

Communication

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If anyone has ever heard me speak, they know that one of my thoughts is that sorority and fraternity life has become a meeting, a program, or activity. Those of us who have been at this for a while know that it is really not these things, but a way of life, an experience. The future of member development is assisted by our educational programming efforts, but the real test is in the way members talk to one another, problem solve, compromise; all the aspects that were learned through good leadership and mentoring.

As I have visited many campuses across this country and actually watched my niece in her first year of membership of her sorority, I have found the greatest challenges facing today's sorority women is their lack of communication skills with one another. They struggle with having mature conversations, working through problems. One of the challenges I face when visiting any chapter whether it be Tri Delta or not, is when someone stands up and yells for the group to be quiet and then they stress "if you are not quiet, we will begin fining" which means they will fine the members for talking.

I will then talk with members or officers of the chapter and they also say the same thing – we have a difficult time with respect in our chapter. We have evolved so much as organizations, but one of our major responsibilities is that respect and being a "family" is what we have to make certain is tied into all aspects of the sorority experience.



This may seem like a lofty concept, but it is the aspect of the world that cannot be replaced by technology. Communication is used in all of our relationships and even as professionals, one of the factors of the work place that is still difficult to find balance. If Tri Delta, or sororities in general, can challenge our women to be more cognizant on the way they interact and treat one another, and how to do so in a respectful and caring way, we will have taught them very valuable life skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

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