in his character, as part of the real self. However, an ideal self as a psychological concept that is associated with narcissism or low self-esteem. If one person has one of these characteristics, he is likely to change his true self, influenced by responses and perceptions of others. While this supports the accuracy of the third aspect of Cooley's concept, it doesn't prove that a narcissistic person or a person with low self-confidence would try to change the true self. An individual who is a narcissist ignores the estimates of other people because he has a twisted self-concept that makes him believe he is better than others by being "perfect". An individual with low self-esteem could try to change himself eventually, based on his idea, not according to other's estimates. Other individuals endeavor to remain as they are, although they deeply desire the ability to change their self-concept. Moreover, if the individual decides to change his true self, the influence he receives depends on the group formed in his environment. In other words, Cooley didn't consider that people equally influence the individual, and he selects groups based on different characteristics- a group of friends, social clubs, persons similar to his ideal self.

The ideal self is an idea in which "*the individual is constantly trying to improve his own self-concept*" (Landon, 1974, p.46)

With this, the individual imagines how he wants to be perceived and strives to achieve the ideal self and make others realize that they've accomplished this, almost as a way to prove that he's really the person others think he is. Therefore, the ideal self is related to the third aspect of Cooley's Looking Glass Self concept-controlling and manipulating responses of others by an individual to avoid hearing estimates of his true self and instead hear how people would evaluate his ideal self.

A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE THIRD COMPONENT OF COOLEY'S CONCEPT

As previously mentioned, the third component is incomplete in terms of claiming that everyone should change their true self because for each individual there are certain evaluations and judgments about his character and appearance.

Namely, the third component reads: "*We develop our own self through the condemnation of others*" (Cooley, 1922)

From this, people tend to become individuals who others say they are. However, the question of whether the already developed self-concept of an individual will change or not, under the influence of others' judgments, conflicts with Karl Rogers's self-concept components, which read:

1. The view we have for ourselves (self-image)
2. What value you have for yourself (self-confidence)
3. How would you really want to be (ideal self) (Rogers,C.R, 1959)

The question is whether people will always want to change their true self depending on other people's estimates based on the significance for the individual and how much he devotes to them. But in this case the emphasis is put on the perceptions of others, but not of those the

individual has for himself. Rogers' components play a major role in the individual's attitude and subsequent decisions which are related to the thinking of Cooley's third concept.

SELF-IMAGE

The self-image allows the individual to create a mental image of his true self, including characteristics and appearance. Every person has different standards he must fulfill to consider himself sufficient. Some standards are lower while others are higher. Those with lower standards tend to be satisfied with themselves due to the easily achievable conditions. Those with higher standards aren't satisfied easily because of the highly set criteria that no one else has set apart from themselves, and are inspired by their idol or imagination of how they should look and behave. This represents a duality of ourselves, similar to the ideal self, where the individual is satisfied with the mental image of himself that is real, and the image that is like him, created by his own beliefs, not inspired by anyone, but different in the better sense of the word he is trying to fulfill because he thinks it's right. The individual wants to be himself, as a unique person but also something that he currently isn't. He wants to remain faithful to himself by not making a copy of someone else but even his own created expectations cannot be fulfilled. The person is often disappointed because he thought it was easy to be himself and not someone else. Individuals who have high criteria about their true self, are often perfectionists and want everything to be according to their expectations, although impossible in real life from many aspects such as financial, family, career, etc. If they only dedicate to the true self, the failure to fulfill the high criteria will cause stress and the choice of different means to achieve what he wants. If he is satisfied by his self-image, change isn't necessary, unless when his self-esteem is shaken by a strange occurrence in his surroundings which he considers to be better or if he will eventually face identity crisis. Satisfaction of one's self-image is when he mentally believes his criteria are fulfilled, whether high or low. The individual thinks he matches the role given by society, has self-esteem and believes change isn't necessary. But, if his self-esteem is shattered, a tendency to change the true self appears, which until then, he was satisfied with. If a person appears in the individual's surrounding, seeming better than him, he automatically adds new criteria in his mind to reconcile and re-accept himself again. Also, his mental tranquility is disturbed as he tries to regain the peace and pleasure he had when his self-image was acceptable to him, or if appears a person that has built an attachment to him and has different thoughts about him that differ from his true self, the individual will try to fulfill those sightings. This expectation relation can be described as one theatrical performance. Namely, the person is an actor who should convey the characteristics, behavior, thoughts and external appearance of a certain fictitious character. In this case, the character is fictitious because in real life he doesn't exist, but is a character that is just a creation from other perceptions and judgments that has its own appearance and behavior. The audience, which in real life represents the immediate environment of the individual, observes the theater performance and will expect their superior person to accomplish everything they believe is true for him. The actor must suppress his true self to portray a person whom others want to see, proving the people right. For example, if the audience imagines the character to be innocent, obedient, quiet, they expect the actor to act him out to be assured in their beliefs and get some sort of a confirmation of their "exact" idea. As long as the actor presents himself in front of others, everything is fine and there are no rebellions. But if the actor behaves as his true self, contrary to the imaginary character, there is already confusion, discontent and disappointment among the audience. Almost as if they were paying tickets for a theater performance that they wouldn't like because of the actors' bad performance.

