**BeWell Doha - Episode 2.mp3**

**Speaker 1** [00:00:00] Hi there. This is Yana Haddad. Welcome to BeWill Doha. This is our second episode, and I'm feeling amazing. I'm here with wonderful guests, so please introduce yourselves to our lovely listeners.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:12] Thanks, Yana. I'm Dawn Mccartie, one of the lecturers here at AFG College.

**Speaker 3** [00:00:16] Hello. My name is Mohammed Ellaham I'm one of the students. And if you call it.

**Speaker 4** [00:00:20] Hi, I'm Munira and I'm a fourth-year student here, in AFG college.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:24] Thanks, guys. Let's get into the episode. Today we're going to be talking about the side of social media that people don't usually talk about, but I think it's a good thing to talk about. And this podcast is a great opportunity to normalize some things that we might not want to talk about anywhere else. So maybe we can learn together from each other. I've been noticing a trend on my Tik Tok for you page, which if you don't know what that is, it's basically like an Instagram real or an Instagram explore page if you don't have Tik Tok. But who doesn't have to talk at this point? Anyways, being on Tik Tok these days has made being on social media in general so exhausting and such a chore. I'm going to try and imitate what my for you page sounds like nowadays. Oh my gosh. What type of girl are you? Are you a clean girl or are you that girl? Look at your side profile. Look at your ribcage, your hip dips. What kind of face do you have? How likely is it a serial killer will target you because of your face? Oh, my God. Here's how to exude feminine energy. What's your aura? A law of attraction Manifestation. There's only two types of girls. Oh, my God. Pretty privilege. Buccal fat removal. What I eat in a day as a model. What I wear as a clean girl. Oh, my gosh. I can go on and on and on. It's clearly exhausting. Okay. I've noticed the long term effects of this being shoved in our heads every single day when we open social media. I've become a lot more self-aware and conscious about what I post on my Instagram, for example, which is where I'm the most active. My Instagram is private, so only my family and friends see. So, there's no need to really go down this rabbit hole. But do you guys ever look through your pictures and really overanalyze every single thing you've ever posted? This happened to me a while back and I think I archived over like 50 photos because in hindsight I think I wanted a sense of control in the way people saw me since my social media. Tik Tok, for example, was completely out of control. I didn't even realize it was happening in the moment. And it's such a bizarre feeling because I never realized how intense the content I was watching was and the impact it could have on the way you perceive yourself. It almost tries to put you in a box and into someone you aren't, if that makes sense. It also makes you notice things about yourself that you wouldn't notice otherwise. So, like your normal skin texture or the normal shape of your body or the normal life that you live. I don't know. Social media is so focused on looks and appearance and it's a shame it's not there's not much admiration going to personality and how to better your mindset and how to grow mentally as a person. Because most of the time the looks that Tik Tok try to sell you are unrealistic, right? That's when the impending doom feeling comes in. I can't do anything about my nose, my eyes, my lips, my face, my skin, my body. Maybe I can, but guess what? I shouldn't have to. And neither should you. If you go down that route, you'll never be satisfied with yourself. I think the scary part that people I think don't notice of such content is you don't notice the effect it has on you is what? Until it's too late and it's already taken a toll and it's already subconsciously ingrained itself into your mind. So I kind of wanted to talk about that, maybe give a new perspective to the way we view social media. Maybe you've never considered this before and maybe you've heard it a million times and its old news. But since I'm starting to see the effects of it personally, I can't not talk about it. If you find yourself going down that rabbit hole, just know that you're not alone. And it happens to everyone you know. So don't try to fit a certain standard because that's going to change over time. So, I'm going to give the stage to our guests. How do you guys think social media has ingrained itself in your subconscious? Do you think it's impacted your self-esteem in any way, or has it affected the way that you post on social media?

