

Shahzeen Fatima

Professor Lauren Fanelli Teague

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The values of Connections

Being alone isn't hard but if you have a group to support your life would be less hard. This generation is all about being a tribe of one. Doing everything on your own and not being a burden on anyone. In the essays, "Heart to Heart: Teaching with Love" by bell hooks and "The Flight from Conversation" by Sherry Turkle, both authors show how people have trouble connecting in different ways in today's world. Hooks argues that teachers use limits and boundaries between them and the student which she refers to as "calculated objectivity," to show their control over the students and also show the students that they are more powerful. This causes the students to fear the teacher and they avoid having a connection with the teacher. This can connect to Turkle's argument because Turkle says people find it hard to connect these days because they are so lost in their little devices. When we try connecting we can't because we have put boundaries between each other for our own comfort and to control how close we want to be to someone. Just like the boundaries put between a student and teacher relationship. This is one way we can connect to others but we can't due to the fear of getting in trouble. In Turkle's essay, we choose to distract ourselves with technology so we don't have to emotionally engage with others. On the other hand in hooks essay, she explains how dominant culture causes the students to be quiet in class and not conversate with any of their peers or teacher because of the fear surrounding the class giving them no option to connect. This type of situation also causes the student to think of themselves as being on their own and feel disconnected from the class

someway and this is what Turkles mean by that we have “gotten used to the idea of being a tribe of one”.

Human connections are hard to make these days whether you want to connect or not. Turkle argues that technology is replacing human connections; she proves her argument by making many statements that she mentions in her essay "The Flight from Conversation." One argument to support this is, “During the years I have spent researching people and their relationship with technology, I have often heard the sentiment ‘No one is listening to me.’ I believe this feeling helps explain why it is so appealing to have a Facebook page or a Twitter feed—each provides so many automatic listeners” (Turkle 3). According to Turkle automatic listeners are someone or something that would listen to everything you have to say such as your phone which you can write all your thoughts down in, by doing this you feel you are being heard. This quote shows that Turkles attitude toward the overuse of technology is negative. It also explains the reason everyone is disconnected and why they avoid making conversations because they feel like they won’t be heard just like hooks mentions in her essay that the students feel like they are not being heard by their teachers due to the power all the teachers hold in the class. She also talks about how due to objectivism in class students would avoid asking teachers questions because they fear the teacher getting mad at them and not liking them anymore. In the essay “Hearts to Heart,” hooks mentions that “The opposite reality is a more accurate portrait of what takes place in college classrooms. More often than not students are afraid to talk for fear they will alienate teachers and students. They are usually terrified of disagreeing if they think it will lead to conflict”(hooks 134). Here hooks speaks briefly of the reason people avoid conversation because they are afraid that they won’t be heard just like how Turkle mentions in her essay that she often hears people saying that “No one is listening to me” (Turkle 3). This

shows the thoughts that go behind a person's mind before they start a conversation because they fear that instead of making connections they would break connection due to the disagreement between them and their peers or teacher. Similarly, in Turkle's essay, people distract themselves with their phones or other electronics because they feel that if they try conversing with someone the other person might not like it or wouldn't agree with them so they are more comfortable being on their devices since they are at least being heard with the devices. People avoid conversations due to the fear of being embarrassed for saying something inappropriate or something that won't make sense. This causes consternation due to which they avoid in-person conversations so they don't have to face any type of embarrassment or anxiety for saying something inaccurate. This lack of connection due to these reasons can create potential problems such as not being able to know what to do in a situation that you can't handle on your own. This fear can also impact our learning and community in many different ways because we won't be open about our feelings to our family which can lead to depression or stress due to keeping all our thoughts to ourselves. We won't be able to share our ideas with our peers and help each other with the skills we are best at.

hooks claims that we must build an environment through which the students learn lessons through emotions, socializing, and connecting. Turkles expands on this idea of hooks because she also wants people to connect to one another and converse rather than just being on their phones and thinking that they are connected online. In hooks essay "hearts to heart" she states "However, there are times when conscious teaching—teaching with love—brings us the insight that we will not be able to have a meaningful experience in the classroom without reading the emotional climate of our students and attending to it (hook 133)." In this quote, hooks support her claim and states why she thinks it's important to build an optimal community. She wants the

student to have a meaningful experience in class and for that, the student needs to be comfortable enough to connect to the people around them and the teacher. Meaningful experiences involve learning something new, feeling an emotional connection to a place, person or thing, and making memories. All these things involve a person making connections and having conversations with people around them. Turkle would not think that meaningful experiences could be done through technology because according to her online people are not their real selves and they only show the parts of themselves that they think are good enough. Similarly in Turkle's essay "The flight from conversation" she mentions how she wants people to connect with conversations rather than just being connected online. She says "But connecting in sips doesn't work as well when it comes to understanding and knowing one another." Here Turkle also wants people to make connections with one another and build a community. She wants people to remove their focus from their phones and all other electronics and focus fully on their surroundings, the people around them, and how they are emotional. Turkle wants everyone to understand each other's feelings and get to know them better. This is what Turkle would consider a meaningful connection and when all these things are done the experiences would come with these connections.

Sherry Turkle in her essay "The Flight from Conversation" explains how technology is separating us from each other. Whereas in bell hooks essay "Heart to Heart: Teaching with Love" she also explains her argument about how making connections is hard. Both of the authors want people to build a community. The only difference is that hooks is focused more on the relationship between a teacher and student whereas Turkle wants to build a community without electronics. They both want people to make connections with each other through conversation and not just sit on their phones thinking that they are connected since they are in the

same room. It's important for us to make build these critical connections because you never know when you need someone and having these connections can help you with different needs. These connections bring positivity around you where you don't feel lost and know the exact person to reach in need. It doesn't matter how big or small the community is if it has love and connection surrounding it you would be benefited from it in different ways such as being open to different communities and finding value in our different communities. The thought of being alone would be gone.

Citations:

- "Heart to Heart: Teaching with Love"/bell books
- "The Flight from Conversation"/Sherry Turkle