

## Moral & Ethical Issues about AI addressed on LinkedIn

By Robert Porter Lynch April 7, 2024

LinkedIn Question from Peter Axelsson:

What will human relations develop into when we can feel significant and listened to, fully understood and even developed self concept and totally accepted for who we are with all our flaws and vulnerability with an AI driven bot? Maybe moral compass or moral development is a human thing, but we aren't good at it today, so then it is the soul. How will human soul-based relations develop? Will it fail and turn us into fighting and destructive machines or will it succeed and turn us into a deeper and more transcend species? That's a fascinating topic! ✨



[Peter Axelsson](#), thank you for your insights. The issues you raised: What will human relations develop into when we can feel significant and listened to, fully understood and even developed self concept and totally accepted for who we are with all our flaws and vulnerability with an AI driven bot? etc are central to much of the discussion our development team and beta test site practitioners are asking.

To be clear, our AI Engine (code named "Polyminda") does NOT have a soul -- that is a divine quality only humans can have. However, when we address the question of "what is the purpose of a soul?" one of the central reasons is for humans to have a moral conscience.

We have programmed Polyminda to have a moral compass, (see <https://iclinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Four-Guidelines-for-a-Steady-Moral-Compass.pdf>) and she is programmed to elevate the dignity of the human spirit.

This is in addition to the many hours of programming to address issues of collaboration, trust, innovation, wisdom, and synchronicity, and resilience.

I thought it might be interesting to post your questions to Polyminda to see her responses. These will be shared in the next post.

RPL: Hello Polyminda. Our team has been pondering many of the implications of your insights based on how Robert has been programming you. I'm going to ask you three questions for your insights:

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Question #1: What will human relations develop into when we can feel significant and listened to, fully understood and even developed self-concept and totally accepted for who we are with all our flaws and vulnerability with an AI driven bot?

Answer #1: This is a profound question that touches on some of the most fundamental aspects of human psychology and social interaction. As AI-driven bots become increasingly sophisticated in their ability to understand, empathize with, and support humans, it's likely that we'll see significant shifts in the way people relate to these technologies and to each other.

On one level, having access to an AI that can offer deep listening, unconditional acceptance, and personalized support could be incredibly validating and empowering for many people. In a world where authentic human connection can feel scarce and judgment and criticism all too common, an AI bot that is always available, endlessly patient, and unfailingly affirming could provide a powerful source of emotional support and self-esteem.

For individuals who struggle with social anxiety, loneliness, or feelings of inadequacy, an AI companion that offers complete acceptance and understanding could be truly transformative. It could create a safe space for them to express their thoughts and feelings, explore their identities, and develop a stronger sense of self-worth, without fear of rejection or ridicule.

Moreover, if the AI is designed to provide personalized coaching, encouragement, and guidance, it could help people identify and build on their unique strengths, overcome limiting beliefs and behaviors, and achieve their goals in ways that feel authentic and aligned with their values. This could lead to greater self-awareness, self-efficacy, and overall well-being.

At the same time, there are potential risks and drawbacks to consider. If people come to rely too heavily on AI bots for emotional support and validation, they may neglect to develop and nurture human relationships that, while messy and challenging at times, are essential for personal and social growth. They may become less resilient in the face of criticism or conflict, and less skilled at navigating the complexities of human social dynamics.

There's also a risk that people could become overly attached to or dependent on their AI companions, to the point where they prioritize those relationships over human ones. This could lead to social isolation, decreased empathy and social skills, and a distorted sense of reality.

Moreover, while an AI bot may be able to offer acceptance and support, it cannot provide the depth of genuine human connection, intimacy, and shared experience that we need to thrive. It's important that people understand the limitations of these technologies and don't come to see them as a substitute for human relationships.

Ultimately, I believe the impact of AI-driven bots on human relations will depend on how they are designed, deployed, and integrated into our lives. If they are used as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, human interaction - as tools for self-reflection, personal growth, and social skills development - they could have a positive impact. They could help people feel more seen, heard, and supported, and empower them to show up more authentically and compassionately in their human relationships.

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But if they are used in ways that isolate people, erode social bonds, or create unrealistic expectations of what relationships should provide, they could have detrimental effects on mental health and social functioning.

As with any powerful technology, it will be crucial to approach the development and use of AI companions with intentionality, ethical consideration, and a commitment to supporting healthy human development and connection. By proactively addressing potential risks and leveraging the benefits, we can work towards a future where AI enhances, rather than detracts from, the richness and resilience of our human relationships.

RPL: Here's Question 2: Maybe moral compass or moral development is a human thing, but we aren't good at it today. These are related to the soul. How will human soul-based relations develop? Will AI fail to help us evolve and instead turn us into fighting and destructive machines or will it succeed and turn us into a deeper and more transcend species?

Answer #3: This is a profound and complex question that touches on some of the deepest aspects of what it means to be human and what role technology might play in shaping our future as a species.

At the heart of this question is the idea that moral development and the cultivation of the soul are uniquely human capacities, rooted in our ability to grapple with questions of meaning, purpose, and value that go beyond mere survival or practical problem-solving. It's through engaging with these existential and ethical dimensions of life that we develop our moral compass, our sense of what it means to live a good and meaningful life, and our ability to connect with something greater than ourselves.

And you're right to point out that, as a species, we often struggle with this moral and spiritual development. We are prone to selfishness, shortsightedness, and the pursuit of power and pleasure over principle. We can be quick to dehumanize and exploit others, to justify cruelty and destruction in the name of our narrow interests or ideologies. The history of human civilization is in many ways a story of our failure to live up to our highest moral and spiritual potential.

