The Lost Art of Personal Interaction by S. Currier

In a day of texting, email, and social media, the way we communicate has become impersonal. It is easy to write hurtful things without seeing the impact such comments have on others. Plus, once a person hits “send” there is no retraction. Even well meaning text messages can be misconstrued. I admit to these faults as well.

I remember receiving my first text from an employee. I called and left a message saying, I don’t text. I also recall critically observing a table of four at dinner in which each person was texting. I laughingly questioned if they were texting one another. Now I, too, sadly am one of these people. When I learned that it was possible to dictate a text message, a new world opened up to me. Unfortunately, I hastily dictated several messages without proofreading them and these messages made no sense at all. In fact, my daughter posted one such text on Facebook because it was so absurd and laughable. (continued on Page 2)
When I notice first graders sporting cell phones and elementary school students remarking they have iPads and XBOXes, I’m concerned they are acclimating to impersonal forms of communication and social isolation. How do we bring about positive change in a society that is so high tech that communication and human social interaction are becoming a lost art?

Wings for L.I.F.E. has a Sunday Community Outreach Program that brings in top professionals, many of whom provide needed services to members of our community. These professionals, also known as community stakeholders, give presentations on relevant and important topics. Our participants are given the opportunity to meet those involved with the services they need and ask their questions in person. The dinner that follows not only provides food, but it also offers social interaction. Many times there are table discussions in which participants reflect on the evening’s presentation and share their views with others. Special events such as the BBQ/Swim Party, Back to School Carnival, and Halloween Family night enable guests to meet new people and engage with each other in ways that are exciting and fun. This interaction is listed on our feedback surveys as the highlight of the evening.

The Building Assets and Why Try Programs for elementary school children and middle school youth foster small and large group discussion and participation in group activities. They encourage children and youth of different ages, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity to learn about and support one another. During these programs children and youth are given a voice, and we adults listen to what they have to say—many times what they say is quite remarkable.

In the end, am I suggesting we throw away our cell phones, iPads, and TV screens? Absolutely not! But instead of texting in the company of others, let’s try to give them our undivided attention. Let’s not check our phones when we sit down to share a meal with our family or when we’re attending meetings. Let’s be in the moment. Think of how much better a response is when it’s given in person. Don’t you agree that lol can’t take the place of the sound of human laughter?
Why Try?
A Program Created to Answer that Question

Why Try successfully addresses the question, “Why try in life?” It is an evidence-based program that is offered to middle school-age youth and appeals to all learning styles. The program involves videos, music, and metaphorical methodology to explain some of life’s situations and also helps youth identify the best approach applicable to them. Teamwork is one of the main objectives of many of the lessons bringing youth together to work with others from different backgrounds all while keeping teamwork as the focus. Honesty, respect, and dignity are taught, internalized and reinforced through Why Try lessons. It is a program that has flexibility so that it can be adjusted to meet the particular needs of the youth to whom it is taught.

Cassondra Fox, BSW/LSAA, and Santos Franco, SRO, currently teach the program at Mesa Middle School. This program combines current research in youth learning development to create a relevant relationship-based, multi-sensory intervention that enables every student to become resilient in the face of life’s challenges. Plus, it is fun!

For more information, call Cassondra at 575-840-8937.

Wings for L.I.F.E.
Parenting Classes

WHEN: Every Wednesday Evening
TIME: 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
WHERE: 505 N. Pennsylvania Ave., Andy’s Hall

BENEFITS OF PROGRAM:
- Supports and empowers parents
- Maintains Confidentiality
- Court Approved
- Certification of Completion
- Enter at any time
- Child care available
- Program is free of charge

SOME OF THE TOPICS COVERED:
- Roots of Childhood Behavior
- Culture and Parenting
- Stages of Child Development
- Parenting While in Recovery
- Discipline versus Punishment
- How to Handle a Supervised Visit
- Effectively applying newly acquired parenting skills

MOST IMPORTANT IS OUR REPUTATION FOR BEING A WELCOMING PLACE THAT TREATS ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH RESPECT
Sundays at Wings are FUN

BBQ/ Swim Party

Back to School Carnival

Halloween Carnival
Above: DWI Prevention Specialist Diane Taylor presents, “Getting off to the Right Start for a Safe and Happy New Year.

Below: Bobby Heard, LCSW/LADAC presents, “Families in Recovery: The experience of addiction, recovery, and beyond by families.”

Balazs Batyka presents, “The 7 Challenges Program—an innovative program for at risk youth.”

Above right: Lisa Reeves, Pregnancy Resource Center presents, “Overcome Obstacles for a Better Life.”

Left: Sally Green, BSW/MS Edu, Wings Parenting Coordinator presents, “Positive and Practical Parenting.”

Below right: Sally Craine and Carla Colacchio, Dr. Kim Hansen, Roswell Refuge, present “The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children and Youth.”
All Wings for L.I.F.E. Programs are Free to the Public

Community Based Programs

◊ **Community Outreach Program** meets from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM twice a month on Sundays at St. Andrew's parish hall. Program begins at 6 PM followed by a delicious meal prepared on site. Child Care available during program portion.

◊ **Building Assets Program** offered weekly at all elementary schools. (Instructors are Kaarina MS/Edu, Karen, LMSW, Cassondra BSW/LSAA, and Lydia BSW).

◊ **Why Try Program** offered weekly at Mesa Middle School (Cassondra, BSW/LSAA, Santos SRO)

◊ **Community Parenting** classes offered weekly at 505 N. Pennsylvania, Andy's Hall (Sally, BSW/MS Special Ed).

Special Programs for Detainees:

◊ Life-skills and substance abuse education classes held weekly for women at the Chaves County Detention Center (Teresa, LMSW/LADAC).

◊ Life-skills and substance abuse education classes held weekly for men at the Chaves County Detention Center (Bobby, LCSW/LADAC), Parenting for Women (Teresa Williams LMSW/LADAC, Theresa Kyser BSW Candidate)

◊ Why Try and Substance Abuse Education held weekly at the Chaves County Juvenile Detention Center (Cassondra BSW/LSAA).