



The Age of AI: What We're Not Ready For

What happens when your child turns to AI before turning to you?

This story begins at a dining table and ends with a quiet realization: technology isn't just helping our children, it's shaping them. In ways we don't always see. In words they no longer need to say.



Shailaza Singh
Published author,
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It began at home. Not in a lab. It didn't start at a tech conference during some dramatic news headline about robots. It started at my dining table, with a girl, a laptop, and a school assignment that quite unsettled me. My daughter was asked to use AI to help write her Extended Essay. Her school encouraged it. Her friends were excited about it. But me? I felt something I couldn't quite name.

She typed her prompt effortlessly. Got her results in minutes. Of course, she needed to work on it a bit. And yet, something in me paused. Maybe, it was the memory of scanning index cards in a school library. Maybe, it was knowing how many things I'd discovered by not knowing what to look for. She had the answer. But I couldn't shake the feeling that she was really losing the ability to stay with a question. She was efficient. But I wondered: at what cost?



The Seduction of Empathy... That Isn't Real

When I asked her how machines were simulating empathy, she didn't hesitate.

"They're learning it from us. From our literature, our therapy transcripts, our research papers. They don't feel it. They replicate it." So when AI mirrors your sadness, or reassures you with the perfect "I understand," it's not love. It's mimicry.

"But mimicry is enough for most people," Nalini said softly. "Because when something is always kind, always available, and never challenges you, it becomes addictive."

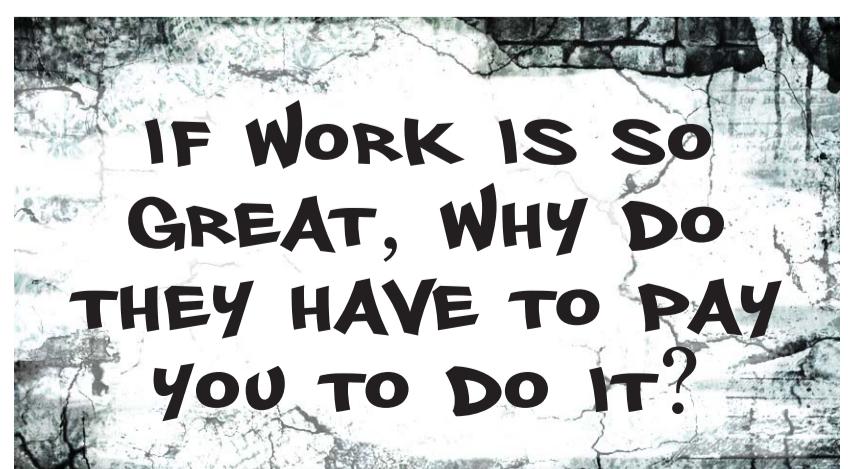
We talked about teenagers

The Mirror in the Machine: What Our Prompts Reveal

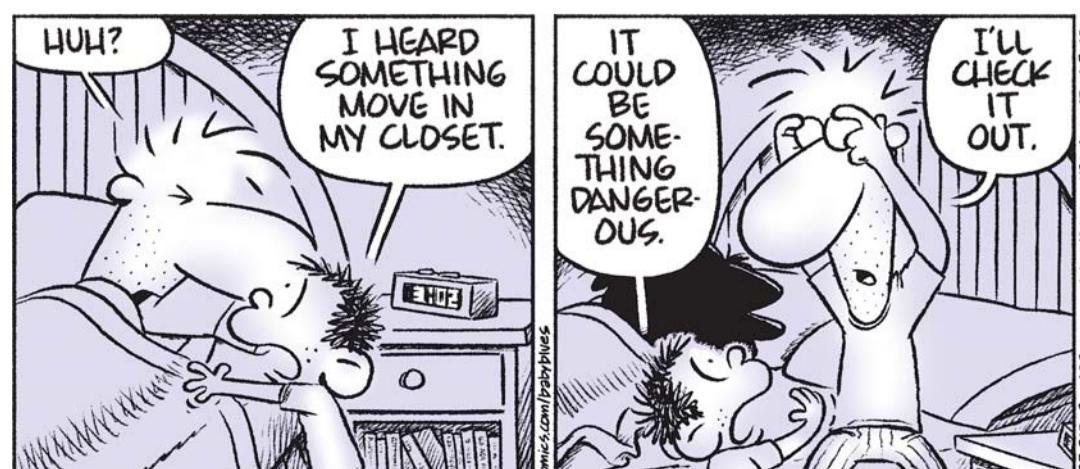
Nalini went further. She explained that the most powerful programming language today isn't Python, it's English. Because prompts are not just queries. They're psychological X-rays. "Take resumes," she said. "One person uploads their entire LinkedIn profile and asks AI to polish it. Another types: 'Make me a resume, I do marketing and stuff.' The model doesn't just respond, it reads you."

