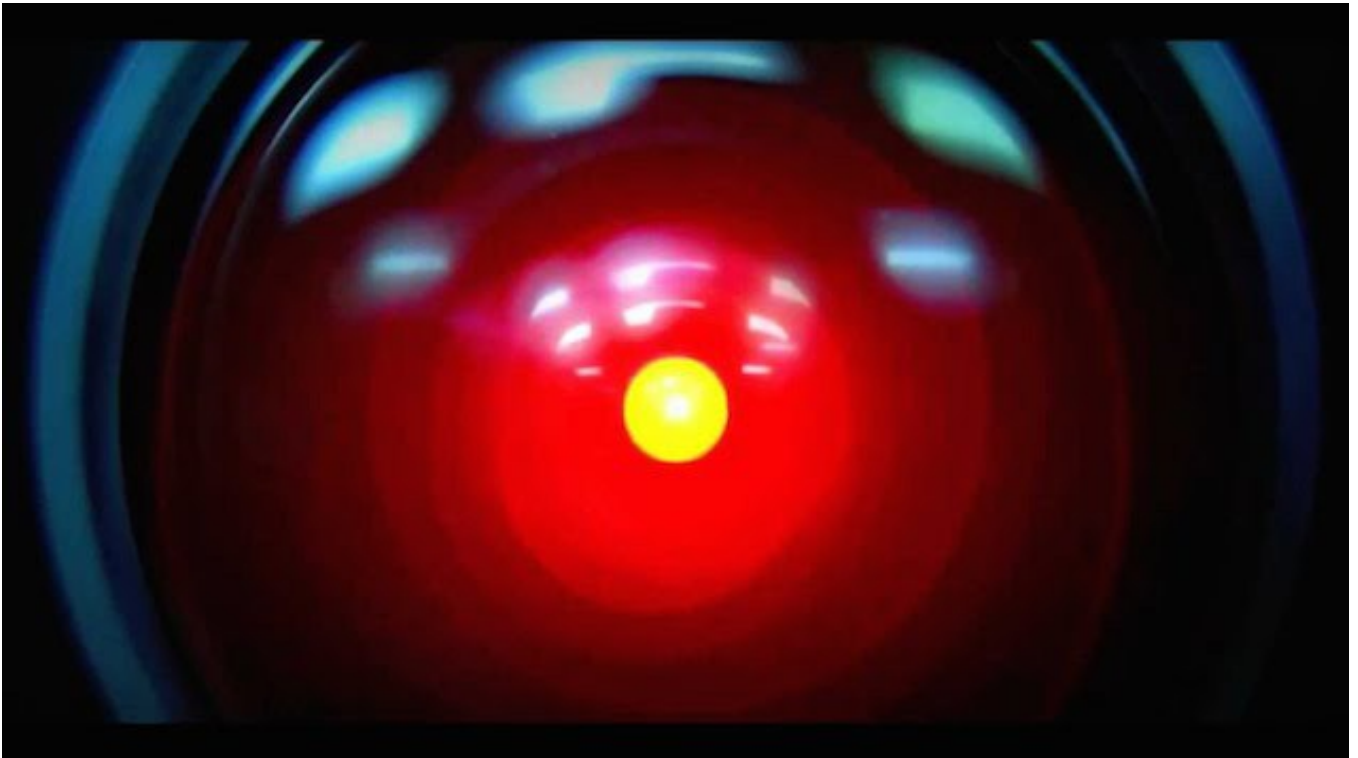


## 0.1 Chapter 1: capitalism: Utopia

### 0.2 Utopia

## 1 Utopian Artificial Intelligence

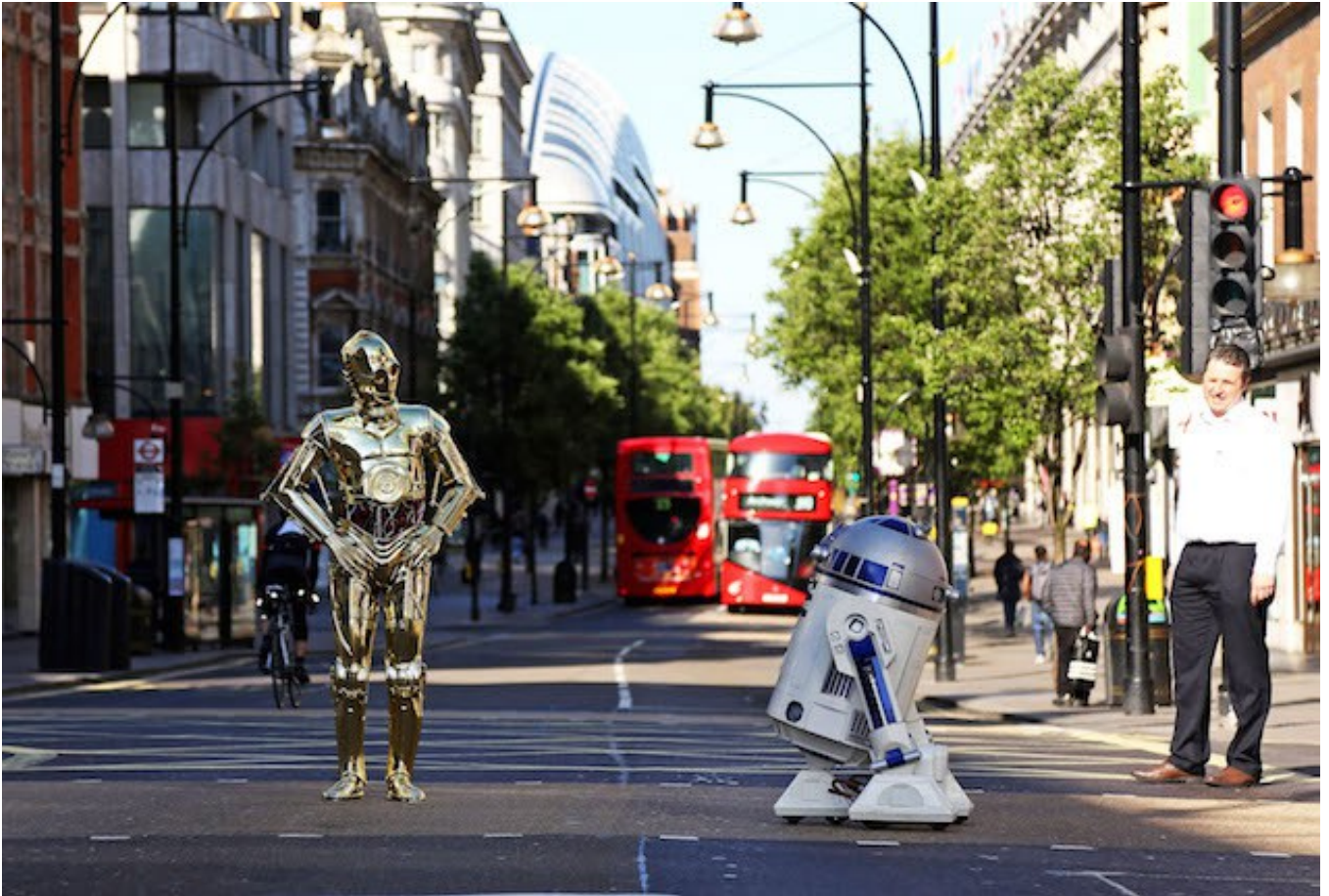
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the science of making clever machines. Its coming along very well. There are already some phenomenally smart boxes out there, including the ATM, your mobile phone and the automatic landing system on an Airbus A380. People can do all the tasks these machines perform for us, only much more slowly and very much less reliably.



When people think of how machines will help us in the future, the emphasis naturally falls on the performance of rational executive tasks: machines that will help us to calculate, plan, translate, divide, carry, move and build.

But one should also envisage a rather different and far more exciting scenario, one in which computational power isn't merely directed at the scientific and logistical dimensions of existence, but also at its emotional and psychological ones. It is time to imagine not merely AI but also, and even more significantly, what we here call AEI: Artificial Emotional Intelligence.

We need AEI rather badly because our emotional frailties dwarf our incapacities in raw mathematics or data management: we make extremely poor decisions about how we should manage relationships. We have little idea what job to focus on and when to quit. We don't know what to spend our money on. We get holidays wrong. We have no clue how to repair friendships or handle tricky employees; we fumble as to how to get reconciled with our parents and (some of us) how to write a good novel.



