The Big Think: Alone Together
Selected quotations from Sherry Turkle’s book (emphasis added)

“These days, insecure in our relationships and anxious about intimacy, we look to technology for ways to be in relationships and protect ourselves from them at the same time” (xii).

“…we seem determined to give human qualities to objects and content to treat each other as things” (xiv).

“…we are changed as technology offers us substitutes for connecting with each other face-to-face. We are offered robots and a whole world of machine-mediated relationships on network devices” (11).

“But if you’re spending three, four, or five hours a day in an online game or virtual world … there’s got to be someplace you’re not” (12).

“It is easy to become so immersed in technology that we ignore what we know about life” (101).

“With it,” he said, referring to his collection of connectivity devices, ‘it’s not just that I remember people or know more. I feel invincible, sociable, better prepared. I am naked without it. With it, I am a better person” (152).

“…there is the risk that we come to see others as objects to be accessed—and only for the parts we find useful, comforting, or amusing” (154).

“What is a place if those who are physically present have their attention on the absent?” (155-156).

“Today, our machine dream is to never be alone but always in control” (157).

“Mobile technology has made each of us ‘pauseable’” (161).

“The self that treats a person as a thing is vulnerable to seeing itself as one” (168).

“Now, technology makes it easy to express emotions while they are being formed. It supports an emotional style in which feelings are not fully experienced until they are communicated” (175).

“Twenty years ago, as a practicing clinical psychologist, if I had met a college junior who called her mother fifteen times a day, checking in about what shoes to buy and what dress to wear, extolling a new kind of decaffeinated tea, and complaining about the difficulty of a physics problem set, I would have thought her behavior problematic. I would have encouraged her to explore difficulties with separation. I would have assumed that these had to be addressed for her to proceed to successful adulthood. But these days, a college student who texts home fifteen times a day is not unusual” (178).

“We fill our days with ongoing connection, denying ourselves time to think and dream” (203).

“You come to enjoy the feeling of never having to be alone” (243).

“…when you depend on a computer to remember the past, you focus on whatever past is kept on the computer. And you learn to favor whatever past is easiest to find” (301).