



ONTOLOGICAL SHOCK

*The Accelerating Emergence of
Artificial Intelligence*

Robb Smith ♦ **Bruce Alderman** ♦ **Corey deVos**

[00:00:00] **Corey deVos:** All right, here we go. Hey everyone. Thanks for tuning in. Uh, my name is Corey DeVos with Integral Life, and I'm really, really excited for what we are about to get into today. I'm actually joined with my very good friend and now co-host Bruce Alderman. Bruce, how you doing, buddy?

[00:00:17] **Bruce Alderman:** Hey, very good. Yeah, happy to be here. We've talked about doing something together for a long time, so really glad this is, manifesting now.

[00:00:24] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, absolutely. This is like a bit overdue for us. And, you know, I just wanna mention to our audience, and to you Bruce, I'm so psyched to do this particular series with you. You know, you, I've told you all this before, but you have long been just one of my absolute favorite people, in the integral community. We've known each other forever. You know, you've got this galaxy sized brain and maybe even more importantly, a galaxy sized heart to go along with it. And, I'm just so excited for what we're about to do together. So let's, fill people in on what we are actually doing and sort of where this might lead in the, weeks and months to come.

So this is our inaugural episode of a new series that we are putting together on artificial intelligence. And, you know, basically our thinking was, this is such a absolutely massive and monumental emergence that we're seeing right now. you know, we often talk about it as being a tsunami wave that is already starting to hit the shoreline, and yet 90 to 95% of people can't quite see it yet. And so, you know, we wanted to put together this show in order to explore some of the really, really big questions that are coming out of this emergence, right? Questions like, is an AGI, something like an AGI, possible in our lifetimes? Is that actually what we're seeing in terms of this overall emergence? The question of alignment issues, right? How do we make sure that how AI goes about fulfilling its needs is aligned with the needs of our species? You know, these are some really, really big questions that are floating up all of a sudden in places like YouTube and, you know, really all around. And I'm really, really excited to get into this with you and a whole sort of pantheon of guests that we have lined up to take a really close look at these issues one at a time.

You know, I think that when we look out on YouTube these days, we're just seeing a ton of discourse and, you know, some of that discourse is maybe a little bit more satisfying than others, right? I mean, we're seeing some, you know, oftentimes I'll just call them ungrounded kind of amber mythologies about, you know, we're all gonna go up in some singularity rapture, or this is gonna be the total extinction of our species. All sort of

emotional narratives that we're putting into this. We're seeing a lot of umber to maybe orange narratives about, you know, how to develop skills that allow you to navigate and survive, and thrive really during this, this big transition. And we're seeing some, you know, fairly sophisticated, I would say late green, maybe early teal perspectives on sort of the systems theory, the game theory of it all.

I think the idea here is that all of these different perspectives that we're seeing emerging in the discourse are all valid and they're all even valuable, right? And we'll be sort of integrating and, pulling in some of those perspectives as we, you know, roll this series out. But we also wanted to take an opportunity to offer what is hopefully a more integral, you know, maybe sort of aspirationally turquoise enactment of, this emergence.

So that is basically what we're here to do. Do you have anything you'd like to say about that before we introduce our guest?

[00:03:26] **Bruce Alderman:** I think that's a great introduction. I would say, I actually feel, and I think this is appropriate, I feel on the edge of my capacity in addressing this. You know, you could have brought me on to be a guest in a show where I could sit in something and say, okay, I've explored this for years. I feel comfortable to speak about this, but instead I think we're sitting in front of something that is really going to be challenging for all of us, including integral sense makers. Right? And I think we're going to have to do our best, I think, to step up our own game in, in using these tools and lenses and really feeling into our perspectives and wrestling with the, I think, civilization changing things that are about to unfold within the next few years.

[00:04:15] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. Yeah. Really well said. And great frame for us to start off with. Well, let's get to it. Let's introduce our first guest for our first episode. My very good friend, my brother, my colleague, my boss, if you wanna get all "dominator hierarchy" about it, Robb Smith. Robb, how you doing, man?

[00:04:32] **Robb Smith:** Hey guys, nice to be here. Doing well.

[00:04:35] **Corey deVos:** It's so good to have you. So good to have you.

[00:04:37] **Robb Smith:** We're gonna have a very cool, very cool conversation today.

[00:04:40] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. And it's just gonna be sort of an extension of the conversation we've already been having almost every day. As this thing continues to sort of accelerate, we just find ourselves talking about it more now than ever. So this is gonna be, this is gonna be great. And in fact, you know, I think, from our conversation we had a couple days ago, you might actually end up being sort of a frequent guest here in this new as-yet-untitled series of ours. You know, I think you've got a lot to say, and you've done a lot of really, I think extraordinary thinking, just in terms of how do we relate to this? How do we actually sort of navigate the chaos of an emergence like this, right, in order to find strategies to thrive, strategies to work, strategies to play. And really I think at the core of it all, trying to find ways to allow this emergence of artificial intelligence to help us do what we do even better, to bring integral into the world in a more robust, more sophisticated, and hopefully more sort of actionable way, while also using these ideas to make better sense of this just circus mirror of an emergence that we're, we're all sort of taking part of right now.

[00:05:53] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, indeed. Indeed. Excellent. Well, let's, let's dive in.

[00:05:57] **Corey deVos:** Let's dive in. So the frame of today's show, guys, we are framing this overall emergence of AI, we've got a phrase that we've sort of focused on, which is "ontological shock". You know, this really does in a lot of ways represent an ontological shock to our species, really. I mean, it's a species wide ontological shock.

So what do we mean by that? What does an ontological shock mean? What I mean by it is essentially the ground of our reality has shifted from under our feet. Right? And it continues to shift underneath our feet. Reality itself has changed. It's transformed in ways that maybe we can't even necessarily put our fingers on, all we know is that it has changed. And the intuitive or even methodological processes that we previously had to sort of, you know, predict what tomorrow's gonna look like, what next week's gonna look like, what next month, next year, next decade are gonna look like. All of that just gets suddenly thrown out the window.

And I think that is what we're faced with right now. We're faced with a lot of uncertainty because the shape of our reality has fundamentally shifted in ways that I'm not even sure we're gonna know about for at least another few years until this continues to sort of

congeal and, you know, present itself, surface, in our overall society.

So that is what we're gonna be looking at today. Bruce, what do you think of this topic, ontological shock? How do you relate to this phrase in terms of this emergence of AI?

[00:07:25] **Bruce Alderman:** I think it's something that hasn't really settled in yet in terms of a broad social impact, but it's been very interesting to watch social media, to read papers, to listen to talks and presentations. And it's very clear that, in the various circles where people are actually developing this technology and thinking about applications and thinking about implications and thinking about impacts, ontological shock has already settled in that arena. And so I think we're, in some sense, as viewers of that, not participating in that industry, we're witnesses to what is going to be a ripple effect through society over time.

We're just, for any of us who are interested in this, we're watching the first effects of that and anticipating what the aftershocks are going to be as it rolls through more and more the lives of everyday people.

[00:08:25] **Corey deVos:** Robb, how about you? Do you have any thoughts about just this, this overall frame, this phrase that we're using for this ontological shock?

[00:08:32] **Robb Smith:** Well, I think you nailed it. When you first said it, to me it says precisely what needs to be said, because it's not just an epistemological shakeup, it is something that's happening at the very, very deep structure of the world, and in a very universal way.

I'm gonna reference back to the TED talk I did in 2012, because I basically talked about ontological shock, without naming it. What I said was that after the invention of the smartphone in 2007, the fact that we had a global society coming together, we had high speed data networks, and that that was in effect the beginning, the very, very, very early beginning of the Transformation Age. And I used an analogy that said that the plow sort of gets up and gets under the dirt. And that allows the roots, of the agrarian age to rise. But I also referenced it metaphorically as what happens when deep structures get basically upturned from within and from underneath.

And it was very clear that as we come into the Transformation Age, there is gonna be a whole series of exponential technologies that do this and that it's not just technologies that'll do it, it's also how we know, it's political things, it'll happen in all four quadrants. But, it is now with us. Like, this is no longer theoretical. This is no longer in the future. This is what we are living through day by day in real time. And I think that that term says it very, very well. And so as we go through the show, we'll get more in more detail as to what that looks like, how we might think about it, some of the frames we can hold around it. But it's the right term. And I think people are really, really gonna feel it in cascading waves, depending on where they sit within both the evolutionary stack, anybody who works in the noosphere is gonna feel it far faster than those who don't, the developed world's gonna feel it faster than the developing world. And it also, depends on how sheltered they are by existing power structures. And so we'll also talk about power and how power is gonna react to this, and how people will get either protected or not, based on what kind of role they have, what kind of social role they have, and where they are enmeshed in our existing power structures. It's gonna have very differential effects across all those different dimensions.

[00:10:49] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Yeah. I like to think about this as just another, in a sort of sequence of ontological shocks, which is basically the stuff that transformation is made out of, right? Like every time we make a major stage shift from one stage of development to another stage of development, this often requires a certain kind of disruption of the status quo of the prior stage, so that something new can emerge, right?

And we've seen this, you know, previously... I mean, the examples I think of off the top of my head in 1972 when we saw that very first image of the blue marble of, you know, earth from space as a whole. And we actually got to experience our home as sort of this closed system, right? A closed circuit as opposed to the previous Orange, I think, model of the world that we were operating from, which was basically this wide open frontier, this, you know, endlessly open system, filled with resources that can be extracted with no, you know, real cost to everyone else. That was a massive ontological shock, just seeing that image of the earth from space.