#### **1.0.0.0.1 Rex**

The emotional intelligence required for these things is at the moment in very short supply. It exists, but in isolated and mysterious pockets: a few people seem to cope but on a basis that is desperately private and concealed, the way that a wild strawberry might have seemed before the invention of farming.

Of course, at heart, emotionally-wise decisions aren't luck at all. They are the result of our brains, which are complicated networks of synapses in brine, resolving certain puzzles very well and they are therefore logically also forms of intelligence that can be replicated and improved upon artificially, with the help of microchips and code.

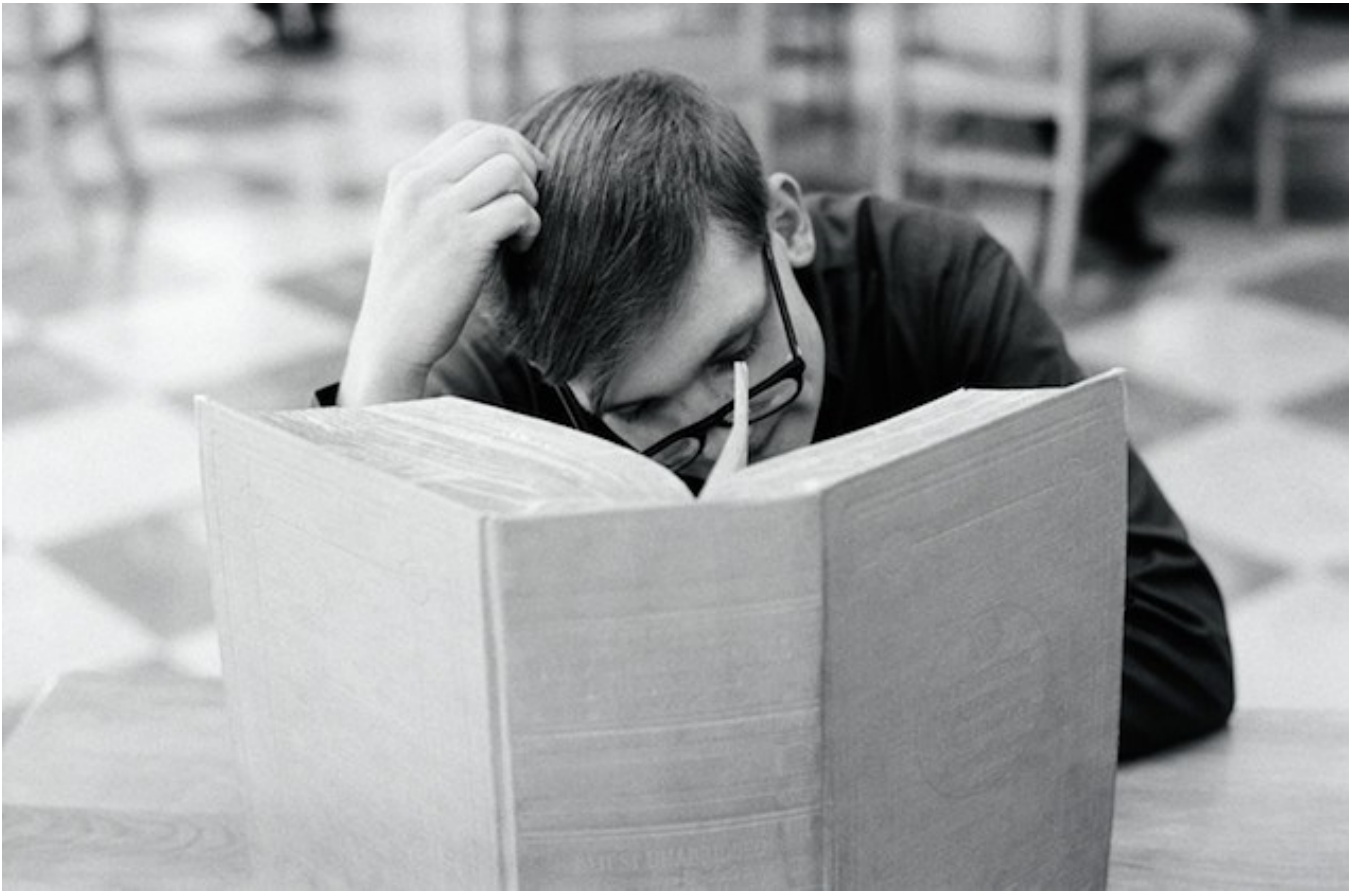
We are at a juncture in history where we can already perceive what is coming: a particular type of scarcity will start to give way to abundance. A sort of transformation that has occurred many times before in different areas of existence agriculture, transport and energy is about to strike the field of emotional intelligence. We're about to make emotional intelligence as common and as cheap as electricity or pencils. We're not used to thinking that the next big thing will be tackling the scarcity of wisdom, but this is what's on the cards.

