

Cell Phone Dependence:

A focus group of students at Texas State University

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

There were six major uses of cell phones established in the focus group: communication, convenience, tools, text messaging, phone calls and visuals. Overall, the group stated that they did not have a dependence on their cell phones; however none were willing to give their phone up if prices were to increase steadily. The group did have many suggestions for others that might be classified as addicts. However, the result of our focus group is that cell phone dependence is not a problem at Texas State University.

INTRODUCTION:

Cell phone use is prevalent among the majority of Americans aged 18-35. Two hundred and twelve million Americans carried them as of April 2006. Today, the cell phone serves more than one purpose. It plays a vital role in the lives of those who own one; serving as a camera, alarm clock, stop watch, calendar, personal tracking device, and even a cute accessory. This ever-evolving technology provides instant gratification in a culture where time is precious and social interaction is unpredictable. In the past, landlines were necessary in every home and phone numbers were written down in contact books. Now cell phones seem to be taking over the place of landlines because they offer mobility, something the landline does not. Cell phone dependence is on the rise. Our focus group discussed some of the reasons why this form of technology is important and becomes almost impossible for some to live without.

In this context and keeping with observation of cell phone use and regulations put into place by some states in the United States, this focus group was specifically interested in finding out more about American's degree of dependence on cell phones.

In order to determine this dependence, it was felt that the focus group technique would be the most applicable. This technique is used to explore the opinions, knowledge, perceptions, and concerns of individuals in regard to a particular topic. Following is a description of the method adopted and the procedure used.

GOALS OF THE FOCUS GROUP:

Our group decided that we would discuss the issue of cell phone dependence. Following the discussion with our participants, the following objectives were drawn:

- The student's dependence on cell phones
- Inquire about attitudes towards cell phones
- Patterns of usage
- How important/why they use it/identify social problems (Anxiety or personal issues)
- What hassle it would cause you if you lost your phone, and
- To make suggestions or ideas for addicts

METHODOLOGY:

Procedure

The focus group we conducted was held on November 12th, 2007. Our group moderator asked questions in a clock-wise sequence to ensure active participation of all ten candidates. In our role distribution, some members of the group recorded the session with tape recorders; other members video taped the session using a camcorder, while others jotted responses on their note pads.

We gave each participant as much time as they needed to emphasize their relationship with the medium and their opinion on their usage. We concluded the discussion within 43 minutes and 19 seconds.

We were able to conduct an orderly questionnaire, and have great participation in a very active and positive atmosphere.

Population

The targeted population consisted of both male and female students of Texas State University that ranged between the ages of 18 and 32. The only specific qualification for this

discussion was for participants to own cell phones. The participants included in our discussion appeared to be individuals whose cell phones were an integral part of their daily lives. In general, we believe college students are victims of the mobile technology changing the way they work, live, love and function. This behavior determined the subject matter of this experiment.

Recruitment

Each group member was tasked in recruiting two people, providing at least eight participants for discussion on the selected topic. We came up with ten logical and probing questions that would elicit detailed responses

RESULTS:

Results of the focus group discussion could be grouped under 6 major themes. These are 1. Communication, 2. Convenience, 3. Tools (Alarm Clock, Calculator, etc.) 4. Text Messaging 5. Phone Calls 6. Visuals (Camera, pictures, etc.) Details follow.

Reasons for Cell Phone Use

Why do people use cell phones? Participants of the focus group gave reasons such as text messaging, talking on the phone, calculator and the alarm clock functions. When asked about the three main functions used on their phones, some comments included:

- Texting, texting and sometimes talking.
- Texting, the applications, like the calendar and talking.
- Talking, I text rarely, and the schedule to know what date it is
- I hate talking on the phone, so I text a lot, occasionally I talk on the phone, but I do use the Blue Tooth a lot.
- I use mine for talking, a calculator and a clock.
- I text more than anything, then phone calls and also an alarm clock
- I talk on the phone, text and that is it.
- I use it for an alarm clock, a clock and to talk on.
- I text message a lot, I actually use the clock and the alarm clock as well.

- Text messaging and phone equally and then a whole lot of visuals.

