

## Thumbs up for Texting

Dorothy Rosby

I don't mean to brag, but I type really FAST--if you don't deduct for errors. And I mistakenly believed that being a good typist would make me a good texter. Well, it doesn't--any more than being a good singer would make me a good auto mechanic. It wouldn't! And I know that, even though I'm not a good singer.

After decades of typing almost every day, my fingers know where the keys are on a keyboard. I don't, but my fingers do. It's muscle memory, like dancers have, only not as graceful. And like professional football players have, only not as lucrative. Muscle memory allows me to type like I live my life, very fast--and without a great deal of thought. Unfortunately, it's my thumbs that do the texting, and my thumb muscles only know where the space bar is. That doesn't make for interesting and effective messages.

Frankly, I'm shocked that texting while driving is even a temptation for some people. I couldn't text and drive if you held the wheel for me. Besides the muscle memory issue, there is the matter of that itchy-bitsy keyboard. I have dainty little fingers. (Who are you to disagree? You can't see them.) And even I have to use the edge of my thumbnail to text. I don't see how men with big thumbs and short nails can do it. I think more men will start getting manicures, what with texting replacing all other forms of communication--including talking with family at the dinner table.

Having said all that, I have to add that I'm a big fan of texting. I love how it lets me avoid eye contact with people I'd rather not make eye contact with--like the guys at the carnival who want me to pop a balloon with a dart while I'm blindfolded, or throw a ring around a rubber duck's neck while it's floating! Who are they kidding? I can't even walk and text at the same time. I'm fake texting when I walk by.

I love how texting allows me to communicate with people in places where it's not appropriate to communicate any other way. Like at a wedding where I can text my friend on the other side of the church and ask if that's the bride's old boyfriend sitting in the third row. Maybe it's still not appropriate.

Or say I'm meeting my husband in a crowded restaurant. Back in the old days--you know, back when a cell phone didn't have a keyboard--I would have called him and said, "Hi Sweetie! Where are you sitting? I SAID WHERE ARE YOU SITTING?" Now I just text, "Where R U?" Short, but not sweet.

But the main reason I love texting, is that it's the best method I know for keeping track of a teenager--short of putting a tracking device in his tennis shoe. Teens will text parents in situations where they would never call. That's because, when they're hanging out with friends, it's less embarrassing to text, "come get me" than to speak into a phone, "Hi Mom. Could you come get me . . . PLEASE?" For all their friends know, they're texting a boyfriend, a girlfriend, or an NBA scout.

But if you think I'm uh . . .concise . . . when I text, you should read my son's messages.

HIM: pick me up

ME: when and where

HIM: 5

ME: WHERE?

HIM: downtown

ME: where downtown

HIM: the store  
ME: which store??  
HIM: on the corner  
ME: CALL ME!!!!  
HIM: why

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