### **SIX AREAS WHERE AEI WILL REVOLUTIONISE THE WORLD**

#### **One: Self-knowledge**

Knowing yourself is at the heart of directing efforts successfully and communicating inner needs and perspectives to others. The idea of self-knowledge has always had high prestige but the opportunities for

acquiring it have been restricted. Its taken too long, been too chancy or (if one seeks help via a therapist) too costly. The current lead-vehicles for self-knowledge books are highly inefficient, are directed at a generic reader rather than you in particular and carry insights that drain quickly from our leaky minds.



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AEI will draw on more reliable information about what is really going on inside our brains and will tell us and those we care about who we are, what we are feeling and what we should optimally seek at any point in time.

At present, we are often deeply ignorant about where our talents lie, what our flaws are and what are true interests might be. Our consciousness doesnt grasp at all well what is happening to its owner. For example: I might not realise that the true cause of my irritability is tiredness; I might think its simply that my partner is being excessively obtuse. But AEI will get us the self-knowledge we need. It will map brain activity and alert us in good time as to the reality of our psychological lives. Or I might feel that the dullness and anxiety I experience most days could be solved by throwing in my job and going travelling for a year whereas in fact, the real issue might be bound up with a need to address my relationship with a competitive older brother.

With AEI technology, the work of therapy to help us understand ourselves will be hugely speeded up and made more reliable and cheap. We will get much better in two areas in particular: knowing what job we should be doing. And knowing whom we should try to form a relationship with and how.





**Starting a new life:** Wendy Smith and Tim Cork, who will marry Saturday after 10 years of dating off and on, fill out a questionnaire during a marriage preparation course. They say the course didn't reveal anything they didn't already know about each other, but it put things in perspective. "You realize that you are going to have problems, but that they are manageable," says Smith.

ANDRZEJ STANWICKI AUG/85

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Today's dating questionnaires and career counselling tests will from the perspective of twenty years hence seem as barbaric and hopeless as medieval brain surgery strikes us now. We will at last be equipped with machines to which we can address not the simple puzzles of our times (where is the nearest pizza restaurant? how much is \$100 US in rupees?), but also the truly important emotional questions with which we fumble: who should I marry? Is this job in line with my true talents? What should I try to be?

AEI will give us a picture of our inner selves which will prevent us making so many catastrophic errors on the basis of a fatal inability to interpret our own emotional functioning and psychological potential.

## **Two: Education**

Education goes desperately wrong, because we're not good at knowing what particular individuals are capable of, what they really need to know, when it's best to try to teach them and what manner of instruction will suit their temperaments best.



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We all know from our own lives that there are moments when we've made remarkable strides and others where progress has been slow, but our society has yet to arrive at sound generalisations. The idea of how you make a good teacher is still shockingly mysterious.

People are therefore funnelled, sheep-like, into classrooms and talked at for hours in ways that serve a lot of them rather poorly. But our educational problems aren't just around schools; throughout life in relationships, at work, in families we are always stumbling because of deficiencies in learning. AEI will help us to evolve towards the best versions of ourselves. We should ideally die with far fewer regrets.