SELF ESTEEM

The individual's self-esteem plays a major role in the hole in Cooley's concept due the relation with self-image. From the level of self-confidence it depends how, psychologically, an individual remains faithful to his true self. The worst situation is when the individual loses his self-esteem along with his real self. Low self-esteem occurs when the individual is insecure about himself, what he wants and expects to fulfill. An individual tries to re-examine himself, his actions, characteristics, appearance. With this questioning, a person concludes that he possesses only negative features, which is far from reality. The character profile of a person is a mixture of both positive and negative characteristics. But the perception of a person with low self-esteem is imprecise because he is so obsessed with the negative features that he doesn't notice or neglects the positive features. Positive features are the key to self-confidence. A person with low self-esteem thinks other people only see his negative characteristics and he is perceived as not good enough for society and combined with the assessment of others that will be different from our true self, will represent a completely sufficient reason for creating another self under the influence of other people's perceptions and thus becoming a person whom others want to see. Considering that only people with positive traits are accepted in society, the person concludes that he doesn't belong in that society, due to not fulfilling a certain criteria. Not wanting to remain alone, but be accepted by others, he is motivated enough to change his true self according to other's criteria to become a new person who behaves differently from his true self, but still in the subconscious may remain a faded picture of what he was before, and this may be an interest or style. High self-confidence occurs when a person is confident in himself, and has the impression that he fulfills what he expected from himself and the need to question his self isn't necessary. The person also realizes he possesses positive characteristics, which isn't always true. The perception of a person with high self-esteem is capable of seeing only the positive characteristics and neglecting the negative because they are not judgmental or think they are gone. If a person has high self-esteem, he imagines that others perceive him as a person with positive characteristics, looks and is therefore desirable in society. This is probably backed up by other people's estimates that match his true self. Because of this, there is no need to become the person that other people want to see because the person already represents it and fulfills all the assessments of members in his surroundings.

IDEAL SELF

A person's ideal self depends on people in his surroundings and their overall appearances who appear before us, including their physical appearance, character, achievements. It results with changing a person's true self if he takes into account his perception of other people in the immediate surroundings. If an individual thinks that a particular person is better than him in any way, he automatically creates an ideal self in order to add the feature that someone else has. Also, these people often have the greatest influence on changing a person's the true self. Thus, Cooley's opinion is disputed that all people have an equal influence on the person's determination to change their true self according to their assessments and responses. People who don't seem as his ideal self cannot easily influence their estimates for us are not an important factor in his psyche. According to the third concept, the behaviors that the individual applies to others and the judgments he receives from others should coincide, emphasizing that the individual should represent a certain immutable monotonous character with clearly defined characteristics that will apply equally to everyone in his immediate surroundings. Only then will the individual change his true self to fulfill other people's visions about him, since it is a self that everyone sees the same way. But if everyone has a different perception of the individual, he cannot become a person who will fulfill everyone's

