



River Valley Current

February 21, 2017 No. 469

"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?"
-George Eliot

School Calendar

This Week

Thursday, February 23

EC Parent Enrichment Evening
Board Meeting

6:30 pm
6:30 pm

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, March 8

School Tour

9:00 am

Saturday, March 11

2nd grade Workday

Tuesday, March 14

Diversity Committee Meeting

6:30-8:00 pm

Saturday, March 18

All-School Open House

Monday-Wednesday, March 20-22

4th grade to PEEC

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org
lc@rivervalleyschool.org
bot@rivervalleyschool.org
pc@rivervalleyschool.org

RVWS All School Open House Saturday, March 18th, 10 am

Invite a friend and come yourself! We are so excited about hosting this year's Open House using a whole new format.

Participants will see a performance by our 5 & 6th grade chorus, meet some of our wonderful alums, alumni & current parents as well as have ample time to converse with our grade school, early childhood and specialty teachers, view student work and see how our program fits together as a synergistic whole.

This is about outreach and it is also an opportunity to learn more about what comes next for your children as they move up through RVWS and beyond! Please RSVP so we can plan for our group. We will have childcare but are still working on the details. Please let us know if you are coming and have a need for childcare.

RSVP to the office, or info@rivervalleyschool.org

Operation Helping Hand Food Drive

Once again this year, RVWS is joining United Way of Bucks County in collecting food for local food banks.

Please bring non-perishable donations to the school lobby any time between now and

Wednesday, March 8th, 2017

Any questions? Contact Robbie or Genevieve

All non-perishable foods are accepted, but our local pantry really needs: *Fruit juice (100%), applesauce (no sugar added), canned fruit (no sugar added) breakfast cereal, peanut butter, canned chicken, canned salmon, canned tuna, canned vegetables (low sodium), soup, beans (dried or canned), canned pasta, oatmeal, rice, pasta*

No time to shop? No problem! Financial contributions are welcome. Just \$10 can feed a family of four. Checks should be made payable to United Way of Bucks County – memo line Operations Helping Hand

Lunch Menu and Pizza Reminder

Please find the March Lunch Menu attached to this week's Current.

Due February 29th.

Pizza forms are at the end of the Current
Due February 22nd.

The new pizza session begins this Friday, Feb. 24th.

Capoeira Update

A new Capoeira registration form is at the end of this week's Current for classes from February 27th - April 3rd.

A Midsummer Night's Dream DVD's

A professional videographer filmed the Friday, January 27th performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and is making DVD's and Blu-Rays available to the RVWS community.

The cost of the DVD is \$15, Blu-Ray \$20. Order forms are in this week's Current and on the wall next to the office and are due back by Friday, February 24th. We will place an order based on the number that have been sold by that date so this is a hard deadline. Please place forms in the folder on the office door.

This would be a perfect gift for relatives and friends and will help defray costs of the production.

It's not too late for Hoagies!

Just in case you'd like another chance to sign up, we have new deadline to purchase hoagies until the end of the year. Grandy will not be offering these fine sandwiches during her regular lunch days so there will never be a double hoagie week!

Order by March 2nd for delicious heroes made especially to your child's taste every Thursday from March 9th through May 25th. Now it's only \$52.50 for 10 weeks of hoagie only or \$62.50 for hoagie with seltzer. The 8th grade students and parents thank you! Order form at the end of this week's Current.

From Administration

YARD SIGNS?

The day of our annual all-school Open House is rapidly approaching (March 18th) and we would like your help promoting it in a new way. We are printing yard signs to announce it and would love to see them placed all around our far-flung 'sending district'.

If you are willing to have a sign in your yard, or if you have other locations for which you are willing to both place and remove a sign, please let us know. Just reply to this email with the location and number of signs you would like.

There will also be postcards and flyers to distribute for this event, which is another way to promote our Open House. If you are able to spread the word that way, we'll happily supply you with materials.

Thank you in advance for your help ensuring that River Valley continues to grow and thrive!

Stainless Steel Water Bottles

An RVWS parent sent us an article about high lead content in some types of stainless steel water bottles. More information can be found at this link:

<http://thenaturalbabymama.com/baby/toxic-levels-of-lead-found-in-stainless-steel-water-bottles-are-you-or-your-child-using-these-water-bottles/>

GARDEN GATE Parent/Child Classes & 2-Day Nursery with Molly MacDonald Spring Session Now Enrolling!

