

Connect with Tech

Purpose

Search the internet for the affects of technology on our relationships and you will be inundated with a mish mash of information. Some saying there is a negative impact while others show the benefit. Because we are fostering resiliency, let's focus on the positive effects.

ESTIMATED TIME

5 minutes

Background

A study conducted by Keith Hampton, PhD, from Rutgers University found the following regarding technology and relationships.

- It leads to more offline interaction.
- Relationships are closer.
 - Users of Facebook had 9% more people they can confide in and discuss important topics with when compared with other Internet users.
- Technology helps relationships last over time and distance.
 - For friends who can't always meet in person, technology helps them stay connected.
- It makes us aware of our group's diversity.
 - In the past, it was easy to assume all your friends shared similar beliefs to yours, but with social media, we get many more daily peeks into what everyone is doing and thinking.
- It creates communities.
 - Now because of work and education and movement, families may be more spread out, so people flock to communities online.

MATERIALS

Required:

- A. Internet Connection
- B. Connected Device
 - Smart Phone
 - Laptop
 - Tablet
 - Etc.

Activity

This activity is designed as a bookend for meetings or events.

Inform participants about the benefits of technology and relationships as noted in the background section or read articles found in the More Information section. Ask participants to think of someone that they appreciate. Next, ask participants to use their smart phones, tablets, computers, etc. to message, email, or post on social media something that they appreciate about the person.

Let participants know that at the end of the meeting or event we will share the responses from their messages.

End the meeting by sharing the participants experience.

Discussion Questions/ Key Points

- While technology can drive disconnection there are several positive aspects as well.
- Be purposeful with your technology.
 - When in real life situations make time for real life relationships.
 - When browsing on line be sure to leverage the power of technology to enrich your relationships.

Let's Try This!

Make it a habit. Once a week message someone new sharing your appreciation or spreading positive thoughts.

Follow-up

Discuss the impact your technology has on your relationships, both online as well as in real life.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/17/technology-changing-relationships_n_5884042.html

<http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/features/tech-affects-relationships#3>