Benefits of Cell Phone Use

While most of the respondents have similar uses for cell phones, they also discussed how these uses serve as great benefits to their daily lives. Most of the students said that talking on the phone allows them to stay in touch with family and friends to cultivate their relationships and make plans to meet. Most participants also found cell phones very beneficial in emergency situations. Others found communication via the cell phone allowed them to conduct business outside of an office much more efficiently. In addition, due to its many functions, students found cell phones very convenient for many situations, from making quick calculations to utilizing its alarm clock function. Some of the comments they made were:

- I use mine for talking, a calculator, and a clock.
- I do like to talk while I'm driving which keeps me from getting bored on the long drives
- I conduct a lot of business by text messaging. It's just easier and faster.
- [Cell phones are] mostly necessary for keeping relationships intact, all that kind of stuff.
- I like keeping up with people and chatting.
- I think it even helps keep my schedule intact just in case something came up, you know, like out of the ordinary, and somebody calls me up and tells me about it. To me, it is much better.
- You know at like 3:00 in the afternoon and I'm waiting on the bus and I need to talk to somebody I could get them on the phone right away.
- If I get stranded on the side of the road I would need a cell phone if I'm not close to a landline.
- I would stick with cell phones as long as I could. They are just too convenient.
- Just to have it for emergencies or something. It would come in handy for something like that.
- I'm a woman about my business so I have to keep in touch with everything, and I'm on it about 2 to 3 hours during the day, depending on the day.

Problems with Cell Phone Use

In a society where technology is ever increasing, the cell phone has had an undeniable affect on the way we live. This new technology has made it possible for us to be instantly connected at all times. We have gone from a culture where sitting alone was commonplace to a society where we dine with a digital device. As many benefits as this technology may offer, there are also problems associated with our newfound form of communication. Many of the participants in the focus group said that cell phone etiquette is important, however; that very few people practice it. Some found that while it offered ways to keep them organized, it also interfered with their schedule. Others felt that the instant way of receiving messages was convenient but it infuriated them when people use it as a way to send mass chain messages. One participant even pointed out that the cell phone is not a good thing to have while intoxicated.

Some comments on the problems associated with cell phone use were:

- The only thing that just like infuriates me is when people send those like retarded like chain mail text messages like forward this to 10 people or you will die the next morning and I'm just like come on. I hate that kind of stuff that's the only time when I want to like just chunk it.
- I get mad or not mad, upset if people are trying to call me when I'm driving or in class or something so I usually just turn it off when I'm driving or walking around.
- One time when my mom called me at like midnight on a Friday and I was drunk and I felt a little to connected then because I shouldn't have answered, I don't know.
- One time I was in I think it was in my biology class and I was text messaging somebody. Right before I was about to send the message, I got a phone call, and clicked to send and answer, I saw it was like what's up baby? For some reason it was on speaker phone. It was friends of mine and they started cursing wondering where I was. And it was a big class and everybody heard and each was yelling at me. That was the only time I could remember it interfering.
- My cell phone definitely interferes. I find myself text messaging until 12 or one in the morning and not doing my home work. It is a social tool, it distracts me.
- Good I'm not the only one; it definitely distracts me for two reasons. One, I'm easily distracted especially when I have a lot of stuff to do, and it's not most interesting, and I'm like, lets give it a few minutes, and before I know a whole hour is gone. And the other thing is that, I know there will be another question

for me to use this anecdote but we usually text in class too, you know, texting back and forth. You know, we're usually texting someone in class.

- I work in a grocery store and I tell the cashier, you know, people that are on their phones you know if they get snotty with me then who cares about those people. If they can't hang on the phone and the guys that shop ya know "What kind of sugar, honey?" I'm just like, you make all guys look bad. But you know, just ask me or something, just cut out the unnecessary chitchat, just call the personal ones you need to make.
- It can interfere so much and it just gets annoying, and I'm definitely not addicted to it.
- Like he said, I hate it when people are on the phone while they're driving, watching a movie, or yeah I know someone who's like that too, so it kind of bothers me.

Dependence

Focus group participants were asked if they could "survive" if their phone died during the day. Some said that they began to feel anxious without their phones, but the majority said that they would survive just fine. Some people would actually enjoy a day without being available through their cell phone. It was discovered that some people also depended on their cell phones for storage and contact information. Some of the remarks made were:

- I'd survive, but I wouldn't be happy about it.
- I even felt better, you know no stress.
- I'd definitely be just fine.
- I wrote down all my phone numbers and put them into an Excel file
- I can still reach people without my cell phone.
- It's kind of like a relief.
- I wouldn't have to worry about people pestering me during the day.

