

Social disservice

Some walk right past me, ignoring the “hi, how are you?” I ask each patron. Some give me a half-hearted wave and head for the bar. Others give me time to ask each question and seat them promptly. But each person has a story, each individual has a tale.

I have worked around customer service since I was eleven, helping out around my grandpa’s tourism business whenever I could. My outlook on the customer service industry changed, however, when I began working as a restaurant hostess last October. I’ve been there for half a year and I’ve learned so much about people.

Some of my favorite customers are regulars at the bar. They make me smile with the way they bring humor and a sense of stability to the sometimes hectic restaurant setting. They come in with their same baseball hats and order the same drinks as the day before.

Although they tend to hang around after we’ve closed and come in before we open, these customers are generally easy. They know the menu front and back, so there’s never any question about what they want. They know what there is to drink at the bar, so they never have to ask. They’re just easy customers.

There are other customers, however, whose attitudes make each shift a little harder. They come in and demand a certain table, booth or high top. They seem to look down on me as if working as a hostess is something to be ashamed of.

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The way that some people treat servers makes me wonder if they respect anyone at all. It’s important to understand, especially at a young age, that every job matters, from service to CEO.”

– Cameron Murray

These people are the kind that make uber-specific orders, request light ice, and demand plasticware instead of silverware.

When they leave, their table is a mess. There is salt and pepper all over the table. They leave no tip. They make the evenings more difficult than they have to be, but they teach us to appreciate every person's job.

I've learned how to bite my tongue more often by working in a restaurant. Instead of letting peoples' frustration or anger get to me, I let it go. I have discovered how freeing it can be to just watch someone walk out the door.

Stubborn or standoffish customers can teach us kindness through their negativity; without them, I don't think I'd be able to fully grasp just how important tips can be. A seventy dollar check and a two dollar tip doesn't add up.

When someone comes in half an hour before closing and demands sweet tea, they typically end up getting upset and feeling as if the restaurant has poor service. What they do not know is that tea containers are one of the things servers have to clean before they can leave. Their cut work, or side jobs, must be done in order to clock out. When people come in and ask for tea that soon before closing, it's not logical to brew a whole new container for two glasses. They throw fits and threaten to walk out.

Seeing the everyday hustle and bustle of a restaurant over the past six months has changed the way I see people in the service industry; every person has a story, a family, a life outside of those double doors.

Instagramless Katie

Anxiety. Fatigue. Sweating. Vomiting. Depression. Seizures. People expect teenagers to be faced with the symptoms of withdrawal without their social media. Adults expect us to be drooling out of our mouths if we don't have our phones in our hands.

I decided to put the myth to test and delete all of the social media off of my phone for a month. I was expecting the month to be awful and leave me with a feeling of exclusion. However, I learned how easy it really was to not constantly see everyone posting about their lives.

The first week was the hardest. My thumb would subconsciously go straight for my Instagram app whenever I became bored. I always wanted to check my phone even though I knew there were no notifications. I didn't realize how much time I was spending on my social media apps before.

The second week left me feeling like I was being left out. People were talking about a new joke online, but I had no clue what it was. There were parties that people kept posting about, and I couldn't look at the pictures. I hadn't begun to see the positive side to it all.

The feeling of being excluded left when the third week came. I no longer missed my social media. I even forgot that I was off of it in the first place. A huge wave of relief came over me when I realized that I was no longer worrying about what was happening on the Twittersphere.

By the fourth week, I was an expert. I was almost reluctant to download all of the apps again. It was refreshing to not constantly see the stream of people's personal lives on my

phone screen. Instead of focusing on what picture from a party I was going to post, or Snapchatting the entire event, I found myself actually enjoying experiences more.

It seemed like I had more free time to read and get all of my homework done. I didn't keep getting distracted by a new Snapchat or someone liking my Instagram picture. The whole experience gave me a new outlook on how unimportant someone's feed really is.

So, no, a month without social media didn't leave me kicking and screaming. It granted me the ability to put into perspective how social media isn't the most important thing in my life.

School WiFi now blocks all social media

It's the new buzz on campus. Students are frantically checking their wireless connection, restarting their phones and double checking app updates. Why? Last week, all social media connections were blocked on the school's wifi.

"Our Internet filter made some undocumented changes to the way they classify some media sites," Rusty Ogburn, TISD director of instructional technology said. "The changes were released in the last auto patch, and it put sites like Facebook, Twitter and such into a new classification and they are now blocked."

Instagram has always been blocked, but recently sites like Twitter, Facebook and even Snapchat are inaccessible on electronic devices on the school wifi. No, your phone isn't

acting weird.

"We are working on trying to get in touch with the company to find out why the classification took place," Ogburn said.

Schools must comply with the Child Internet Protection Act guidelines, and Ogburn said the district is looking into whether or not the changes are based on a state mandate.

Ogburn said the district is having to address the coding of each site individually.

"We are in the process of hand-fixing the database, but there are hundreds of entries," Ogburn said. "and it will take some time."