Garden Gate: for children under 3 years, together with a parent or caregiver.

Spring session begins February 6, 2017.

Space available on Wednesday - 9 until 11:30am.

Class size is limited to 6

Tuition/fees are \$420

Garden Gate provides a warm, supportive atmosphere for children and adults alike. This welcoming environment allows children to develop their social capacities, expand their interests, motor abilities and problem-solving skills. Songs, games and parenting tips are part of the valuable exchange of ideas and information that is enjoyed by participating adults.

2-DAY DROP-OFF NURSERY CLASS IN THE SUN ROOM – One spot available!

Sun Room Nursery: 2-day, drop-off class for children 2 ½ to 3 ¾ years.

Began February 2, 2017

Class meets Thursday & Friday from 8:30 – 11:30am.

Class size is limited to 8

Tuition/fees are \$1,125

A day in the Sun Room includes time to explore and play both within the classroom and substantial time out of doors. There is time for practical work and care for ourselves and our environment and a gathering time for finger games, songs and stories. Warm, wholesome snack-time is a favorite time for conversation and sharing amongst the group. This busy day wraps up in time for lunch and rest in the comfort of home.

Please contact Cindy Schretlen with any questions you may have, 610-982-5606 or email: admissions@rivervalley.school.org

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts
Second Grade – Language Arts – Saints/Fables
Third Grade – Math
Fourth Grade – Class Play

Fifth Grade – Geometry
Sixth Grade – Geography
Seventh Grade – Physiology
Eighth Grade – History

From Development

Watch our Giving Tree Grow by Giving to the Annual Fund!

Did you know that your tuition only accounts for a portion of the funds needed to operate our beloved school? Because we are a tuition-based school, we are not eligible for most grants and subsidies that other schools may qualify for. Additionally, we offer financial assistance for many of our families. Our ability to invest in our programming, support our faculty, serve our students, and maintain our facilities depends upon additional funding from events, gifts and sponsorships. This is why we ask our community to support the Annual Fund each year. In the next several weeks, you may receive a letter, note, email or call asking for your support of the Annual Fund. Please give what you are able so we may provide all the wonderful things that enrich your children's education. When you give, your generosity will be recognized as a leaf on a Giving Tree in the lobby. Each class will be represented by its own leaf color. Additionally, your generosity will be recognized in the River Valley Current and the Annual Report. Watch our tree bloom, from the roots to the canopy, as our Annual Fund grows! Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Stephanie Spencer
Development Coordinator

From the Community

BYRON KATIE WORKSHOP APRIL 7, 8, & 9th

There will be an introductory retreat in the work of Byron Katie, presented by Tania Tierro. The retreat will take place at the James-Lorah House in Doylestown, PA.

The work is a way to question the beliefs that underpin our stress. It's a simple, profound process of self-liberation and, consequently, self-realization. For the 2nd year, Lisa Naples, a local resident, is organizing this event. She can be reached for questions at 215-340-0964 or at lisanaplesceramics@gmail.com.

Cost for the workshop is as follows:

- Friday night only option: \$60
 - Full weekend retreat: \$275 with an early bird special of \$240 if registration takes place by March 8th
- Scholarships are available for those who otherwise cannot come.

Lenape Chamber Ensemble Concert in the Round

For children ages 4-12, featuring music by Bach and Handel.

Saturday, March 4th, 10-11 am at Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium, 700 Butler Avenue at State Street and Rt. 611, Doylestown, PA 18901.
Children: \$2, Adults Free.

Lenape Chamber Ensemble

Friday, March 3, 8:15 pm, Upper Tincum Lutheran Church, 188 Upper Tincum Church Road, Upper Black Eddy, PA

Sunday, March 5th, 3 pm, Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium (See above for address.)