SOLUTIONS:

While students found many problems and issues associated with cell phone use, they also gave many solutions. Most prominently, these participants said that those dependent on cell phone use, particularly "cell phone addicts" should turn their phones off certain times throughout the day. This would allow students to concentrate on tasks at

hand, limit possible annoyance, and spend time with actual people. Some suggested to turn the sound off, so students would not be distracted by calls or messages. Others proposed using cell phones only in private settings and not in public places like the bus or in theaters. One other suggestion for those dependent on cell phone use was to make time limits for themselves. Some of the advice students gave was as follows:

- One suggestion, I guess to make a time limit for yourself, if it's a school night, you know, cut off at 10 o'clock, 10:30, stop text messaging at 10:30 or you know, just don't text message in class.
- There are things people can do to decrease the annoyance of their cell phone addiction, i.e. talking on the phone on the bus or talking on the phone in the store or you know, that kind of thing. I think you need some kind of etiquette about it...
- Just cut out the unnecessary chitchat, just call the personal ones you need to make.
- Try to communicate in other ways, ya know, through e-mail and things like that, spend time with the actual people.
- Just turn it off. Just make small steps, if it's turning it off for an hour a day and dealing with it that way more and more until you can function without it.
- Maybe try to save time on their original phone, like cut it out, as far as, such as in class, or you know just unnecessary times or whatever. Like he said, I hate it when people are on the phone while they're driving, watching a movie.
- Try actually limiting yourself to only your free time.
- Limit yourself, I mean if you're in class, like leave it in your purse, you know, put it on silent.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The discussion in our focus group was carried out in a very relaxed atmosphere with every participant enthusiastically involved. The participants seemed to speak frankly and there was no observed general pattern in their response, which would indicate that cell phone dependence constituted a problem.

The hours of usage varied a lot, but a greater majority of the participants said they use their phones for about two to three hours a day. Very few of these hours were work and business-related. A greater percentage was personal and not that necessary.

It was surprising to note that nearly all the participants said they would still keep their phones if the cost of their plans was to double. Their major reasons were emergencies and the convenience that goes with cell phone because it could be carried everywhere. However, about two-thirds of those who said they would keep their cell phone also said they would get the most minimum plan for economic reasons and depend more on a land line. A few of the participants said they would switch to a land line and discard their cell phone, however they would not be happy about it.

When the participants were asked if they could survive a full day without their cell phone, every participant cheerfully said they would survive, though a few admitted they would be unhappy.

The issue of surviving a day without a cell phone rolled into the question of being able to retrieve lost numbers and what hassle it would cause. Several of them said it would cause a hassle for various reasons. One major reason was being able to get in contact with loved ones and close friends.

A small number of participants said they talk to their family and friends very frequently throughout the day because they are family-oriented, however; the discussion showed that none of them were exclusively connected in such a way that it would affect them negatively in any way.

The question about whether or not the participants feel any anxiety while away from their cell phone brought up some mixed opinions. Four of the participants said - no, two said that they do feel anxious, and another four said it depends on the circumstance; the general indication is that it is not an issue of concern.

The discussion on addiction was a long one. All the participants admitted there are cell phone addicts, but an overwhelming majority said they are not addicted. This addiction could be seen in people constituting nuisance in public places like on the bus, in line at the mall, going over their plan limits, talking while watching a movie, text messaging or talking in class, etc. They went on to offer suggestions to addicts. These included:

- Leaving the phone behind and going to camp for awhile
- Turning it off from time to time each day and learning to do without it.
- Setting a time limit for oneself like cutting off for the day at 10pm.

Conclusively, the result of our focus group is that cell phone dependence is not a problem at Texas State University. However, this outcome may be based on the homogeneous nature of the participants. The fact that all of them were college students between the ages of 18 and 31 might have been the cause. Another focus group on this subject should be demographically widespread to include older people, business people, academicians, less educated members of the public, the police, to mention but a few. Alternatively, focus groups can be conducted exclusively on these different demographic categories.

ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT:**1. What are the three main functions you use on your cell phone?**

- Texting, texting, (lol) and sometimes talking. Very rarely do I talk on my cell phone, otherwise its texting.
- Texting, the applications, like the calendar and talking.
- Umm, I say, umm, most of the time talking on the phone, and um I text rarely, and uh, I don't know about a third use, I guess use it for the schedule to know like what date it is.
- Well I hate talking on the phone, so I text a lot, occasionally I talk on the phone, but I use blue tooth a lot.
- I use mine for talking, uh, a calculator, and a clock
- I text more than anything and after that, it would be phone calls and uh, I also use it as an alarm clock.
- Umm, I talk on the phone, text and that's it.
- I use it for my alarm clock, um a clock and a talker
- I text message a lot, I actually use the clock and the alarm clock as well.
- Text messaging and phone equally and then uh, a also a whole lot of visual.

2. On average, how many hours a day do you spend on your cell phone and are they necessary phone calls? How many are personal and how many are work-related calls?

- They're all personal, probably an hour to two hours a day, and none of them are necessary. No I mean I think they're necessary, but, wasn't that the second part of the question? Yeah, it's important to me - might not be life or death.
- Um probably a couple hours a day, I'd say more work-related than personal. (Okay, and are they necessary calls?) Um, sometimes; not the late night ones.
- I'd say I probably spend about, depending on what day it is, more like 2 to 3 and a half hours on my phone. And most of it is personal; I very slightly use it like something that isn't just with my friends, I mean sometimes it is work-related. (Would you say that's necessary talk?) Uh, yes, mostly necessary for keeping relationships intact, all that kind of stuff.
- Usually my phone calls are like, personal but like for a reason, like I need to get ahold of someone, like for plans or anything, but most of my text messaging's just like personal. So, I spend usually like less than an hour on the phone. (Mainly personal then?) Yeah. (Are they necessary calls?) Uh, see if people like want to go eat or something, that's pretty much it.
- I spend less than an hour on my phone, they're all personal, and no, none of them are necessary.
- Well, 90% of my calls or more are all personal, and I'm not a big fan of talking on the phone so I try and keep most calls under 5 minutes. I text a lot though if that counts. (And is it necessary?) Not usually.

- Um, most of mine are business-related, cause I'm a woman about my business so I have to keep in touch with everything, and I'm on it about 2 to 3 hours during the day, depending on the day.
- I spend about 1-2 hours on it. They're mostly personal. I get like 1 or 2 a week that aren't. I think they're necessary, but I guess I could live without them.
- I'd say I spend about 3 or 4 hours with my cell phone every day and probably one-fourth to one-half of them are business, but I conduct a lot of business by text messaging. It's just easier and faster. (Would you say the personal calls are necessary when you do make them?) Not the personal one, no.
- I'd say because my days are varied a lot, I just kind of average them up to 2 hours a day. Most of them are personal, and if there's a heavy business day or something, I will count that. I do like to talk while I'm driving which keeps me from getting bored on the long drives, and most of them probably aren't necessary.

3. If your service provider and all others almost doubled the cost of their plans, would you continue to use the service or switch to a landline? Why?

- Oh no I would continue to use the service. Just because landlines are not available to you all the time. I have to have my phone with me everywhere I go.
- What's the question again? I would probably say I would have to continue using the service. I couldn't do just the whole home phone thing it's just about the same as having a home phone if you are always on the go.
- Um I think I would switch to a landline just because I mean a cell phone is important but honestly I could do without texting and all of the extra features other than talking. I could just walk around with like a list of phone numbers and use pay phones and something like that instead; it would be a lot more economical.
- I would probably go to just like the minimum service I could, just to have it for emergencies or something. It would come in hand for something like that.
- I guess if I had the option I would switch to a landline because I don't know I don't ever use my phone unless I am in my dorm room.
- I would stick with cell phones as long as I could they are just too just convenient and usually I'm not at home
- I would stick with my cell phone and switch to the lowest plan to have it for emergencies only like if I get stranded on the side of the road I would need a cell phone if i'm not close to a landline.
- Yea I'm never at home so I would stick with cell phone but I would get the most minimum plan
- I would stick with cell phones because I would have everybody's number right there. You know at like 3:00 in the afternoon and I'm waiting on the bus and I need to talk to somebody I could get them on the phone right away.
- Well it's a hard question to answer straight up because I am on my families plan so its whatever they would want to do but if I was paying myself I would probably keep it and go with the low plan and just keep it for emergencies and work purposes and then I would go to a land line partially because I am kind of

getting sick of just how like so technologically wired as a society we are it would be like a return to normalcy.

