

Social Proof

As a child, I grew up always enjoying building connections and making new friends. In growing my interpersonal skills, I looked towards how others interacted and picked up on the personality traits that I favored. Through interactions, I recognized how the people I surrounded myself with reflected how my personality developed. I strive towards surrounding myself with people who helped me become a better person. Furthermore, I learned that who you surround yourself with is who you become. I acknowledged how I followed a variety of decisions due to the actions of the people around me and realized the impact of **social proof** on my actions. The events in which I became more aware of social proof took place in my current year of college. I recognized elements of social proof in extreme situations along with mundane instances such as following trends.

A recent circumstance I witnessed of social proof consisted of when a player suffered an injury during a flag football game. I noticed how many individuals around me followed through **pluralistic ignorance** because a majority of the people who saw the player get injured looked around to see who would help instead of directly adhering to the player first. After one individual reached out to the injured player, I realized that the pluralistic ignorance lingered to when the helper started to call 911. In turn, it took a delayed time for someone to help the injured player out. Personally, I recognized that I fell into the **bystander effect** because I did not react to the situation because I believe that another person would react first. Additionally, I recognized how my bystander effect of social proof also fell into **uncertainty** because I initially hesitated to help the player out. Moreover, my mindset on not reaching out consisted of believing someone else more knowledgeable would help out the injured player first, and I was unsure of the severity of the injury. After reflecting over social proof, I decided that in future events of emergency I will step in and not fall short into the bystander effect. More specifically, I will progress to **specific** commands in order to gain help quickly. For example, I will say “Person with the green shirt, yes you. Please call an ambulance.” I believe that acknowledging social proof in extreme situations will allow for more proactivity in events of social proof in lighter scenarios.

Another lighter example of social proof consisted of when a new Korean hot dog restaurant opened up in Carrollton. Many ads about the restaurant described how “fast-selling” and “large growing” the products of the restaurant sold. I noticed how I fell into **people power** when I read the ads because I had the notion to try out the restaurant even after looking into other reviews describing how overrated the restaurant was. Moreover, I notice how my decisions resulted in **click whirr** because I acted on an automatic response after recognizing my friend’s testimonies of the restaurant and viewing many of my friend’s snapchat stories where they ate the Korean hot dogs. The click whirr also sparked from **similarity**, because I believed that if my friends enjoyed the hot dogs, I would enjoy them as well. Furthermore, I decided to try out the restaurant after arriving to the location when I viewed long lines. The long lines emphasized how people power plays a significant role in social proof.

Through my interactions in college, intense and more mundane I learned the impacts of social proof on my decision making. Learning about social proof allowed me to gain more knowledge of my actions and the way I choose to deal with situations. In the future, I plan to use the positive attributes of social proof to strengthen my character and act according to what may benefit a situation. Additionally, I want to incorporate the knowledge of social proof to prevent me from falling into the bandwagon of negative attributes that will hinder growth from myself and others.