perceptions, because it's impossible to have various kinds of realistic selves. Often, parents, friends, siblings, superior and enemies perceive the individual by their own experience. It's almost impossible for everyone to have exactly the same opinion about someone, but why is that so? Because a great role is played by the behavior of an individual that varies depending with whom he is communicating with. For example, the individual will doesn't behave the same in front of his parents and in front of his friends, i.e. if the individual doesn't have good grades, the teacher can perceive him as uninterested about school, without high goals for his future, and friends can perceive the individual as relaxed and disposed, due to the meaning of behavior. There are cases where the meaning of the individual's behavior before different people is the same. For example, an individual treats his parents with respect and gratitude that results in a good assessment. Then, if the individual acts with fidelity and solidarity with his friends, it will also result in a good impression. When it comes to certain individuals, there are differences in their sense of behavior depending on the relationship they have with people in the place where the events take place. So, in one environment he can have a positive sense, and in another environment a negative sense of behavior. This doesn't depend only on the individual, but also on the relationship others have toward him. And depending on the attitude stimulated by the attitude of behavior, there are various answers manifested in the individual's actions.

SOCIALIZATION AND THE LOOKING GLASS SELF

"Socialization is the process by which we learn the meanings and responsibilities associated with certain social roles through our interaction with others" (Campbell, 2013).

Identity, different attitudes and self-concept of the individual are shaped through socialization. Before birth, the individual is given social roles expected for him to fulfill, depended on gender class, etc. Although beliefs and attitudes developed by the individual seem individual to themselves, their self-concept is in fact *"maintained and enhanced by positive response from significant others"* (Grubb & Stern, 1971, p.31) through social interactions. Through constant exposure to the process of socialization, people are increasingly aware of how they are viewed by others. In basic terms, looking at ourselves in a mirror is the idea that we are seeing ourselves through someone else's eyes.

For example, when a girl is trying on a dress, she instantly thinks: How are others looking at me in this dress, irrelevant of her awareness. By itself, this concept is *"a passive and conformist view of human beings, one which emphasizes an external source as the locus of content or substance upon which we construct our self-concepts"* (Gecas and Schwalbe, 1983, p.77).

Many accounts of Cooley's concept are viewing the individual as he internalizes the perceptions he believes others have for him and starting to take on that social role associated with them.

"Thus, many accounts note the importance of interpreting these perceived responses as failure to do so can result in false self-images" (Kyriacou, 2012, p.56).

Other accounts look at the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy. It is to remember that self-fulfillment of prophecies works not only *"because of the belief of another, but also because one accepts a false definition of oneself from which real consequences emerge"* (Reitzes, 1980, p. 634)

Another very important factor regarding socialization and Cooley's concept are the rules that society places on people. Throughout history, the expectations and rules set by society have been quite diverse and have undergone dramatic development. In every period, society set rules that people were expected to blindly follow in order to be accepted by others, even if they had to completely change or deftly hid their true self. But why do people do this? By his nature, man has not been created to achieve everything alone, but with the help and cooperation of others in his surroundings. Namely, in the Stone Age people lived and moved in groups called hordes. They thus felt more secure for survival and defense against animal attacks. This proves that in the prehistory, when circumstances were different from today, it was still necessary for a man to be in communion with others in order to survive.

Even Aristotle himself once said, "*The man who is content to live alone is either a beast or a god*" (quotation)

But modern society is very different from the Stone Age and Ancient period, changing relationships between people. Today man keeps himself in touch with the rest, not meaning to spend his entire time alone. Society used this to set rules by which everyone in the community should behave the same. However, the problem lies in the impossibility for all people to behave so because they don't represent the same person society expects. Society sets rules of behavior so people cannot become distinguished between themselves, which would mean chaos in the middle, without harmony. Everyone is unique in terms of thoughts, interests, goals, style, based on the experiences of the man who gained them during his period when he still sought out his self through various experiments. However, society will require people to behave in a certain way and is often emphasized on the youth who are the most vulnerable and easily manipulated. More mature and older people are considered to have grown in a different environment where society, back then, has set other rules of behavior and therefore there is contradiction in their opinions and behaviors. When it comes to youths, it is a broad term that covers more things and, to be more specific, youths are included here in the Adolescence period.