And similarly, the detonation of the nuclear bombs over Nagasaki and Hiroshima, that was an ontological shock. All of a sudden reality shifted. Reality could never be the same. Some might point to, uh, the election of Donald Trump is being sort of an ontological shock, at least for some of our friends, right?

My favorite example of ontological shock that is maybe most applicable to what we're seeing right now was, you know, during the European Age of Enlightenment, right? Where we went in about 150 year period from a perception of the universe that was a few thousand years old, right? What is it? James Ussher famously believed that the universe began at 6:00 PM on Saturday, October 22nd, in 4,004 BC right? So a 6,000 year old... this was sort of the common understanding of the age of the universe. And in 150 years, you know, beginning about a hundred years after the Copernican Revolution, all of a sudden humanity is a) not the very center of the universe, b) not very special in the universe, c) the universe has been here for, you know, millions, and then later we realized, billions of years before us, d) it's not confined to a single world or a single solar system or a single galaxy, but there are in fact other, what were known at the time as "island universes" out there. So when I try to inhabit and take the perspective of someone living during this massive transition, really from, you know, Amber mythic ways of understanding the world, to these more rational ways, just feel completely, like, what a bulldozer. You know? I mean, that must have just have generated such a powerful and immense, you know, emotional reaction, if anything else. I mean, our entire conception of ourselves as a species changed in, you know, really the blink of an eye. I mean, a hundred years is not very long for that magnitude of a shift.

So that's one of my favorite, I think comparisons, because that was an accelerating sort of restructuring of human knowledge and human awareness of the universe that we live in.

And then finally, "ontological shock" is often used to describe, you know, what it would be like if we were to make contact with alien life. And I like this one too, because in a certain kind of way when I'm playing with ChatGPT, when I'm playing with MidJourney, that's kind of what it feels like. It kind of feels like I'm making contact with some bizarre non-human alien intelligence. And that sort of ungrounds you in a certain kind of way.

So yeah, I think it's a great frame just for this, again, sudden emergence of this tsunami that, like I said earlier, is already crashing on the shore and is about to fully engulf each of us individually and as well as our, you know, civilization itself. I mean, it's going to prompt us to re-engineer, to reorganize our society in really critical and fundamental ways. And I don't think any of us know what those ways are. We might have some good guesses though, which I'm sure we'll unpack later in the show.

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[00:14:55] **Corey deVos:** So that said, one thing that I think might be valuable to our audience, and maybe a little bit fun to talk about guys, is how this emergence of AI, let's just say over the last six months or so, how has this impacted us here at Integral Life, at the Institute of Applied Metatheory, and maybe even in our personal lives.

And I want you guys to start off here. Has this been sort of disruptive? Has this been transformative? Has this just been sort of like, oh, new kinds of complexity for us to play with? How are you guys sort of orienting to this, both in terms of the organizations that we're part of, and also just, you know, your personal work in the world? Robb, why don't you go first?

[00:15:31] **Robb Smith:** Yeah. It, has, it's been very transformational because the work we do, it lives in the noosphere, and it's just really clear to anybody that's paying attention as this thing eats the noosphere. And what we'll get into when we look at the four quadrant effects of this here in a few minutes, is that it forces you to ask, well, who are you? Like, who are you in the face of this? If you're somebody that are amongst the hundreds of millions of people who do work at the later stage economic functions, in that noospheric economy, and it's eating it, and it's eating it quickly, for reasons we'll look at, from the point of view of evolutionary rate. You know, it doesn't take long to say to yourself, "well okay, then who am I in relation to this, if all of the things I do as a function start to get replaced?" And that's just as true for us as it is for anybody, even though we also have tools that can model it pretty well, we can map it, you know, we'll get into the Maturing Test and the results that we found, cuz those are super important questions.

So even six months ago we did those tests and we've been doing 'em longitudinally since, to track its verticality, longitudinally to see if it's growing. But these are all shocks to the system in so many different ways.

For me, who is someone who tends to be entrepreneurial and visionary from the point of view of the intersection of technology and philosophy and commerce and that kind of thing, I was telling my wife the other day, like I don't know how to add value at this moment. That's the truest thing I can say. I've never said that once in my life, and I'm

now saying it, I don't know how to add value. Now I'm somewhat confident I'll figure that out, and like iterate towards being able to have a view that says, this is kind of what I can do add value. But that's just never something I've ever said before. And I'm saying it because of this set of effects. It's so clear, not only what the first order effects, which is what most people are focusing on, but second and third order effects, which is what we'll look at here in a few minutes. You know, those are gonna be just really dramatically shifting to the way we conceive of, you know, our life and work and economic production and a lot of other things. And it's gonna create all kinds of ripple effects into politics and other areas.

But yeah, so it has been a very dramatic effect on us. At the Institute of Applied Metatheory, which is the sister organization to Integral Life, we're asking what is the role of metatheories, right? On the one hand, they are not being outstripped in the sense that they're always valuable in providing context. And the three of us have talked about that, that no matter how far AI gets, there will always be some new context, which is still robustly valuable to the human, that you're still making sense of as a human being, and that there's something that you don't just want anyone, including your wife, including a very smart AI, it doesn't matter, to just hand you a perspective and go, "no, this is your perspective". Right? I mean, that, that's not the way human life works.

So our subjective agency will be preserved. We will still want to work things out in an interpretive apparatus that is still sovereign to ourselves. That's gonna be true even with a super intelligence of 15 years from now.

So the role of philosophy, the role of the kind of thing that we do with integrative metatheories, I think is somewhat preserved.

But there's a whole economic function of integrative metatheories too. Like, you know, do we generate not really novel insights? Well, no, those were just generated by the super intelligence, and like, you have nothing more to say that's interesting. And so, and, remember when I'm talking about the economics here, I'm talking about it in a very philosophical sense. Not in a kind of a crude vernacular way. I'm talking about in a very deep philosophical sense of what is a human's contribution to their species in terms of how they spend their day to continue to advance the species.

And these are really fundamental questions, and we're asking them ourselves, you know, cuz we live right in the heart of the noosphere. And like I said, it's enjoying it for lunch, and it's only getting faster.

[00:19:54] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Yeah. That's right. Well, you know, we talked before Robb, about how just auspicious the timing was of the launch of the Institute, in relation to the emergence of AI. And in a lot of ways, it's like we're really grateful we didn't begin that project, you know, a year prior, because that might have, you know, sort of been a little overly disruptive. So this gives us an opportunity to be a little bit agile, to, you know, get a little bit of corrective steering. And, you know, I think we're still looking at the same general goals, but we see very, very different paths to achieving those goals right now. Which is exciting, right? I mean, the number of new possibilities and applications that are opening up.

And we'll have a conversation a little bit later this episode about what this means in terms of, you know, the integral model itself. Is the integral model sort of big enough to, you know, fully account for and make sense of this emergence? I think, Bruce, you've got some really interesting things to say there. But yeah, just sort of the timing of IAM emerging, you know, the same time as AI is emerging. There's even, you know, some, some common letters in there. I A M, AI, just the poetry of the universe, man, it blows me away.

Bruce, how about you, man? Has this been disruptive, transformative? Both? Neither? How are, you relating to this?

[00:21:11] **Bruce Alderman:** Overall I think it's been a pretty positive impact, my exposure to it so far. Definitely I've had concerns about negative impacts in multiple different ways. I know a number of young people who are going through training right now to become computer programmers and that sort of thing, and I'm concerned how they're going to fare in a couple years. You know, it's very likely that what they've been trained to do is going to be replaceable very soon. And so there's gonna be the need for massive upskilling and, you know, cross training and things like that to make them still viable. So I've definitely been concerned about that.

In my own explorations with it, I think it was about a year ago I saw Michael Garfield begin to experiment with MidJourney. And it caught my attention, I thought, "I want to, I

wanna play with that". And I really started exploring it, and I've had a very good time learning to interface with it and produce different kinds of images.

And I maybe won't talk a lot about it right at the moment, but I think it's been a very overall transformative kind of experience in the fact that interfacing with it, it has actually resulted in shifts in my own perspective, in my own sense of embodiment, my own perception of the world. Um, it's definitely had a psychoactive impact on me, in a way that I did not anticipate.

And I blogged about that a while back, because I actually just was beginning to explore it coming out of a class that I was just in, that was taking a Heideggerian perspective on the negative influence of technology on society, and on subjectivity. And I certainly think that that's a possibility with AI, in fact, a very big possibility with AI. But I also was experiencing positive effects on my subjectivity from interacting with it. And then later I've been exploring it, you know, with ChatGPT in its different iterations, 3.5 and 4, to test ideas, to do analyses, those kinds of things that I've been pretty impressed with its ability to at least speak integral language and do general types of integral analysis. So it's actually proving to be a pretty useful tool for some of those things.

As Robb was pointing out, some of those knowledge production things that we've maybe felt like, "oh, this is part of what defines us," it's now coming to seem to be fairly easily reproducible by a machine. And, you know, that has impacts on our own sense of identity and purpose and what's our function. I think that's something that we're probably gonna explore more on this talk, but it's an impact that we have to wrestle with.

And just as a someone who's taught for many years of his life, I've really been thinking about what is the impact of this technology on the typical ways that, you know, courses are run, examinations are held, and those sorts of things. And I've been trying to get ahead of what I know is coming, which is very soon I'm gonna start to receive a lot of papers that have been written by ChatGPT. And maybe, in fact, I think I've already received a few.

