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The Other Side: Consumerism

There is a pair of shoes that is wrapped carefully in a box and ready to be bought. I reach inside, pull one out, freshly scented and new, covered with splashes of red, black and white. Another pair to add to my collection, I thought to myself. I untie the laces and slip the shoes on my feet. They are not comfy but they look amazing. These shoes are in season and it will grab attention anywhere I go. I'm certain they will make me look cool. However, as I stand in the mirror, staring down at my feet, I don't really feel happy wearing the pair. They look great on me but I feel like it won't make any difference. Another pair to add to my shoe collection, 3 new dresses to give to my cupboard and a set of new wireless earphones. Big shopping bags are at my side and I don't think they have space for a pair of shoes.

I go to the mall every weekend and return with bags and boxes of presents for myself. What is the point of buying things that I'll only wear for a week then stuff away at the back of my closet? When I go to events or places, people will just recognize me as the girl with cool shoes. And if I don't stop myself from buying them, I will continue this pattern of buying things I don't really need.

"Excuse me ma'am, but would you like to buy this pair? It fits very well," said a salesperson, interrupting my thoughts. it took me a minute to give an answer, carefully thinking about whether I should buy it or not.

"I think I'm good for now," I say. "Thanks for helping though", and I leave the store feeling happy that I didn't indulge.

We often get confused between what we want and what we need. And it's important to know the difference because we can end up using large amounts of money and buying unnecessary things which can affect the future. The other term for this is consumerism, and it is highly common with teenagers today. Some kids buy things so they can look cool and feel satisfied. It's like our schools and society, making us believe that what we own is better than who we are and our personality.

Consumerism also has a large impact on problems like climate change because of the excessive need to make items, along with inequality and bullying because there is always constant competition of who has what. There are people who can't afford the things we buy. Food and clothing that we want, is what millions of other people need to survive. So the best we could do is when you are longing for something, something that you really want and don't have just ask yourself if you really, really need it.

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