Meet My New Roommate, Technology

As long as I can remember, technology has always been a part of my life. It has influenced and changed how I speak and how I communicate with others. But most importantly cell phones and tablets has changed the daily interaction right within my own household. More than ever technology in today’s world is effecting families in all sorts of ways. Since technology is used in almost every aspect of our daily lives, it’s hard to imagine life without it. Because of the computer and social media, communication between my parents, my siblings and me has changed. As well as daily tasks that we have done as a family throughout the years. I have also noticed there are things certain things technology cannot change no matter how much we are attached to our gadgets. The evolution of technology in last couple of years has been the reason why I have experienced such great memories with my friends and family.

 When I was a little girl there were no cell phones and tablets. If I wanted to play I would either ask my older sisters or I’d play by myself. Most importantly I did not have any electronics to teach anything. My mother always told me I began speaking right away because of all people around me communicating with me all the time. Because I had so many sisters she said I would always watch them and wanted to talk like them. I was also told my eldest sister always had me in her room listening to music and dancing. The constant interaction with my sisters is where I began expressing myself verbally. My parents always believed in teaching child from an early age will be beneficial. My mother would sing the alphabet and the national anthem to me. Every time USA would win a gold medal in the Olympics she would always tell me to get ready to sing, and that’s how I learned the star spangled banner. Because she was always singing to me when I was a child, I believe that is the reason why I’m always singing and humming as an adult. My mother also taught me how to read and write. When it came to learning how to read, my mother used an old book she taught all my sisters with. The story was about all kinds of people that lived in the city, and the occupations they had. She taught me before I began pre-k, so when it came time to attend school I already knew my numbers, shapes, colors and how to write my name. She also taught to me to good penmanship. I would have to rewrite any homework that wasn’t neatly written. My father brought me all sorts of books along with educational toys that taught me how to count money, how to spell and others. He also brought me activity books where I could paint and do other arts and crafts. My dad always brought home Highlight magazines which I enjoyed because I drew pictures, I solve word problems, and I had to find hidden objects in a picture. My family used books, toys and daily interaction to teach me the basics of orality and literacy.

As I got older, a television and a VCR would be the very first technical device I began using as a child. I began watching educational shows like Sesame Street, and watching Walt Disney films which were on VHS tapes. I remember seeing items around my house that my parents own. My father had a type writer. It was big and heavy with a greenish cover that had a latch in the front to open it. He had a larger pink eraser if he made any mistakes, and I remember the letter H he had to pressed down extra hard for it to come up on the paper. I also remember my father having an old projector with the small white edge square slides, and a vintage black and white camera. My mother had an old fashion beige rotary dial style telephone, which I loved to play with. She also had two cast iron irons, and a kerosene lamp I used to see on the shelves.

 My parents also had a turntable in which I played their 33 & 45 records. My sisters had a television with two dials, which made a clicking sound every time you turned it on or off. They had a Polaroid camera and cassette tapes. I believe the first game console I saw and played was the original Nintendo, with the gray squared structure and the rectangular controller with red the buttons. I remember playing Tetris and Olympic game. My sisters had the matching Nintendo pad or matt, where you could run like you were a real track star. Another game console I remember was the Atari, but I never played it because it was considered old when I was a little girl. I remember when my house for the first time got the internet connection. Everyone was amazed and didn’t know exactly what to do. I remember the first thing my sisters looked up, it was a website about a film that was just released in the movie theaters. The first time I seen and used a mac computer, one of my older sisters purchased one and it was he the famous bulky IMac g3 and she got it in the color blue. I also remember every time she turned it on I would hear the mac startup sound. I remember thinking how clear and pretty the screen was.

Since some much time has passed, it’s funny to try and remember when the first time I used a computer. My first experience had to been at home from my uncle who built computers, or it was at school. I do remember my computer class in elementary school. The class room was located in the basement and it had rows and rows of computer monitors. I learned the basics of on and off, how to print, the meaning of control+alt+delete, how to use a mouse and other basic information. It was the first time I played with an educational math & reading games. In Junior high school, I did more problem solving games, and I learned how to use Power point and used a floppy disk. The assignment was to create a presentation on anything you were interested in. I did mine on Jamaica.

Television created a bonding experience between my mom and sisters When I had a day off from school, we would watch the “Price is Right” and soap operas with my mother. She would tell us how she watched soap operas because of her mom, but there was a time and soap operas were broadcast on the radio not the TV. Unlike today where everyone has their own TV, there were only three TV set in my house. One in the living room, the second in my two eldest sisters and third was owned by my other two older sisters. I remember watching a show called ghost writer with them and I always watched them play video games on the Sega Genesis. Our favorite game was Sonic the Hedgehog.

