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Humans need technology. I don't mean devices such as printers or automatic doors I mean phones and computers. In more recent years, many people have become glued to and almost completely reliant on their phones for even the most simple of tasks. Unfortunately, some have become so attached to their phones to the point where they need them for even the most basic parts of being human, such as communicating with each other and even feeling happy or satisfied. The worst part is many people aren't aware of this dependence and see nothing wrong with their need to always be stimulated to be happy. In her book, *The Empathy Diaries*, Sherry Turkle addresses just that, humanity's ever-growing need for screens and constant stimulation, as well as the problems it causes. I believe the need for digital technology is created from the need to feel even the illusion of happiness or satisfaction.

I think because of the need to feel happy or satisfied, stuff like positive stories online have become much more appealing and because of that, some of us have developed a hint of a confirmation bias toward screens. Despite the fact Turkle never directly writes about a confirmation bias, I believe she briefly alludes to it when she writes: "We like to hear these positive stories because they do not discourage us in our pursuit of the new – our new comforts, our new distractions, our new forms of commerce. And we like to hear them because if these are the only stories that matter, then we don't have to attend to other feelings that persist" (349). Providing a bit of context, people with a confirmation bias tend to search for or interpret

information to verify and support their existing point of view on a subject (which in this case are phones and computers) rather than finding a different view that may cause discomfort. In the quotation above, when Turkle says “We like to hear these positive stories because they do not discourage us in our pursuit of the new.” It shows we look for information that supports our beliefs, making us happy. Thus, we ignore the negative stories that make us feel bad. When we find information that makes us happy, we take it as a sign of how technology is, as stated by Turkle, a “proof of progress” and we should feel good about using it – justifying our unhealthy desire to constantly be behind our screens, rotting away in the illusion of happiness and satisfaction it brings us, and as a result, a bias towards our screens is formed.

Moving along the lines of needing constant stimulation. In *The Empathy Diaries*, Turkle talks about how there was an experiment that was run where someone was left to sit in a chair quietly, no phone, no books, nothing for 15 minutes. Turkle writes: “At the start of the experiment, they were also asked if they would consider administering electroshocks to themselves if they became bored. They said absolutely not: No matter what, shocking themselves would be out of the question. But after just six minutes alone, a good number of them were doing just that.” (348). It is astonishing how people can’t sit for 15 minutes without some form of stimulation. These people were so bored after just 6 minutes of having nothing to do they decided it would be better to “harm” themselves than to sit there and be bored for another 9 minutes. Not only does this prove the point that people need to feel satisfied even if it isn’t genuine, but it also proves that a lot of people will go to great lengths just for that feeling because they are so used to getting it from their phones. I realize that a lot of people would argue that there is absolutely zero way you could feel satisfaction from shocking yourself, and I agree. However, some people have become so accustomed to needing the feeling constantly to the point

that anything that gets rid of their boredom will leave them satisfied. Obviously, the small group of people used in the experiment doesn't represent the whole population, but the fact that most of the people in that small group chose to shock themselves proves the lengths people will go to, to get even a hint of satisfaction.

“when people are alone at a stop sign or in the checkout line at the supermarket, they seem almost panicked and they reach for their phones. We are so accustomed to being always connected that being alone seems like a problem technology should solve.” (348).