

I was at Disney the other day and saw a "Today I Feel" magnet board with Disney character faces on it expressing different feelings. You know so you can choose whatever emotion you are feeling on any particular day and frame it within the movable little square it brings. It was really cute so I bought one for myself. And then I bought one for a friend of mine whose moods swings some days can have that little square hopping all over that magnet board. I figured she'd overlook my insinuation and appreciate the fun distraction. : )

After using it for a couple of days I realized that this board, although equipped to show the most common moods and emotions, omits some of my most recurrent ones. So I thought, okay I'm gonna have to custom design one just for me. And then I thought, well, while I'm at it maybe I'll add an *app* to it; you know, to get rid of a negative mood and easily access a more desirable one at the touch of a button. After all, it seems there's an *app* for just about anything. So how about one that would instantaneously and genie-like blink me out of a bad mood and into a good one? Something that'd work faster than a bite of dark chocolate (as doubtful as that may be). Yes that would be grand, wouldn't it? Feel frustrated, angry, enraged while at the office and want to stop before you ring your co-workers neck? There's an *app* for that. Feel frightened, anxious, hopeless about the state of the country and want to stop before you go postal on somebody? There's an *app* for that. Feel threatened, jealous, resentful and want to stop before you really lose that someone you love? There's an *app* for that. Feel stressed, annoyed, aggravated at traffic and want to get there teletransporter-style before you have a heart attack? There's an *app* for that. [You moms, you know you want this one, admit it]. Like magic. That'd be pretty cool, huh?

Yeah, no, not exactly. I don't know about adding this feature to our already existing push-button, instant gratification world. As it is, we spend an immense amount of time in cyberspace, wearing our hearts on our webpages, if you will, where we learn about engagements, weddings, divorces, births and deaths, and discuss current events with a zillion people at once, all in the most impersonal of ways. And I've come across a number of mood-tracking applications readily out there to help people quickly change their moods, not quite at genie-like blink speed, but certainly in the most uninvolved and indifferent of ways.

Nothing like social media to strip away interpersonal skills. Whatever happened to reaching out to a friend or family member to help us get out of a bad mood or emotion? Nah, that requires more than just the push of a button I’m afraid; that means engagement, time, and patience. Too much to ask for maybe?

Truth is there’s nothing like live communication I believe, and although yours truly is herself guilty of cyberspacing and texting, as I can appreciate the reaching out capability of social networking, through which I’ve been able to reconnect with some friends and family, I don’t fail to recognize the dangers of conforming to this medium’s addictive character and hooking power over us to depend on it for human interaction. I mostly worry for the kids, the ones growing up digital, who seem to choose texting over calling in a birthday wish to even their closest of friends. Of course, at the end of the day, life is all about balance, and it’s important to find it in this arena as well, and to teach our children the value of this balance.

— Hello?
— Hey.
— Hey, what’s going on?
— Ugh, I’m in such a bad mood.
— Why, what’s wrong?
— Well, today when I ……

I don’t know, call me old fashion, call me sentimental, but I think nothing beats the warm comforting sound of a live voice over the phone or the reassuring feeling of a face-to-face presence over coffee to help you get into the right place again. Thank goodness there’s NO *app* for that!

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