When it comes to analog and digital audio, I have an appreciation for my stereo, the CD player, the phone, and the streaming. When I want to blast a song with heavy bass I’ll use the stereo, but there is something about the turntable, putting the needle into the grooves of records and hearing that sound right before the song begins there is something about it. Listening to music has played a major role in my life. My love of music comes from my family. Being that everyone is from a different generation, when I came along I basically was like a sponge and soak up all the genres everyone listens to in my house. From my parents it was “Oldies”, jazz, and doo wop. From my sisters I learned about 1980s pop & hip –hop and in addition to what I grew up listening to. Technology has played a major role in music. How it’s created as well as how its listened to. Throughout the years I been exposed to records, eight-track, cassette tape, CDs, mp3s, IPod, and streaming. Because I listened to all kinds of music I’m that person you hear saying, “That’s my songs” and I said that line for the last 50 songs. On the weekends I would start playing my parents records and before you know it, everyone has gravitated to the living room and the entire family is laughing eating and talking and reminiscing about childhood memories and loved ones. Before I know it is 5 o’clock in the morning a we’ve talked and danced the night away.

 As I got older, communicating with my family has changed. I noticed we could all be in the dining room and everyone is on a laptop, tablet or phones. When its dinner time all the phones are right next to the plate as if it took the place of the knife and fork. We still have constant conversations but I realize that the room is sometimes too quiet all because everyone’s nose is in a screen. Growing up I played with board games, watercolors painting, coloring books, and I played in the driveway or the backyard. I had a very active imagination as child especially when my older sisters couldn’t play with me. As for my nephew and niece, who is 14 and 9 respectively, they don’t even know how to use their imagination. All they know and accustomed to is electronics. For Christmas or for their birthday’s they would get boxes of toys but would only play with it for a few 10 minutes before they would want to go back play with the electronics whether it was a PSP, a Xbox, or a cell phone. They are still glued to this day to their devices all day and all night. How they entertaining themselves is the complete opposite of how I spent my childhood.

Because of tablets, phones, and social media, I bonding am with my parents differently. Normally older individuals don’t engage with all the electronics of today because some find it hard or intimidating. My parents are the opposite they both found devices that they like and willing to learn more about. For my father he gravitated toward the computer. Years ago I showed him how to open and exit a web browser, how to scan, copy, and print documents. Before he used to type slow, but now he type fast and checks the online newspaper and articles. He reads up on entertainment news, by the way he is more up-to-date than I am, and he sends e-mails to friends and family. I would like to describe my father as an unofficial vlogger because he takes picture and videos of his day, but he doesn’t have an audience. He shows the family but I really don’t consider us an audience. He is always reading and asking me questions like what are hashtags, memes, and Gif learning the new terminology used today.

My mom on the other hand didn’t gravitate to the computer she is starting to come around, but she likes to use the Kindle. I taught her how to search on the web browsers how to buy apps and look up recipes, and play hidden object games. Because my parents are completely from a different generation, having a cell phone wasn’t that important to them. So a few years ago my father finally got a cell phone, but he only uses it to take pictures during family events. What ended up happening was my mom uses the phone more than my dad does. Recently I taught her how to text. It was very funny because she got excited when she heard the phone chimes and she really got flustered when one of my sisters texts her too fast. For some reason she had the impression texting was hard. It’s been a couple of weeks and she is still texting. Even though my mom has a kindle she still uses a Walkman. She is always me tell me she prefers the Walkman over the Ipod. Even though I have grown up with technology, I find it amusing to look up now and again, and I see my father on one side of the couch with the nook in his hand and on the other end my mom with her kindle. They both enjoy playing computers game which they have become addicted to playing.

Technology has always improved on old ideas, and is constantly changing. Sign of the times is why everyone in the world went from using analog technologies to digital. Society is always advertising the latest thing it’s something that’s been done for decades since the idea of advisement came about. There is always a problem in Analog technologies that digital technology can fix, it’s only considered analog technology because something new and improved was invented. Every technology made has a shelf life, that’s why technology is always expanding. Technology is like a small snowball and when you roll it down a hill, it becomes larger and larger. Digital technologies compared to analog technologies are made to be faster and made for easy use. For example, a cassette and cassette players, to a CDs/CD players, a mp3 to streaming. VHS tapes to DVD to blu-ray disc to Netflix. Another example is physical hard copy tickets to digital tickets that are printable. A third example is Film cameras, to disposable cameras to Digital cameras to cell phones.