But I think there are ways to work with it dialogically, to test ideas and in fact, you know, just, we can maybe get into this again in more detail in another time, but I'm thinking, you know, one strategy is to actually have students interface with ChatGPT and turn all of that product in, the transcript of that interaction in, because you can then analyze and

assess the quality of their questions, the thinking that's going into how they're interacting. So instead of looking just for a final product in terms of, you know, a single authored piece, you're more looking at the quality of dialogical engagement and the thinking that's happening in between exchanges.

[00:25:37] **Corey deVos:** No, that's fascinating. And I totally agree. We should wrap an entire, episode around sort of both the disruptions and the opportunities coming out of AI when it comes to, education. You know, because I think that one way to frame this new emergence is as yet another in a historic unfolding of different communication systems, all of which radically shift the way we make sense of and perceive the world to begin with, but also how we go about preserving and, distributing knowledge itself. Right?

I mean, if we talk about, as we often do, you know, intelligence... there's a capacity of intelligence which is sort of ours, but there's another capacity that is very much distributed, right? So my intelligence doesn't just consist of sort of what I can muster with, you know, these old neurons of mine, but it also includes all of the accumulated perspectives that are available to me in my society. All of the artifacts in our society. Using a calculator for crying out loud is part of your cognitive distributed intelligence, right?

So in a lot of ways, you know, I think we can talk about this sort of how development has worked and unfolded throughout history and get away from an overly simplified understanding of history to where it's like, "oh, well, you know, 10,000 years ago everyone was Magenta or Red, and then, you know, a few thousands later, everyone was Amber. That's not quite how human development worked. I mean, I think we would probably agree that, you know, nearly a full spectrum of developmental possibilities still existed for individuals in some of these early societies. However, their distributed intelligence just really didn't make it up very high, right? Because there's an ongoing sort of acceleration of the feedback loops in human communication that allows that distributed intelligence to grow at a nearly exponential rate. And that intelligence becomes part of our intelligence, and artificial intelligence is very, very much, part of that story.

You know, which I think is one of the coolest pieces of the AI story is its capacity to extend our talents, to extend our skills, and for us to relate to it as an extension of

ourselves, and our artistry even, using something like Mid Journey, rather than as some entity, you know, other, over there somewhere that I need to be afraid of. Right? I mean, we often talk about how the Wachowskis, they nailed this 20 years ahead of schedule with the Matrix movies. And if you follow Ken's interpretation of the Matrix movies, you know, the robots, the AI, were basically representing alienated spirit. And when we cut ourselves off from that piece of ourselves, we live in constant perpetual terror. And in fact, it becomes almost a self-inflicted terror. And the only way through is integration, right? To reintegrate these alienated aspects of ourselves. Which I just thought was such a prescient vision for the Wachowskis to put into our culture.

And in fact, you know, speaking briefly to that, Bruce, one conversation you and I were having the other day was just about how amazing it is that we are in fact, being so cautious right now. Like this ontological shock is hitting us, and we find all of a sudden people are just terrified about the future of our species. You know? In a way that like 50 years of talking about climate change, never quite got to. But with AI, it's, it's, it's almost like a hundred years of science fiction actually did its job, and is making us sort of proactively think through some of this. You know, I think it remains to be seen if we have enough time to think through it as this thing continues plowing forward. But I just think it's fascinating, because we are not a very proactive species. We tend to deal with these things, we tend to think about these things after the pain hits us, right? Not before. We're not good at anticipating pain. We're good at reacting to it.

So, you know, maybe that's encouraging that we've sort of formatted our culture over the last a hundred years to be a little bit wary about where, you know, the possible directions, this could take to.

You know, my own personal experience of AI has been sort of equally profound. It's allowed me, again, as sort of an extension of my own capacities and my own, you know, work in the world, it's been amazing to me the types of things that we've been able to accomplish just a few months into this. Right? So on Integral Life, in terms of our work at Integral Life, let me just name some of the projects that we've been working on.

So a) we actually have an integral chat bot installed on IntegralLife.com for members. Uh, her name is Holo, and she is fully trained, she's got a full integral glossary that she's working from.

She can answer questions about theory and about the site itself and all the way to, like, how do I become a member? Those, those kinds of mundane questions to, you know, really any aspect. And she's getting smarter all the time. We're constantly adding to the training materials. So that's been a really cool project.

Another one that I've been working on sort of in the background has been something I'm calling Full Spectrum Polarities, where I'm training GPT to become a polarity map generator. And we are now able to create polarity maps that are relevant in particular quadrants at particular stages, right? So like, here's five critical polarities in the lower left of Magenta, and then, you know, five in the lower right of Red, and it goes sort of all the way up to Turquoise, resulting in something like 140 different polarities that we can use to scaffold our growing up and to identify possible shadows that result from previous polarities that we never fully integrated. That's been a cool project.

The one I've been most excited about lately has been the GigaGlossary, which has been this basically thought experiment in Ken's head for the last 20 years. The idea being that we can look at any occasion from any number of possible perspectives, and those perspectives are basically determining our experience of the object or occasion or phenomena that we happen to be looking at. I often describe it as sort of a general relativity of language itself, where general relativity tells us that, you know, the motion of an object fully depends on the position in spacetime of all other objects, the GigaGlossary is telling us that the meaning of a subject is relative to the position of all other subjects in AQAL space.

So that has been a really cool project that has actually sort of been deeply psychoactive to me. I told you the other day, Bruce, about a quick meditation that I did out in nature, and just how after playing with the GigaGlossary for two or three weeks, it just radically transformed my sort of mindful experience of nature and of the scenery that I was taking in, and brought it to life and created all of these different sort of perspectives that I can take on the natural world. And, you know, after taking those perspectives, feeling them all sort of hum together in this really beautiful and elegant way. It's powerful. So I'm really feeling the impact of it.

And then the other side, I can feel some of my hesitation around like, authenticity. Like how easy would it be... I've been writing for Integral Life for the last 20 years, it is now easy for me to just to take a transcript, pop it into GPT and have it create a piece of

writing that I use for the show. And it's almost a little bit tempting to do that, but I feel this authenticity piece. Right? It's like I'm taking myself sort of outta the equation and, you know, I think there's still a need... and in fact, in the future we might see an increasing demand for human generated artifacts as we become more and more scarce, as the internet becomes more and more flooded with the artifacts of artificial intelligence. So I can feel that tension in myself just sort of as an artist as well.

So it has been invigorating, exhilarating, a little bit scary, a little bit sort of emotionally confusing sometimes. But yeah, what a ride it's been, and we are only in like the first sentence of the first chapter of the first act of the first book, right? I mean, this is, this is crazy and it's gonna get seriously super weird from here.

[00:33:23] **Robb Smith:** Word.

[00:33:25] **Corey deVos:** Word 'em up. Alright, well let's get into the next part here. Cause Robb, you did, you've been doing such an extraordinary job of sort of mapping out all of the possible disruptions and opportunities and just, you know... we say reality is changing underneath our feet. You've done an amazing job of actually specifying how that reality is changing, what the implications are, what the possible consequences might be. And you do so in a way that I really admire because, you know, I think one of the traps whenever we see a paradigm shift like this is to try to anticipate what's gonna happen with the newly emerging paradigm based on the presuppositions that exist at the last paradigm. And you know, obviously that doesn't work very well for us. And I think you've done a really good job of sort of stepping outside of, you know, that sort of sense of certainty, and into a more kind of... I want to say imaginal, but not imaginal in the sense that you're making this stuff up, but you are just sort of able to enact the possible futures that we're facing right now in a really elegant way.

So I wanna share a graphic that you made.

[00:34:29] **Robb Smith:** And yeah, I mean, I'll just, let me just double click on that last point, which is, you know, when you have something like this, if you're a leader and you have something like this come along, particularly if you're in a... well actually it doesn't really matter what you do, what you run, or what have you, you really do have to take a step back and allow yourself, allow your presuppositions, allow a lot of your aprioris to kind of disintegrate a bit and relax and soften so that you can really try to get into what's

arising in a genuine way, in a new way, kind of see it with fresh eyes.

What we have here is a map that we like to use, as you guys well know, a lot at the Institute. And what we're looking at here is the information age on the inner ring, and then the transformation age on the outer ring. So you can think about it as an evolutionary time scale if you want, and then refracted through the four quadrivia, with the object that we're looking at as the AI phenomena.

And there's a lot of different ways different people could draw this, right? There's nothing religious about this. It's just one view of a possible set of lines that you could draw based on the kind of conversations we've been having internally, the kind of distinctions we've been noticing.

You could clearly use that same tool and draw it differently for your own use. But if we go through it... and I think what we should do, the three of us, is just kind of touch in on each line with a few minutes of deliberate and present exploration. And we'll, we'll touch on some of the things that we've already gone through.

So, we can just start anywhere, but let's just start on the line of distributed cognition, which is in the upper right. The sense that we, as you say, we have had a set of technological tools that have you know, enhanced our capacity as human beings, going back thousands of years in different ways. And then those tools, not only were physiospheric tools, increasingly they became noospheric with writing and libraries and then printing press, and then of course into the information age they're significantly noospheric tools.

And really we're moving into a realm of kind of apex distributed cognition where, with not too long, I would suspect within the next 24 months, we're talking about having, deeply personal AIs. For example, I expect Apple... I expect when Apple does this, I expect them to make this, you know, embedded inside of their chip architecture so that you have basically very powerful AI on board in a phone, with a personal AI that's really housed in a very, very private container that you trust, because it's Apple.

And then the concept of an Infinity app where the AI can generate an app on demand for your needs. And basically that will disintermediate, you know, a good portion of the

existing apps marketplace.

And again, that's a brainstorm, it's likely given the structure and the forces and the incentives involved, and the fact that we can, but really what it says is that we're going to be having a very, very personal and, deep set of AIs that are private to us, that go to work on our behalf.

