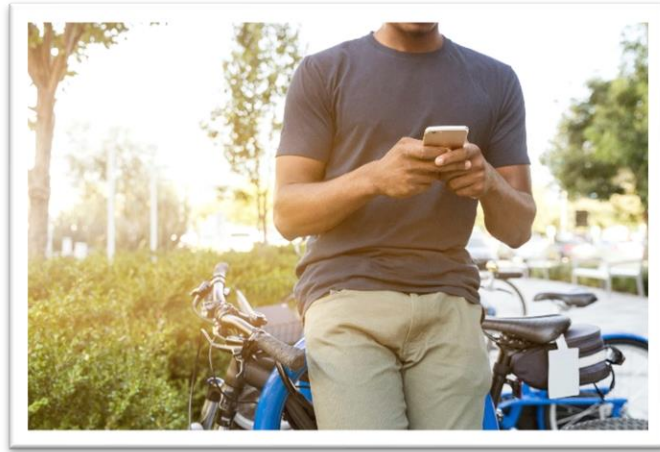


# COULD TEXTING BE RUINING YOUR MARRIAGE?

## 5 WAYS TEXTING IS RUINING YOUR MARRIAGE & HOW TO STOP IT FROM DESTROYING YOUR MARRIAGE



One of the most common requests for couples coming to see me as a relationship coach, is about communication. I'll hear couples say, "We are not talking enough, our communication sucks, we argue to over little things, he doesn't listen to me or she doesn't understand me." How can we ever hope to have the marriage that we desire, if our communication with each other is breaking down or worse, not happening at all ?

The problem is that we have never been taught that there is a difference between how we communicate at work from how we need to communicate in our relationship. We have taken business practices of communicating as the way we should communicate in our relationships, and by doing so, we have found very little success.

Of the many culprits that have hindered us from better communication in our marriage, none has affected us the most as TEXTING. Read on and see if this mode of communication has infiltrated your marriage and started a slow and subtle erosion of intimacy with your life mate.

# **UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION: The Basics of Sharing**

Most couples that I meet who are having communication problems in their marriage believe that TALKING and COMMUNICATION are the same. They could not be more wrong. Let's start by defining the difference between these two modes of conversation.

## **WHAT IS TALKING?**

Talking by nature is all about one simple thing. INFORMATION.

The goal of talking is to simply share information to someone for one purpose in mind, TO FIX OR SOLVE SOMETHING. There are no parameters or requirements needed for this exchange of information to happen other than you just need one person to share and the other to receive what was shared. Whether it be a voice command, email, text, fax, a note or a memo, the goal is to just send information. And for the most part we do this quite well.

## **WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?**

Communication by contrast is very different. In communication, the goal isn't just the sharing of information, the goal for communication in marriage is CONNECTION, specifically to build a meaningful relationship. And to do that, communication demands a few things to make this viable for a couple. Communication needs active participants, purposeful engagement, a desire to connect and a willingness to discover.

So, whether the communication is through a face-to-face encounter or by phone, the purpose is to build a relationship by being an active participant wanting to connect deeper with our partner. For me, the best medium for communication is through a face-to-face conversation. We can always find ways to communicate in a meaningful way through all formats, but the face-to-face encounter will always be the richest experience. Therefore, we delight so much in physical intimacy because all other methods might give us a moment of satisfaction, but it will never be as full filling.

Now that we know the difference between Talking and Communication, lets look at how TEXTING HAS RUINED COMMUNICATION WITHIN MARRIAGE.

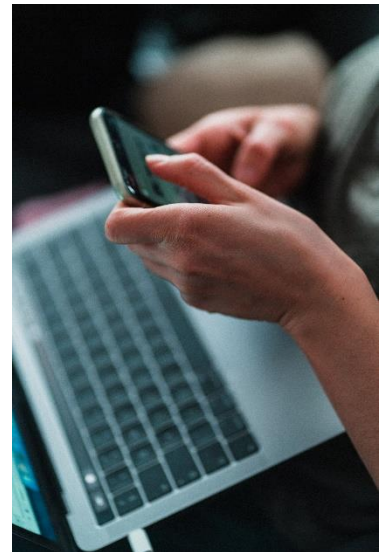
# WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH TEXTING THEN?

