

Internet infidelity a growing concern among couples

By Lauren Ruvo, Las Vegas Sun

Instant messaging via Twitter, Facebook and smart phones allow people to reach out to others at all times, and for instant support.

But there's a dangerous downside: It can lead to Internet infidelity.

Katherine Hertlein, an assistant professor in UNLV's marriage and family therapy department, says Internet infidelity can occur with an act as simple as chatting online with someone else to the exclusion of a person's primary partner.

Texting someone while in another person's physical presence may create closeness between the people texting, but it creates a distance between the two people who are together, says Hertlein.

One reason Internet infidelity may plague a couple, Hertlein says, is because couples rarely take the time to define their definition of infidelity.

"You'll have one person who says 'It's a breach in the relationship, you cheated on me,'" Hertlein said, "and the other person is saying 'No, I never touched anyone. Yes I was talking to people but that's not a breach.'"

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