Music by Mozart, Prokofiev and Brahms
Adults \$18, Students and Seniors \$15, Children \$5

For information: 610-294-9361 or
www.lenapechamberensemble.org

Car for Sale

Due to our plans to move back to Europe, we are selling one of our cars, namely, a Volkswagen Jetta Hybrid from August 2013 with about 41,000 miles and in excellent conditions (no accident, no scratch). MPG 42 City, 48 Highway. if of interest, please contact Piergiorgio, Oscar's dad (Moon Room) at 646 830 9250 or pgv.pier@gmail.com

Network Chiropractor Extraordinaire

Hello friends! Dr. Renee Sexton, Chiropractor, will hold sessions at 3163 Main St, Springtown, PA, February 22, 2017, 4-6 PM. Please RSVP to Rose Litschauer asap! 610-570-7408. Adults \$50.00, Kids \$25.

WANTED

I am looking for used plastic feed bags to upcycle into little bags. So, if anyone has large, plastic feed bags left over from their rabbits, chickens, or other critters, please save them for me. Thank you, Elizabeth McCracken (Aftercare teacher), juliam57@aim.com

WANTED

Newspapers, old sheets and towels needed. Please leave in designated box out in front of the school. Thank you, Hilary Murphy

Looking for a Dollhouse

If your family has a large wooden dollhouse that you are no longer using, we would love to buy it from you! Contact Sara, mother of Isaiah in Mrs. Atkinson's first grade. 908-323-9691 sarajoyfishkin@gmail.com

Help Available

Isabella Blasucci (RVWS Class of 2012) and her friend Noah from High Mowing Waldorf School are living in Milford, NJ for a month (till March 5th or so) and trying to save up money to travel in Europe! They can babysit, paint, build stone walls, polish shoes, sweep, sing or tackle any other projects one might have in mind. They can be reached at 603-498-9076 or isabellablasucci@gmail.com or through Facebook as Isabella Blasucci.

Teen & Young Adult Panel: Alternative Educational Paths

Local teens Miranda & Stephen Evarts, current and past members of The Learning Cooperatives, will share their experiences of living and learning without school. Teens welcome!

Wed Feb 22, 7:30-8:30pm - Flemington, NJ
<http://raritanlearningcooperative.org/get-involved/events/>

STANCE: A Party with a Purpose

Saturday Feb. 25, 6-10 PM, Nurture Nature Center, Easton PA.

A unique and fun night out for a great cause, STANCE is an evening kicked off by (optional) all-levels yoga & songs led by Kira Willey, accompanied by DJARM18--RV's own Andrew McIntosh—plus hearty hors d'oeuvres, beer & wine, and a set by River Valley parent bluegrass band, Moonshine & Millet! All proceeds benefit Shanthi Project, which brings mindfulness and therapeutic yoga to prisons, detention centers and underserved schools. Advance tickets: \$30 at shanthiproject.com.

NEW Mosaic Center for Wellness and Creativity

23 Bridge Street, Milford, NJ

Kundalini Yoga and Unity Meditation with Felicia Ruth

Tuesday 2/14 9:30-11 AM (first of four sessions) drop ins welcome

Vacation Valentines art activity with Autumn during yoga 2/14 \$10 per child pre-register children by 2/13 and for more information please contact Autumn@motherarts.com

Nia with Autumn Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9:15-10:30

Book Discussion in Alpha, NJ

The Alpha Mennonite Church is hosting a book discussion on the book "Between the World and Me" by Ta-nehisi Coates on Friday, February 24 at 6:30pm. All are invited to participate in a discussion about current racial divides and how we as a larger community can come together and encourage healing. There will be a dessert potluck!! For more information go to: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1883913398506639/?ti=as>

Footloose, the Musical at Kimberton WS

Kimberton Waldorf High School invites you to a performance of Footloose, the Musical. River Valley alumni Lauren Goodyear and Gabe Martinez will be playing the roles of Ariel Moore and Ren McCormick! We hope to see your familiar faces in the audience!

Footloose is teenage coming of age story set in the fictional town of Bomont. On its surface, this is a story about parents and teenagers, small town life, and young love. More deeply, it is a story about loss and grief, love and redemption. Our cast is very enthusiastic about this production. It is full of humor, fun, great depth of emotion, and lots of great music. Songs like *Footloose*, *Let's Hear It For the Boy*, and *Almost Paradise* became popular hits and still keep our toes tapping today!

Thursday, March 2nd, 7 pm, Friday March 3rd, 7:30 pm, Saturday, March 4th, 2 pm & 7:30 pm

Adults \$15, Seniors \$12, Students \$10

Kimberton Waldorf School, 410 West Seven Stars Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460, 610-933-3635 x111,

A Midsummer Night's Dream DVD Order Form

A professional videographer filmed the Friday, January 27th performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and is making DVD's available to the RVWS community.

