

GROWING UP THE '90S VS THE 2000S

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If you feel trapped in eternal childhood, unable to get over all the awesomeness that you experienced as kids, we are here to make you feel worse. Well, not really. We know that growing up was magical and whether you are a 90s' kid or a millennial, you have fond memories from your era that you would never want to let go of.

FOOD

We, the 90s kids, might not have had imported chips and restaurants mushrooming here and there but we definitely had food that was less adulterated. Mimi and Aziz Chocolates were childhood favourites for many of us and one of us have an entire scrapbook filled with stickers that came free with those. Potato Crackers was the best tiffin we could have and then, there were chips that smelled like raw prawns but we bought them anyway because free toys. Ring chips were popular too and there was only one way you could eat them. Put them in your fingers like actual rings and then eat them, one by one. Bubble gums did not promise fresh breath but an innocent colour change from white to pink that always made us believe in magic. 'Pijja' with nothing but onion toppings were one of the only existing fast food items around and we gobbled them down with no complaints. Ice-cream vendors hit the neighbourhood almost every evening and sold amazing kulfi, iced malai and deshi ice cream brands. Chanachur-walas were clad in red, wore 'ghungru' and carried megaphones, calling out 'chanachurr' in a familiar tone that we kids loved to mimic.

If you're a kid born in this century, you probably have no such memory of the times when eating out meant having Bangladeshi-Chinese at some local Thai-Chinese-Indian restaurant. Food options now are limitless in range, though limited to the size of your wallet. Eateries are no longer dingy, dimly-lit restaurants situated miles away from one another, but have rather sprung up like toadstools all over town. Lay's and Doritos are available at more than just a selected few places and have gone from being luxury crisps to everyday tiffin. You can have a taste of any part of the world through placing an order by phone and having the food delivered to your doorstep. Going out to eat has become less about eating, and more about looking camera-ready. Technology has shaped even your tastebuds.



BOOKS AND TV

Back in the 90s, kids actually read books and talked to people for real. Thrilling, no? Entertainment for us was more about movies on VCR, VCP and a daily dose of BTV. Hey, BTV was cool back then, okay? A daily marathon of Aladdin, Spiderman, Mickie Mouse and Alif Laila was mandatory before we sat down to do our homework. We read and re-read editions of Archies and Chacha Chaudhary. We remember watching the first Batman and Ninja movies. And in the late 90s, Japanese “cartoons” were the most happening things on TV and we embraced them wholeheartedly. Pokemon vs. Digimon, enough said. Rising Stars, lest you forget, was one of the best things that happened in the 90s.

This century presents to us kids who learn the word “fandom” as naturally as “mum”. There has been no dearth of great books to shape their young minds, gifting them with the Harry Potter series, the John Green books, the Hunger Games trilogy and so much more. Twilight too, but we're trying to focus on the positives here. The television has been a huge catalyst in terms of bringing the world that much closer together. Kids have been able to watch more than just a few cartoons on BTV, and instead have had access to reality shows on the Discovery Channel and Nickelodeon. The availability of the internet has also seen a reduction in family-TV-time. Instead of sitting down to watch something with everyone in the TV room, kids will instead opt for the seclusion of their rooms, streaming shows on their laptops. While that may be sad, what is more depressing is the realisation that Doraemon is as dear to the new kids, as the Power Rangers were to us 90s kids.



GAMES AND TOYS

The big brothers of mobile games aka brick games were immensely popular back then. Gaming arcades located in the narrow neighbourhood golis were popular hangout places for teens. In the late 90s, Road Rash gave us sugar rush. We used to decide everything by rock-paper-scissor or a quick game of palms. Walkie-talkies used to be our favourite props when dressing up as policemen. Yo-yos were love, yo-yos were life. Playing with those scented, shimmery and colourful bouncing balls were great pastimes. We, the 90s' kids, have flawlessly transitioned from Walkmans to CD players to iPods. We have moved from MSN Messenger to Myspace to Facebook and to Instagram. We had fat, not-so-adorable landlines or cordless phones that seemed so cool in those days. We obviously never saw smartphones coming. A cassette player was found in almost every household and we knew how to use the pencil to get the tape fixed. Such skills are surely obsolete now. You can hug as many pandas as you want but you will not come across those rectangular floppy disks. We remember quite well boom boxes and CD players. Cameras with reels were the way to go. DSLR what? Casio watches were fancy too, just saying.

This being the 21st century, technology has become intertwined with everything we do. Toddlers no longer cry for their favourite stuffed animal, as the “Talking Tom” app has trumped the abilities of all stuffed animals combined – minus the cute factor. Pre-teens who would normally be obsessed with action figures, toy cars and such find themselves sucked into the world of online gaming, playing LoL or Dota 2 with strangers from Philippines. Strength of character is tested by winning battles on Clash of Clans as opposed to who stays off cheating on Monopoly. Encyclopaedias and dictionaries are not their only source of information; they have the freedom to learn as much as they want about their topic of interest, thanks to their early exposure to the internet. This is hopefully shaping the new generation to be more innovative and creative, ones not limited by the technology they are born into.

While the world is abuzz with negativity, we hope we took you down the memory lane for good. Now go and dig out any dear possession you have left from your childhood and cry over it.



SHOUT

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