Here are 4 ways that **TEXTING** has ruined communication within marriages.

## 1. Texting makes us LAZY.

If the goal of communication is for the purpose of building a meaningful relationship derived from engagement, active participation, and a desire to discover, then texting has made us lazy in the pursuit of communication. We have become so dependent on texting that we don't purposefully make a point to have a conversation anymore. We have become so accustomed to the quick transferring of information that the idea of discovering something new about our spouse everyday has become a chore or after thought, then a pleasure, like when we first dated.

One of the best examples of how texting has made us lazy is when I hear stories from couples of how they got into an argument. As I explore what and how the conflict took place, I suddenly discover that the whole conversation actually took place over texting, each in separate rooms, while in the same house! Texting has made us so lazy that we would rather text each other a full conversation instead of getting up and going to the person to have a face-to-face conversation. This is a sign that we would rather walk in the fear of how our partner will react vs believing that our partner wants to get close to us and support us.



## 2. Texting has made us resist connection and conflict

One of the biggest pieces of evidence of how texting has ruined communication is how we use texting to avoid conflict.

Consistently I am finding more and more couples whose preferred method of communication is texting because it is the safest way to veer away from conflict. We would rather text each other something that is bothering us instead of saying it face to face in hopes of veering away from a fight and from getting hurt by what we may hear our partner say to us.

The problem with avoiding conflict is that we end up stunting our growth as a person and interrupt the natural process of developing our own voice when it comes to communicating our need to our partner. If we don't take the opportunity to learn how to articulate what we need to our partner, how will they ever know what we need, but more importantly how will we ever develop our own voice when it comes to communication?

You can't find your voice until you say something. And Conflict is the gym where we learn how to develop the skill of listening to what we need and what our partner needs. Conflict is a necessary part of the journey of becoming better at communication. Without it, we will choose to be passive and find ourselves slowly closing down with our partner.

### **3. Texting has made us impatient**

We have increasingly become an impatient society of people. And the current state of marriages is evidence to this.

I find couples more and more are demanding their needs to be met immediately and if it's not done immediately, threats are given. It's kind of like my children asking why their food that was just ordered hasn't arrived yet. Their perspective is that if we get food right away at a drive thru, then why can't the restaurant make the food come out just as fast. Much like technology and the goal of improving how to serve people better, we have created a culture where impatience is an entitlement.

Consider this for a moment.

How many times have you noticed something you don't like about how your partner does something or behaves in a certain way. Then drop hints about it thru out the week. Then when the end of the week comes around you end up piss mad because your partner hasn't changed at all? Or have you ever texted your partner something mid day, expected a reply immediately, never got a reply and then proceeded to believe that your partner is ignoring you? Maybe you've asked your partner to change in a particular habit, you've seen the little change, but its not enough. You believe there should be MORE CHANGE, so you now believe your partner won't ever change. Do you believe that same thing about your very best friend who doesn't change but yet you accept them?

Impatience is not a way of life. It is not an entitlement.  
It is a sign that you don't care.

### **4. Texting has made communication all about efficiency and productiveness**

When it comes to having good communication, there is nothing efficient or productive about it. Most of the time communication feels so inefficient and unproductive. Though there is a measure of truth to this statement, it is merely a perspective of truth. When we think of being efficient or productive, we are trying to maximize our time and what we do with that time. Makes logical sense when we are trying to get things done. However, in communication the goal isn't to "get things done". Communication is about building a relationship where we connect with each other and understand each other better. It isn't meant to be fast, efficient, or productive. It is however meant to help us grow in understanding each other which in turn, leads us to be connected deeper. This takes time.

My fear is that we have become so focused on being efficient and productive that we have ceased to discover the joy of getting to know someone over time. What would the point of having a relationship be, if it was all boiled down to being efficient or productive? Don't you want more than what you get at work already?

## **5. Texting has turned communication into short bursts of words and phrases instead of a conversation.**

Texting has created in us a belief that all communication comes in short bursts of words and phrases. But not just that, we also believe that all replies must be done in the same way. What is even more insane is that we truly believe that this is good communication! ???