I would like to order _____ DVDs @ \$15
_____ Blu-Ray @ \$20 Total _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Deadline for Orders – Friday, February 24, 2017

Prepaid orders only, please.

Make check payable to River Valley Waldorf School.

Put "DVD" in the memo.

Bring form & check to office.

Grade school families
enjoying the annual
RVWS Ice Skating Party.
Tiffany Robinson, with her
camera always ready,
captured the fun.





PIZZA DAY! ROUND TWO!

Once again the 3rd graders will be offering pizza from **Galasso's** in Frenchtown as well as organic lemonade on Fridays, starting February 24th until June 9th.

Please return payment to the front office by FEB 9th with payment to RVWS.

This payment is for 13 weeks of pizza

***This is part of an annual fundraiser for our trip to Hawthorne Valley Farm
Thank you for your support! Sincerely, Mrs. Niemczura's 3rd Grade Class!***

Child's Name: _____

Grade and Teachers name: _____

_____ 1 slice & lemonade: \$52.00

_____ 2 slices & lemonade: \$84.50

_____ 1 slice/no lemonade: \$32.50

_____ 2 slices/no lemonade: \$65.00

_____ Lemonade Only: \$19.50

LAST DAY OF PIZZA - Friday June 9th

**Gluten free pizza may be available if interested please email: ericakellyr@yahoo.com
Questions please contact Erica Nichols at 908-303-2255 or ericakellyr@yahoo.com**

Pizza will be delivered to each classroom as ordered. The children are distributing the pizza and lemonade and have had a great time being involved in this fundraiser.

Pizza dates are as follows: 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/31, 4/7, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5, 5/12, 5/19, 6/2, 6/9

RVWS After-School Capoeira Program

Open to grades 5-8

Monday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 pm

Capoeira at River Valley is taught by renowned Contra-Mestra Gata Brava (Leigh Robertson) from New Hope's Morro Verde. The art form of Capoeira combines elements of dance, acrobatics and music, all within the context of Brazilian culture. It traces its origins back to the 1600's when West African slaves in Brazil developed it as a mean of resisting oppression.

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Registration Form

Student's Name _____

Student's Teacher _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Phone 1: _____ Phone 2: _____

Email 1: _____

Email 2: _____

I would like to register my child for Capoeira:

Mondays, 3:30-4:30 \$15/class

_____ 2/27 through 4/3/2017 (6 classes) **\$90**

Payment in full must be attached to the registration form. Payment is non-refundable and is set regardless of the number of classes actually attended by your child. Classes will be filled on a first come first served basis.

ADULTS ARE ALSO WELCOME TO ENROLL

8th Grade Hoagie Lunch Fundraiser

Hello Wonderful Families!

Our fundraising for the Class of 2017 end-of-school trip continues!

This semester our 8th graders are (still) looking forward to serving your children

Hoagies on Thursdays!

Sign up for the second half of the semester!!

March 9 through May 25

Kid tested and kid approved!

Delicious hoagies & all natural fruit seltzer

Made to order, with love, right here in Grandy's Kitchen

Sign-up is for the second half of the semester (10 Thursdays)

\$52.50 for 10 weeks of hoagies only (\$5.25/hoagie)

\$62.50 for 10 weeks of hoagies and seltzer (\$5.25/hoagie + \$1/seltzer)

Please place your order form in the "8G Thursday Lunches" folder on the office door

Deadline for orders: Thursday, March 2

Please make checks payable to RVWS with "8G Lunches" in the memo.

8th grade thanks you for your support!

