COMMUNICATION IN THE AGE OF BLACK SCREENS "...WHOEVER LOOKS AT ME IN BLACK DOES NOT KNOW WHO I AM..."

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SUMMARY. Why do we have the black screens (closed cameras) when we are at the zoom? This is the Millennium 'Dollar' Ouestion. From my doctoral research: Communication in the age of black screen, I research the phenomenon of black screens when using zoom. I wish I could write one main reason responsible for closing the cameras and the appearance of the black screens phenomenon, because if there was one, then there would also be one solution and our (teachers) lives would be much easier. The reasons for closing the cameras are many and varied, including: socioeconomic, social, digital, psychoanalytic, multitasking and sometimes even boredom and lack of interest. The latter is also found in school but zoom has a seemingly democratic 'delegitimization' of choosing whether to be or not to be. Or in other words - whether to open the camera or not. (Although not always at camera closure the participant disappears). I will not expand in this article the discussion of the pros and cons of opening the camera when using zoom, although these are derived from the text, but will seek to reveal the mental mechanisms that work on zoom participants and how these mechanisms affect zoom communication and user experience. This article is about Zoom's Self-Representation.

Keywords: self-representation, image, Zoom

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Self-representation of zoom in the perspective of psychoanalysis

Self-representation during the zoom (at the opening of the camera) meets the criteria of the selfie experience and the components of the Id, ego and super-ego as determined by the father of psychoanalysis 'Sigmund Freud'². Therefore, it is impossible to discuss the concept of "self" without mentioning Freud and his successors in psychoanalysis. The many theories and interpretations of theories over the years refer directly or indirectly to the phenomenon of opening the camera or closing the camera (black screen) when using zoom. The question arises, what happens to the self-representation that the camera is turned off? Where is the attachment and theory of reference with the object that makes up the self? And perhaps precisely at a time like this when we are locked in houses and isolated, Freud would say that the use of a black screen is an outlet for the Id and the mediation of the ego and the super ego into reality. Maybe.

The concept of 'self' entered the pages of academic history with the advent of psychoanalysis to the forefront. In (1895) Freud, together with Breuer, published a book called ('Studies in Hysteria') which connects hysteria, childish seduction and a treatment technique concerning the release of emotion (Mitchell & Black, 2006). Throughout Freud's life and work, he proposed three major theoretical models, interrelated with each other: the cathartic, topographic, and structural model. This study deals with Freud's third model, the structural model.

In 1923 Freud proposed the structural model, and in fact made an attempt to better understand the topographic model. In the topographic model it was clarified that the place of the passions is unconscious. The discovery that the defense mechanisms that clear memories and experiences from the unconscious are inaccessible to consciousness has raised the need to change the topographic model, and divide the mental

² Sigismund Schlomo Freud; 6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939) was an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, a clinical method for treating psychopathology through dialogue between a patient and a psychoanalyst.

structure into three distinct agencies: the Id, the ego, and the superego. This created an integration into a structural model, according to which the mind is composed of the three awareness areas and three agencies operating. This model became the psychoanalytic canon of its time (Mitchell & Black ,2006). This model forms the basis for understanding the selfie / self-representation phenomenon as a psychological phenomenon beyond being a social-media phenomenon. By understanding the meaning of self-representation in psychology we can understand the psychological codes that make up the decisions in opening or closing a camera while using zoom.

NarcissuZoom

The term narcissism was chosen by Paul Näcke (German psychiatrist) in 1899 to describe the position in which a person treats his body in the same way he is usually treated as a sexual object - that is, enjoys looking at it, stroking it, etc., until satisfaction is achieved. Our instinct for self-preservation. Our urge to feed ourselves and avoid danger is universal. Our outwardly directed (sexuality) desires cannot be completely separated from those inwardly directed (self-preservation) (Freud, 1914).

Id - Opening the camera out of pleasure for observing. self-representation, and other presentations. On the other hand, the Id can equally decide to close the camera in order to protect the mind, self-preservation and avoidance of danger.