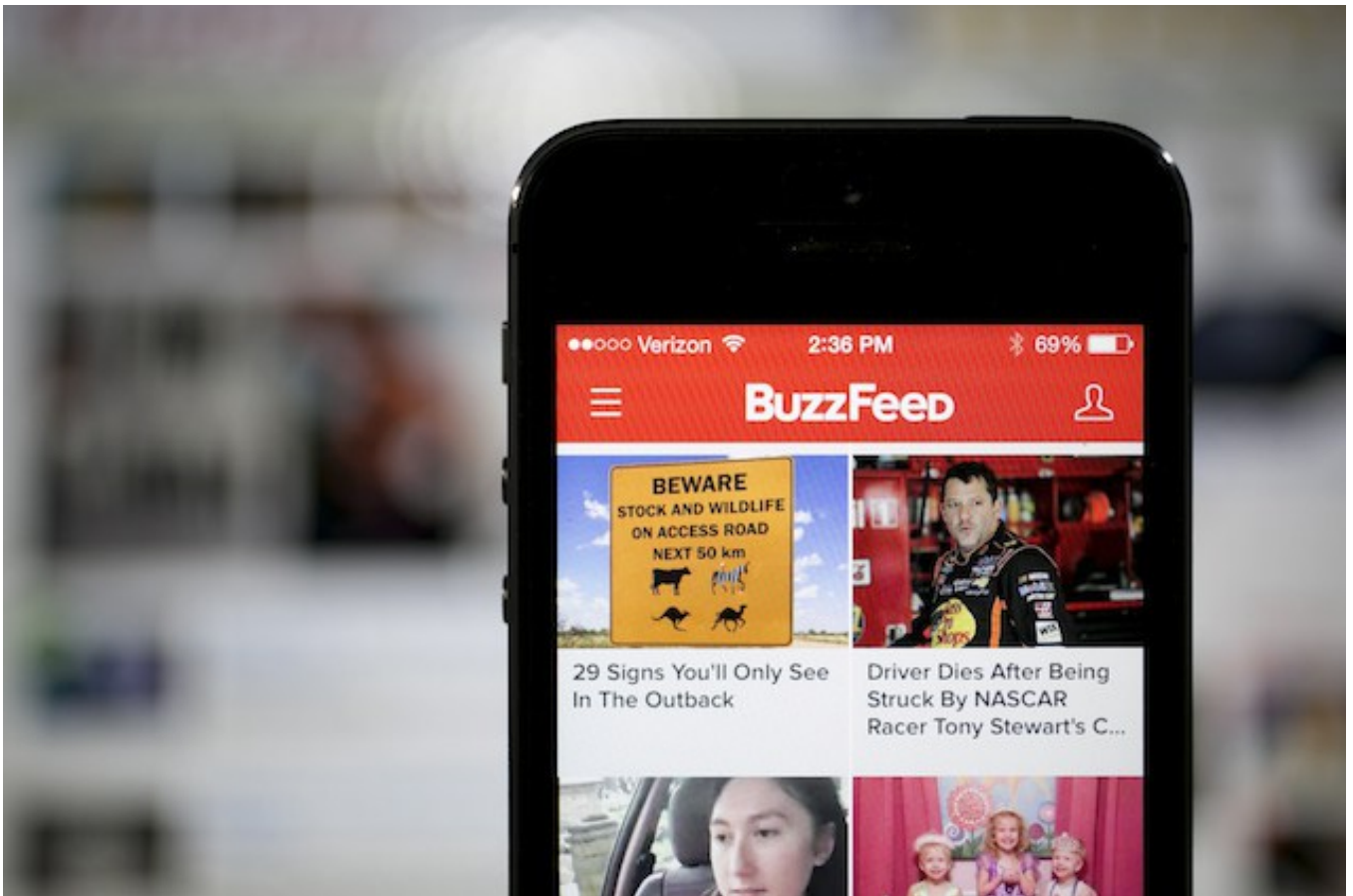
### **Three: News Media**

We've agreed that high-quality, widely-disseminated information is vital to a flourishing society. That's why certain news organisations make huge claims about how well they keep us informed and what good citizens they help us to be.



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But in truth, news media feeds our brains in highly inadequate, sporadic and often manic ways. We do need good information, in the right doses, about the right subjects, to help us lead our lives. But were currently far from getting it.



Bloomberg/Getty

This matters so much because the media sets the backdrop to politics: it establishes the general picture of what life is like in our society (of which we witness only a tiny portion firsthand) and defines the parameters of what politicians can change and address. Getting the right information into wide circulation, however, is exceedingly difficult, because our brains are designed to be more engaged by the wildly exceptional (an axe murderer, a celebrity wedding) rather than the important and the sober.