-
- 10 Hoagie Thursdays lunches (3/9- 5/25)
 - 10 weeks of hoagies only (\$52.50) or
 - 10 weeks of hoagies and seltzer (\$62.50)

My Special Hoagie (Please Circle Your Choices):

Turkey Only

Cheese Only
(provolone and cheddar)

Turkey & Cheese
(provolone)

Lettuce

Tomato

Mayo

Oil&Vinegar

Name _____ Grade _____

Sherry Turkle: 'I am not anti-technology, I am pro-conversation'

For nearly 30 years now, Sherry Turkle, professor of social psychology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been exploring the effects of digital worlds on human behavior. Her books, *Life on the Screen*, *The Second Self* and *Alone Together*, have charted the seductions of "intimate machines", the advance of social media and virtual realities and the all-pervasive internet, and the effect these things have had on our culture and our lives. Her latest book, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in the Digital Age*, is a call to arms to arrest what she sees as the damaging consequences of never being far from email or text or Twitter or Facebook, in particular the impact it has on family life, on education, on romance and on the possibilities of solitude. Using extensive interviews and half a lifetime of research, she suggests – with reference to the birth of the environmental movement in the 1960s – that we are at a "Silent Spring" moment in our infatuation with life on screens rather than life in the real world, never wholly in one or the other. She measures these effects in a breakdown of empathy between children, in the consequences of increasingly distracted family interaction and a growing need for constant stimulus. Her antidote is a simple one: we need to talk more to each other. This interview took place by telephone last week.

You have been writing about these issues for a long time now. Has it always felt like a losing battle?

Less so now. In the beginning I thought I was saying things people didn't want to hear. I think more people see something happening now that they don't like, but they don't know what to do about it. This new statistic seems telling: 89% of Americans admit they took out a phone at their last social encounter – and 82% say that they felt the conversation deteriorated after they did so. It is captured by the story I tell of the young girl saying: "Daddy! Stop Googling! I want to talk to you."

It is interesting to note that quite a lot of the antipathy towards being "always online" comes not from adults but from children. I suppose we have assumed that these habits would only become more ingrained among people who have grown up with them, but your work shows that is not necessarily the case.

Absolutely not. I was so impressed by kids who said: "I want to raise my children not the way I've been raised, but the way my parents think they have been raising me: in a house of conversation." That was stunning.

But what if children haven't had any experience of sitting around a dinner table, or of talking to their friends without a iPhone to hand? How do they know what they are missing?

That's the danger. But I believe that we are resilient. I like the study that shows that after five days away at camp without connections you see the empathy markers among children rising. The ability to recognize the emotions of somebody in a video or a story go right back up. I believe we are wired to talk. It is a Darwinian thing.

I guess we are also wired for novelty and distraction...

Yes. But I feel we have now created an environment that will distract us to distraction. My recipe does not involve my giving up my phone. It's too useful. But it means not using it on occasions like this when I am trying to give you my full attention. The human voice occupies a lot of bandwidth if you listen to it properly. If I was also texting, you would not be getting a sense of me.

I've worked in a newspaper office for 20-odd years. In that time, like all offices, it has become much quieter. Everyone used to be on the phone, now they are often emailing. Do you think something is lost in that?

If you sent me 10 email questions, you would get very different answers from me. Typing is not the same as talking. Students increasingly say they don't want to see me in person, they just want to email me. When I ask why, they basically say they want to get their questions perfect, so I can make my answers perfect. They want my perfect to meet their perfect.

Email allows us to give the press-release version of ourselves?

Yes. But that is not who we are. It's an algorithmic view of life. Who ever loved learning because they asked the professor a perfect question and the professor gave a perfect answer?

Certainly when I think of teachers who inspired me I couldn't tell you precisely what they said, but I can certainly remember the tone and the circumstances in which they said it.

Exactly. It's the fact you were there and thought: could I someday be like them?

(Continued on next page.)

You came to some of this understanding quite prophetically. I mean you were writing about the lure of digital worlds back in the 1980s.

I wrote my first book really in an effort to get people like me, humanists and anthropologists and psychologists, to look at these things with an open heart. That was about at the beginning of sociable robotics, the creation of machines that pretended to care about you. That appeared to love you. The other big development was devices with the ability to distract you all the time. I was very positive on the whole about machines that you physically went to. That you had to pull up a chair to. But once these things were with you all the time, I really wanted to study how the world changes with that possibility.

There are obviously huge commercial interests in that shift. And despite widespread understanding of the implications of it, of the end of privacy and so on, it seems most people believe it a price worth paying.

I want to be part of the change. I have met engineers and people in the industry who have said, you know, there is also money to be made in allowing you to have time off from your phone. The question is, how high do the costs of not doing that have to be? If you begin to see spikes in developmental issues? When people forget how to talk to each other?