As an interim summary of the process that psychoanalysis has undergone from the time of Freud to the present, it refers to the conception of the concept of the self, from a conception of a single, multilayer, integral and continuous in time (continuous), towards multiple (or multi-self) and non-continuous. The perception of the self as multilayered, singular and continuously grew out of Freud's thinking, and was reflected in the topographic and structural models. In these models Freud relies on spatial images, from which is implied a layered configuration (defenses) with a nucleus at its core. This

perception can explain the augmented reality of zoom screens. The stratification serves as the protector of the soul and by peeling off the stratified images we may be able to find the subject (Winnicott,2009). Such a process, requires trust and a sense of sympathy from the additional objects in the zoom. So, zooming without a sense of belonging to the peer group and a comfortable personal acquaintance with the zoom organizer, will lean towards black screens or augmented zoom reality.

A Different Approach to Zoom Layering suggests Mitchell (1993). He claims that the stratification is a metaphor for a kaleidoscope, which peeking through its nostril, while rotating its axis, reveals a wide variety of configurations, which appear simultaneously and change according to the interaction in the rotating action. This perception presents the augmented reality on the screen as a way of expressing the self and not necessarily as a defense mechanism. Both theories can be found in the online life of all of us - we defend ourselves with flattering images covered in filters, text and recently also music. On the other hand, if there is a social issue that touches our hearts, we will immediately change the profile picture to an activist-adapted augmented reality and our digital self-representation will become an image and text that expresses our personal opinion and position. Therefore, the perception of augmented reality can be both in the context of a defense mechanism and a form of self-expression. Depends on the subject, the context and his relationship with those around him.

Self-representation in zoom as an artistic act

In 1889, 125 years before the selfie³ was named "Word of the Year" in the Oxford Dictionary and became synonymous with the

³ Selfie - a self-portrait by the person who takes a picture of himself, and which is done using a smartphone or a webcam, and which undergoes social sharing on the net (Oxford Dictionary). The selfie phenomenon is part of the visual culture and an accepted way of communication today between people who upload their pictures on social networks on the Internet through smartphones (Eftekhar, Fullwood & Morris, 2014).

obsession with self-documentation, a failed and depressed Dutch painter chose to paint a portrait of his bandaged face after cutting his own ear. The experience of life itself was, for Van Gogh, the central object in the creation of his portrait, an experience that could not have been omitted from the canvas species. Evidence of this power is the fact that Van Gogh's figure is to this day identified with this portrait as an "artist who cut his own ear."



The self-portrait in art - creating an image in which the artist reflects his figure - has become popular in the way we know it today - selfies. During the early Renaissance, in the middle of the 15th century, the horn of the self-portrait rose. This trend is directly related to the changes that took place in the production of the mirror during this period - it became cheaper and more sophisticated, so that it reflected reality more reliably, which made it easier for many artists to use it to create their portrait. The word "portrait" implies "accuracy" - the importance of staying true to the original. In Greek, for example, the same word is "ink-icon", meaning - doubling the image (Melchior, 2011). But in a world that is evolving and changing, it is natural that

⁴ Retrieved from: https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4831453,00.html

even the limits of self-portrait man will try to challenge. Compared to the self-portrait, the selfie does not produce introspection, but perpetuates a constant transition between transmission and reception, between transmission and viewing. He compares the "I" of the self with the "I" of the "other," and tries to reconcile them or create a rationalization that will allow him to go against him and criticize him. In this way, "the other" also reflects social construction (Tifentale& levi, 2014). Zoom We will see this match with black screens.

The ability of the documenting subject to see himself is a central element in the creation of the self-portrait, and it is also the key to understanding the selfie phenomenon of today (Hemo&Regev, 2014). Although the act of painting in the creation of the self-portrait and the act of documenting in the creation of the selfie are both immanently related to the representation of the self and the phenomenon of narcissism, a number of significant differences can be noted: first, the artist is required to have high technical abilities. The creation of a selfie, on the other hand, requires only the most basic and simple knowledge of operating the cellular camera and the ability to press the shutter button; Second, creating a realistic self-portrait takes a long time, while in selfies the end result is obtained immediately. In selfies, the image is both finite and infinite - the format is fixed, but the possibility of changing the image is related to the device's ability to produce more and more images one after the other, with self-directing changing from one moment to the next; The third difference is related to the imprint of the artist's personal stamp on the work - in painting the expression is influenced by choices related to style and color alongside the affiliation with the genre and the period in which the artist operates (Cohen, 2014). The selfie is the thing itself: you can add a filter or two to it - one that will make the photo look like it was taken in the seventies or one that will turn black and white - but in the end it is not possible to intervene and personally influence the final product. That is, the medium limits the user to data means that cannot be deviated from. That's why all selfies look more or less the same - happy people who enjoy life and smile straight at the smartphone. In the zoom user experience, we are in constant selfies. The main difference in zoom from the selfie we are familiar with on social media is, that it is a selfie that is forced on us by default and not a selfie by choice.