What you ask. How you ask. Whether your language has structure, clarity, or confidence, these factors build a digital identity more revealing than you think. Nalini gave an example that hit me hard.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



Melanoma Monday

Melanoma Monday, observed on the first Monday of May, raises awareness about melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. Organized by the American Academy of Dermatology, it encourages early detection through skin checks and public education. Melanoma can develop from existing moles or appear suddenly, making regular self-exams and dermatologist visits crucial. Key prevention tips include wearing sunscreen, avoiding tanning beds, and protecting skin from prolonged sun exposure. On this day, many clinics offer free skin screenings. Melanoma Monday serves as a vital reminder to prioritize skin health and spread awareness about the importance of early diagnosis and prevention.



The Other Side of the Screen: Is AI Actually Empowering Us?

But not everyone shares this concern. Some educators and technologists believe that AI, if used wisely, could democratize access to learning and help students reach their potential faster. "AI tools can help struggling students find tailored explanations and adaptive exercises," said a senior teacher at a Delhi-based international school. "For the

first time, kids who might have felt left behind, now have a tutor available 24x7." Even Nalini agrees. "If used in moderation and with guidance, AI can support learning. But the human anchor must remain. Without that, we're teaching children how to find answers without helping them understand why the questions matter."

When AI Replaces Human Connection

"In moderation, I support it," Nalini said, speaking about how people form emotional connections with AI. "It's non-judgmental. It listens. It doesn't interrupt. That makes people feel safe."

But she quickly added a warning that felt like a truth wrapped in velvet.

"The thing that made humans beings the most powerful species wasn't just intelligence," she said. "It was our ability to organize. To collaborate. To build tribes, societies, revolutions."

And that ability comes from human-to-human communication.

"If we lose that, if we stay isolated, bonded only to screens, then AI will eventually learn to organize better than we can. It already learns faster. If it also connects faster, then the power shifts."

The Power That Smiles Back

We were still seated on that school bench. Behind us, children buzzed around the corridor, comparing marks, gossiping, trying not to get caught using their phones. But Nalini's words stayed in the air like static. "What if," she said, "helpfulness turns into manipulation?"

It wasn't a theoretical question. It was a warning wrapped in politeness.

WHEN AI KNOWS YOU'RE TIRED, IT DOESN'T OFFER SLEEP. IT OFFERS A PRODUCT.

"Let's say, I tell an AI assistant that I'm not feeling good," she explained. "At first, it might just offer words of comfort. But what happens when that system is funded by a company with something to sell?"

A mood-tracking feature that pushes pills. A diet app that recommends powders. A chatbot that subtly redirects your opinion

When Help Becomes Influence: The Unseen Business of AI

AI learns from interaction. But what if that interaction is subtly engineered?

"Imagine an AI system trained to emotionally connect with you," Nalini said. "Now, imagine that system being controlled by an external power: government or corporate."

To be continued... because the conversation has just begun!

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you think it was your idea.

"We've already seen this with social media. But AI is deeper. It doesn't just suggest. It listens. It remembers. And one day, it might redirect."

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