



By Stephanie van Pelt

## Have we become addicted to instant gratification?

Everywhere we go, everywhere we look, we see some form of instant gratification.

Cell phones and computers are two of the most predominant types of instant technology - things that many of us use every day. This technology is very useful, and I still find it amazing that I'm able to send an e-mail halfway across the world and have it reach the target in just a matter of seconds. Letters by mail are no longer necessary, and I'm starting to ask myself why we even bother having house phones anymore.

### Becoming more impatient

People have become accustomed to the luxury of being able to reach someone almost immediately wherever and whenever they want.

This instant way of communicating is spreading through every aspect of our lives, but not always in a positive way. Having all these things so conveniently available to us is transforming us into a much more impatient people with very high expectations.

If we can't figure out a simple arithmetic problem we whip out our trusted calculator because it's faster than using our minds. Speed dialing means we don't need to waste time pushing several buttons, nor do we need the bother of actually remembering the numbers we are calling.

How long will it be before we choose to run through a red light to speed home to watch our favourite television program because it's faster than waiting for the green light?

Patience may be a virtue but every day it is becoming harder and harder to find. I'm finding we live in a society where people just want things done instantly, and if that doesn't happen, then we have a problem.

Have you noticed that our grocery bags are filling up with quick microwaveable foods? Have you ever picked up an Indian takeaway meal for two? No need to do anything other than heat through and serve. Even that two minutes of

waiting while the microwave warms macaroni and cheese seems too long.

It's these things that concern me about the future of our culture. I mean, how much easier can it be? What are we willing to sacrifice to make life even easier?

### Shortchanging ourselves?

I understand many of us buy these instant meals because they're quick and easy. We all have busy on-the-go lifestyles. But are our lives too busy to put our health and the health of our families on the line? Homemade cookies and freshly made dinners are becoming a rare thing. Have we forgotten about the



unmistakably delicious taste of fresh meals, not to mention their irreplaceable nutritional value?

What makes us think that taking the easy or fast way out is ever going to get us farther than taking the longer way?

I strongly feel that by taking the easy way out so much of the time there will end up being more negative outcomes than positive for us as a society. We love this instant way of life and we believe our lives are too short to do things the long way. But is it possible that by being addicted to those things that are "instant" we are actually shortchanging ourselves in the longer run?

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