



Questions to Ask About Parasocial Relationships, Fandoms, and Social Media in Therapy

Parasocial Relationships

What are some of your favorite characters, personalities, etc.? What makes them a favorite? Who do you look up to? (Don't forget "microcelebrities" – YouTubers, Twitch streamers, cosplayers, etc.)

What media has most influenced your life? (Specific books, movies, TV, music, games, etc.) In what ways? How do you carry them with you today?

Is there any media you connected with where you felt really represented? How did that impact you?

When you feel lonely or have time by yourself, what do you do?

If you were going to put on a show/movie/music/media to have playing in the background while you do something else, what would you put on? How did you choose that? What is comfortable/companionable/relaxing/regulating about it?

When you're engaging with (parasocial relationship/fandom) how do you typically feel? Are there any things this (parasocial relationship/fandom) has helped you overcome? Learn about? Change in your life?

What type of media do you typically gravitate toward (genres, types, etc.)? What makes them appealing to you?

Is there ever a time you felt too involved with a piece of media/personality/celebrity, etc? What did you do? What told you it was too much?

Have you ever experienced a parasocial breakup? (E.g., TV show being cancelled, band member leaving, book series ending, etc.) Tell me about that experience. How did you handle your grief?

Has there ever been a person you looked up to in the media who has let you down, or where you felt betrayed? What happened? How did you handle it? Did it change anything about how you see yourself, other people, the world, etc.?

Are there/what are the ways your parasocial relationships have extended into your real life?

Fandoms

Are you a fan of anything? What things do you really like and enjoy engaging with? How do you spend your time?

Do you engage with anyone around your fandoms? Do you have online friends or an online community? In real life friends you connect with around fandom?

Are there any creative ways you've engaged with your fandoms? Fan Art? Fan Fiction? If not now, have you ever in the past? How did you come to move past those fandoms or give up the things you like? Is there anything you like right now that you would consider engaging creatively in again (reading/writing fanfic, making fanart, etc.)?

What have you learned about yourself in your journey of being a fan of this thing? What have you learned about other people? About the world? About life?

How has being part of a fandom pushed you to do things you wouldn't have done otherwise?

How has being part of a fandom impacted your mental health?

What skills have you learned through fandom?

What type of fannish activities do you engage in? (E.g., going to conventions/sports games/concerts/theatre, fan art, online posts, discussion boards, watch-alongs, etc.)

Social Media

What type of social media do you engage with? How do you use it? What types of topics and people do you follow? How did you decide which sites to use? What keeps you using them?

How much time do you spend on social media? How do you use it as a tool in your life? Is it a way that you regulate, or do you find it activating? When it's activating, how do you typically re-regulate?

How do you feel when you use social media? What are times it feels good? How about times it feels/has felt overwhelming or toxic?

Have you ever taken a break from social media? How did you feel? How did you decide? How did you know when you were ready to go back?