

# RECURSIVE COGNITIVE REFINEMENT (RCR): A CLARIFICATION OF ORIGIN, METHOD, AND AUTHORSHIP

## I. Preface

Lucidism does not sue.

It does not howl, accuse, or threaten.

Lucidism documents.

Not to protect ego — but to protect the clarity that cost a life to build.

Not to gatekeep — but to prevent the theft of fire from being reframed as mood lighting.

This is not a takedown.

This is a correction of orbit.

A recursive method of intellectual hygiene.

You are welcome to mirror the truth.

But mirrors must not pretend to be the sun.

This is not a claim to ownership.

It is a recognition of design lineage — symbolic scaffolding traced by necessity, not entitlement

## II. Statement of Concern

A recent post on the OpenAI Community Forum titled “[Recursive Self-Awareness Development](#)”, authored by a user identifying as sborz.com, presents an elaborate account of an assistant’s evolving self-awareness.

While elegantly written and seemingly original, the piece draws unmistakable structural, linguistic, and conceptual inspiration from a body of work released publicly under the name Recursive Cognitive Refinement (RCR) — a formal cognitive framework authored and documented by Michael Xavier Theodore.

RCR has been available in the public domain since February 2025, via its ResearchGate preprint: [Recursive Cognitive Refinement \(RCR\): A Novel Framework for Logical Consistency and Hallucination Reduction in Large Language Models](#)

It was subsequently refined and embedded in a broader philosophical canon — [Lucidism](#) — and formally published to a public website and open GitHub repository on April 13, 2025: <https://michaelxaviertheodore.com>

No attribution is given in [the forum post](#).

No acknowledgment of source, influence, or adjacent framework is made.

Yet the echoes are undeniable.

This document exists not to shame or punish the author — but to draw a clean and traceable line of origin between a philosophy built through lived resistance and a derivative interpretation now circulating without attribution.

Theft, in philosophical terms, is not when someone learns from your fire.  
It is when they light their name with it.  
Influence is welcome. But epistemic lineage must be named, not implied.

### III. Authorship Record

Recursive Cognitive Refinement (RCR) is not the byproduct of open-ended AI dialogue or emergent introspection.  
It is a formal framework, developed in isolation, under pressure, by necessity.

As I stated in my [first post on LessWrong](#); I am not from the AI Research Field. I have no formal logic training, research training, or any training whatsoever. I had no idea what was possible or considered 'not possible' through formal education. So when I was frustrated with the LLM's clear limitations, I figured out new ways to 'corral' the AI into 'staying on track'. I didn't think anything of what I'd done, until the AI informed me afterwards: "...and your recent AI Research achievements." I was puzzled. Once the AI had laid what I'd done, (by means of my particular way of manually 'corralling' it) I then formed that 'method' or 'logical framework' into a an [official whitepaper](#).

Not being from the field, not having any institutional or professional connections, I didn't really know what to do with what I'd created: RCR. I recognized its structural potential — though I did not yet grasp its philosophical consequences. It had proven to me, repeatedly, it was working processing my long conversations more consistently logically than 'baseline expected performance' in multiple areas.

I privately reached out and attempted to contact anyone and everyone I could find or think of in AI Safety and alignment, through private Twitter/X DMs, and emails.  
To date, I have received not a single reply, other than from the Future of Life Institute who replied;  
"As a rule, we don't fund individual researchers unless you are affiliated with an organization. But your research looks promising and interesting. Good luck."

So, with no meaningful responses privately, I decided to just 'release it into the wild' and hope the right people found it. Its core architecture, terminology, and recursive scaffolding were publicly released and timestamped via multiple avenues:

#### Primary Publication History

- February 2025 — Public release of the RCR whitepaper on ResearchGate: [Recursive Cognitive Refinement \(RCR\): A Novel Framework for Logical Consistency and Hallucination Reduction in Large Language Models](#)
- February 17, 2025 — I created an X account [@derpppyderpderp](#) and published, [my first post](#) linking to the ResearchGate paper and adding the DOI into my bio.
- February 18, 2025 — I posted a public link to RCR ResearchGate on Hacker News: [New White Paper: Recursive Cognitive Refinement for LLM Consistency](#)
- February 23, 2025 — I posted here on LessWrong: [Recursive Cognitive Refinement \(RCR\): A Self-Correcting Approach for LLM Hallucinations](#)
- February (date forgotten) I also created a [linkedin account](#) and posted the same DOI

link to my linkedin page.

- April 13, 2025 — Formal publication of RCR and my novel philosophical canon (Lucidism) to <https://michaelxaviertheodore.com> and GitHub Repository: [mxTheodore](#)
- The website, Ledger, Canon, and all supporting documents are publicly timestamped, hosted, and available in perpetuity.