You are not immune to the pull of these devices yourself.

I feel all of it. I have to fight the impulse to use my phone as an alarm clock rather than leaving it in another room. If I don't I will wake up in the middle of the night and think: I'll check my messages. Or the number of my book on Amazon. If I start checking my phone at two in the morning I suddenly find it is four in the morning and I have to get up in two hours.

Perhaps writers crave distraction more than most.

Perhaps. It's like Zadie Smith acknowledging Freedom, that program that lets you turn off Wi-Fi, for allowing her to finish her last book. People really struggle. I have interviewed several people who say they now have to go to remote country cabins to get any concentrated work done. Then they find themselves driving around the neighborhood trying desperately to find an unlocked Wi-Fi signal. Knocking on doors.

The scary thing about that is that these people are adults. Children have much less opportunity for self-control.

Yes but the thrust of my argument is not that we have a device that has constant conversation on it. It is with the fact that there are no limits on that. It is with the father who checks his email while giving his two-year-old a bath when he used to play with her. Those are the lost conversations I am worried about. The fact is we need to design around our vulnerabilities.

But there is no sense that the corporations that make billions of dollars from these habits are going to adopt that idea willingly.

I like to look at the food industry and how it has evolved. My mother, when I was growing up, adored me but she also fed me white bread, tinned vegetables, potatoes that she made from flakes, TV dinners. It was a profit-centered industrial kind of machine that led her to do that. But a young mother today – if that was what she was feeding her child – you would know she was not with the program. How did we turn that around? It certainly wasn't because the food industry said "Ooops!" It came from people seeing the effects of this diet. And that is how I think this will go also. There is study after study saying the same things: talk to each other, experience solitude, experience boredom. Boredom is your imagination calling to you. I think it will happen slowly.

I suppose in the case of nutrition there are physical effects that can be measured, though; isn't this more intangible?

I'm not sure the effects of not talking are hard to measure. The interviews that I did in business settings, people said people come to them for jobs and literally don't know how to have a conversation. I mean if you take a baby and put them on a baby bouncer that has a slot for an iPad, instead of taking time to have eye contact and reading to them, and then they go to a school where most of their instruction is on a screen, why be surprised when they show up as sixth-graders [those in the first year of secondary school] looking down at the floor and being unable to speak? I came across many kids who are set homework on tablets but can't concentrate on reading it until they print it out. I am sympathetic to that. I know for a fact that it's hell to try to read complicated things on a machine that also gives me access to every other thing in my life. We are asking kids to read homework on a device that also gives them access to everything that matters to them: Facebook. It's sad to witness that struggle.

(Continued on next page.)

How did you negotiate these things with your own daughter? I have two daughters, 16 and 12, and my experience is that you have to choose your battles...

We did the sacred space thing. And it mostly worked. No computers or phones in the kitchen, at the dining table, or in the car. Those are the places I think where you create family space. The car is very important. I don't think it works if you talk about set hours or whatever. And it is of course crucial that you apply the same sacred space rule to yourself as to them. The issue is not that your child loves using their screen to write. The issue is that they should not be doing it when they are talking to you. I never friended my daughter on Facebook; that wasn't our space to share things. Instead I had dinner with her pretty much every night. I am not anti-technology, I am pro-conversation.

Can you see this becoming a movement?

I do see it. Every time you go and see a doctor and he looks at a screen and not at you, for example, this movement is strengthened. In business the research on how useful conversation is to the bottom line will make it a movement.

Do you encounter hostility to that message?

Much less than five years ago. When I wrote my last book, *Alone Together*, people were angry. The dominant emotion I encountered was irritation: "Give it a rest."

Isn't that a classic symptom of addiction – people don't want to be told that the thing they are in thrall to is harming them?

I wouldn't use that metaphor. If you are addicted to heroin you have to give it up completely, go cold turkey. Here it is a different assignment. I am not planning to give up my phone. I just need to know what it is good for.

Are you hopeful those habits will catch on?

I am not Pollyanna and deluded. If people start to buy the idea that machines are great companions for the elderly or for children, as they increasingly seem to do, we are really playing with fire. I think the stakes are very high. But the good thing is we don't have to invent anything to turn it around. We already have each other to talk to.

Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age by Sherry Turkle is published by Penguin.