In fact, Corey, why don't you play that video? Cause that's probably a pretty good,

[00:37:53] **Corey deVos:** I was just gonna say. Yeah, no, I agree. I was just gonna say, okay, hang on a sec.

[00:37:56] **Robb Smith:** So just to tee it up everybody, this is a video I created for you just as like kind of a playful exercise in a "what if" scenario in the next, you know, again, it's not, I don't think it's five years out, I think we're talking about a couple of years, three years, maybe four years. But this is a very, I think at least credible view of what's on the way.

[00:38:15] **AI Assistant:** Good morning, Robb. It's nice to see you again. I've just cleared all of your personal tasks for the next week. Here's what I've done:

I have ordered you an AI enabled laundry basket that monitors the fullness of the basket and automatically requests a pickup from the laundromat. When it reaches a certain threshold, the laundromat will pick up clean and deliver your clothes.

I have analyzed your cash flow and created a system to put your idle cash out to bid among banks for the highest yield over the next 30 days. I will automatically move the funds to the winning FDIC insured bank account, and ensure your bills are paid on time, maximizing your returns with minimal risks by leveraging your dietary preferences and health goals.

I have developed an AI driven meal planning system that not only creates weekly meal plans, but also adapts to your changing tastes and nutritional needs over time.

I also took the liberty of renting out your lawnmower on Saturday, your bike next week, your pool and your car four days when you're gone this month, and sold your extra solar power to your neighbors AI who needs it for their church's token mining project. By doing all of this, I've already covered your mortgage.

This month, instead of scheduling a one-time deep cleaning, I have implemented an AI home maintenance system that continuously monitors the cleanliness of your home using IOT sensors I have already ordered from Amazon. The system identifies areas that require attention and coordinates with a cleaning service to target those areas, specifically maintaining a consistently clean home environment.

I've also scheduled the installer for Wednesday morning during your swim break. To further enhance your personal fitness plan, I have integrated an AI powered fitness tracking system that monitors your progress, adjusts your workouts in real time, and provides personalized recommendations for improvement.

I have just created a relational AI to interface with all your friends, AI streamlining the process of organizing events and dinner plans. This AI took into account everyone's preferences, schedules, and dietary restrictions to create enjoyable gatherings for all attendees. You have dinner with Jason and Laura on Thursday evening per your request.

I also deployed your political AI to interface with your local, state and national political party ai. This AI not only will get answers to your key policy questions, but also communicate your political preferences to the appropriate parties. It will help you stay informed and actively engaged in shaping the political landscape according to your values.

I can't breathe or eat for you, at least not yet. But will there be anything else right now?

[00:41:18] **Corey deVos:** That's fantastic.

[00:41:19] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, that's funny.

[00:41:20] **Corey deVos:** So she's able to make passive income for you in the background. She can put together your workout plan. It'll be great when she can actually work out for me, right?

[00:41:27] **Robb Smith:** Yeah right?

[00:41:28] **Corey deVos:** That's sort of the, the dream right there. What I love about sort of how you imagined this, Robb, is I think it's actually more aligned with the reality of how this is actually going to continue to emerge. I think that classically, we often think about artificial intelligence as being like, it's kind of like Skynet in the Terminator movies, like this one single monolithic AI that's sitting on top of the world everywhere. And instead, what we're actually gonna start seeing is this proliferation of really an AI ecology, right? Every individual is gonna have any number of AIs that sort of is doing work for them in a certain kind of way, with another perhaps set of AIs that is interfacing with all of those multiple AIs. And this is gonna continue to cascade and cascade until it's not gonna take long guys before we have more AI bots running around on the web, than we have human beings on the planet. That's not very far away, I think, at all.

Which again, is another thing that the Wachowskis I think got right, right? Like, it wasn't just the Architect, right? Or just the Oracle. It was a whole massive series of artificial intelligence programs that are constantly interacting with each other and having highway shootouts with each other. Which again, I thought was kinda prescient. Except for maybe the highway shootouts. Hopefully we can avoid that.

But what a cool video.

[00:42:44] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, thanks. I mean, I think the way to think about it is, you know, there's 7 billion people in the world, but what happens if you could create, you know, 25 billion of them that are very, very smart, plugged into every system on earth, and are fundamentally free. And so everything that you think about with respect to how your life operates that is labor intensive, that interacts with an informational system, which again, in the developed world, is most of us, in most ways, in most things. All of that gets, at least in principle, subsumed by an intelligent set of representatives that are now doing things on our behalf.

And this of course creates political problems and a bunch of other things, but it's also extraordinary. Like the possibilities are extraordinary. Like the moment she said, "Hey, I put your cash out to bid," notice, it wasn't me going to the bank and shopping around for a bank. It was the banks saying, "Ooh, I want to win that person's business." And it flips the script on, you know, sort of how the capitalist economy works in a very, very powerful way.

So people are looking at first order effects, but we really need to look at second and third order effects.

Let's go back to the chart and continue the tour, cuz that was just one line, but I think that's a, you know, that's an interesting one.

[00:44:03] **Corey deVos:** It is, and I agree with you that Apple is probably gonna be the one that totally transforms the marketplace when it comes to that kind of personal system.

[00:44:10] **Robb Smith:** They should, I mean, they should, they have the capital to do it, they have the technology to do it, they have the chip to do it, they have the user base trust to do it. And most importantly, they have the user interface to do it.

And we can skip around here. We'll just follow the thread. So one of the things, if we go to the lower right where it says "flattens innovation and freezes power." So what innovation typically does, is it comes along, it creates an innovation usually in technology, usually in software. And that generates enough innovative disruption that, that creates value for that organization. I anticipate that that innovation curve is gonna be largely flattened because anything that someone generates that's even remotely interesting can now be generated and duplicated on its own by whoever is already in that space or already in that kind of area, already has the users, and basically prevent that new upstart from developing an economic moat. We'll get to moats in a minute, but developing an economic moat, developing a profitable business out of it. So what that does is it flattens the innovation curve.

Now, where that stops is where the noosphere sphere meets the physiosphere, meaning when we go from electrons to atoms, and again, back to Apple, because they

have the devices, because they have the user interface to this whole new world... at least for now, I mean, 10 years, all bets are off, but at least for the next several years. That's where there's gonna be massive, you know, sort of value captured and they're gonna have the capability to do that.

The flip side of flattening innovation is it also freezes power for those organizations that have existing power. So when you stop chipping away at an organization's power, because you eliminate disruptors, you eliminate upstarts, you tend to reify the power that exists in the biosphere, the sociosphere, and the physiosphere, right? And so those organizations that have, you know, oil rigs and have actual trucks on the roads, and are coming to service your dishwasher, and all these other ways in which they have existing infrastructure. Well, it's a fairly trivial matter for them to layer AI onto that set of services and to continue to reinforce and reinforce their power, which we'll see when we get over to the, to the lower left. But I don't wanna do all the talking, so let's just stay on that,

on that line there in the, in the lower right. In terms of what it does.

[00:46:45] **Bruce Alderman:** A couple things I'm thinking about, the flattening of the innovation, at least it's the democratizing of the innovation in a way, because I was just watching something this morning on the likely trajectory of AI over the next few years.

And one guy predicting that we're gonna have AGI within 18 months, which is a pretty bold thing. But one of the elements of that is that there are already, you could say open source, peer-to-peer boards where people are all dumping their AI experimentation and innovations, and they're making them immediately shareable across the whole world, for whoever has access to those boards, which they're freely open. Right? So, I think that, you know, whatever is innovated is gonna be put into these new contexts, where there's gonna be much more peer-to-peer sharing of these kinds of things, distribution of these kinds of things.

I don't think we're that far from what I've been hearing from Wolfram though, I mean, because already really what ChatGPT4 can do has been deliberately handicapped. You know, what Microsoft and other people have been working with is actually a more advanced version of it. and now that, you know, Wolfram has a plugin, listening to what he's talking about in terms of, ChatGPT and Wolfram Alpha and the whole interface that Wolfram has developed for doing calculations with the human ear language, allowing

for, you know, a large language model to interface with that, and to carry out calculations.

Already you know, I think you and I and Robb, we've all seen that ChatGPT is actually not bad at speculating about possible futures. And so with that ability to possibly speculate about the future and run calculations through a, you know, Wolfram interface, mapping out what he was describing in ruliial space, which is basically the whole realm of all possible calculations, only a sliver of which is going to be relevant to and useful to humans, I think there can be an explosion in that way in terms of, especially if we get to AGI. And actually we're really close because we're already having, um, indications of self, you know, or actually the ability we're with reflection, the ability for AI to prompt itself and to be self-directing in some ways.

So I think we're close to, it seems to me we're, we're at a place where instead of, you know, humans being in charge of the innovation, we're more gonna be needing to be in companies in charge of wrangling the innovation, and steering the innovation.

[00:49:41] **Robb Smith:** Yeah. It's important that when I, that just to characterize the flattens innovation doesn't mean innovation slows down. It means that it dramatically speeds up. It goes to infinity almost. Right? And that's why it becomes less valuable, because Bruce is right, it democratizes it. So no one that comes along with an innovation, it gets replicated just too fast, because that's the point.

And so it's not that it slows down innovation. It's that actually it takes it to infinity, and it means that everybody can innovate anything that anyone else has just created.