4. If your cell phone died in the middle of the day how important, would it be for you to check your messages or charge your phone? Why?

- Charge my phone would be important. I never check my messages. I just look and see who called me and call them back. But I don't know anyone's number, so I do need it for logistics.
- If it was business related I don't really need one during the workday.
- Same answer
- I could wait until the end of the day and charge it. I would not die without it.
- I would be in no rush, only if I need a calculator.
- I am not consistent.
- I have to keep mine charge. I freak out, I need my phone.
- I carry my chargers with me at all times, cause my phone dies all the time.
- I could wait until I get home. I have alternate ways of getting a hold of people, such as on MySpace or on Facebook.
- If it did die, I could wait till I get home. I do get a bit edgy when it dies. But I don't have to go home and drop everything I am doing to charge it.

5. Ok, our next question is, does your cell phone ever interfere with your daily schedule? Could you give examples?

- I don't really think it interferes. I mean I use it or text when I am at work. I generally don't talk on the phone when I am at work. If somebody calls me I'll send him a text because, I mean that's rude. I don't let it interfere with my day. My boss may think it does. I think I'm so pretty good at that.
- You know, I don't think it would interfere...when I'm on schedule...(Inaudible).
- Hmm, I don't think it would interfere with my schedule at all. In fact, I think it even helps like keep my schedule intact just in case something came up, you know, like out of the ordinary, and somebody calls me up and tells me about it. To me, it is much better.
- Yeah, it doesn't really interfere with; it doesn't interfere with my routine. Lately, if I like feel my phone vibrate in my pocket, I'll wait till I have something like free time to check it rather than let it interfere with what I'm doing.
- I don't ever really check it even if it vibrates.
- One time I was in I think it was in my biology class and I was text messaging somebody. Right before I was about to send the message, I got a phone call, and clicked to send and answer, I saw it was like what's up baby? For some reason it was on speaker phone...(laughter by the participants) It was friends of mine and they started cursing wondering where I was. And it was a big class and everybody heard and each was yelling at me. That was the only time I could remember it interfering
- No, it doesn't interfere with my schedule. I'm like a person who like to plan my day...(inaudible mixed with coughs). I have to plan...

- Ehm, I don't know, I wouldn't say it interferes. I mean sometimes I have five minutes; I talk with my boyfriend during class. But, I don't see that as interference (laugh)...
- My cell phone definitely interferes. I find myself text messaging until 12 or one in the morning and not doing my home work. It is a social tool, it distracts me.
- Good I'm not the only one; it definitely distracts me for two reasons. One, I'm easily distracted especially when I have a lot of stuff to do, and it's not most interesting, and I'm like, lets give it a few minutes, and before I know a whole hour is gone. And the other thing is that, I know there will be another question for me to use this anecdote but we usually text in class too, you know, texting back and forth...(laughter and mumblings). You know, we're usually texting someone in class.

6. If asked to give up your cell phone for a full day could you “survive” Why or why not?

- Oh yeah, I'd survive. I wouldn't be happy about it. I dropped my cell phone in the toilet and went two days without it. It was hell, but I made it. I'm still here. So, yeah, I think I'd be okay.
- Yeah, I'd survive.
- Yeah, I think I'd definitely be just fine. There's been many times when my phone died and I didn't have it for, you know, a weekend or something. I even felt better, you know no stress. In some cases I felt a little more stress, but it was just kind of nice to not have to worry about checking my phone and stuff.
- Yeah, it's kind of the same way I feel. It's kind of a relief. Like I don't feel like I'm not going to be the one that's like going to cut off my phone for a day just because, but like, if it like stopped working, or like uh, I forgot it, it would be kind of nice because I wouldn't have people pestering me during the day.
- Yeah, I could survive in a heartbeat.
- I like my phone a lot, but I could go without it.
- Yeah, I could survive without it. It's not going to kill me.
- Yeah, I'd survive. I'd just be really unhappy, but.
- I could survive. I wouldn't like it. But, I feel like I would get a lot more done.
- My story is actually going to relate to Christy's. If I were asked to do it, like ahead of time I would be totally fine with it because I've given it up against my will, if I loose it. And I've survived that. So I would be prepared I wrote down all my phone numbers and put them into an Excel file because I actually dropped mine in the toilet a couple of months ago, and I was like oh crap, so you know I can still reach people without my cell phone.

