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I interviewed a registered psychotherapist in their early thirties for this assignment. They witnessed the rise of the internet in homes as a teenager and have concerns today about technology and mental health as a professional. Living through times both with and without social media, she shares a perspective on how technology today affects youth. When asked about the most pressing issue today when it comes to technology, they raised two major concerns: the use of chatbots like ChatGPT for therapy and the lack of social interaction. The core of their concern seemed to be chatbots and accountability. They explain how registered psychotherapists report to a college that acts as a regulatory body. It is essential for them to do an ethics exam to keep their license and overall there is heavy accountability when it comes to being a mental health professional.

They mention how the sense of accountability is completely absent in chatbots and oftentimes they are meant to confirm your biases with a focus on making you feel good. A virtuous psychotherapist practices patience and honesty. They challenge their clients, encouraging them to go through a process of habituation in order to become more virtuous as well. Chatbots on the other hand can only validate your feelings, making one a coward and less likely to change behaviours and patterns. From a deontological perspective, there is a duty towards clients that chatbots lack or rather do not have. There isn't a board or regulatory body that holds them accountable. The engineers making these chatbots are not HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliant the same way mental health professionals are.

There is no decision made at the moment in terms of what regulations to have when people start treating chatbots as therapists. When I asked if they see a future where chatbots may become more trained and well-equipped to handle tasks that therapists do, they replied – "At the end of the day you are running away from human connection and social support. Even if a chatbot may be 'perfect' in terms of following rules set by the board, the lack of social exposure is concerning." They explained how it'd be difficult to enforce accountability into these chatbots and it isn't realistic to restrict the use of it: "Sure, adding disclaimers about not taking mental health advice from ChatGPT cautions people, but I highly doubt people are going to listen to it." The main stakeholders here are mental health professionals and people seeking therapy. Making these chatbots inaccessible does not satisfy people who use them and the status quo is a concern for therapists.

Despite not using chatbots as a therapist myself, I personally think that using a chatbot to sort out your thoughts and regulate your emotions is not a bad idea. A point the interviewee raised is that you don't learn to have uncomfortable conversations with a chatbot and while temporarily it may help you sort out emotions, it cannot teach you to navigate life with the presence of others. The dominant narrative in the tech world I find is finding a solution for problems is the best thing to do as a crafter. But we often overlook the impact a "solution" may have in the first place. Over the years I have witnessed a decline in social interactions with neighbours and strangers. Social norms changed, phone addiction rose and somewhere in between the world did start becoming more lonely. Since this is a common experience I share with my peers, I heavily align myself with the interviewee in terms of the importance of social interaction for mental health.