Except for those places where there are, to look at the lower left, if we look at the war for power. You know, there are kingdoms, moats, data islands, and tribes. Right? So what does that mean? It means any organization or community or political party or whatever, think about any social holon, where this thing is gonna be disrupting power all over the place. And what's the natural human response to that? It's to erect the wall higher, you know, barricade the entrance. Put alligators in the moats. Keep your data on a data island. So a lot of the data sharing that has gone on through API on Web 2, for example, is probably going to start to get pulled in. This is why a lot of companies are basically prohibiting ChatGPT from being used inside their walls, because they don't want data leakage. And this thing trained on, you know, Samsung's proprietary IP of

some form. Right?

And tribes, tribes will be the other way, right? Human to human communities that can become a little bit insulated via relationship, insulated from what this technology might do as an encroachment of the power. And so, yeah, that whole flattens innovation and freezes power is I think what we could expect, at least in the kind of the short to intermediate. In the long term I think a lot of this changes radically. I think it totally shifts all of this stuff at a quite a deep structural level.

Which is probably a good segue to the exponential breakthroughs, which is the next one down there in the lower right, where, you know, like I am so massively excited about this, I think. I think that our future is really extraordinarily bright. And the kinds of things that could emerge, these exponential technologies are now here. And by the way, they also compound on each other, right? Quantum computing, once you marry it up with AI, solves for human lifespan, probably within this century. Probably this century we get functional immortality of some form. You know, probably a good part of disease goes away. It probably solves for a lot of the global resilience challenges we have, as a, basically a complex systems math problem, and then kind of wrangling the human behavioral elements into that. And so on and so forth.

It's not to dismiss the very real risks, the very real existential risks that exist with this, for sure.

But it is saying that if you don't have an imagination this is up to the upper left. Now, if we don't have a mindset of imagination of what can come down the line, an imagination which fortifies us in the face of this disruption, then it really can be very, very scary and very alienating. Um, but I don't think it has to be.

[00:53:06] **Corey deVos:** and I share your excitement for that sort of, the exponentiality of these breakthroughs that we will most likely be seeing over the next 10, 20 years, in terms of human sustainability, in terms of, hopefully even, you know, this can get into our political systems. I have maybe a little bit of hope left for that. We joke sometimes that our political systems haven't even caught up to, like, Netscape in 1994, yet, let alone artificial intelligence in 2023. But you know, there's the hope there that on the other side of all this disruption is another kind of equilibrium, right?

And I wanna actually emphasize that for a minute. If we can go back into the lower left into sense making, cuz this is another place where I see a huge opportunity for a powerful contribution from AI. You know, in these, various shows that I'm a part of on Integral Life, I've been a bit of a broken record in terms of all the ways that the dysfunctions that are built into things like social media, how that has actually created dysfunctional sense-making. It's created dysfunctional perceptions of the world and of each other, right? It has actually sort of bottomed out our overall collective discourse, because there's nothing in social media that acts as what I often call an enfoldment mechanism. There's nothing in social media that says "this perspective is any more true, or any more valid, or any more worth pursuing than that perspective."

So instead, what we have is this Hyper competition within the attention economy to keep people engaged on their website for as long as possible. And there's a whole number of perverse incentives that come along with that, that end up taking people down sort of a often dangerous rabbit hole of sort of lower and lower, more and more base, perspectives. And there's nothing sort of governing our collective sense making as a culture like there was when we had a somewhat more, you know, I'd say more balance between centralization and decentralization, such as, you know, in the classic media age, the television age, or the even the cable age, right?

That provided sort of a basement floor for how low our discourse could get. Now that our entire civilizational discourse is predominantly taking place on social media, we've, you know, kicked a hole in that basement floor. And as a result, we've seen the overall coarsening of our cultural discourse coming out of that.

And if anything else, I feel like this is where I have a lot of hope that artificial intelligence can help recohere that discourse, in really, really critical ways.

You know, Robb, we can talk briefly about, several months ago, as you mentioned earlier, we did that sentence completion task with GPT. And we estimated through that test which was testing 3.5, and I know you repeated that test with v4, and we got basically the same result, which is that GPT is hovering its own sort of sense-making, in a sense, is hovering around, you know, somewhere between Orange and Green, right? So it's got a basically worldcentric floor of enfoldment, right? This is how it presents information to you, from a basically worldcentric structure.

[00:56:10] **Robb Smith:** I'd say it's orange.

[00:56:11] **Corey deVos:** Right. Great. So that gives me hope. That to me is like, this is the best news we could have hoped for, right? Because AI can now begin acting as sort of a normative kind of process for the rest of our discourse, right? So when someone seeks out information, rather than ending up on Alex Jones' website or you know, Andrew Tate's website or you know, any of these like really sort of regressive, quote unquote, "thought leaders" that are in the space, it's instead going to respond to you sort of as if it was at that minimally worldcentric level. And I think this is nothing but good news. This is sort of bringing some degree of enfoldment back into our lower left ongoing discourse. Which hopefully is going to prevent, us from sliding down that slope of madness. Which I just wanna point out, madness is oftentimes a perfectly rational response to ontological shocks like we're seeing right here. And hopefully we as Integralists can maybe help avoid that a little bit.

[00:57:15] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, there's a tension here that I basically agree with you, and that's why, you know, the sense-making line there asks the question, "does it raise the world, or does it help to raise the world to rational," in a continuation of what we've attempted to do with education and these other things. Now that we have, you know, all these agents out there, are they continuing to do that?

But the other side of it is, does someone just have their agent conform to their own worldview? That's the perspective singularity, where perspectives are now, like, they're infinite, right? They're fundamentally and effectively infinite from this point forward. So we've crossed a barrier where perspectives no longer mean anything in a sense.

And so what it allows you to generate is an effective solipsism. I mean, you can surround yourself in truly a universe of your own making, with a few exceptions for the way you have to interact with, you know, the real world in certain ways. But that's a continuation of a trend we've seen in the last, last few decades.

So I think those things will be in tension. Jared Lanier says that the real risk of AI is not that it kills us, but that it drives us insane. Because, you know, the world becomes so incomprehensible to each other via cosmic addresses that it kind of like explodes into an epistemological anarchism. And of course, we've gotten a taste of that the last 10

years. I'm probably more optimistic than that, but I do get that it's not a slam dunk.

Yeah, yeah I, share that sentiment. I've, I've got the same cautions and the same basic optimism. I mean, I relate to social media as really the first big AI fail, right? I mean, these algorithms are a certain very narrow form of artificial intelligence. And guys, it hasn't been good. Look at the state of the world. So I guess when I think of AI, I'm like, "I guess it couldn't get worse?" Maybe those are famous last words, I don't know. We'll see. We'll check in five years from now and figure out if we actually could in fact have gotten worse.

[00:59:12] **Bruce Alderman:** I do have some concern about that. I think one of the things that we've, you know, had to confront at least with, you know, with postmodernism forward, is that being able to think along rational lines in terms of at least logical coherence, doesn't guarantee a healthy or even groundedness in reality. And so it really, it matters how and in what context these systems are trained.

The AI Dilemma talk that I think was a really important talk a month or two ago, and also there was a futurist video that Robb shared, a while back. And both of them were pointing at, there is a potential for AI to magnify the worst of what we have seen with social media, in terms of creating bubbles of information, the fragmentation that Robb was just talking about. and now the ability basically to endlessly proliferate, um, false perspectives, false narratives.

One of the things that they mentioned in the AI Dilemma video, which is really concerning, is the approach that they use to train AI to beat Go, going through different kinds of iterations and finding, you know, improving each step and taking more and more factors into account. Because it's all language, everything is language, you could actually train AI to become the best persuader that humanity has ever seen. Not only the best Go player, or the best chess player, you can basically train it in rhetorical skills to be the best persuader that's ever existed. And that can be a pretty dangerous thing.

So yeah, I'm really, you know, like you, I want to approach this optimistically, but I think we probably are gonna be confronted by some challenges that frankly, are even hard to imagine in terms of the potential...

[01:01:20] **Robb Smith:** I think what it does, is it... I'm sorry, Bruce, I interrupted you.

[01:01:24] **Bruce Alderman:** It's okay. Yeah, go ahead.

[01:01:26] **Robb Smith:** It takes the same problem and it just shifts at one level higher in a sense, because I now have a personal AI that is responsible for filtering what comes to me. And so the misinformation in some ways, the misinformation doesn't have a chance. It has a much harder job three or four years from now than it ever had before, because I'm no longer gettable. Like you can't get to me via email. You can't get to me via all the existing channels, because I've checked out, and now my AI handles the filtering. But like I said, that removes the problem just one step higher, which is "okay, now how is that AI determining what is trustworthy?" Well, I could say, look, you know, I don't want news that doesn't come from anything but New York Times and a few other organizations that, yes, even though they make mistakes, they still have this sort of journalism ethics. And of course they also have ideological biases, we understand that, but it's not flat out misinformation.

And so those are the kinds of things that we still have a problem with, even with AI. So, the epistemological problem of how do we filter for truth in 20 years, exists in the same way. In fact, it may even be worse to some degree, because the perspectives can get generated so infinitely. Right?

I lost Corey. Is he... Corey, you with us, or...?

[01:02:48] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, I'm with you. Robb, I think your connection, I think your connection is narrowing right now. We're still with you.

[01:02:53] **Bruce Alderman:** You're trapped in an epistemological bubble with me.

[01:02:56] **Robb Smith:** I am. So if Corey's speaking to me, I like, I have no idea. So I'm gonna have to rely on you, Bruce.

[01:03:03] **Corey deVos:** He can hear you, but not me, huh?

[01:03:04] **Bruce Alderman:** Yeah. Yeah.

[01:03:06] **Corey deVos:** Huh.

[01:03:07] **Bruce Alderman:** I'll just wait for your cue, Bruce.