**Speaker 2** [00:03:46] Wow. Yana That was that. That scared me a little bit. If I'm honest. I never really. Tik Tok for me is I'm older, I'm 45 years old, so I think that it's a very different kind of reals that I'm looking at on Tik Tok. But I do have a 15-year-old impressionable son who will be saying what you're talking about. And it really, really worries me in terms of the type of content. And I'm already seeing the impact that that has on his self-esteem, body image, the things that one day he will say to us, my eyebrows are this, my chin is this, I need a six pack. I need to I need to eat more protein; I need to whatever it may be. And as a mother, it's scary. But also, I try to think back 30 years to when I was 15, and obviously we didn't have that type of media then, but I don't even think that those type of things entered my head then. So that really concerns me. I think in terms of what you're saying about self-esteem, for me, I think, yeah, absolutely. I feel quite censored with social media know, Where I am very, very cautious about what I post in terms of words or tone or really just in terms of how people will interpret it. You know, am I trying to get their attention? Am I trying to be, you know, superficial? What really all I've actually tried to do is just sort of say what's happening in my day and where I've been, and I don't want to be that show-off that says, I've been to Dubai, I've been out to here wherever, because we're living over here now. And I'm just very conscious of that now. And I think that when I'm posting pictures on there, I mean, I don't like pictures taken and videos taken anywhere, but it's very much about kind of taking however many shots and then making sure that you're happy with them because will somebody judge me in that respect? So, I think social media has got so many positives and effused. Right. But I really do worry about this rabbit hole that we're all going down, really, But I'll let somebody else speak on them, will probably come back to.

**Speaker 3** [00:05:57] That is a really an interesting topic that not a lot of people take into consideration, especially social media, since we are on it all day, every day, especially Tik Tok. But I believe honestly, when it comes to the content that you consume and all of these videos and pictures that you see through social media can be altered by what you search. So, for example, like I used to be prone to the same thing where I see certain standards were like that that were very unachievable. And all of these different perspectives on how people live their lives. And all of this, like, for example, like travelling to, to a different country every week, living a certain lifestyle and all of this for a man, it's actually kind of emasculating when you don't live in the same level as some people that you see on social media. But that's not always the case. Like also people fake what they want people to see and on social media. So and also to add on your point to when it comes to social media and what what pops in front of you, it really comes down to what you search and what you favor. Because I was prone to the same thing with, like I said in the beginning, certain things that were unachievable and very high standards and all those types of stuff used to pop. And at some point, where I started searching about certain things and they just kept on showing up in my media. So it's all about the algorithm. Like what you look up, look up or what you search for. Obviously, there are things that are like was done said that are very alarming for young kids in general that they shouldn't consume at a young age. But also it comes down to what you search and what you consume when it comes to social media.

**Speaker 2** [00:07:52] I'm sorry, is that not about so in terms of yeah, yeah, I totally agree in terms of what you search, but it's almost kind of a vicious circle, isn't it? So if I think about my son, he might say something about body image and then change his search to reflect that. So it's kind of it is a vicious circle. And I think if people don't have that maturity to process that and obviously you talk with maturity there, I think it can be quite dangerous really.

**Speaker 4** [00:08:20] I think that it could happen subconsciously. It's like you see one picture like or an image on your Instagram feed and then you click on it once and then like your whole Instagram is based on that. And I found that happened to me where I like click on one picture of a girl, for example, and then like my whole Instagram feed is full of pretty girls and pretty nice bodies, and I'd overanalyze that and look at pictures, zoom in, and like, look at myself. Why don't I look like that? And like, I feel insecure about myself. And I found that I've been down that rabbit hole, but I tried to pull myself out to the does not go to drag because it's going to be unhealthy to achieve such body image. And when I decided that I wanted to become healthier, like work out or achieve that body image, I did it in a healthy way where I did it for my own good, not to look a certain way or try to copy someone.