Adolescence (from lat. *adolescere* which means "to grow") is an intermediate phase of physical and psychological development that usually occurs during the period of puberty to adulthood. Tied to teenage years, this is a period where they seek their true self. This represents the brain functions in these years. Namely, the human brain is not fully developed until the time a person reaches puberty. Between ages 10-25, the brain undergoes changes that have significant implications for behavior. And due to psychological immaturity, identity development means trying out different behaviors and appearances in order to discover who they really are. They change many different identities until they find the identity that suits them best. This difficult process has another problem-not compliance of the true self with society's expectations, where individuals are in a dilemma whether to follow their self or adapt to social rules. In this situation, a high level of self-control and self-awareness is needed. Often young people decide to change the true self they have found, or skillfully hide it from society. Why take such a decision?

Usually when an adolescent finds its true identity, it indicates that he recognizes things that make him happy although in his subconscious know he isn't truly happy if lonely. So he's manipulated by thinking he'll find happiness in other people, or at least thinking so. But how will he achieve all this if he isn't accepted by others? For him the answer is no, and only because of the fact that he'll no longer try to find happiness in himself. The happiness that individuals find within themselves is the true value that can always tell them what makes them happy, not others. So they must blend with the others in order to find "true happiness" according to them. They have two options in this situation: either completely change their

true self, or skillfully hide it from the rest. This comes as an option to put a new face or wear a face mask. Putting on a new face means giving up from views and behavior we've had before and adjust and develop views and behavior that other people have. Then we have a feeling that we are faithful to society's followers and have not failed them. Sometimes the individual can only start wearing a mask in order to fool others, but over time that mask will eventually become his true face because he is still stuck in the process of searching his true self in an unconscious way. Why is that so? Although he thought he found his real identity, he also has to protect it from society. However, because he's forced to not always behave as his real self, he subconsciously represses that identity and gets use to his false identity. Getting used to hid false identity, he starts to think that it's actually his real self that he's been searching for and besides, he would no longer have to pretend to be "normal" in front of others. We should always be careful when we select our false mask i.e. the mask that we present in public because we can lose our true self with the mask melting and becoming our new face. Judgments are viewed by insecure individuals as punishment for their decisions. They have to face the consequences of their actions- opposition to social rules that other people apply, similar to committing a crime. Furthermore, the creation of self-concept is the mental image we have for ourselves. In adolescent years, cognitive developments result in greater awareness on other people's views and judgments. But when we see that we have a relationship with the Looking glass self, the most important feature is the awareness of other people's opinions and judgments because this contributes to become a person that is created by the rest. Again drew with the previously expressed view, adolescents in this period conceptualize more "possible selves" they could become. Researches linked with these possibilities result in sudden changes in self-representation as the adolescent accepts or rejects behaviors and qualities, trying to steer their real self toward their ideal self and away from their feared self, i.e. the self they would not want to be. And here lies the problem- to direct their real self on the wrong way. Although the individual can make a difference between the ideal self from the feared self, still he can be lead to deception, i.e. the feared self becoming our real self because it is accepted by society and we see that everyone around us is acting the same way. If the idea of being accepted has any meaning to us, we'll try to make a deeper analysis of this feared self and present it before the public as our real self to avoid judgment and criticism. While we're doing this, we might stop to ask ourselves why and do we really are afraid of our feared self. If we stop being afraid and gradually realize that there is nothing wrong with this identity, we will be ready to accept it as our true self. Therefore, our self-concept will be changed and we will perceive that change in a way by which we are satisfied of the image about ourselves. Thus, our former idea about the ideal self will disappear and the feared self becomes our ideal self, which we have eventually achieved.