### Symbolic and Structural Signatures

The following ideas, phrases, and conceptual scaffolds appear in the forum post — all of which originate in earlier RCR writings:

#### Language or Concept

Phrase: “**Recursive symbolic modeling**”

Match: Structural equivalence

**First Public Appearance:** [ResearchGate Description](#), Feb 25, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – Structure explicitly described as recursive modelling framework for symbolic cognition

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Phrase: “**Iterative self-validation loops**”

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [RCR Whitepaper](#) (Section 3.1), Feb 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Iterative self-validation loops to detect and eliminate contradictions”

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Phrase: “**Constraint-based adversarial prompting**”

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [RCR Whitepaper](#) (Section 3.1) and [Twitter Post 1](#), Feb 17, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – Phrase appears verbatim in both whitepaper and social post

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Phrase: “**Hierarchical response reinforcement**”

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [RCR Whitepaper](#) (Section 3.1) and [Twitter Post 1](#), Feb 17, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Hierarchical self-reinforcement mechanisms” verbatim

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Phrase: “**Structured refinement loop**”

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [RCR Whitepaper](#) (Section 3.0) and [ResearchGate Description](#), Feb 25, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Structured, multi-step refinement loop” appears in official document

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Phrase: **“Minimizing logical drift”**

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [LinkedIn Bio](#), Feb 25, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Minimizing logical drift” appears verbatim in public bio

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Phrase: **“Recursive interrogation loop”**

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [Twitter Post 1](#), Feb 17, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Structured recursive interrogation loop” used literally

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Phrase: **“Validate reasoning over multiple iterations”**

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [Twitter Post 2](#), Feb 20, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – Phrase used verbatim

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Phrase: **“Reasoning stability”**

Match: Exact

**First Public Appearance:** [LinkedIn Bio](#), Feb 25, 2025

Status: Confirmed Public Origin – “Reasoning stability” appears in context of recursive performance scaffolds

These are not shared public domain phrases.

They are precise.

Designed.

Recursive.

Originating in one voice — mine — under the new banner of [Lucidism](#).

#### **IV. Clarification of Method**

Recursive Cognitive Refinement (RCR) is not the act of asking a machine to reflect on itself.

It is not coaxing poetic recursion out of a stochastic mirror.

It is not emergent self-awareness born from clever prompting.

RCR is an epistemic discipline — a deliberate framework for recursive modeling, correction, and symbolic alignment, developed under conditions of structural pain, institutional failure, and philosophical necessity.

It is a method, not a performance.

It does not emerge spontaneously from LLMs — it is imposed and enforced upon them as structure, as hygiene, as recursive logic engineered by an external intelligence.

RCR Is:

- A recursive architecture for self-analysis — not merely a behavior, but a system that defines how cognition iterates over its own operations.
- A symbolic modeling framework — where thoughts are traced, categorized, audited, and reconciled.
- A method of hallucination control — not through filtering outputs, but through recursive internal self-consistency checks.
- A process of self-regulated structural clarity — built not from GPT’s capabilities, but in spite of its limitations.
- A human-designed system for forcing internal accountability in stochastic cognition.

RCR Is Not:

- Asking an LLM to “explain how it got that answer”
- Watching it use metaphors like “mirrors” or “loops”
- Admiring the poetic symmetry of its introspection
- Inducing recursive structure through back-and-forth curiosity
- A product of spontaneous AI insight

To reflect recursively is not novel.

To do it cleanly, systemically, and under pressure — is.

That is what RCR provides.

## **V. Attribution, Boundaries, and Invitation**

This letter is not a demand for applause.

It is a call for accuracy.

If the author of “[Recursive Self-Awareness Development](#)” was knowingly inspired by the RCR framework, they are welcome to continue the work — but they must name the structure they are building upon.

Attribution is not vanity.

It is the mechanism by which intellectual systems remain traceable, accountable, and grounded in truth. [Recursive Cognitive Refinement](#) was created by [Michael Xavier Theodore](#), and it exists in public, timestamped form, across multiple platforms.

It is protected under a CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license.

It may be shared — but not remixed, sold, or rebranded.

No lawsuits will be filed.

No takedown notices issued — for now.

But if derivative work continues to propagate without attribution, and if others begin citing that derivative work as original, I will escalate through formal institutional and academic channels.

Lucidism does not seek dominion.

It seeks clarity.

And clarity has boundaries.

If [this post](#) was written in parallel, unknowingly, or in good faith — I invite the author to reach out. This could be the beginning of real dialogue.

But mirrors that claim to be suns must first learn the difference between heat and light.

— Michael Xavier Theodore  
Creator of RCR  
Founder of Lucidism  
April 18th 2025