

LETTERS: **Social Media?**

As a parent, educator and psychologist, I found "The Flight From Conversation," by Sherry Turkle (Sunday Review, April 22), particularly relevant. Social media enable us to communicate but replace face-to-face time with others and impede having real connections.

Ms. Turkle points out that in lacking conversations, we also have fewer opportunities to self-reflect. Children develop in the context of a relationship. Emotions drive behavior and are central in all relationships. These emotional connections give us feedback toward a heightened self and social awareness, promoting thinking, reflecting and an understanding of what is going on within and between us. They are very important for our social development and are lacking in social media communication.

For our children truly to become successful personally, socially and academically, we all need to start connecting emotionally. We need to stop looking at our smartphones and smarten up by looking within ourselves and among one another!

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In noting the disappearance of conversational skills caused by texting, e-mailing, tweeting and so on, Sherry Turkle echoes J. B. Priestley's¹⁾ uncannily prescient observation: "The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate."

RICHARD BOYCE
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Sherry Turkle accurately describes the world of online connections. The irony is that those who want to engage in real face-to-face conversations are too often forced to endure intrusive cellphone monologues in restaurants, theaters, commuter trains, airline cabins ...

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noot 1 J.B. Priestley (1894-1984) was an English novelist, playwright and broadcaster