 **Speaker 1** [00:09:20] So I think you all raised very, very good points. One thing I do want to bring up is that the type of social media content that I consume and maybe Munira consumes because we're around the same age group and the same demographic is probably different to what the, Mohammed you know, consumes, or miss down consumes. I want to talk about more about your experiences personally with social media. You might not get the same TikTok for your page like I do, like you mentioned, or Instagram reels, whatever you choose to, wherever you choose to on social media. Is there anything similar to what I've been experiencing or what other people might have been experiencing that's maybe different in generations or different with each? Demographics or you know, if the Tik Tok for you page of a guy, for example, is different to the Tik Tok for you page , you know, to Munira and I or if the Tik Tok for you page of a for mother's different to Tik Tok for you page of someone who's you know in her early twenties and is mostly concerned with how she dresses and what she looks like.

**Speaker 2** [00:10:18] It's probably similarities more more so than you think because obviously, you know, when you're a bit older, you think we're much more boring and less exciting. Obviously, you get all of the kind of reels up about, you know, I love a cleaning reel. I love a reel that's going to show me how I'm going to clean something I never will. But I do love it, I love yeah, I love watching those ones there brilliant. I never do it. But still I would say I still get up a lot of body ones in terms of, you know, what people should be looking like I think as well. You know, you need to think about social media from the perspective of what the platforms as well, not just Tik Tok on Instagram, but if I think about LinkedIn as a platform for social media from a career perspective and a professional perspective, yeah, okay. You don't necessarily get the reels, but you do get the constant updates about congratulate somebody for getting a new job, congratulate them for this. And whilst you are very pleased for them, you know, time after time after time, it can be it can have an effect because you think, oh, am I be left behind? Should I be doing something different? Have I taken a different path? What have I done wrong? Rather than kind of thinking about where the positives are, you see all of this information on LinkedIn and automatically the brand goes to, Oh, well, what could I be doing better? And as a as an academic, we actually run sessions for women on various topics. We just ran one this week and we talk about imposter phenomenon a lot. And one of the things that I said to people on the course is about trying not to engage with the social media because actually it brings on a lot of the self doubt and the imposter phenomenon because it was kind of like, Well, I'm not as good as those people that going to catch me out soon because clearly I'm just a fraud and you know, nobody's going to hire me when there's all these other people that can do a much better job. So it is about trying to not compare yourself, which is really, really difficult on all platforms. You know, And I think what we also need to take into all of this is filters. I think you mentioned it's not real earlier on the use of filters is a really you know life just does it I mean you get some influences don't you, that will do a kind of influencer app sorry, Instagram versus reality type post. And that's quite nice because you actually do see the reality behind the shot. That's the photo shoot. So it shows that with the with the body not in the kind of pores that you see it on insta. But again, it comes back to how people interpret that and you kind of talked about how you've been able to take a much more positive outlook to health and fitness, which is fantastic. And again, that kind of comes with the maturity, isn't it? It's the worry is for those people that aren't able to do that and are significantly influenced by what they are seeing on there. And it's how to I think it comes down to education. I think we really need to be educating children from a young age now because the constantly got the smartphones and the tablets in the hands and it's all they know. So I think we really need to think about how we educate maybe our siblings, our children, even through the schools as well.

**Speaker 4** [00:13:28] And similar to what miss done said about the how LinkedIn influences you as like someone who works. I feel like social media had embedded in like Children's Head or like teens had that you could achieve more with social media and like, you could get the things you want. And now kids want to be a social media influencer, or rather than having actual dreams of becoming an engineer or a doctor or whatever. I feel like that's toxic because that's not reality and it wouldn't happen for everyone and like children nowadays, should think better.