An interesting fact is that the front cameras in the mobile devices only started to appear after the companies that made them realized that this was necessary, as more and more people started taking pictures with the device without being able to see themselves while shooting. The accelerated technological sophistication of the mobile devices has made the front camera of the smartphone a pocket mirror that allows not only my gaze on myself, but also the freezing of this moment. This freeze is related to narcissism - in both painting and selfie - as it expresses the ego's desire to become one with the reflection it sees in front of it. But on top of that, it also makes Bunny jealous of that "little other" for the whole that he is. The self can never be as whole as its reflected character, and it is a void that cannot be filled (Rissling, 2003). But in selfies this passion is intensified - the infinite potential inherent in the ability to "freeze myself" at any moment is what drives the self to such an extent that it becomes a kind of prisoner in a state of constant, compulsive freezing, in which it changes its image in front of the pocket mirror over and over again. That nothing really changes.

This need for constant change, as well as the illusion that it is indeed possible, is related to the world of images and values of the Western world, especially in the last two decades - in the accelerated development of technology, Internet dependence and the constant presence of screens around us. The images do not stop flickering before our eyes, the information is endless and constantly changing. The only order that is permanent and stable is the one that requires us to be "connected" all the time and to transmit ourselves to the world in one way or another - to look at ourselves in constant comparison to what is happening "out there", to share ourselves, to express ourselves, to show ourselves - and this in contrast to the self-portrait in the painting, which is made from looking inward, to the mind, through the mirror, and expressing it in the painting itself. In selfies, there is

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no introspection, but rather an obsessive juggling between the ego's and other's channels of transmission, while trying to find a match between the contents or go against them.

"Self-theater" and body image In Zoom.

Evidential evidence provides insights into the effects that social media behaviors may have on users. On the one hand, using social media may be beneficial because it allows for greater connection with others, leading to an increased sense of well-being. On the other hand, using social media may lead to engaging and focusing on physical appearance, such as engaging in external-related photography activities that may cause appearance concerns and lowering body image and self-esteem. Because users are often exposed to a variety of other profiles, they can compare their appearance to friends, relatives and strangers. Cross-sectional data revealed that for both women and men, Facebook use is associated with greater social comparison and self-objectivity, both of which are associated with lower self-esteem, poorer mental health, and body image concerns. A person has a tendency to reshape his self-image to suit images taken at earlier periods in his life.

When a picture is taken, it is done with the aim of producing an idealization of the self-image and complimenting the 'I', without showing effort, ostensibly, even though selfies are always staged and planned. Compared to a photographed image, the zoom, which is a video selfie, is challenging in maintaining the direction and 'lightness' over time and becomes a narcissistic-zoom performance. Rowling, (2014) argues that from the beginning of photography there is a tendency for the photographer to point the camera in his direction. Photographs can serve as a tool for the construction and representation of the self, while portrait photography offers the creator complete control over his image, and allows himself to be presented to others in a mediated way. Relying on Lacan (2014, Rawlings), the photographer disassembles the self and turns it into a complex essence. The self is both private and individual,

as well as group and public. The self becomes part of an imaginary community (Anderson, 2011) with means and a group platform for the dissemination of images, and the format is provided by the site.

Selfie and gender

Various studies have documented widespread body and weight dissatisfaction among girls and women, and social media has been found to be a significant catalyst for these appearance concerns (Tiggemann, 2016). Given that social media provides an opportunity for social comparison, as well as exposure to unrealistic beauty expectations, it is likely that dissatisfaction with the body results from frequent use of social networks. Social media presents countless ideal images of skinny and beautiful women. The "lean ideal" and the "athletic ideal" are presented as standard and desirable. There is an illusion that such a body structure is achievable for any woman. The internet and social media have been found to promote thinness, dieting behavior and weight loss through ideal images of "perfect" women. Women who use social networks often internalize the "thin ideal". which causes them to strive for an unrealistic and unnatural standard of beauty and to be ashamed when they are unable to achieve it. Studies have found that frequent exposure to the Internet and social networking sites causes high levels of weight dissatisfaction, urge to lose weight and body tracking in young women (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010; Tiggemann & Slater, 2013). It can be concluded that women in general and adolescents in particular, may feel embarrassed in front of the zoom cameras while suffering from low body image.