THE VIRTUAL SELF AND LOOKING GLASS SELF

We mind that Cooley developed his concept in 1902, a time where people were still active in their performance but only in the real world. In modern days, the self represented in reality is also presented in the virtual world where Cooley's concept should support the function of the new self available in the virtual world, as a new phenomenon that the criticism of this concept should consider. In the early twentieth century, individuals shaped other people's perceptions through consuming symbols and the arrogations that hold them. Individuals are aware about how they are perceived in other people's eyes and the self-representation, using a technique called managing impressions, all in order to be perceived how they want. In most basic scenarios, this so called technique of managing impressions is often used in the process of interviewing, as a way for the interviewed person to ensure that he will make the desired impression by wearing the appropriate outfit, shaking the interviewer's hand, saying things

people actually want to hear. But now people yearn toward achieving their ideal self by reflecting it in the virtual world. Virtual self refers to the *“person connected to the world and to others through electronic means, such as the internet, television and cell phones. It is a sense of being and is a particular way of experiencing and interacting with the world”* (Agger, 2004, p.9)

Even online, people are aware about their self-presentation. A typical example is when people reevaluate themselves before posting something on social media, because they consider it as a relevant factor which determines their character in the real world. But there is no need to change our real self when the virtual world exists. If one individual wishes to change his self under the influence of other people's judgments, he will no longer have to actually do it. It's enough to create a self in the virtual world where he will presented his ideal self or the self according to other's assessments. However different people do this in different ways. While some people use their real name and surname online, other people remain anonymous and instead of using their real name, they use another name, possibly which they always wanted to have or a pseudonym which directly or indirectly discovers personal information about the user, such as a trait, emotion, status, favorite color, celebrity, hobby etc. With this, there is a bit of truth about that false username because the user thinks there is no harm in actually revealing a detail about him because he won't be recognizes by it. Thus proving that the person although wants to skillfully conceal their identity from the rest of the world, still in his subconscious there is hidden desire that suggests him to present a part of his true self without risking to be recognized meaning that the own self is still present somewhere, it's not completely suppressed although overpowered by other people's judgments. On the other hand, people who present themselves as someone who is a creation of other's opinions, while using their real name and surname, want to prove others that their perceptions are correct by posting things others want to see. They deliberately use their real name and surname because they don't wish to stay anonymous but rather show off in a false light just to verify other's opinions. For instance, if one person is considered to be rich and living a fun life, that person posts pictures of attending parties, wearing expensive clothes. In most cases, other's opinions represent the ideal self, which although not displayable in the real world, is shown in the virtual world. Even though we look at our displayed virtual life, we get the false impression that we really have the life others imagine. Thus we get a false image of ourselves that we somehow managed to achieve the desired life according to other people's views, even though it's not real. With the virtual worlds appearance they now understand the real world as a spare and something irrelevant, until at least in one of the worlds (real or virtual) they live the desired life, in this case the virtual world, but just enough and satisfactorily to fool people in their immediate surroundings. Thus confirming the theory of Goffman that people really are actors playing roles in public but deep inside, far from other's eyes, they act according to their true self. So, the public world is just a big theatre were the roles we receive are different from what we really are. With this, we come to a connection with Cooley's third aspect- people have a tendency to be what others think. The virtual world is an opportunity for people who aren't satisfied with their self to appear different before social network users. It's like they have a copy of themselves in front of them where their views, behavior, life, style and looks are presented. And they are given the power to be the creators of their self. They have felt that they could not truly affect to change their true self because deep in their subconscious they know they are still a different person behind their mask used in public. But now they have the impression that they are the creators of their new persona who they make out of their taste, like a piece of clay shaped until they are satisfied with the final results. This is inspired by two things: Other people's opinions and the ideal self.

