



**"The way we communicate with others and with ourselves ultimately determines the quality of our lives."  
– Anthony Robbins**

**WatchGlass  
Advisors, LLC**

*By isolating a single aspect of a broader situation and focusing on it, great progress can be made...*

## Becoming Aware of Your Surroundings

by Rosanne Scriffignano, Ph.D.

When people consider their surroundings, they are often concerned about personal safety—perhaps when walking alone at night or when crossing a busy street. In addition to physical surroundings, there are human surroundings that require attention and consideration of the human spirit.

The digital age has impacted all of us—even those without an iPod® or cell phone. (Yes, there are people who are not digitally connected!) The impact has translated into isolation and loneliness for many. When our young people send text messages to friends who stand next to them, they miss out on human interactions involving facial expressions, vocal inflections, and laughter. Adults are also guilty—sending text messages via BlackBerry® devices while attending meetings with customers and colleagues.

A high school senior recently shared with me that she hated to talk on the telephone. She “preferred” e-mail or text messages. I pondered why she felt comfortable speaking with me in person but didn’t dare ask the question. Instead, I observed her interactions with me: Her sentences were short. She did not look me in the eye. Was she truly aware of her human surroundings, which at that moment was temporarily occupied by me?!

Technology is not the villain here. We can make choices about how to incorporate gadgets into our lives. In lieu of fretting over how many people are “linked-in” with us, let’s find creative ways to spend quality time with friends and family. A digital presence is important but should it replace our human presence? The answer lies somewhere in the great Digital Divide entangled among the virtual wires of our techno-devices and the precious threads of our human spirit.

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