

Advertising is designed to make you miserable

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I posted this video on YouTube this morning:

<https://youtu.be/k8dh05aryZ4?si=kDWoljc4Ah8Q6Nkn>

In case the link does not work for you, [it can be found here](#).

The transcript is as follows:

Advertising is meant to make you unhappy. That is its single sole objective.

The whole of the advertising industry exists to make you feel inadequate. Isn't that obvious? What it's trying to tell you all the time is that whatever you have, however well off you feel, you could feel better off if only you had whatever it is they're trying to flog to you.

You need the latest iPhone.

You need to go on holiday, wherever they're saying.

You need to buy this financial product.

You will be insecure unless you buy their insurance. Whatever it might be, they are trying to make you feel as though there's a better world over there, which you didn't even know existed until they blasted it in front of your screen, onto your radio, or wherever else you might see it.

And the fact is that most of the time you don't need any of that stuff because you were already feeling okay before this happened. And they have tried to undermine your well-being by creating a sense of dissatisfaction with where you were. Now, that's really important because this process of making you feel inadequate does of course drive our material growth.

When we look at the whole of the fashion industry, it is of course effectively driven by advertising, continually presenting us with different images of how we want to look. But the consequence is we have vast quantities of clothing now being sent to landfill sites, clogging up not just this country but because we export a lot of that waste to many developing countries as well.

We have waste in the form of excess energy because we're trying to buy all these new products and throwing away perfectly workable ones.

And perhaps worst of all, we're all - well, not all of us, but a lot of us - are getting into debt to actually buy these products because there is a form of pernicious agreement between the advertisers, the producers and the finance industry that whenever you buy something, you will be offered credit to make payment for it - keeping you in debt and therefore in hock to the finance companies, the banks, and so on of this country and elsewhere.

You are therefore not only meant to be miserable because you haven't got what you want, but you're also meant to be in debt, forcing you to stay on the treadmill to buy more of the product, the service, whatever it is they're trying to sell.

Is that a wise way to run an economy? Personally, I don't think so. I believe we have to change if we're going to become sustainable. And the quickest and easiest way to achieve that goal is to say that advertising is not a universally good thing. Most of it isn't. In fact, except for the small ads in newspapers, I can't think of anything that is.

So, we should stop tax relief being provided on expenditure by large companies on advertising and we should stop them being able to reclaim VAT on the advertising costs charged to them by those who broadcast these things.

Are there consequences? Yes. It will change the way that we see and consume media. I have no doubt about that. We have to, therefore, rethink that issue.

But the world will be a better place because there'll be less waste, we'll be more sustainable, and, ultimately, we will be happier because we won't be told all the time by everything we see and hear that we are inadequate.