STIMULUS FROM OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS

The stimulation of other people's opinions stems from the individual's attitude who thinks he failed. The individual was aware of other person's estimates about him, showing himself as a person different from his true self. These assessments are offensive to him, making him think that he failed to prove to others they are right. In reality, people imagined a particular image of an individual based on their own beliefs and expected him to fulfill that idea. But with the individual's true self being different, people are disappointed and begin to express their dissatisfaction through negative reviews towards the individual. The individual, on the other hand, feels guilty because he made the wrong move. In fact, the only reason the individual feels guilty in this scenario is because he developed a liking to other people's ideas. He perceives the other's idea for himself as acceptable and wants to make it but for personal reasons, he cannot. Because the individual is aware that he cannot change his true self, he feels that he didn't realize the ideas of other people and considers him to be his own personal failure. Failure which in the mind of an individual reflects as one of his weaknesses and as punishment for that weakness, the individual is not accepted by the people in his surroundings by betraying their assumptions. However, with the existence of the virtual world, the individual feels as if he is given another chance to prove that he can become a person after another's imagination. If there were no other perceptions, and different from the true self of the individual, he would appear in the virtual world as his true self, but because he likes other's idea that motivates him not to present his true self to the world. The step the individual takes has mutual satisfaction - both from the environment and the individual. The environment feels like having a confirmation of their opinion and people in the environment are encouraged to analyze and evaluate deeper, either the individual, or other persons they meet, having the same effect on them. The individual feels as if he finally achieved something that he strived because in this instance he shows he has a concern for others opinion, a motivation to be content with his actions. In the satisfaction of the individual, there is a feeling of repentance that through misrepresentation, he deceived others; however, they easily ignore it because they got what they wanted -proving themselves to the environment, regardless of the method. The success of their deception in the virtual world in some way "turns out" their morale by thinking the idea to deceive others is acceptable until they get what they want, and the perfect justification will be that did it only for their own good. In reality, it's not good to anyone, but the individual and the environment perceive it as such. The false representation of the individual in the virtual world depends on the degree of his concern for others' estimates that over time can either be reduced or increased. It increases if the individual from other people starts to demand a greater degree of approval of the false things he makes and publishes in the virtual world in order to get more attention in the virtual and the real world or for the entirely opposite reason -negative attention in the virtual world to no longer be as important as before, and he will try to retrieve it. The reason for the greater attention is due to the egoism that developed in the individual's character and the false admiration of others that he began to perceive as real. On the other hand, the reason to regain his former attention in the virtual world is often driven by the paranoia that he is no longer worshiped as before, thinking that in his deception he made a mistake by revealing his true self or did not portray enough what others expect from him. The level of care an individual has towards other people's assessments can be reduced. It diminishes if the individual starts to analyze the false self that he represents in the virtual world and concludes that he is doing something completely wrong and can only hurt the true character he still possesses. The view that he does something wrong comes from the perception of the individual that his happiness

lies in himself, not in the attention and acceptance of others. An individual develops a sense of being played and manipulated by the environment with their false idea of his true self. This so-called feeling can be compared to giving the individual a role as a ballerina in a music box. An individual is perceived as a ballerina who, like an unreal figure, is given life and ability to dance. Here, he is represented as an unreal figure of a ballerina because of the fact that he falsifies a characteristic self that does not really exist in him but only the idea of other people's estimates. Life and the ability to dance represent the false attributes that the individual, or in the illustrative example of the ballerina, should falsely present to the others. The ballerina will be forced to constantly perform a performance for viewers who want to see her dance. The only reason the viewers want to see the ballerina dance is because of their imaginations and impressions of the ballerina after they open the music box and see the ballerina inside as well as the assumption of its purpose. The ballerina motivated by the estimates of her viewers will endeavor to fulfill it by the ability to dance, which she does not really own, but is also given by her viewers. Thus, the ballerina will dance by her viewer's request until she becomes exhausted of their admiration which will not fill her with the sense of accomplishment and happiness. The feeling of captivity in the music box will prevail in the ballerina, motivating her to stop dancing for her viewers by accepting the fact that her happiness does not lie in others, but in herself. Once the individual understands this, he will no longer be influenced by others' estimates and will begin to manifest his true self. In this scenario, satisfaction will not be mutual, but unilaterally. Satisfaction will be present only from the side of the individual, but not to the environment. The surrounding area will be insulted and humiliated due to the individual's deceit. They will take revenge on the individual in the only way they can-non-acceptance and mocking the individual. However, this may have a counter effect on them because the individual has found happiness in his true self and neglects the fact that he is outraged by the others, although aware of it.