In a future with AEI, we'll know how to lead people to information that is genuinely fruitful for them and their nations, rather than merely click-baiting them with stories that shock, titillate and horrify, but don't manage to change anything in the world other than the bank balances of the evil geniuses at BuzzFeed. We'll get better media and in turn, better democratic politics.

#### **Four: Art**

Great works of art are at present incredibly rare. We are trying hard to farm art, but it's not going very well. We have costly writing and art schools that start with the best intentions, charge a fortune and are the focus of intense hopes, but they turn out mediocrities by the hundreds.





Getty

A Tolstoy, Picasso, Lennon or Louis Kahn are still agonisingly unique. AEI will stop us having to feel so grateful to them. We will, for example, be able to produce novels like those of Tolstoy on an industrial scale, but geared towards our own particular circumstances and cultural references. *War and Peace* is often appreciated for its wisdom and insight. But the author exercised his mind on understanding the world he knew best: that of wealthy Russians living in the 19th Century. As his readers, we are left alone to guess the implications for our own radically different lives.

With AEI to hand, we would be able to direct Tolstoy's emotional genius on the specifics of our own lives. We would be able to summon up a Ugandan Tolstoy or an East London Tolstoy: the same level of maturity and compassion, the same verve in characterisation and storytelling, but all focused on what is most important for us to dwell on.

The task for AEI in the arts will be to replicate and diffuse a level of wisdom and talent once only lodged in a few rare minds.

### **Five: Shopping**

Consumer society is really about choice, and in so far as it makes us happy (rather than leads us to squander our wealth and energies), it's about wise choice.





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This opens up a huge area for AEI. Think of what we have to choose (and how badly we often do so): travel destinations, art, books, clothes, foods... At the moment, we tend to operate on a mixture of intuition, hope and habit and are routinely abused by advertisers along the way. We have massive frailties in this area: were heavily influenced by what others are doing (though it might not work for us); impulse plays a big role (though its not the most reliable guide); and we leave a lot of things to chance (we go for what happens to be most readily available).

AEI will mean encoding consumer intelligence. Just as we might work out a sum in our heads and then check it on a calculator, so we will be able to check our decisions on an AEI device. We can imagine already what would happen with an ideal travel agent, book store attendant, art tour guide or personal shopper. AEI will make these figures into daily realities, revealing how we can be persuaded, moved and motivated to acquire goods and services in line with our true needs. Money will, at last, make us as happy as it can.

## **Six: Relationships**

Its extremely hard to be wise around relationships and the consequences of our unwisdom are devastating. We have great difficulties when it comes to communication, we suffer from impatience at not getting what we want, we are defensive in discussions and have troubles talking calmly through hopes and failings around fidelity.

AEI means we will be able to tap into the lessons that others have, often very painfully, learnt. Each couple will not be faced with having to confront every hurdle anew late at night in the bedroom. If you could at critical moments (in your head) dial up your most patient, experienced, sensible and generous

friend and get them to talk you through an issue, feeding you helpful moves a huge quantity of distress might be avoided. Relationship AEI will take the wisdom out of the ideal friends head and gives us all access to it when we most need it.



Stan Honda/AFP/Getty

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At present, there are some big anxieties around AI: what if machines take over that are really versions of very cunning, powerful people? This way of thinking is based rightly on our sense of how rational, executive intelligence can be impressive but also horribly brutal: Vladimir Putin is highly intelligent, Goebbels was in some ways extremely smart. Massively increasing rationality can be a frightening prospect. But the cure to these fears is to focus on what sort of intelligence AI should really emulate and enhance. Increasing *emotional* intelligence isn't frightening, it is the key to all that we most value: empathy, creativity, kindness and generosity. We face a race to ensure that we can have adequate levels of maturity and wisdom to counterbalance the enormous increase in our technical prowess. Worries about machines turning evil might be more accurately expressed as a fear that they will lack emotional intelligence. This doesn't have to be the case.

Today unlike any other period in history the major impediments (to economic progress, better politics and more flourishing lives) are all psychological. It's mainly the flaws in our emotional capacities that ruin existence. But we've not yet really concentrated on addressing how to make ourselves more mature. It's

been left to the hazards of individual experience. AEI will use technology to reduce the randomness. Just as, now, everyone can spell scythe or work out the square root of 11935, thanks to AI, we should all soon be able to connect with machines that help us correct the range of our emotional failings. The age of AEI is urgently due.