

**By Matthew Crider, JD
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There is a common complaint among Baby Boomers when it comes to aging parents and grandparents: It's hard to keep in touch with them. Most communication among the middle and younger generations now takes place on the computer—e-mail, Facebook, electronic photo-sharing and more. Very rarely do we pick up the phone for a good old-fashioned chat; and when we do it's usually on the go, in the form of a quick call or text message from our cell phones. Unfortunately, where all this technology helps us to be more connected to friends and family in our own cohort, it ends up leaving our elderly loved ones out of the conversation.

Karen Stabiner, in her article "Elder Tech: What's Important" argues that it doesn't have to be this way. Stabiner states that the key to getting elderly relatives involved in high-tech communication is to get out of our own heads and look at it from their point of view. "For technology to become 'sticky' with the older generation, we have to get into their heads and understand what would make them think this is fun... The bells and whistles that might attract us are too often counterintuitive [for them.]"

The younger, tech-savvy generations tend to look for high-tech devices that do everything, but that's not necessarily what's going to be appealing to grandma or grandpa. This article in GrayTimes.com suggests that single-purpose gadgets—devices designed only for e-mail or only for sharing photos—are more intuitive for elderly users.

New high-tech devices may be harder for parents or grandparents to use, but being able to connect with their loved ones can be a huge motivating factor. Being able to communicate with family makes our elderly parents and grandparents happy, but it also helps keep them safe. Adult children who communicate with their parents on a regular basis are better able to recognize and respond when mom or dad suddenly have trouble caring for themselves.

About Matthew Crider, J.D.

Matthew Crider formed [Crider Law PC](#) in 1999 so he could help individuals by providing creative solutions and be their trusted advisor and legal counselor. He serves his clients by listening closely to their goals, dreams and concerns and working with them to develop superior and comprehensive estate and asset protection plans. His family law and divorce focuses on assisting families in a dissolution matters, including divorce, child custody and visitation, child and spousal support, spousal support and alimony, and parental rights.

