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Effects of self-esteem on self-viewing: An eye-tracking investigation on mirror gazing

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While some people enjoy looking at their faces in the mirror, others experience emotional distress. Despite these individual differences concerning self-viewing in the mirror, systematic investigations on this topic have not been conducted so far. The present eye-tracking study examined whether personality traits (self-esteem, narcissism proneness, self-disgust) are associated with gaze behavior (gaze duration, fixation count) during free mirror viewing of one's face. Sixty-eight adults (39 females, 29 males) viewed their faces in the mirror and watched a video of an unknown person matched for gender and age (control condition) for 90 s each. The computed regression analysis showed that higher self-esteem was associated with a shorter gaze duration for both self-face and other-face. This effect may reflect a less critical evaluation of the faces.

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