Motivation for selective self-presentation also refers to impression management, whereby people present themselves carefully in order to create a specific impression on their viewers. As a result, social media users are pushed to present the most attractive versions of themselves to others to create a positive impression. However, these images do not often present an accurate description of a person's true physical

appearance. The most common way users present themselves selectively on social media is through taking and uploading selfies. Users tend to take selfies from flattering angles and use bright lighting, and may also edit their photos through color correction, skin retouching and even shopping in photos to make body parts look thinner (Anderson, 2012). This way, social media users are able to manage the impression they have on others by displaying only the most flattering images of themselves and minimizing flaws. Zoom in Activating the camera is more challenging, although there is a "beauty" option that smoothest the facial skin, you cannot freeze the moment and you can get caught in an unflattering angle or God forbid lighting that is not good enough. Previous studies show that social media use is positively correlated with external appearance concern. Moreover, the literature suggests that taking selfies and retouching images, which are very common social media behaviors, are associated with lower self-esteem and body image among young women. Women are motivated to display perfect images and ideal versions of themselves on their social media profiles to create a positive impression on their viewers. Image retouching behaviors allow women to display the most attractive versions of themselves and minimize perceived flaws. Therefore, it is not surprising that women's black screens zoom in more than men's black screens.

The action of zoom as exhibitionism and voyeurism

The exhibitionist expression in the selfie sharing on social networks while self-exposing the subject, constitutes a waiver of privacy. According to Bergin (2005) this exposure is related to a tendency towards sexual exhibitionism, which is based on Freud's view that the human tendency to offer the body for the observation of others, develops in man a curiosity about the bodies of others as well. It is a kind of barter deal, which alleviates human loneliness and turns the observed into an object. The camera that people place in front of themselves and their bodies becomes a window, through which they communicate with

the world and maintain social connections. Each surfer chooses whether to open the window (camera) and observe who also chose to open a window. This virtual window is open for viewing and exposed to the observer, as the photographed and the observers become not only subjects, but also partners at a varying level of intensity (Bregen, 2005). In fact, exhibitionism is fed through voyeurism, and serves as a mirror for it. The exacerbation of the interplay between exhibitionism and voyeurism is the result of a continuous update of the personal profile on social networks and of the repeated uploading of photos to the web. The need for attention and approval is provided by the comments to the photos through likes and comments. When the camera is zoomed out, participants are not given likes on their exterior. So how did they know if they looked good? What's more, what's so cool about sitting in a chair and being photographed like that for an hour. If the zoom was on the summit of Everest, in the middle of a tropical island at dusk or at least with a real Eiffel Tower in the background, it would have been much more attractive to attend it with an open camera. If so, ostensibly, the zoom should be turned into an app that pays more attention than it does today with the augmented reality it offers. It seems that without immediate feedback and positive reinforcements - virtual communication loses its power and becomes black screens. On the other hand, paying attention to live can be implied as an invasion of privacy and a kind of exhibitionistic on the one hand and causing mental anguish and frustration among the disadvantaged participants in the forum who do not receive immediate feedback and reinforcements.

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Self-representation in the technological time tunnel

Video calls appeared on Star Trek in the mid - 1960s, where they are displayed on large screens in the style of a conference room on the bridge of the USS Enterprise.⁵

Video chat was part of a starstudded journey from the first episode of the TOS that aired ("The Men's Trap") to the latest TNG movie ("Nemesis").



