

Selfie-Absorbed

By Reg P. Wydeven
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In 2012, my entire family went to Disney World to celebrate my parents' 50th wedding anniversary. There were 10 of us – my wife and our two kids, my sister and her husband and two kids, and the couple of honor.

We took tons of pictures, and my sister assembled them in an awesome Shutterfly photo album that we gave to our folks as a present. We had pictures of the granddaughters with princesses, shots of the grandsons with Disney characters, and pictures of me with Star Wars personalities.

Some of my favorite shots included my daughter with Darth Maul, my son lightsaber dueling against Darth Vader, my niece mimicking Leonardo DiCaprio in 'Titanic' on the bow of our ferry, and our whole family in front of Cinderella's Castle. I also love the shot I took of my sister and I on the plane.

I took the picture with my phone, but it was before there was a camera on the other side. Of course, I cut off a little of my face. Although it was only a few years ago, the 'selfie' was not the phenomenon that it is today. Thanks to the Kardashian clan and other celebrities, snapping a photo of yourself is now an art form. Ellen Degeneres' selfie taken with other stars at the Academy Awards almost shut down the internet. While it was an awesome picture, unfortunately, some of the stars got cut out because Bradley Cooper's arm was too short.

To fix this problem, the selfie-stick was invented. Users can attach their phone or camera to the end of these three-foot-long poles to get a better panoramic selfie. While this would have helped me take a better picture of my sister and I, starting last week, I now can't bring a selfie-stick into the park.

Starting on June 30, selfie-sticks are now banned in Disneyland, all Disney World theme parks, water parks or DisneyQuest, a gaming attracting in Downtown Disney. The new ban will be added to the park rules on Disney's website, in addition to being posted in park parking lots and local hotels.

The policy will be enforced through the routine bag checks that occur as guests enter the parks. Violators will be given the option of turning their selfie-sticks in to be picked up later or bringing them back to their car or hotel room.

Citing safety concerns, Disney had been considering banning selfie-sticks for a while. Kim Prunty, a Disney World spokeswoman explained that, "We strive to provide a great experience for the entire family, and unfortunately selfie-sticks have become a growing safety concern for both our guests and cast."

The park had forbidden selfie-sticks on select rides, however, some riders ignored the rule. The park-wide ban comes on the heels of an incident at Disney California Adventure park, where a roller coaster was halted after a passenger pulled out a selfie-stick and the ride was closed for an hour.

To be honest, I embrace the new policy. Knowing my propensity to be either violently nauseous or terrified on rides, I certainly don't need those moments captured for eternity.

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