

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
Small Group Ministry Session

***Conversing***

By *R. Haines*, UU Fellowship of La Crosse, October 2, 2015

**Opening Words:**

After reading the referenced article by Sherry Turkle, consider the implications, social and productive, of multitasking versus unitasking (single tasking). When conversing with another person or with a group of people, should one ignore the telephone, email, texts, tweets, TVs, papers, doodles, and other interruptions? What might be gained or lost by listening intently, with full attention to the speaker and by refraining from conversing simultaneously with others by voice or other media? Please read the article carefully and with an open mind, ready to bridge generation gaps and social differences that cause you to reject it without full consideration.

**Check-in**

Share a bit of yourself, a thought, an event in your life, or something intended to be meaningful to those present. Please respect the confidentiality of what is shared within this bonded group.

**Topic:** *Turning off Electronic Intermediaries*

Regarding Ms. Turkle's article from the New York Times, please respond in turn to the following questions:

1. What are your thoughts in response to the article?
2. When is it OK to chat and text or read email at the same time? Are there any rules of etiquette or other guidance that might apply? Would some social settings be more pleasant or productive if people practiced such rules today? How might different circumstances affect when to apply different rules? Can you give examples?
3. What are your thoughts about the practice of dividing attention to the person speaking to you or to a group of people while simultaneously engaging another person via an electronic device, or by composing a reply or an unrelated article either mentally or via an electronic device?

After listening to what all the others said, do you wish to say something more, perhaps different from what you already said about the subject?

**Closing Words:**

Thanks to all for coming today and for sharing your thoughts with the rest of us. I believe that I am wiser and that my time was well spent and I hope you feel the same way.

To read the original article and related links, go to:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/27/opinion/sunday/stop-googling-lets-talk.html>