In all of these retro-futuristic descriptions, video calling technology has a kind of analog elegance that seems far removed from the digital video calls we make today from our cell phones, tablets and computers. One important component of a video conference that cinematic fiction has not watched? The image of yourself that appears on the screen next to the participants in the conversation, commonly referred to as "self-observation". Self-viewing is not a particularly new feature of today's video conferencing platforms, and until recently it has not been relatively tested in the popular consciousness. But over the past two and a half years, as COVID-19 has made zoom calls, Google Hangouts and FaceTime a regular part of daily life, the chance to stare at yourself for hours at a time has raised all sorts of new concerns and inconveniences. Which raised the question: Why does all

⁵ Retrieved from:https://trekmovie.com/2010/06/07/steve-jobs-invokes-star-trekagain-while-unveiling-4th-gen-iphone./

video chat technology now include self-display, and where did it come from? Designers seem to have started incorporating self-images into video call interfaces simply because it was possible. Nearly twenty years after Skype became active, Sean Sprocket, design director of Awakening Experiences at Godfrey Dadich Partners, says self-sight is a "locked" trait that people have begun to expect. Even for many designers, this convention has become a given.

Despite all the benefits of self-presentation, self-perception can also be distracting. In a 2017 study published in Computers and Human Behavior, researchers from Marquette University found that seeing yourself during video calls adversely affected team performance and personal satisfaction with both the process and the results. They suggested two possible explanations for why: increased self-awareness and cognitive load. According to the study, seeing yourself "shifts people's focus from the environment and the task," while too much information of any kind leads to lower performance. Given this, the researchers suggest that "as the technology and bandwidth of the system grow, individual virtual team members may actually be less efficient." Unless, they point out, users have the option to turn off self-viewing, a feature that Zoom offers but most of its competitors do not. That is, closing the camera can increase users' focus on content and the environment.

The idea of "presence" has emerged as a consistent goal in video chat design - this is what can differentiate between one platform experience and another. Most of today's popular video platforms - Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts - are one-dimensional and have limited range cameras. But that is beginning to change, and when it does, it may change the need for self-perception. For example, concepts like The Square, a multi-camera LED screen that looks like a window, or portal products, that include desktops and TVs, that give platforms a fuller multi-camera view of the spaces in which we live and work. This seems to be the direction the video platforms are heading. A more three-dimensional perspective on both sides of the conversation will make the conversations feel more real, but will also require users to share more of their environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that there are many reasons for a black screen. But without a doubt the user experience of self-representation in front of the screen, is one of the main and complex between them. Psychoanalysis, illustrates the Id - the urge to be seen versus the need to protect the mind from harm. The ego and the super ego focus on the interaction with the object and the communicative relationship with the other. The ego is built from the feedback and interaction that lacks zoom. Sometimes the super ego does not allow exposure for fear of insufficient 'visibility'. Exposure to social networks leads to low body image, which is influenced by the desire for self-representation in zoom and intimate boundaries are broken alongside the growing voyeuristic instinct. In addition to all, increased exposure to a large amount of flickering image on screens over time leads to zoom exhaustion. All of these provide grounds for closing the camera.

In the age of the digital self-portrait, the selfie serves as a self-portrait and a social definer. Zoom, changed the self-representation from image selfies, which is a short and fleeting moment, to a prolonged self-representation that is photographed over time. The pressure to be at your best over time and the challenges that come with it, have taken the concentration from the zoom content to the visibility.

We moved in a short period of time from frontal communication, to crisis communication. We did not understand all the implications of distance learning. In fact, there was a sense of a Wild West, with no clear rules of conduct, with everyone doing (more or less) what they wanted. Still, in terms of reality, zoom is a legitimate alternative to distance learning with the potential for success. Now, after the initial shock of an isolation and closure experience we never knew existed before, it's time to examine distance learning along with the user experience and see how media literacy can be applied alongside the zoom.

In the time tunnel with a glimpse into the future, there will probably be a possibility of three-dimensional exposure of the self in zoom-like apps. That is, one must prepare for it in advance. Maybe this

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time we will not be surprised by the zoom invasion of our lives, the exposure, the voyeurism and the sharing and we will prepare for this possibility in advance. This is where the role of education as a public opinion designer comes into and to teach the correct use of technological means destined for hybrid education (Abrudan, 2012). It must prepare participants for the extensive options and define sociocultural norms for the use of zoom. All this with close attention to the mental aspect of opening the camera. If at all it should be open and perhaps our representation will be replaced by avatars and socially agreed conceptual augmented reality in the field of hybrid communication in the postmodern era.

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