**Speaker 2** [00:14:03] And it's the minority that are successful with that. And younger people will see the money, they will see the glamour, they will see the money side of it and how easy it is just to do one post and then get paid so much money and get to go to all these glamorous places. The reality is that's the minority. And the reality is that that won't last that long. You know, those bodies will not last that long. They can't live that life forever. So it's a very short window of opportunity. And I guess as well, that's the same with sportspeople, isn't it? You know, sports people grow up knowing that they almost have to have a second string to their ball because they're going to have to, you know, professional footballers have to retire at the grand old age of, I don't know, 20, 25. Yeah. Young age don't they. So a lot go into presenting or you know, and I think that it is about saying okay that's a nice, maybe a nice to have, but I totally get what you're saying. It is about kind of telling. We're not telling but educating children and I think children, not teenagers I think teenagers. It's too late. I think it is about educating children, maybe even from the age of kind of seven or puts, would you say? Do you think? Yeah. I mean, obviously parents probably wouldn't give them access to the tools. But let's face it, we know that they see it and of course, they see their parents on it. I used to get that from my son when I would try and get him off. Well, you are always on your phone and it's quite difficult to argue because the reality is that the minute you wake up, you start scrolling. Even if you're just constantly scrolling and scrolling. But I think the point about influences is it's made to look so glamorous and the reality is that it isn't. But for impressionable minds, it's what they want to do. And I think you're right. It's like, Oh, well, I'll just get a career in that. I'll just be I'll just become the next whoever.

**Speaker 3** [00:15:45] I think it's very simple to like establish an audience and always provide consumable content and where they can make money off it. But with the actual reality, it's not that easy. For example, Mrbeast took him years to basically build up his name and his brand in general.

**Speaker 2** [00:16:05] Is this the time when I tell you that I don't know who Mrbeast is

**Speaker 4** [00:16:08] This famous guy that makes a lot of money and gives it to people, basically? With like challenges

**Speaker 3** [00:16:16] No, actually, he basically does these challenges where, like, let's say, for example, we are all sitting on this table, okay, that's like $1,000,000 on the table. So all of us would have a hand on it just like one of his many videos and basically his challenges. The last person to remove their hand from that million dollars keeps it. And there was this challenge that took around maybe like four days for these people just standing there holding that million dollars. This is like one of many examples. And there's like he did this challenge where he basically did the same million other concept, but with an island, a jet.

**Speaker 2** [00:16:55] I think I think my students mentioned an island one time to me a long time ago .

**Speaker 3** [00:16:59] Yes. Yeah, yeah. But if you only knew his humble beginnings when he started, he started with nothing, basically, but out of nowhere, because he's doing these types of challenges and he is actually like really giving people these prizes. That's where his fame skyrocketed, and he became very smart with it. Also, like he only he didn't only do it for the Western audience, he targeted the Asian audience, too, and the Latin speaking audience to where he made basically the exact same videos. They were the same exact videos, but they're all duplicated with their languages. And basically, that what made him be more famous were a lot of people. More and more and more people know about him. So let's say the video of the episode of the million dollar Challenge was done in, let's say, Indian. It's done in Spanish. All of them like that, you know, So it took a lot of work and teens in general. And kids should understand that, that there is so much work behind being that famous as well.

**Speaker 2** [00:18:07] It from a negative perspective. When they've got that following, it's what they then do with it. They have to be responsible with that following and sometimes people can get that following and then almost change their narrative. And this isn't the place for me to start talking about kind of any specific people, but there are specific people that have got such bad reputations in terms of what they're saying and how they're acting, how they're treating people, the terminology that they use. But they have got that strong narrative across millions of people and followers. And what's really concerning is that certainly as a parent, I don't know what my son is looking at because I class myself as a good parent, but you can't monitor them 24\7with these gadgets anymore. Not like when we were children. We didn't have these things. But I can only do so much as a parent. And you know, ultimately, if my son goes to bed and closes the door and I hope that he is going to sleep and obviously I will check on etc., but who knows what's infiltrating his different feeds you've talked about. I mean that what you said at the beginning, Yana, was, wow, you know, I was a shock to me. Some of the things that you're saying at your age, never mind what he must be saying, but it's it's then that if that gets into them, it almost can become a kind of cult following that a lot of these influencers will get, which then does have a real impact. Going back to where you started with this on people's self-esteem, because it's like, well, how am I going to be like that person? Not necessarily just in terms of the looks, but how am I going to talk like that person? What do I need to read upon to say the same things as that person? And people almost lose their individualism, which is which is where youngsters need to grow and develop and become their own personalities.