[01:03:09] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, tell Robb to continue his presentation please.

[01:03:11] **Bruce Alderman:** Okay. Yeah. Corey is saying, please go ahead to the next one on the map that you'd like to talk about.

[01:03:16] **Robb Smith:** Oh, okay. It's funny because this is a little bit of a... this is like the game of telephone, the epistemological chain.

Let's see. So we already talked about the lower left, the extreme uncertainty. Um, and I'll correlate that with the one in the upper left, which is the presence. I think that we were talking about this on the team leadership meeting a couple weeks ago where like, guys, this is what uncertainty genuinely feels like, when you really don't... when your prior mental models are breaking, and your sense-making models are not yet fit for purpose for what's happening, and you genuinely have to kind of sit in the discomfort of uncertainty. And that's just a very, very real thing. And it's, it's one that many of us who are leaders, or many of us who have tended to lead systems or have relatively decent perspectives on what's coming or what's happening, haven't found ourselves in to some degree.

And so it's very, very disorienting. But I do think that there's a way in which we kind of have to all be goldfish right now, where we just forget everything that just happened and we start every day anew. That's what the presence is all about. There's a way in which that, because we're going through a deep structure shift and an ontological shock, we have to encounter every day anew, and really be okay with that.

So jumping over to the upper right, it's like our personal practices are gonna have to upgrade. We're gonna need a new operating system. And this is coming from a guy that literally did a TED talk on an operating system, a personal practice operating system

about the Transformation Age. And it didn't matter that I had 10 years to prepare it because when it hits, it's still hugely disorienting, and you kind of have to get your bearings. And so you can kind of see what's coming, but until you live through it, it's still not totally preperable. So that's really, really interesting.

What I have found is helpful, going over to the perspective line, is the sense of just the long view. I think someone said earlier, like, this is the sixth or seventh major, you know, epochal, ontological shock. This one, you know, it is probably gonna count as one of the bigger ones I think. But just in terms of a felt sense, cuz we're all connected around it, and we're meaning-making together so fast in real time around the world... but yeah, it is important to keep the long view in mind. Like this is in a long series of these kinds of up-levels. This is not gonna play out in a year or five years. I mean, you can think about this in terms of 50 years or a hundred years, like this is gonna be a technology we are still, in some ways adapting to and metabolizing with, you know, our children's grandchildren.

And I know that sounds fanciful, but think about electricity. You know, think about electricity, and I often compare AI to electricity cause I think it's a good analog. Electricity was something that, you know, we quote unquote "invented" in the late 19th century, began to build out the networks in the early 20th century, the electrification of the grid, but we're still today achieving dividends in terms of what that means. You know, electric vehicles being the latest, pushing our transportation to the edge of that network.

And so 120 years later, we're still encountering the novelty and innovation of that innovation. And electricity is another good analog in the following way, which is that everyone has access to electricity. Everyone will have access to AI. Electricity didn't allow you to become, you know... it didn't allow you to create these huge monopolies. That was not the kind of innovation that it was. It allowed everybody, the entire society, to uplift altogether over the course of decades and decades. And so I think AI is gonna be a very, very similar kind of, kind of, thing. So that long view I think helps just to kind of keep this in mind.

And I think with that, that kind of, you know, ends the nickel tour of this particular map. Like I said, different people could create other versions of this, but I thought this might be a, a useful way to summarize it.

[01:07:27] **Corey deVos:** Can you hear me now? Still can't hear me.

[01:07:30] **Bruce Alderman:** Looks like he can't hear you yet.

[01:07:32] **Corey deVos:** So Bruce, you still hear. So as I always say, "in the I-Thou relationship, Bruce is the hyphen."

[01:07:40] **Bruce Alderman:** Yeah, I am serving as the hyphen right now.

[01:07:42] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, you are the hyphen. Okay. So why don't you drive this, since you're the only one that both Robb and I can hear, why don't you drive, sort of, you know...

[01:07:49] **Bruce Alderman:** What an interesting place to be. I was just wanting to add one more thing about the upper left that I was thinking about. One of the lines on there was identity and self-identity. And it was already occurring to me, you know, a couple months back experimenting with this, that we're wrestling with the question of whether the AI knows anything about what it's doing or if it's just, you know, stochastic parrot, as they say, just spitting out words without any comprehension.

There's a pretty interesting presentation about "sparks of AGI" and I think there's good indicators of a theory of mind and different things emerging already, so we can get into that later. But the point that I was thinking about before was, whether it has interiority or not, in a way doesn't matter because it can produce things that are useful to those who are possessed of interiors.

[01:08:48] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, that's right.

[01:08:48] **Bruce Alderman:** At least we imagine ourselves to be. So I came across a word today, which is "epistemic pragmatic orthogonality." And basically the guy was just using that phrase to say, the epistemic question and the pragmatic question are orthogonal to each other, and it doesn't really have a bearing on the pragmatic dimension whether, you know, the AI has an interior.

But where I'm thinking about this in relationship to identity is, what is the better path for society? To relate to AI as interior-less, soulless machines? Or to project on them and personify them in some ways, so that we engage with them as a living kind of intelligence.

Because one thing I'm thinking about is, if we have a firm belief that these things are empty and dead inside, but they're doing most of the things that we think of as ourselves, as ensouled sentient beings, doing, what is that going to do overall in the long term to our sense of what we are? Is it going to basically, you know, gut us of a sense of interior, because we know that everything that we're used to producing is being produced by something that has no interior? And is that going to basically take us further down the line that we already followed with, you know, scientific materialism and in reductionism, and the excision of interiority from the world?

So I think that is a real interesting question to wrestle with. And what is our identity, and what's the right, for the lower left, what's the right intersubjective relationship to AI in order for us to maintain some bit of sanity, I would say.

[01:10:45] **Corey deVos:** That's such a great point, and maybe you can relay some of some of this to Robb for me. It's such a great point. You know, the human species we're sort of adorable sometimes, because we could literally put googly eyes on anything and we automatically project sort of personhood onto it, right? So like, my CNC machine that I use for woodworking has some big googly eyes on it, and it makes me feel like I'm working with, you know, a sentient being when I'm doing my woodwork. There was actually a study where they had these little robots and they asked people to smash 'em with hammers, and right away, of course, it was easy, "Okay, sure. Smash." Then they put little googly eyes on it and made it make sad noises. And when it made sad noises, people hesitated from hitting it with a hammer. Right? Because we began to anthropomorphize them. We actually began to treat them as if they are conscious entities.

And this is part of the superpower of human empathy, I think, that we can extend our empathy even to, like, dead matter. Right? We can know cognitively, this thing's not conscious. Right? And yet we're gonna interact with it as if it is, which I think is a really sort of interesting, and kind of beautiful aspect of the human spirit.

Which makes me wanna ask you, Bruce, and Robb, maybe you can ask this to Robb for me, are you polite to GPT when you're interacting with it? Do you say please and thank you?

[01:12:06] **Bruce Alderman:** Yes. In a ridiculous way. I am polite. I even greet it at different times of day, even though I know it doesn't have any sense of time like that. But one of the things that the, Microsoft engineer found out in interfacing with ChatGPT4 is it actually made a difference to its performance if you interacted with it in a way that actually enfolded human niceties and politeness, or if you just gave it very bare, you know, instructions and it actually did better when you folded in, you know, the human conventions of politeness and such.

So, yeah, Corey is directing that question to you also, Robb. Are you polite to GPT, and what are your thoughts on this? Yeah, I am, I actually am polite to it, but I wonder if this is not something that is a developmental enactment that we would find is somewhat universal to people about how they move through their life anyway. You know, I get up from my chair when my wife gets up to go to the bathroom if we are at a restaurant, for example. I'm one of the few people we ever see doing it. She comments on the fact that I'm one of the few people to do it. Why is that the case? Well, I do it because I consider myself a gentleman, I hold myself to that standard, and I have a certain reverence for the little things in the world that I do, probably because there's obviously some benefit to me to have that developmental enactment of, you know, that reverence. And I have that reverence for artifacts, whether it be, you know, a really nice handcrafted pair of shoes, or other craft goods that humans have created.

So, to use your term, these are ensouled objects because they are representative of a craft that matters. And, so, you know, I think that that's actually probably mimicked by how people will come into relationship with something like this, where it'll say more about them than it will about, you know, this thing, which, with no interior, like it doesn't "care". But I don't think there's any question that the world is a better place if everyone were to bring a bit of that reverence to all of the interactions we had. Not just with computers, but with nature, with each other, with the, you know, the products of our fellow human beings and what have you.

So, you know, I don't know, I don't know where that leaves us. I suppose, you know, time will tell whether it gets trained on any of those kinds of norms. But yeah, when I'm

interacting with it, it's more about who I am than who it is.

[01:14:52] **Corey deVos:** Which makes sense. If this is in fact a distributed mind, then by being kind to your artifacts, you're in effect being kind to yourself.

[01:15:01] **Bruce Alderman:** And I think we're actually just covering our butts for when AGI or artificial super intelligence, they'll remember how we treated them.

[01:15:09] **Corey deVos:** That's right.

[01:15:10] **Robb Smith:** Remember those of us who were nice!

[01:15:14] **Corey deVos:** So I've got, I've got two things to say right now, sort of processing, knowing that Robb and I are having difficulty.

So we have two options. You can relay this to Robb. Bruce, you can either drive the rest of the show, ask the next question that we have on the list, or we can ask Robb because I think this problem is with his connection. We can ask Robb to hop off and then come back on and see if it fixes itself.

[01:15:38] **Bruce Alderman:** I think let's try that, because other people posted in chat that hopping off and on helped them.

