My partner constantly talks, texts, checks messages or is engaged in some way with his smartphone. What's the best way to address this annoying issue?

Dorothy Horton, PsyD, answers your questions in her latest Ask Doctor Dee column.

September 5, 2016 By Dorothy Horton

Q: My partner constantly talks, texts, checks messages or is engaged in some way with his smartphone. What's the best way to address this annoying issue?

A: If your partner is always fiddling with his phone and this bothers you, you've got to let him know how you feel about this alienating behavior. After all, he may not be conscious of how this is affecting your relationship.

First, ask your partner to stow away his phone and give you his undivided attention. Explain that his smartphone etiquette makes you feel bad, isolated, unimportant and totally rejected. To be fair, you should also reflect on whether you're dishing out the same treatment to your loved one. Is your phone use distracting and disconnecting you from your partner?

If you're both guilty as charged, make a deal with your significant other. Ask your partner to avoid using his smartphone when you spend time together at home or while you're out and promise you'll do the same.

You might also ask what helps him to feel close and connected with you. Then, to maintain the intimacy and close connection in your relationship, both of you should make an agreement about what you're willing to do to give each other your full attention.

Dorothy Horton, PsyDCourtesy of Dorothy Horton, PsyD

Let’s hope that once your partner realizes he can bring the two of you closer together simply by changing the way he uses his smartphone and manages social media, then he’ll work with you to build a better, stronger relationship.

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