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Can I Get Some Real "Face Time" Please?

"Um, just let me have your number I'll text you." Growing up in this century I've heard this line over a million times and up until recently I would have received daunting stares, and awkwardly raised eyebrows when I would say, "I don't have a cellphone." After that statement, when they got their laugh out and realized I was serious, without a doubt, a concern would overwhelm the person asking for my number and they would begin a conversation I had become all too familiar with. "What if there's an emergency and you are not at home? How do you get on Facebook? What do you take pictures with?" This conversation would always end in something along the lines of, "I don't know how you do it, I couldn't live without my cell phone." What always crossed my mind though as they uttered that last line was; what was their definition of 'live?' How does a world turn their eye to the fact that technology has taken over, destroying what once was the only, and best form of communication. The best form of communication is face to face real conversation, which enriches our lives through personal relationships, developing social skills, and opening our eyes to the simple things in life.

Our personal relationships have begun more and more to thrive off of text messaging and emails, which is convenient and applicable to the business world, but in reality is eliminating the opportunity for a casual conversation which would develop a relationship. According to CBS

News the average American teenager sends up to about 60 texts in one day, equaling out to 420 texts in a week and a whopping 1,680 texts a month on average (Ngak). The future of our world is resting in the hands of teenagers who only know how to hold a conversation via messaging.

When we use these modern forms of technology we are stripping away the chances in which we can truly get to know another person. A one on one moment is where you find chemistry with another that cannot be captured in a limited space of 120 characters. Rather take the time to listen to others and create a strong foundation based on the knowledge of their personality through real life interaction. By texting, messaging, tweeting, and updating we are ruining our personal relationships without even realizing what's happening to us.

What is happening to us? It is now acceptable to live in a world where you can lay in bed or on the couch for hours among hours yet somehow, you're still being active in your community by blogging or in the social scene by updating your status or posting a tweet. Before I joined the social scene of having a cell phone, although I did not appreciate the luxury then, I could 'live' without a cell phone. I could not say the same today, because as the minutes pass as I waste away minutes of my life scrolling into an endless pit of information, and I genuinely find myself missing out on the courage to strike up a conversation instead of isolating myself into the background, hidden behind my phone. It is now that I realize I am robbing myself of the social etiquettes which my parents instilled. No longer do I engage with the people around me and the longer I stray from the teachings the more distant they become. Over time, if I do not learn to remove my face from my cell phone screen I will surely begin to lose all forms of social and cultural capital that I've spent my life trying to create for my future.

When one asks, "So what's new?" or "How have you been?" when talking to a long lost friend, or family member they ask out of courtesy, but when you tell them, more often than not they will simply reply, "Oh yeah, I seen that on Facebook/Twitter." Likewise, if you're spending your entire vacation capturing the perfect Instagram picture, or the perfect witty update or the next tweet you are going to send you are unknowingly missing the world that is happening right in front of you. Can you remember the last time you left your phone at home, whilst feeling naked you also seem a bit relieved? Relieved, that for just one day you would not have to answer to anyone and you will simply just be and go about your way for a whole entire day. Although, these may seem trivial in comparison to the larger picture this is exactly something we are missing out on, the little things. We have opened ourselves into the mass media of social networking and fixated ourselves on delivering the perfect image or status. These are not the things that we must fill our life with, and by continuing the path we are going down we are escaping life's simple moments to share memories in which we can only remember in fondness. Technology has allowed for the world to advance, but in reality, when it comes down to the things that matter, we're still in dial-up mode.

I am confident that we have all in some way devoted too much time to the advancement of today's technology and not enough to the advancement of real interactions. I will admit that technology does make life more convenient in the aspect of business, long distance relationships, and the occasional daily dealings. All I am asking for is a little more real interaction and a little less technology interaction, is that really too much to ask for when in exchange your life will improve, through your personal relationships, the development of social skills, and giving you the opportunity to appreciate the little things. As one of my favorite actors, James Whitman's character from Shawshank Redemption said, "The world done went and got itself in a big damn

hurry." And, honestly we have. Where are we going that is so important that we cannot wait? Technology has pushed our world into wanting to have it, and wanting it now. Our patience is withering away like that of a dying rose. It's still there to some extent but it's nothing to be proud of, or to show off. Our patience is wearing thin, and if our life gets much faster there's no way we're going to be able to keep up. There are 24 hours in a day, and with all that we are able to fit in, due to technology it is only the beginning of the end if we do not make the ultimate decision as a society to slow down and possibly even though most do not want to hear it; wait.

Works Cited

NGAK, CHENDA. "Teens Are Sending 60 Texts a Day, Study Says." CBS News. CBS Interactive, 19 Mar. 2012. Web. 21 Mar. 2013.