7. Before the cell phone, we had to write phone numbers down or just remember them. If you lost your phone tomorrow, would you be able to recall the numbers in your phone and what kind of hassle would this cause you?

- The only number that I know in my phone is my parents', and that is because they are still using that same phone number they have had since I was a child... (Someone coughs in the middle of the statement)... Other than that, I not a single one.

- Ehm, it would be tough. My mum's work phone number. I talk to her on daily basis, you know calling home. A few friends that I'm close to, I know, but the rest of the numbers, there's not a single number that I know. It would be a hassle.
- Actually it wouldn't be too hard for me because I actually have most of my contacts written down in the book I have. So, I'll just go to that but there's a few, I mean there's always a few that I miss writing down and stuff, and I... and so it will be a bit of hassle, maybe, maybe, but you know, and it won't be too big a deal because most of the people that I actually talk to most of the time I have their numbers memorized. So, no big deal.
- Yeah...like my parents and my family members, and like a few friends, like a few people I talk to the most, I have those memorized. So, I will still be able to like call those people I actually call more often. But I would lose a bunch of like just people I don't talk to that much.

Moderator: So would that cause you a hassle?

Yeah, but I could just call like a friend and say, hey, I need this guy's number. It's pretty easy. It will be a hassle but it wouldn't be too bad.

- (Coughs) Ehm, what are to me important numbers, I pretty much memorize but I'm a kind of guy that is like hey nice to meet you, what is your phone number? So, I have a lot of phone numbers in there. Ehm, but I mean a lot of people I don't call all the time. So, it's not that big of a deal if I lost all of them. But it will definitely be a hassle to pull it back up.
- The only number I really know is my parents'. Sometimes I don't really know my own number. Sometimes I call somebody so I can see it. So, it will be a big hassle.
- Hmmm, it won't be a hassle for me because I have a back up plan. I wrote down the number...
- I have about three hundred numbers in total. So, it would be a hassle... I wouldn't be able to get those numbers back. So, yeah, it would be a hassle.
- I have about three hundred numbers as well. So, yeah I wouldn't find a way of getting them back. But also business contacts... whenever they're sending their emails they have their phone numbers down there. So, I can always go to my emails. There are some phone numbers I'd like to get rid of. So that won't be a problem. But I can also go to friends as well.
- As I've mentioned before, it's a second time. So. I have a comprehensive list in case like in the toilet drop. Also, I learnt the hard way like when I made some calls the numbers didn't transfer but at another time they did... So it wouldn't be a problem at all. And the ones I have, I usually know people who know them. So, it won't be a problem.

8. Do you ever find yourself feeling too connected to friends and family? Do you feel very connected with a few people and disconnected with the rest of the world?

- No, I think I'm pretty well balanced
- Uh yea I talk to my parents all the time, but out of a thousand minute plan I use like 200 minutes, I call a couple friends and all the other numbers well I'm just like whatever, I may call some on the weekends but that's it.

- Um well like I said before it is kind of nice to just not have my phone and be disconnected from everything for a little while but I mean I don't think I've ever felt too connected to anything. Like I said it's a convenience it's not a hassle or anything. So I guess I feel well balanced as well.
- Um so do I except for the only thing that just like infuriates me is when people send those like retarded like chain mail text messages like forward this to 10 people or you will die the next morning and I'm just like come on. I hate that kind of stuff that's the only time when I want to like just chunk it.
- Can you repeat the question? Uhh I don't know if I feel too connected just because I just naturally don't answer unless I'm in my room, but I don't know, I get mad or not mad, upset if people are trying to call me when I'm driving or in class or something so I usually just turn it off when I'm driving or walking around. Uhh so I don't feel too connected to them because I just don't answer it. But yea I feel more connected to the people I talk to in person and not over the phone.
- One time when my mom called me at like midnight on a Friday and I was drunk and I felt a little to connected then because I shouldn't have answered, I don't know. But other than that no.
- Yea I would say that I'm connected to my family and friends I mean I take that to heart. I'm like very family oriented and you know I like to socialize or whatever so. I would think that I'm too connected in some kind of ways because for example if I loose my phone I'm like man I have to talk to my family and friends or whatever. I'm like uh I don't have a social life.
- Is that too connected in a negative way? Well I mean I talk to my boyfriend a lot over the phone, I mean a lot like hours so I guess you could say that's too connected but I really don't feel disconnected except for maybe when I want to be disconnected like when there's that weird guy that always tries to talk to you and I would pull out my phone and be like hey mom I miss you but really it's just because I don't want to talk to that person.
- I'm not too connected to most people, well I guess maybe to one person I'm too connected to but I don't think I'm disconnected, well I'm disconnected to some things going on because I'm so like my phone lights up and I'm automatically pulling it out and looking at it and reading texts so I've missed some things going on, but overall not too disconnected.
- When you say disconnected to the world does that mean like your social circle or the rest of the world? I don't, I'm a social person so I like you know being in touch with people and I like sometimes being on the phone with people I haven't talked to in a while so I never feel too connected. Like there are just some people I really don't want to talk to and I just silence the phone or something or just don't pick up but for the most part I don't have a problem with people in general calling me to much. So I like keeping up with people and chatting.