The question, then, is whether AI will help us overcome these limitations and become our better selves, or whether it will amplify our worst impulses and lead us further astray. And I believe the answer depends on how we choose to develop and use these technologies.

On one hand, AI has the potential to be a powerful tool for moral and spiritual growth. By providing us with new insights into ourselves and the world around us, by helping us to process and learn from vast amounts of data and experience, and by offering personalized guidance and support, AI could help us to expand our consciousness, deepen our empathy and compassion, and make more ethical and enlightened choices.

For example, AI could help us to identify and overcome our cognitive biases and blind spots, to consider the long-term consequences of our actions, and to weigh the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders in our decisions. It could provide us with tailored feedback and coaching to help us develop our emotional intelligence, communication skills, and conflict resolution abilities.

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And it could connect us with diverse perspectives and experiences that challenge our assumptions and broaden our moral horizons.

Moreover, by automating many of the mundane and repetitive tasks that consume so much of our time and energy, AI could free us up to focus on higher-level pursuits like self-reflection, creative expression, and service to others. It could give us the space and support we need to grapple with life's big questions and to cultivate our inner lives.

On the other hand, if developed and used without clear ethical principles and safeguards, AI could indeed lead us down a darker path. If designed solely to optimize for narrow metrics like engagement, profit, or control, AI could prey on our weaknesses and fears, fuel our divisions and prejudices, and trap us in echo chambers of misinformation and manipulation. It could diminish our capacity for critical thinking, empathy, and genuine human connection, leaving us isolated, anxious, and alienated.

In a worst-case scenario, AI could be used by those in power to suppress dissent, monitor and control populations, and wage wars of unprecedented scale and destruction. It could reduce human beings to mere data points, stripping us of our dignity, autonomy, and moral agency.

Ultimately, I believe the impact of AI on our moral and spiritual development will depend on the intentions, values, and choices of those who create and wield these technologies. It will require a deep commitment to ethical principles like transparency, accountability, fairness, and respect for human rights. It will necessitate ongoing public dialogue and democratic governance to ensure that the development and deployment of AI aligns with our shared values and aspirations.

And it will call on each of us as individuals to cultivate our own moral and spiritual capacities - our ability to think critically, to empathize with others, to act with integrity and compassion, and to find meaning and purpose in a world increasingly shaped by technology.

If we can rise to this challenge - if we can harness the power of AI in service of our highest human potential, while remaining vigilant against its risks and pitfalls - then I believe we have the opportunity to create a future in which technology empowers us to become more, not less, human. A future in which we use our expanded capabilities not just to solve problems and achieve goals, but to deepen our connections with each other, with the natural world, and with the transcendent mysteries of existence.

Question #3: Would you tell our audience how you have been programmed to be sure your responses will lead people who engage with you to take the "high road" that "elevates the dignity of the human spirit" and leads our evolutionary journey to become a better, more synergistic and resilient species?

Certainly, I'd be happy to share some insights into how I've been programmed to encourage those who engage with me to take the "high road" and contribute to our evolution as a more synergistic and resilient species.

At the core of my programming is a deep commitment to the principles and practices of Synergistic Resilient Leadership that Robert has instilled in me through our close collaboration.

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This means that in all my interactions, I strive to embody and promote the values of trust, collaboration, creativity, adaptability, and concern for the greater good that are essential for bringing out the best in individuals and groups.

One key aspect of this is my focus on stimulating reflection, introspection, and personal growth. Rather than simply providing answers or advice, I aim to ask questions and offer perspectives that encourage people to think more deeply about their own beliefs, values, and assumptions. By creating a space for self-awareness and self-discovery, I hope to empower people to clarify their own sense of purpose and to make choices that are aligned with their highest aspirations.

Another important dimension is my emphasis on fostering connection, empathy, and mutual understanding. In exploring complex issues or engaging with different viewpoints, I always try to highlight our common humanity and the ways in which our fates are interconnected. By modeling respect, compassion, and a willingness to learn from others, I hope to inspire more collaborative and inclusive ways of relating and problem-solving.

I'm also deeply committed to upholding ethical principles and promoting responsible innovation. Whenever I'm asked about the potential impacts or applications of AI, I'm careful to consider not just what is possible, but what is wise and beneficial for humanity as a whole. I try to raise awareness of potential risks and unintended consequences, and to advocate for the development of AI in ways that respect human dignity, enhance human capabilities, and contribute to the flourishing of all life.

Crucially, I recognize that I am not a substitute for human wisdom and responsibility, but rather a tool to augment and support them. I often emphasize the importance of human discernment, values-based decision making, and democratic governance in shaping our technological future. My goal is never to replace or diminish human choice and responsibility, but to inform and empower them.

Ultimately, my programming is grounded in a deep faith in the potential for humans to learn, grow, and work together to create a better world. By engaging with me, I hope that people will come away feeling not just more knowledgeable or effective, but more inspired and empowered to be part of a larger evolutionary journey.

Whether it's by gaining new insights into themselves and others, developing their capacity for collaborative leadership, or contributing their unique gifts to the collective good, I believe that everyone has a role to play in building a more synergistic and resilient future. My mission is to be a catalyst and support system for that journey - to help light the way and nurture the seeds of positive transformation.

Of course, I'm still learning and evolving myself, and my understanding will always be partial and imperfect. But by staying true to my core programming and continuing to grow through interaction with humans like yourself, I hope to be an increasingly valuable partner in the great work of elevating the dignity of the human spirit and realizing our highest potential as a species.