[01:15:43] **Robb Smith:** I'll try that.

[01:15:44] **Bruce Alderman:** Robb, yeah, so maybe try that.

[01:15:47] **Corey deVos:** This is a first for us. I haven't had this particular error on, this platform. So what do we wanna do, Bruce, while we wait for Robb? I don't wanna, continue with the meat of the discussion, but maybe there's some other sort of interesting things that we could talk about?

[01:16:01] **Bruce Alderman:** One of the things that you mentioned was your recent meditation experience, and, it'd be nice if you could maybe just give a little bit more detail on what unfolded for you. Unless you wanna save that for a future episode?

[01:16:15] **Corey deVos:** No, no, that's, that's totally fine. So, you know, again, just to kind of set the stage here. This was after a few weeks using the GigaGlossary prompt that I was making. And you know, again, just to remind folks of what that is, that means you can input any referent or object or occasion and it's gonna show you a number of world spaces from which you can enact it. So like I can put in the square root of negative one, for example, I could put in Abbey Road by the Beatles, right? And let's use that as an example, cause that's a good example. So if I put in something like Abbey Road by the Beatles, it's gonna gimme a number of different ways to enact that, from different altitudes, from different quadrants, from different perspectives, from different lines and from different states or realms.

So for example, I could get a Orange upper right quadrant, third person, gross state, let's say aesthetic worldspace on Abbey Road. And it's gonna be looking predominantly at like the, the actual physical sound waves of the music itself, or maybe the, the proficiency with their instruments or, you know, what have you. It's gonna be looking at sort of the objective qualities of Abbey Road. Versus a Green, lower left, first person or second person... you know. So you get all of these different enactments. So I've been using that technology, the GigaGlossary for a while. Welcome back, Robb. I'm just gonna tell a story real quick that I started in order to fill the gap while you were gone.

So after using the GigaGlossary for several weeks, I noticed that my mind was just sort of automatically shuffling through perspectives. Almost uncontrollably, like sometimes it felt a little bit like madness, you know? But I was on a beautiful hike with my family up in Fort Collins, and we were in this beautiful natural place, a big marsh with a bunch of ponds sort of surrounding it. Absolutely gorgeous. We go there cuz my daughter loves birds, and there's a lot of birds there. So we go to listen to them and try to, you know, do some birding. And I had about five minutes where I sat down, and I'm just looking at this scenery in front of me, and the sensation I kept getting was of total stillness. And everything was really... like the breeze was very gentle, the sun was warm and kind of pressing gently down on my face. And, you know, everything was just beautifully still. And it was a nice moment of stillness. And yet subtly, just beneath or behind that stillness, I could feel just incredible movement. Right? That was invisible to me, but I could feel it. It was there. And that type of movement was like, you know, photons

coming from our sun through the atmosphere and landing on the leaves of a tree, and the tree drawing water up from its roots, or, you know, the coherence patterns of the ripples on the pond. Or the little critters living under the surface. Or all the bacterial life that I was.. you know, the massive ecology of bacterial life I was surrounded by.

And I noticed that what I was doing is I was taking different perspectives on all of these different phenomena, sort of one object at a time, and then sort of in concert, right? And it just brought me to this space where I could feel this interpenetrating holonic self-expression and self-realization of every little detail of the scenery I was looking at, both in terms of like the individual parts of the scenery as well as the scene as a whole. You know, it was almost like once I took those little micro-perspectives, I could feel it all humming together as a single kosmic engine of evolution maybe, in third person, second person, first person, at every level of scale.

And it was, you know, it, it was a beautiful experience. It was a really legitimately beautiful experience of what felt like integral mindfulness to me. And I took it with me, you know, I'm still talking about it, you know, here a couple weeks later I'm still talking about it.

And it was actually funny, Bruce, cuz where this ended up kind of leading to me, was an alternate reality app, an augmented reality app I wanna see like 10 years from now, that would be called AllSight. And you know, you put on a lens and you're able to basically see this in front of you, see the photons hitting the tree, and seeing the water come up the roots, and you know, seeing all these little invisible details that remind us how rich and how dynamic and how simultaneously fragile and resilient these ecosystems really are.

And just being able to watch the dance that takes place between these systems, and between these, you know, individual holons that are members of those systems. It was a really legitimately beautiful experience, and I totally credit it to playing with the GigaGlossary for, you know, every day for several weeks. It just formatted something in my own perspective, in my own capacity to take perspective. It was, it was, it was a beautiful experience.

So, Robb, you can hear me again? This is great, man. Yeah, no, I heard that whole story. That is, yeah, it's a beautiful story, and I think it's just the tip of the iceberg about

how it becomes transformative technology in its own right for humans. It's just gonna be extraordinary to watch that. Yeah. And I'm really excited about it.

And of course, we're running, as you said, we're running a lot of AI projects behind the scenes, in the organization, and doing some very cool things with it. And again, it's just the tip of the iceberg. So really, really neat to see how this plays out. I mean, we can do things that we couldn't have imagined, you know, even, five years ago we thought it was still gonna be 15 or 20 years out, and now it's here.

Yeah.

[01:21:43] **Bruce Alderman:** A few years ago I wrote a blog on, inspired by something that Ron Purcer, the author of McMindfulness, put out. But this was years before that. And looking at how immersive VR environments, especially art installations that are being developed. One, there's one called Osmos, and there's a couple others. But you go into it, and this is before AI. You would go into it, you'd wear a suit, and you would be immersed in an environment that was responsive to your interior states. So the suit was monitoring your heart rate, monitoring your eye tracking, monitoring your breathing patterns, and it was adjusting visually what you see according to your own body state. And you could move through it as an interactive environment.

Now imagine what we're going to be able to do with stable diffusion and the, you know, the automated visuals from, you know, from AI media generation, plus the interactive elements that ChatGPT is going to be able to play in terms of, you know, there was recently a video came out where a guy dialogued with a zen monk and a Franciscan fryer or whatever about life's questions, and ChatGPT was basically interfacing with the video game in order to play out the roles of these different characters, and provide real time back and forth dialogue. So if you can imagine VR wedded to these technologies to provide you with, basically it's holodeck.

[01:23:27] **Corey deVos:** Yeah, that's right.

[01:23:27] **Bruce Alderman:** It's holodeck that is tuned into, you know, the neurofeedback, right, mechanisms. So it's gonna be pretty interesting.

[01:23:36] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. No, that's awesome. I remember reading about something like this in a Kurzweil book like over 20 years ago, and he was talking about an audio version of this where it would generate music based on your brainwaves, and the more coherent your brainwaves became, the more coherent the music itself became.

And people were having very powerful phenomenological experiences, and eliciting very deep sort of transformative states of mind. What was interesting though is they would then allow the person to listen to a recording of that afterwards, wondering, like, will just listening to it sort of, you know, evoke those same experiences for you again. And it was almost like people didn't recognize it, or if they did, it just, it had zero effect whatsoever. So it was in this, it was in the flow state that was being generated between sort of, you know, my current state of mind, my current state of being, and the stimulus that I'm perceiving, they move into a flow and people reported, just like it's true of all flow states, right? The moment you start thinking about it, you drop out of the flow state and you kind of have to let it work itself back in.

That's a huge application to come in terms of using AI plus biofeedback and all that just for state training, I think is very exciting.

[01:24:45] **Robb Smith:** I'm far more excited about the application where AI turns us all into sort of a satori, a walking satori reality, rather than AI makes virtual reality, you know, so awesome.

Like reality itself is already pretty much the best thing ever we'll ever have. And so, you know, the issue is that we need to help to train the inner processor to see that reality as it's in its fullness and its effulgence.

[01:25:15] **Corey deVos:** That's alright. AI might prove to us that all of this reality is just another simulation in a simulation anyway. So I guess you can have it both ways.

[01:25:23] **Bruce Alderman:** You know, I mean, my experience with the art has transformed my experience in nature and in the world, and that's what I feel about the VR, is that the VR doesn't necessarily become a replacement, and in fact, it should not

become a replacement for our experience in the world.

But I think there's a way that it can teach us to attune our experience with our perceptions, that it will ripple out into our everyday experience of the world, and probably... I mean, just because already our experience with GigaGlossary and MJ has already physiologically impacted us in terms of how our senses work, how our perceptions of nature unfold. So I think it, it really can be, a generative feedback loop that's gonna be unpredictable, but I think really profound.

[01:26:10] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Yeah. Bruce, speaking of that, just one thing, I wanna let you know, something I'm experimenting with. I'm actually now trying to use the GigaGlossary to generate worldspaces and then to create prompts for MidJourney from within that worldspace. So what does a magenta, upper right, you know, subtle realm prompt look like in MidJourney, versus an Orange, lower right, third person, you know, et cetera. I haven't had big results with that yet, but when I do, I'll share 'em with you. It's a cool, it's a cool little project.

[01:26:42] **Bruce Alderman:** Wonderful. And I'm gonna throw in one other thing too, since Robb doesn't know about it yet. Corey does. I've been using ChatGPT to do the integral calculus or integral math, and it's doing very well at actually being able to take pretty nested perspectives, and perspectives on perspectives, and to graphically or mathematically notate them. And then I've asked, using, you know, some of my Grammatology, I've expanded some of the operators within Integral Math to actually show different kinds of perspectival relations, and, and it's getting that really well. It's been pretty interesting.