9. Do you ever start to feel anxious when you are away from your phone for several hours or even minutes?

- I want to look at my phone so bad right now. So yes. Definitely.

- Sometimes. When I am at work I forget about it for a few hours. Not normally though I am so busy at work.
- Yeah, not at all. Mostly because I am not an anxious person. But also cause I don't care too much about what is going on with my phone.
- Depends on why I am away from it. If I chose to leave it then no. But if I accidentally left it at home than yes. Because if I was expecting a call and accidentally left it.
- I only need it for a calculator or to see what time it is.
- Just in case someone needed something. Like in case of emergency.
- Not normally because of how busy I am.
- I have to check my ph one at least once in class. Like right now I am checking it ever two seconds.
- Depends on what day it is and what is going on. I coordinate a lot of people. But if I was just outside hanging out then I wouldn't worry about it. When I get bored I like to have it for something to do.
- I am the same way. Kind of yes and kind of no. If I left it in the car than I don't worry about it. But if I left it at the house than I would rather not leave the house without it.

10. Do you agree that people can be cell phone addicts and would you consider yourself dependent? If so, what suggestions do you have for such people? How can they reasonably limit the use of cell phones?

- Yeah I think there can be cell phone addicts. Of course, you know, I talk and yeah it bothers me when I don't have one, I'm going to say that, but I think there are things people can do to decrease the annoyance of their cell phone addiction, i.e. talking on the phone on the bus or talking on the phone in the store or you know, that kind of thing. I think you need some kind of etiquette about it, but I don't think I'm hurting anybody with my little addiction, so I'm okay with it.
- No I wouldn't say I'm an addict. I didn't even get a phone until I was 20, and it was pretty horrendous. High school was pretty much sheltered and did nothing. I was on AIM at 9 and if my friends were taking off before then, you didn't call our house, otherwise you'd wake up my mom, my dad would get ticked and threaten you. So no, it wasn't good and then I became dependent on it, but you know, now that I'll stay busy and balanced, trying to finish up school, and I work 2 jobs, so not so much, but yeah I'll say the necessary talk, especially working retail, I work in a grocery store and I the tell cashier, you know, people that are on their phones you know if they get snotty with me then who cares about those people. If they can't hang on the phone and the guys that shop ya know "What kind of sugar, honey?" I'm just like, you make all guys look bad. But you know, just ask me or something, just cut out the unnecessary chitchat, just call the personal ones you need to make.
- Yeah definitely wouldn't say I'm a cell phone addict at all, I definitely do enjoy having it as far as convenience and it's just nice to have that easy thing to go and communicate with people with ease, but having breaks is nice with it, and I would definitely prefer to have it, but I'm definitely not addicted to it. (Do you believe that some people can be?) Yes, I think that some people probably get addicted to