Just for a moment, think about how we communicate with text most times. Is it not with short bursts of words and phrases?

For example:

me: whats for dinner?

other: don't know

me: how are you doing?

other: good. not bad. ok

me: when can you get this done?

other: don't know. maybe tomorrow. or when I feel like it

me: Are you mad at me?

other: no

me: can we talk tonight?

other: maybe

Now think about how you talk to your spouse. Are you communicating mostly like texting? Are you asking short, curt questions and expecting a short, curt answer? And when you do get a short, curt answer, are you getting upset by that response? Sadly, the way we have evolved when it comes to communication, is much like how we text. There is no Listening, no discovery or exploration, and no need for engagement and active participation, yet we crave for this in our relationships.

One of the most common responses I get from couples is, "What do we talk about when we can't talk about our work or our kids?".

We have literally lost the art of talking about life and holding focus on each other and holding a conversation, where the focus of our engagement is our partner instead of it being on our work or our kids. We have lost how to discover each other. We have lost how to explore through questions like we once did when we first dated.

# WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

So the real question now is how do we interrupt these horrible patterns of talking and grow in the skills of true communication?

Here are 4 Quick things you can do immediately in your relationship to improve communication.

## **1. STOP TEXTING.**

Unless you are getting groceries or need to get something done that is time sensitive, there really is no reason why you should be texting your partner.

If you are not together or at work, then pick up the phone and have a quick call. But other wise you should be growing in your skills to communicate by actually communicating. That means you need to be speaking to each other more face to face and not hidden behind that of a screen.

## **2. CARVE OUT TIME TO HAVE A CONVERSATION**

Like most things in life that we do, like eating healthy, fitness or some skill related passion, it takes practice to get better. And communication is no different. What we do naturally is TALK. But talking is not the same as Communication. (Another topic for another time) So to practice communicating with your partner you need to carve out time to communicate. The problem is that we tend to get in the way of this happening by filling our "free or available" time with distractions like watching tv or some sort of chore that we think is way more important then having the talk that we need to have.

So, my point is, PURPOSEFULLY CARVE OUT TIME for a conversation. Set a time and date and do it.

## **3. PRACTISE TALKING ABOUT TOPICS OTHER THAN WORK, OR KIDS.**

One of the hardest patterns to break once you are married is having a conversation with your spouse without talking about Work, or your Kids. It's a bit comical that we struggle with this once we get into marriage because before marriage, we didn't have any problems generating conversation. So, this isn't about learning something new, as much as just reawakening the love of sharing and discovering life together again. A great way to kickstart this would be to search up some great date questions and once you have carved out some time to have a conversation, throw out one of these date questions to kick start a discussion. For FREE 40 DATE QUESTIONS goto <https://claritycoach.ca/free-kit/>

#### **4. DON'T AVOID CONFLICT. FACE IT HEAD ON AND GET INFRONT OF IT**

Whatever you do, DON'T AVOID CONFLICT. DON'T IGNORE IT. AND DON'T RUN FROM IT.

Our biggest mistake within our marriages is that we run and hide from Conflict. Now I get it. No one likes conflict. No one. But with out conflict we will never grow individually and as a couple. Let me explain why. When we run from or ignore conflict, we rob ourselves of the ability to discover more about who we are by learning how to articulate what we need from our partner. And every time we push past our fear and learn to articulate more clearly what we want, we actually become more and more at peace within ourselves because we end up blaming or attacking our partner less and instead become more at peace each time by sharing what we are needing.

The other reason why you shouldn't avoid conflict is because our willingness to articulate what we are needing not only helps our partner begin to understand who we are but more importantly it helps them to begin to open up to discover who they are as well.

## **SUMMARY**

If we are going to have healthier marriages, the one thing we can not ignore is our communication with each other.

We need to get past the idea that communication is like talking, where it is about information and done efficiently. We need to move past hiding from each other out of the fear of getting hurt and instead engage in conversation even when it's tough. But more importantly, we need to remind ourselves that communication is all about building a relationship that starts with a genuine desire to know each other deeply.