Read this article about staying in close connection with other people.

Connected!

Most of us hardly go anywhere today without a cell phone, an iPad, or a laptop—or so it seems. We're trying to communicate with each other 24/7. We want to be "connected." How do we accomplish this? We access the Internet to contact friends on Facebook or Twitter. We send and receive emails, write and read blogs, call others and text them on our cell phones. We're "available" most of the time. Is this constant communication good? I think it's positive overall, though there are some downsides to living digitally.

My 17-year-old daughter, Allison, is an excellent example. She has joined the social networking sites Facebook and Twitter. Facebook has been around since 2005 and Twitter since 2006. This evening, Allison is sitting in front of her computer. She's reading posts from her friends and writing responses. At the moment, she's laughing, probably at a picture or amusing comment. She's having a great time, but she still hasn't done her homework, and she probably won't finish it until very late tonight.

Then there's my 15-year-old son, Nick. It seems that he just can't do without his cell phone, which he's had since his birthday four months ago. Right now, Nick is texting friends. He's been doing that for the last half hour and shows no signs of stopping. I'm afraid that Nick spends far too much time on his phone, and that it's affecting his powers of concentration. Nick's teachers say he isn't doing well in the classroom. They've been having difficulty getting his attention.

Then there's my wife Elena, who loves email. After dinner every night, Elena gets out her laptop, logs on to the Internet, and reads and answers her messages. These days, she's getting hundreds of email messages a week, and she's having trouble staying on top of them. This makes her feel stressed out.

And then there's yours truly.[1] I go to the office three days a week and telecommute the other two. When I'm working at home, I write a blog. (By the way, do you know the origin of the word "blog"? It's a contraction of "web log," which is a type of website.) On my blog, I write regular entries and comment on what others say. I really enjoy doing this, but it takes up a lot of my time. In addition, I start to feel anxious if I don't update it frequently.

Staying in near-constant communication with others often leads to stress. It tends to prevent us from spending quiet time alone, from reading, from enjoying nature. It can be addictive. It can have undeniably negative effects on our ability to work or study efficiently.

There are a few downsides to living digitally. Does that mean we should limit our exposure to the digital world? As with so many other things in our lives, we need to put things in perspective. Most people realize that there are many advantages associated with frequent communication with others. Through texting and the Internet, my family and I find out important news almost immediately, and we stay in touch with friends we seldom see. So would we give it all up? Not on your life!

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1 *yours truly:* me, myself

AFTER YOU READ

A VOCABULARY Match the words in **bold** with their meanings.

_____ 1. We **access** the Internet to contact friends.

_____ 2. Should we limit our **exposure to** the digital world?

_____ 3. There are a few **downsides** to living digitally.

_____ 4. There are advantages **associated with** frequent communication.

_____ 5. We need to **put things in perspective**.

_____ 6. It can have **undeniably** negative effects.

_____ 7. Do you know the **origin** of the word "blog"?

_____ 8. It seems that he just can't **do without** his cell phone.

a. see things clearly

b. disadvantages

c. live without

d. clearly

e. starting point

f. experience of

g. use

h. connected to

B COMPREHENSION Read the statements. Check (✓) *True* or *False*.

	True	False
1. Most people today want to be in frequent communication with others.	☐	☐
2. The author thinks digital living is positive overall.	☐	☐
3. Facebook and Twitter are computer search engines.	☐	☐
4. People have been using Twitter longer than Facebook.	☐	☐
5. The author's daughter is not having a good time tonight.	☐	☐
6. The author's son has had his cell phone for over a year.	☐	☐
7. The author and his wife think that digital living is sometimes stressful.	☐	☐
8. The author seems to think it's good to spend quiet time alone.	☐	☐