- it but not myself. (What suggestions would you have for such people?) I guess go camping for a while and leave your cell phone away and just enjoy life. (How can they reasonably limit the use of cell phones?) I guess try to communicate in other ways, ya know, through e-mail and things like that, spend time with the actual people.
- Well I definitely think there is such thing as a cell phone addict and I am not one of those because I really like getting away, like if I ever go on a trip or something, I turn mine off, unless it's someone just checking up on me, then they'll leave a message and I'll call them back and turn it off. It can interfere so much and it just gets annoying, and I'm definitely not addicted to it. But as far as a suggestion for someone who does claim to be addicted to their cell phones, just turn it off. Just make small steps, if it's turning it off for an hour a day and dealing with it that way more and more until you can function without it. Because I mean you've gotta think like before cell phones were out how everyone did things, so many people still hung out all the time and got ahold of each other fine before cell phones.
 - I guess there could be cell phone addicts. I could never imagine ever myself being one, but I've never really met one I guess. I've met people that use their cell phones so much that it kind of annoyed me, but that's only because I never use it. What was the rest of the question? (What suggestions would you have for someone who is a cell phone addict?) Turn it off, I don't know. Chill out. Same answer as before, just turn it off. It's no problem for me.
 - I think I know a few cell phone addicts, but I don't really have a problem with them being that way as long as they're not talking during a movie or something. (So you don't see it as a problem?) No.
 - I would categorize a cell phone addict as someone who goes over their minutes and their monthly payments are like over 500 dollars or something. I know a lot of people just like that, and that's like ridiculous, and in order to wean themselves off of it, maybe try to save time on their original phone, like cut it out, as far as, such as in class, or you know just unnecessary times or whatever. Like he said, I hate it when people are on the phone while they're driving, watching a movie, or yeah I know someone who's like that too, so it kind of bothers me. I would categorize a cell phone addict as someone as who continuously goes over their minutes and their texting where it's ridiculous.
 - Yeah I believe there are people who are addicted, people who are in class and they text the whole time or the people who sit in those big classes and actually talk on it, it's ridiculous. I mean I check it obviously for time and stuff like that and I guess I'm an addict in that way, I'm obsessed with time, I know that's just weird, but I don't really talk on it a lot. I text message a little bit, but I guess to limit yourself, I mean if you're in class, like leave it in your purse, you know, put it on silent, well if you're a guy, obviously not, but silence it. I mean, just an hour and fifteen minutes, relax and not look at it at all.
 - I'd say I'm a cell phone addict; I don't let it get out of control to where I'm rude in public, in class or rude at work, when I'm at work I keep it in my purse or I keep it in my pocket or my back pack or whatever, but there are some addicts. One suggestion, I guess to make a time limit for yourself, if it's a school night,

you know, cut off at 10 o'clock, 10:30, stop text messaging at 10:30 or you know, just don't text message in class.

- Well, after the first half of the table spoke, I was beginning to think, "maybe I am a cell phone addict," although in theaters, I've never talked or I always put it on silent and sometimes I'll put it on absolute silence, still a vibration because I'm spastic by nature I suppose. But I think sometimes I can be because like Charlie was saying when he's on vacation, he just shuts off the phone, whereas I'm always on it saying, "Hey I'm in San Diego right now" or "Hey I just climbed up a peak at Davis Mountain State Park and in uncomfortable shoes and I can see everything from here" so I guess I'm an addict that way, but Terissa's calling me out for texting in class, and actually I just did check a text message while they were speaking too, so I think I kind of am, but I don't let it actually truly interfere with, if I'm in line at a restaurant or I'm trying to limit my cell on the bus because I may think I'm more interesting than anyone else, but I'm not, so my conversations aren't that interesting. Yeah I guess just like setting a time limit might certainly be good, try actually limiting yourself to only your free time, like only after 7 or after 9 might be good, plus you're probably saving money in the process.

TOPIC OUTLINE GUIDE:

1. What are three main functions you use on your cell phone?
2. On average, how many hours a day do you spend on your cell phone and are they necessary phone calls? How many are personal and how many for work-related calls?
3. If your service provider and all others almost doubled the cost of their plans, would you continue to use the service or switch to a landline? Why?
4. If your cell phone died in the middle of the day how important, would it be for you to check your messages or charge your phone? Why?
5. Does your cell phone ever interfere with your daily schedule? Explain.
6. If asked to give up your cell phone for a full day could you “survive”? Why or why not?
7. Before the cell phone, we had to write phone numbers down or just remember them. If you lost your phone tomorrow, would you be able to recall the numbers in your phone and what kind of hassle would this cause you?
8. Do you ever find yourself feeling too connected to friends and family? Do you feel very connected with a few people and disconnected with the rest of the world?
9. Do you start to feel anxious when you are away from your phone for several hours or even minutes?
10. Do you agree that people can be cell phone addicts and would you consider yourself dependent? If so, what suggestions do you have for such people? How can they reasonably limit the use of cell phones?