**Speaker 1** [00:19:55] I love the fact that you guys brought up social media influencers because that has such. A big impact on the content that we consume on social media. Another thing I feel like is important to mention is how social media influencers, first of all, have such a huge power and so much control over the content that we see. I feel like the more influencers get successful, the more I guess fake they become because that's when they start promoting products, for example, that maybe they don't believe in, or they are like they kind of have this narrative of, Oh, if you're not doing this, you're doing it wrong, you know? And at the end of the day, that's just a marketing tool. That's just a way for brands to be like, we’re going to get this really influential person to say this and we'll pay them an insane amount of money and then they get their sales up. It works. That's that's something that works and it's extremely toxic and it's not healthy. But that's how I feel like social media has worked in the past few years. I'd say especially it's become a lot more common and frequent than in the past few years.

**Speaker 2** [00:20:59] As a marketer, I'll have to bring some academia into it, but as a marketer, I don't disagree in the sense that obviously people are now using influencer marketing as a social media marketing tool for their promotional campaigns. And it's a it's a great way of doing it if it works well. But I think what a lot of brands are very conscious of, and I think that I do genuinely think this has developed and improved over time is authenticity, which is what you're talking about in terms of we as the consumer need to believe that that person would purchase those that product. We need to know that they do use it within their everyday life. And I can think of certain influencers that are on my blog as influencers, probably celebrities if, but I guess they think themselves as influencers that may use a product. And I do genuinely believe that they use it because they give the positive and the bad and the negative as well. And obviously certainly, you know, within the within the industry, you have to kind of say if you've been gifted something, you have to say whether it's an advert. So there's lots of things that have been brought in over the years to try to aid that from a market in perspective. And I do think people are getting a little bit more savvy as consumers. I think that, you know, I'm not talking as a marketer now. I'm talking about people have become a little bit more cynical as well and a bit more savvy and a just a bit like, would you really use that brand? Because sometimes they don't align. And as a marketer, I'm very frustrated because I think I know that you, the celebrity footballer from however many years ago, wouldn't wear those shoes because when you see them in magazines, they're not wearing them. They're only wearing them when they do in that specific advert. So that kind of makes you realize that it isn't authentic. But those ones that are telling you and showing you the videos and you know, you become a little bit more like, Oh yeah, okay, I believe that one. Um, but yeah, I think, I think influencer marketing, you're absolutely right. But I think we just need to I personally believe that there are some amazing benefits to it if you choose the right person and they are authentic with what they're doing.

**Speaker 4** [00:23:06] So going back to what was said about influencer marketing, I find myself like whenever I see a feed, like multiple ones, one after another talking about a single product, for example, concealer. I like makeup because like, it's I'm a girl. So most of my feed is about makeup or clothing I find myself the next day or like going online and looking get up and purchasing it. And most of my makeup drawer is now based off recommendations from TikTok. I don't know if you've been like that.

**Speaker 2** [00:23:34] Yeah, obviously. But at least it's opened up your mind to other products, which perhaps potentially you wouldn't have been. So, speaking as a marketer, and if I'm a marketer of that company, I'd be over the moon. If you've started to use new products, just hopefully we've got to get them right so that you want to continue to use them.

**Speaker 1** [00:23:51] This is a topic I feel like we could talk about for hours and hours and hours. But on that note, I hope that anyone listening understands that not everything you see on social media is reality. Obviously, I feel like social media is a highlight reel. At the end of the day. I hope this episode made you feel a little less insecure with regards to any insecurities you might be feeling as a result of social media. We all have them, and I think it's very important to start normalizing them more and more as time goes on and as social media starts to become a lot more powerful in our day-to-day lives in a good and bad way. But it's definitely important to talk about. Thank you, guys, for being on the episode. I absolutely love this discussion. It was so much fun. Let me know what topics you guys want to hear next. You can email wellbeing@ AFGE-Aberdeen.edu.qa. thanks for listening. Enjoy your day. And yeah, there is that.