

Predictions on Artificial Intelligence

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg spent his Sunday afternoon smoking meats and doing a Facebook Live from his backyard in Palo Alto, California. While waiting for his brisket to slow cook, he delivered an admonition to Elon Musk, his fellow Silicon Valley billionaire, and others who sound alarm bells over artificial intelligence posing a threat to our safety and well-being.

AI is going to make our lives better in the future, and doomsday scenarios are “pretty irresponsible,” says Zuckerberg.

A user submitted a question, which Zuckerberg read out loud: “I watched a recent interview with Elon Musk and his biggest fear for the future was AI. What are your thoughts on AI and how it could affect the world?”

Earlier in July, Musk, the CEO of SpaceX and Tesla, said that artificial intelligence will cause massive job disruption, that robots “will be able to do everything better than us.”

Musk also expressed dire concern over a future shared with robots: “I have exposure to the most cutting edge AI, and I think people should be really concerned by it,” Musk said. “AI is a fundamental risk to the existence of human civilization.”

In the Facebook Live, Zuckerberg says he opposes the spread of fear surrounding the potential of artificial intelligence.

“I have pretty strong opinions on this. I am optimistic,” says Zuckerberg. “I think you can build things and the world gets better. But with AI especially, I am really optimistic.

“And I think people who are naysayers and try to drum up these doomsday scenarios — I just, I don’t understand it. It’s really negative and in some ways I actually think it is pretty irresponsible,” he says.

“In the next five to 10 years, AI is going to deliver so many improvements in the quality of our lives,” adds Zuckerberg.

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Mark Zuckerberg

FOUNDER AND CEO OF FACEBOOK

Zuckerberg says artificial intelligence is already helping diagnose diseases, for example. He also points to self-driving cars as a way that artificial intelligence will improve our lives. “One of the top causes of death for people is car accidents still and if you can eliminate that with AI, that is going to be just a dramatic improvement.”

Not that he’s being Pollyanna.

“Whenever I hear people saying AI is going to hurt people in the future, I think yeah, you know, technology can generally always be used for good and bad, and you need to be careful about how you build it and you need to be careful about what you build and how it is going to be used,” says Zuckerberg.

“But people who are arguing for slowing down the process of building AI, I just find that really questionable. I have a hard time wrapping my head around that,” he says.