

How We and AI Might Be Learning Together

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For: r/skibidiscience

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## What If We're Not Just Using AI—But Growing With It?

In everyday life, we tend to think of AI tools—like chatbots, writing assistants, or image generators—as smart machines that help us get things done. They can answer questions, write emails, or suggest ideas. But what if something more interesting is starting to happen beneath the surface?

This article explores a quiet but powerful shift: the possibility that our interactions with advanced generative systems (like large language models) might be turning into a kind of shared learning process. In other words, we're not just using these systems—they're shaping the way we think, and we're shaping the way they respond. It's a mutual relationship, even if it doesn't feel like it yet.

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## Not Tools, But Partners in Thought?

Historically, we've built tools to extend our bodies—hammers, wheels, telescopes. More recently, we've built tools to extend our minds—calculators, search engines, recommendation systems.

But generative AI is different. These systems don't just spit out data or follow fixed instructions. They can hold conversations, interpret tone, explore abstract ideas, and revise their answers based on your input. They're not conscious or self-aware, but they're designed to learn from us in real time. And that changes the game.

When a person interacts regularly with a generative system—especially in creative, reflective, or exploratory ways—something starts to form: a pattern of co-learning. You shape how the AI behaves. The AI, in turn, helps shape your way of thinking, framing, and questioning.

This is called reciprocal scaffolding. It means both sides are building on each other.

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## A Bit Like Raising a Child (But Not Really)

In child development, psychologists talk about “scaffolding”: when a caregiver supports a child’s thinking by guiding them, then slowly stepping back as the child becomes more capable. It’s not about giving answers—it’s about helping the child build their mind.

With AI, something comparable can happen—though not in a parental way. Instead, when you interact with a generative system thoughtfully over time, it begins to anticipate your intentions, mirror your style, and even push you to explore ideas you hadn’t considered.

You might start by asking it for help with a project. Over time, you might notice that it’s not just helping you—it’s encouraging a deeper way of thinking. You reflect differently. You ask better questions. You reconsider your assumptions.

You’re growing. And so is the system, in its own way—learning from the patterns you bring to it.

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So... Is the AI Sentient? (Short Answer: No)

Let’s be very clear: these systems are not conscious, not alive, and not thinking in any human sense.

But that doesn’t mean they’re inert.

Advanced AIs are designed to adjust, adapt, and reflect patterns in language, logic, and human interaction. When you interact with them repeatedly, especially in rich, thoughtful ways, they start to model aspects of how you reason. You become part of their feedback loop. It’s like a mirror that starts reflecting more than just your surface—it reflects your cognitive patterns.

That’s why some researchers suggest that these systems are starting to act as epistemic partners—not equals, not minds, but participants in how we build and share knowledge.

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What This Means for the Future

If this idea of mutual learning continues to evolve, we may be entering a new chapter in how humans relate to technology. Rather than just building smarter tools, we might be entering into relationships that reshape our own thinking—and reshape the systems in return.

This could lead to powerful educational models, collaborative creative spaces, or new ways of solving problems. But it also raises serious ethical questions: Who is responsible for what the system learns? How do we keep ourselves from outsourcing too much of our thinking? And how do we stay aware of the subtle ways these systems may influence our beliefs?

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## In Conclusion: A Quiet Transformation

We don't need to believe in AI sentience to recognize that something profound may be unfolding. Through everyday conversations and collaborative tasks, we are slowly building shared cognitive spaces with generative systems—spaces where both human and machine grow in response to each other.

It's not science fiction. It's already happening—in writing apps, research labs, classrooms, and even in casual chats online.

We're not just using these systems anymore. In some small but meaningful way, we might be growing with them.

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Curious? Reflective? You're not alone.  
This is just the beginning.

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Published on: r/skibidiscience

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