The technology I love the most is my sewing machine, a machine manufactured in the 1960s. I think about how much clothes people used to wear decades ago and the seamstress who had to sew everything by hand. When I think about in that sense its mind blowing. People of high society had very intricate detailing when it came to their clothes. I also think about the size of gowns women worn throughout the years. The invention of the sewing machine was a great form of technology because it allowed mass production to develop. It would change how clothes are made and with the different type of fabrics. The time it took to stitch a gown would be cut in half by using a sewing machine. Sewing machines would be used for an assortment of items, shoes, furniture, upholstery, and cars. Anything that was sewn by hand can now be done by a machine. Later on you would have the very convenient idea of electric sewing machines being available within every household. Anyone can create their own clothes. The invention of the sewing machine became a big industry and it still is today. In the film “The Corporation” it was reveal that big corporations prey on the poor underdeveloped countries. They make a deal to provide whatever goods to the people that they need at that particular time for the cheap labor. The corporations then sell the product at a high price. Making a profit where they get their products made and where they sell the products in the United States. In Neil Postman’s “From Tools to Technocracy”, when he creates the terms for three types of culture, they are tool-using cultures, technocracies, and technopolies. The invention of the sewing machine can go into the technocracies culture. “In a technocracy, tools play a central role in the thought-world of the culture.”1 Postman describes the tools of this culture as it will attack the culture or it will unintentional do so. The invention of sewing machine is used throughout the world to attack certain countries displayed in the film “the corporation” for their labor. The original idea was to solve a specific problem, but it was changed into a big business around the world because it was known the person who invented such a machine would guarantee be rich.

Cell phones are a technology I cannot stand sometime. Before cell phones were everywhere I never was a phone person and I’m still not. I hate the fact that I’m so accessible to people. There was a time where I was running late for school and I forgot my phone. It was the best day ever. Not one person could get in contact with me. I will say that when you have a real emergency like being sick or you get stuck somewhere, it is very convenient to call for help. Another incident I had with my phone I lost it in my house, but for some reason I could not find it. Everyone I knew was panicking more than I was. Honestly I didn’t even give it a second thought. Everyone took it upon themselves to search the entire house as if there were cops with a search warrant. My sisters and my friends would get angry and frustrated because they had to wait until the evening or the end of the day to tell me something. One of my sisters told me it helped her realize how much they talk to me and how much errands they ask me to do.

When I’m using my phone I like to play games, read my news app, and to watch videos on YouTube. I do love group text with my sisters because it’s fun. One time I had 64 messages from sisters. I could not believe it. I was too many messages to look through. I had to call one of my sisters to tell what that conversation was about. My best friend is always yelling at me because I never pick up or take hours sometimes days to answer a text message. I love cameras, but I can’t stand digital pictures I love having a physical picture in the palm of my hand. I also feel like you lose out on creating a real photo album. One that is big and bulky and you have to dig in a corner of the house to find it.

When social media began, the hottest social network website was Myspace. I thought it was cool to create your very own website. Every week I changed the background of my page, along with the music to complement my page. There was nothing like it before and almost everyone in the world was on Myspace. I remember when Facebook was also new to the social media scene and college students were the only ones using it. After the decline in Myspace, I tried to be involved with Facebook, but Myspace made me lose all interest in social media. I discontinued all my accounts and I haven’t been on any social media since. Facebook became the top social media website then along came Instagram, Vine, Twitter, Snapchat and countless others, but I still wasn’t interested. The only time I’m on social media, is when someone I know posts a picture that I happened to be in. I do get a kick out being asked what is my Instagram or Twitter name and I respond back saying, “I’m not on there” It’s as if I have three heads or spoke in a different language. Recently I did make a twitter account only because I was selected for a contest from an online clothing store I shop at. I didn’t win the contest and that was the end for my time on Twitter.

What I really don’t like about social media are the idea old classmates I haven’t seen in years wanting to reconnect. I had a great time through my school days, but I feel like unless I kept in contact from before I don’t have anything to say to you. I feel like that was a moment in time that came and went. I feel like trying to connect to someone you haven’t seen is weird you are a completely different person because of whatever experience you have gone through so I personally think it’s weird even if you’re just speaking only on the social media. Another thing I don’t like about social media is everyone believes everything they see on there even if its misinformation.

 I realized that no matter how technology has changed you have to change right along with it. All the analog and digital technology throughout the years gave me some good memories and good times to think about. In the next 10 ten years who know what the technology will be, but I know it will impact my life whether I want it to or not.

References

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