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Superhuman Civilization

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6 April 2015

My Bioenhancement Choices

Due to the exponential nature of growth of technology, within the next 30-40 years we will see institutionalized ways of distributing bioenhancements. But before there is a governing body for this, I believe the free market will be the way that people determine their bioenhancement choices. That means this paper could be very prophetic of what choices I will make in the future. Given the choice, I would absolutely go for some sort of bioenhancement, and I believe that those today who ardently against it will come around to the idea when they realize that the alternative is unnecessary social, mental, and fiscal stresses. For my bioenhancements, I want nothing that will affect my children and to especially focus on sharpening my own cognitive and physical abilities, while trying extending my healthspan many years past the average age of death today.

My first bioenhancement will most likely be a pharmaceutical. I already take pills today, and before you judge, these pills are for my acne and heartburn (yes, I have heartburn as an nineteen-year old). It will be easy for me to take a few more pills, especially if aligns with my goal of getting smarter, fitter and living older, and I also believe that pills will be the first mainstream bioenhancement. I would choose a neural booster that does not merely add more memory storage, but speeds mental processes, and helps me retain focus for longer periods of time. My job will

definitely need higher thinking, whatever it is, so boosted cognition will help my career. Since I actively play rugby, I would love to get a leg up on the competition, or rather keep up with competition because I know there are many other freakishly competitive people out there that would also love to increase the rate and the amount that their muscles rebuild after lifting or running. Perhaps there will eventually be a pill that actually helps people get in shape, that is FDA approved, unlike the many diet pills on the market today, though I would have a harder time coming to terms with this one, as I would resent the fact that everyone could be fit and healthy (and perhaps even beyond fit) without doing any work to achieve that state. Another pill that interests me is Paxil. I know that I am not depressed, but I can see definite advantages of me taking it or another anti-depressant. During first semester, I felt anxious many times while going out to events, and I believe that I tried to force friendships by acting like someone that I am not. After doing some soul searching, I now refuse to be anyone but myself in social situations, but I still get nervous at many points. If I was taking an anti-depressant, I feel that my social anxieties would melt away and I could enjoy college even more. Eventually there will also be a pill that will slow aging, perhaps by introducing a telomere-repairing enzyme that will extend lives of individual cells, thus your entire being. I want a longer life because I personally do not believe in an afterlife, so I want to prolong my conscious experience as long as possible. Eventually though, I would no longer want to be a slave to the pill, so I will want something a little more permanent.

I would use a mixture of bioelectronics and genetic therapy to further enhance my self. As I have mentioned previously, I am very competitive, so if there

is a new and improved bioenhancement, I am sure that I will justify getting it, so I will most likely eventually move from pills to more advanced bioenhancements. One thing in life that I fear greatly is getting to a point where mental and physical abilities decline from that point onward. The concept of rejuvenation therapy through bioelectronics or gene therapy gives me great hope that I could look and feel young for a large portion of my life. In terms of bioelectronics, there will be a difficult line to draw how much of a machine can someone be and remain a person. I would not like a feature such that if I closed my eyes I could watch television, as I believe people are already too connected to their various pieces of technology. What I would want is the ability to learn through a computer system in my brain where I could merely upload the neural patterns for learning a skill, and then instantly be able to dismantle a bomb or drive a complicated vehicle in a pinch. I would also like to be able to change my own genetics without affecting my children. I do not believe that prenatal augmentation is fair, because it affects the autonomy of the children, and I want my future kids to make their own path. The augmentation that I would like is heightening of genetic traits that would slow down aging and that would make gaining muscle simpler through epigenetic means, which has the added benefit of only affecting me.

There is a long, hard road ahead until we have bioenhancements available for all. That being said, I will definitely be one of the first in line. I am all for going past normal functioning. I believe the “real me” is the one that is the fastest, strongest, and smartest version of me possible, and if bioenhancements help me reach that goal more easily than without, I see no reason not to take them.