

Elmo's viral tweet sparks an existential crisis among his followers

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Elmo confused. Elmo amazed. Elmo baffled by the responses he's getting from this rather run-of-the-mill tweet he posted yesterday morning: "Elmo is just checking in! How is everybody doing?"

Just over 24 hours later, the tweet has 137 million views (and still climbing!) and responses from big companies like Buffalo Wild Wings, Chipotle and Shake Shack, as well as celebrities as diverse as Dionne Warwick, T-Pain, Rachel Zegler, Garfield and TODAY's very own Craig Melvin, who wrote, "Thanks for checking in, Elmo. Mondays are hard. Hope you're doing great. Be sure to check on Oscar. He always seems to be in a mood."

Mondays *are* hard, Craig. And maybe that's why so many people decided to trauma dump (or overshare their personal traumas) with Elmo so publicly. Here's a selection of responses:

- "Elmo I'm gonna be real I am at my f---ing limit"
- "Elmo I've got to level with you baby we are fighting for our lives"
- "Elmo each day the abyss we stare into grows a unique horror. one that was previously unfathomable in nature. our inevitable doom which once accelerated in years, or months, now accelerates in hours, even minutes. however I did have a good grapefruit earlier, thank you for asking."
- "Elmo was just checking in. He didn't ask for all this."

He didn't. Elmo was simply dropping pleasantries into the online conversation as he often does, which is why the volume of responses seems so surprising to everyone. Elmo himself took to social media today to respond, saying, "Wow! Elmo is glad he asked! Elmo learned that it is important to ask a friend how they are doing. Elmo will check in again soon, friends! Elmo loves you."

[#EmotionalWellBeing](#)"

Elmo's friends jumped in to respond to their favorite red monster. [Cookie Monster](#) said, "Me here to talk it out whenever you want. Me will also supply cookies." [Snuffleupagus](#) wrote, "I love being a Snuffleupagus because I have huge ears that are made to listen to you share your feelings."

Even [Oscar the Grouch](#) chimed in, saying, "I'm not great at listening to others share their big feelings, but my worm Slimey is. You should talk with him if you ever need to chat. "

Though Elmo is only 3.5 years old (his birthday is coming up on Feb. 3!), he is quite active on social media. Technically, you're supposed to be 13 years old to have an account on X (formerly Twitter), but "Elmo's mommy and daddy" help him run the account, which has almost half a million followers. (And may we add, Elmo's spelling and grammar are quite impressive for his age.)

Elmo often wishes his followers good morning or good night, he sends birthday messages to neighbors like Ernie, and he's even had that [#FridayFeeling](#). But his tweets haven't had a reaction quite like this one.

"This is certainly a unique moment," says Aaron Bisman, vice-president of Audience Development at Sesame Workshop. "Elmo has connected with audiences in big ways," over the years, but this is one of the biggest Bisman has seen.

Perhaps it's because Elmo is so friendly and curious and open — the trifecta of qualities of a good listener. Or maybe it's because we grew up with Elmo and still maintain that wholesome and sincere bond from childhood that makes us want to share. But it could also be that it's January, we're tired and it's easier to unload online than it is in real life.

Bisman agrees that the viral nature of the tweet is linked to its timing, and he also credits social media manager [Christina Vittas](#) for being the online "voice of Elmo" and performer [Ryan Dillon](#) for bringing Elmo to life. There is a true "magic in the connection" viewers have for this empathetic character. He tells TODAY.com, "There's something about having a sweet, adorable 3.5-year-old monster asking you how you're doing that makes you want to answer honestly."

[Rosie Colosi](#)

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