STIMULUS FROM THE IDEAL SELF

The dissatisfaction of the individual's true self and the aspiration that has evolved in him to have the opportunity to change it represents the source of the stimulation from the ideal self. Because the individual doesn't have what he needs to realize that there is dissatisfaction with his true appearance, internal or external. Not tending to accept his true self, a striving is developed for change which will end the dissatisfaction he feels after accepting the achieved results. Aware that he isn't naturally born as his desired self, and not willing to change in the real world, the individual considers the virtual world as a place where he can be someone else, yet keeping his true self at the same time. Subconsciously, he views the virtual world as an opportunity not to give up his true self. When an individual is presented with opportunities offered by the virtual world, an impression develops that he can create his own ideal self, making another copy of him, but a better one reserved only for other people's eyes in order to receive the expected answers and treatment. With this, a sense of having a subspecies of a double life appears in the individual, where he doesn't live two different lives in the real world, but one life in the real world and one life in the virtual world. Although the virtual world is very different from the real world and practically you cannot actually "live" in the virtual image that's being offered by modern technology, the individual imagines it as another world, or as he is traveling from one town to another. Both towns are different, as the individual's appearance. The individual can live in a misconception about himself that he has achieved his ideal self by looking at his plastic life, but only in cases when he truly wants in practice to achieve his true self and feel proud, as if he has done an important achievement in life and the memory of him in his still living acquaintances after he is no longer alive. However, there is a special situation where the individual is hesitant and isn't ready to change

his true self, although he subconsciously wants to be someone else. Although in our subconscious mind we know that we haven't achieved our ideal self and lie to others, still with the perception of our false ideal self portrayed in the virtual world, we feel pleasure from the fact that at least we have manipulated others to think we are an ideal person. In this scenario, the individual is satisfied with the idea that although he failed to achieve his true self in reality, still he managed to spare himself from other people's responses and criticisms that would only further confirm that he did not achieve anything. At the price of the individual not being criticized and unaccepted by the environment in which he lives, he agrees with the idea to lie and manipulate. An individual whom is indecisive of what he really wants, is willing to deceive others' perceptions in order to get the best of both worlds - at the same time being the two individuals from whom he cannot choose just one. That feeling for the individual is like holding his true face in one hand and his ideal face in the other. By holding them, he is given a choice only one of those two faces to be turned into a mask. The individual's satisfaction in this scenario applies when he receives the criticisms he always wanted to get from people in his surroundings. He has an impression that he cannot be condemned and belittled because he managed to become a false inspiration for others. The fact that the individual has found a way of not hurting himself without any change in his self is his success and that it doesn't pose any problem for him to play a role given by him, not from society. With this we know the manipulation of our environment is not something that should concern the individual as long as he gets what he wants. His condition can be compared as a jewelry box without any jewelry inside. When people become a jewelry box, they expect jewelry to be inside when they open it. They almost never think that the jewelry box could be empty. Their expectations lie in finding something they really want. There are similarities, but also differences between the stimulations of others' opinions and the ideal self. The difference is that in the opinions of others the individual wants to change because of them and in the ideal self because of his own conviction based on the idea he longs for but cannot implement it in reality. The similarity, however, lies in the fact that in both scenarios, the individual is ready to manipulate other people's impressions that are only created in the virtual world.

CONCLUSION

The influence of the society itself and the way in which individuals behave in it depends on the perception. It represents the center around which this critical analysis is revolving, regardless of whether the perception is derived from other people or from the individual. The influence of perception on the individual's self-concept has the ability to change his previous thinking, and to encourage him to change his true self. In the mind of the individual, he understands the reason for such a change as a specific goal that should be fulfilled in the hope of a better social life. Assessment of other people based on wrong perceptions in some individuals leads to a complete change in character and way of life. Or at least this is according to Cooley's third concept. However, according to the above criticism we can come to a certain conclusion that although perception plays the main role in the true self of the individual, it all depends on the attitude that develops in the mind of the individual. That attitude is based on previous experiences that are different and decisive in terms of the willingness of the individual in society to change his true self or not. The reason the individual makes this step is because of the motivation of the thought of a better social and virtual status and life. Social and virtual life nowadays are inevitable and every individual is part of them, no matter how he is presented. The mask was and will continue to be part of the individual's self as a segment in his presentation to the society, until it comes to the

conclusion that the definition of his happiness lies in him all the time, not in other people, which he had hopelessly sought.

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