

ARE WE REALLY MORE COMMUNICATIVE?

The amount of on-going communication today is staggering. With email, the cell phone, texting, and social networking etc., the number of messages sent each day today is probably more than 20 times the number of messages sent per day compared to 20 years ago. With all this additional communication, are we, as a society, any better off?

I don't believe so. In fact, in some ways I think we may be even worse off.

Given our current increased capacity to communicate, are we more understanding, accepting, and connected? The current incidence of illegal behavior and violence acts in our society would suggest we are not more "in touch" with ourselves or with others.

Has the ability to more effectively find a life partner over the net decreased the divorce rate? Again, the data suggests that that is not the case.

Ironically, with all this increased communication I believe that the value of a message has actually decreased. By being deluged by emails and voice mails etc., the importance of a single message has become insignificant. When one hits the delete button 20 times, how much value does an individual message have?

I remember not that long ago when we answered every phone call, if we were present, and returned every call, if we were unable to initially receive it. We also responded to every letter with another letter.

Today, it is quite common that emails, phone messages, and letters go unanswered. The modern default response, it appears, is no response at all.

The problem with a non-response is that the sender wonders if the other party got the message; if they should send the message again; if the other party is so busy they cannot respond; or they may contemplate that they are so insignificant that the other party chooses not to respond. Most importantly, there is no closure.

Technology is amazing and can be extremely useful. However, let's not forget common courtesy in the process of communication. If an individual sends you a message, please respond. Isn't that what communication is supposed to be all about?

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