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Let's Take a Moment to Smell the Roses

I will be the first to tell you that the cell phone has been one of the best, if not the greatest, inventions of all time.

Anyone close to me would tell you, they'd think my phone was glued to the palm of my hand, if they didn't know any better.

And following closely behind the cell phone is the ability to send a simple, to-the-point text message without even having to call.

We have the ability to have a private conversation with a friend in a room full of people without anyone else listening in of the freedom to play the "he said, she said," game with written proof.

The text message has changed the way we communicate with friends, family and even our employers.

Whether it's, "Hey I'm gonna be a few minutes late," or "Mom, can you pick me up after practice," and more recently for some, "Sure, I'll pick up that shift for tomorrow," a text has become the new way to correspond with the people in our lives.

Texting has also altered the way some people speak, going as far to use acronyms and 'net-speak' in everyday life and conversation.

This leads me to often wonder if people have forgotten how to properly speak English.

However, skewed writing and words aren't the most troubling part about texting.

With our heads and fingers buried into the keys of our cell phones, we're missing out on the world and what's going on around us.

To avoid uncomfortable situations, we text our friends about the awkwardness instead of making the most of it and putting ourselves out there.

Texting has become a safety net to avoid the judging eyes of our peers and the people who surround us.

We miss out on all of the opportunities the world has to offer only because we'd rather avoid all physical and verbal contact with others and exchange it for the silent and secretive messaging texting presents to us.

Baylor Line Camp thrusts new students into an environment isolated from their friends and family to get to know strangers who are feeling the same apprehension about starting at a university.

The main rule: no outside contact and no cell phones.

When you first check in, the first thing the Line Camp leaders do is take the phone away and stow it in a safe place.

At first, this handing over of something so special scared me to death.

Fortunately, I realized that when I wasn't distracted by the constant blinking light from a new text, I found myself getting to know people I probably wouldn't have talked to because I would have been too scared or apprehensive and instead would have texted my best friend.

And now, some of these people have even become close friends.

If everyone would put their cell phones away for just one day, we'd notice the small things that our surroundings have to offer and the wonderful people who help fill the atmosphere around us.

And with Baylor's beautiful campus and ever-changing flowers, maybe we'd even stop to smell the roses.