

## Saying farewell to silly trends of 2016

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Most of us work through our own ups and downs year after year.

We make plans, and break plans. We set goals, and hopefully we achieve one or two. We try to keep our personal ships on an even keel.

Whatever the case, no one can dispute the fact that 2016 was filled with more than its fair share of challenges, surprises and tragedies.

In our modern, high-tech society, it's very easy to take a "snapshot" of our world. In fact, it's being done every second of every day around the globe. We are so connected that nothing escapes our attention.

In many ways, that's a very good thing. History is being recorded by average citizens around the world on their smart devices. We are documenting, sharing and saving vital pieces of our human puzzle.

These instant images show tragedies as they happen. They catch bad guys in the act. They highlight the very best, and the worst, of our species.

Does all of this make us smarter in any way?

Not on your life!

As I recall some of the social "trends" of the past year, I not only feel old, but have had cause to stand on my office chair and shout: "I'm not going to take it any more!"

As I slip and fall off my chair, and land on my floor, that video is immediately uploaded to YouTube for all to see!

I often wonder if God is happy with the way the human race has turned out.

When I think about things like selfies, the mannequin pose, Snapchat filters, the running man and idiocy of our fellow men and woman, I feel somewhat embarrassed and ashamed.

Can you imagine the reaction from aliens if a passing space craft stopped briefly around our globe and tuned in to YouTube?? They would put the saucer in overdrive and high-tail it out of here!

It used to be that trends of any description were being created and dictated by decision-makers, leaders and civil rights activists.

Today, social trends are being created largely by self-serving, bored, lazy souls.

Just how many photos of oneself with dog ears and big floppy tongues does anyone need?

The "mannequin pose," while quaint for the first five minutes, is another of our biggest accomplishments in the past year! A friend of mine put it quite well, saying we've made a trend out of absolutely nothing, and doing nothing. Wow. We've sunk to a new low when doing absolutely nothing has become a pastime.

This does not bode well for the future and for our young leaders of tomorrow.

I understand that major corporations are now targeting, and profiting from, a massive youth market of teens, even pre-teens. Let the free market economy operate as it does.

I really don't relish the idea of any trends being set by teenagers.

When I was young, our parents and society curbed the bad behaviours of youngsters. We knew our boundaries and when not to cross them.

Today, it seems that all bets are off. We not only give our young people leeway, we let them run with their silly ideas. We even encourage them and profit from them.

Who remembers Pokemon Go?

Yes, my kids had a brief obsession with that during the summer. I totally understand the infatuation with old school Pokemon games that were played on the Game Boy and Game Boy Advance (although you can now get GBA Roms for PC too, so you can now play your favourite Pokemon games on your computer). But I never fully grasped the fascination of this passing fad. However, it seems like I was in the minority as a lot of people were hooked on this activity, even those who lived in rural areas. Even though it's much harder for these people to collect the different pokemons, if they learned how to hack location on pokemon go, then they had the same accessibility as everyone else. No wonder it became a worldwide phenomenon. The options were endless.

While I'm still a novice with all the capabilities of my iPhone, I have succumbed to cute texting abbreviations and Emojis. Yes, I admit it, "sad face, crying eyes, hands on mouth."

I don't have a problem with the happy face or "Smiley" being an icon from the 1960s pop culture. It has served us well and actually means something. But I really don't want any emoticon going down in history as a representative image of the 2000s.

Our youth now has altered the ebbs and flows in popular music. I imagine they are one of the biggest consumers of the stuff.

Today's "hits"?are coming from the mouths of babes themselves and a host of Disney Channel creations.

Many top pop stars today are well under 20. What does a 17-year-old know about love, relationships, breakups, or commitment?

Why is anyone listening to this and taking advice from teenyboppers? Since when are we heeding match-making advice from toddlers?

In the process, these same child stars are earning millions of dollars. They're ill equipped to handle the pressures of "real life" and many of their life stories have proven this.

On the up-side of music, many young people today are actually taking a shine to "our music" from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

They are embracing groups like Styx, Supertramp and even KISS.

In 2016, the world said goodbye to many music and entertainment icons, legends and trendsetters. Most will leave a lasting impression on our hearts that goes far beyond fleeting Instagram posts or Tweets.

There's no doubt we will remain intimately connected in the future. Our devices are becoming even "smarter"?every day. We will go way beyond the evils of Orwell's Big Brother.

Like it or not, our species will continue to evolve, in plain view for everyone to see. I think I'll start wearing sunglasses!