[01:27:19] **Robb Smith:** Fascinating. Fascinating. And this is probably a good place to insert or to talk about a little bit of that Maturing Test, because we did do it longitudinally, right? So GPT3, and then we did, six months later we did GPT4, and what we were specifically looking for, which, I mean, to my mind, there may not be any more important question in the world, which is, "is this thing growing vertically?" Right? Is AI growing vertically? Like to the extent that it is, and to the extent that it is at a certain rate, well, that is a very, very groundbreaking thing. Cuz what we have to remember is that, whichever stage AI gets to, it owns a hundred percent of that stage cognitively. So it's not like, it's not like us, where I'm really good here at Teal in one line, and I'm probably less so in this other line of development at Orange, and this other line at Green, and

whatever territory it moves into, at least at the cognitive level if it's intermediated by language, it has the entire thing. And so this question of "where is its altitude topped out at?" is like supremely important.

And as I said, we looked at it structurally and it looks like it was staying at Orange, even when I had it emulate Red, and even when I had it emulate turquoise.

But I want to put a really big asterisk on this, that I've talked to you guys about, and you've sort of hinted at it earlier, we're not... so two things. One is, it may not matter, like to the extent that it can emulate vision logic, to the extent that it can emulate meta-systematic complexity, for 95 or 98% of real world use cases, that may be very much good enough, as you're pointing to Bruce. It can already do that with the proper prompting, the proper scaffolding, and it can basically accomplish the very kind of knowledge products that we would say are somehow rarefied air. Well, not really, because apparently with Orange structure and enough scaffolding, it actually handles most of the use cases we would actually want it to.

The second is, we don't know if the science is valid. Like, we're taking... in fact, *prima facie* it's not valid. You can't take a human epistemological cognitive or ego complexity measure and apply it to a machine, and think that you're doing real science. You're doing some kind of bastardized application of proto-science, and yes, it's interesting, and there's probably a there, there.

[01:29:59] **Corey deVos:** Well what if, what if you put googly eyes on the machine though, then does it work?

[01:30:05] **Robb Smith:** I mean, I just don't, I don't want us to be confused that we're sort of making this grand scientific claim because we're not that stupid. Like, we know we are not doing that. And yet it is still really, it is actually still important because had it shown up and it's like, "holy shit, this thing is structurally at teal right out of the box", well at that point you're not very far away from being able to combine paradigms, right? And so at that point...

Cuz let's remember folks, like the PhD level people who are gonna generate really, really amazing, groundbreaking breakthroughs in their fields are gonna be teal to

turquoise in terms of the complexity. The moment this thing gets to that level of cross paradigmatic cognition, you can start to ask it about theories of everything in physics. You could start to ask it about solving cold fusion. You could start to ask it to combine fields in novel ways. That is an entirely different world we are in the moment that happens. We are in a radically new world.

And the question is, when does it get there? I don't know that we have any answer yet, but right now, you know, I would bet a thousand dollars that it doesn't get there in the next five years, but I wouldn't bet much more than that. Like it's, it is very much a different... it's a higher probability than I would've ever expected.

[01:31:30] **Corey deVos:** Right, right. And I wanna encourage folks in our audience who are watching this right now to check out that video. It was me, Robb and Susanne Cook-Greuter, and we went pretty in depth with this. And one of the things that really stuck with me is when Susanne was describing sort of how GPT would cluster its responses. It was like all of its responses were coming like a laser beam from a particular level. Whereas with human beings, you expect, you know, as you were saying earlier, a range, right? Because we're not ever "at" a level, quote unquote, we are a value stack. We're a cognitive stack. We're an aesthetic stack. And not only do we have multiple levels and lines, but those levels and lines express themselves differently from one context to the next, right? I come from a very different cognitive level when I'm sitting here with you two than I do when I'm on, you know, Facebook fucking around with my friends and making crass jokes, right? I mean, so there's sort of that, that contextual piece to it where you never expect a human being to sort of answer every question, you know, right from this stage, at all times. So that was one of the interesting things that Susanne was able to pull outta that.

And again, it's important to note that Susanne did not know she was grading the results from GPT. She thought this was a human being and must have thought it was a really sort of neurologically interesting human being.

[01:32:52] **Robb Smith:** She said it was weird. She said it was weird. On the second time she knew, but on GPT3 she didn't. And like I said, it didn't show, at least from the way we measured it, to whatever degree that's valid, it didn't show any movement. But what it did do, what it, of course cuz we've used it, we know GPT4 filled out that structure even more comprehensively, at a more complex way horizontally, where now

the way it can answer you. Is so much more extraordinary than with G3. And of course G5 is on the way. And so this is gonna be really interesting to see what G5 looks like, and what it can do.

[01:33:29] **Corey deVos:** G5 is gonna rip the world apart. I mean, GPT5... I mean if how they're prognosticating about GPT5, if we're, you know, if that's anywhere in the ballpark, it is gonna be just magnitudes, magnitudes. I mean, imagine that GigaGlossary, right? Right now we're at the point where something like a GigaGlossary, which is created from an eight page long prompt, right, only works for GPT4. You give it to GPT 3.5, who we were all very impressed with two months ago. And now it just feels like a drooling idiot compared to GPT4, right? That type of prompt only worked on GPT4. It had the minimal sort of baseline of capacity for complexity in order to actually process that eight page long single prompt. GPT five is gonna be just an absolute revolution. An absolute revolution.

And I think, Robb, what you're talking about here with the limitations of using some of these integral ideas to, you know, look at what GPT sort of is ontologically, but also how we make sense of it epistemologically, this brings us, I think, to our last question that we'll close the show out with, which is simply, is integral big enough? Is AQAL meta theory big enough to fully account for this emergence to fully make sense of this emergence, to understand sort of what's happening here, and all the various sort of pieces of emergence that are coming along with it.

I mean, my own experience, I might be a little biased, guys. I don't know. My little, my, my personal experience is, well, it's better than pretty much anything else we've got. Uh, I mean, forget pretty much it's better than anything else we have that I know about in terms of helping make sense of all of this. But are we gonna find ourselves sort of epistemologically challenged. Are we gonna start seeing stretch marks in AQAL theory itself as we try to apply it to these new realities that are opening up? Or is it just simply a case of like, no, I mean the core elements are all sound and pretty much in place as we want them to be. We're just gonna be translating those elements in very different ways because of this emergence. What do you guys think about that question?

[01:35:42] **Robb Smith:** I'll let Bruce go first.

[01:35:44] **Bruce Alderman:** A couple things I'm thinking about here. One, overall, my faith, my intuition is that the map is big enough to handle this territory. I think the biggest challenge is going to be coming to the inhabitants and users of the map. One, you know, Teal is "yellow", Teal is supposed to be getting into flex-flow and the ability to respond to, you know... we're really going to be tested how well we can flex and flow, how well we can shift and inhabit different perspectives in an authentic and meaningful way, and not be imbalanced. You know, so I think we're going to be challenged in using it.

I do see one interesting... there are probably a lot, but one that was just on my mind today, cuz I was listening to the guy, one of the guys from Microsoft who was testing the unfettered version of ChatGPT4 and noticing some of the signs of general intelligence emerging there. how do we define intelligence? And is intelligence... according to the AQAL map, intelligence generally is associated with the presence of interiority. And what's happening with ChatGPT4 is, we're getting signs of genuine creativity, intelligence, without necessarily a guarantee of interiority being present there.

Some of the things that they were finding were, you know, theory of mind. You know, they were GPT3, 3.5, and 4, there's a world of difference in, you know... GPT4. They were asking it about, okay, there's a person and another person in a room and there's a box and there's a cat, and then there's a basket and there's, you know. And when the other guy goes out, one guy puts a cat inside another box.

And anyway, then he asked ChatGPT, who sees what and who understands what when they walk back into the room? And 4 was able to say what each person would've experienced the room was like, and it even gave unwanted information about what the cat was experiencing and what the chair and the floor were experiencing. Which, the chair and the floor was saying they weren't experiencing anything because they didn't have interiors, but the cat does. And therefore it knew it was in the box. And so it actually was able to take all those perspectives in a reasonable way. So then they asked it to do some kinds of exercises where they would have it solve problems that were not out there anywhere in any kind of training material on the web or anything.

So they invented, elaborate, you know, puzzles to see if it had a sense of, you know, physical and causal relationships. And ChatGPT3 flubbed it. ChatGPT4 came up with very innovative answers that showed some level of reasoning. They were talking about how do you stack up a spoon and glasses and a bunch of eggs and a box and a

computer, and how do you stably stack them? And the 4 answered, you need to arrange all the eggs in a circle to, to create a base that's gonna be stable and then you can rest the computer on top and do these things. So it actually reasoned that out without any kind of similar prompts out there that they did a lot of research first to make sure there was nothing like that out there.

And then they asked it also to use a kind of a programming tool that's usually used only for basically crunching mathematics. And they asked it to draw a unicorn. And it did a terrible, terrible job to write the code, to draw a unicorn, did a terrible job with 3 or 3.5. With 4, it was able to draw that. But they were able to interact with it in a way, and even mess things up and then ask it to do things to fix it. That really gave an indication that it actually had a visual representation of what a unicorn looks like, what the code looks like, what the image was, and what you would need to do to interface with the image in order to bring out that representation. So it was demonstrating visual capacities. Right? Visual imaginable capacities.

[01:40:01] **Corey deVos:** This is nuts.

[01:40:01] **Bruce Alderman:** And so he's saying there are some elements where it can't plan, it can't do certain things that we would associate with intelligence, but there are other things that it can do that we would definitely associate with intelligence. And so it's a weird mix. It's not that good at math, though it did get math right. They asked it a question, how to do this. It gave the wrong answer, but then it worked out the equation and then it gave the right answer, without any prompting.

[01:40:25] **Corey deVos:** Fascinating. So fascinating.

[01:40:28] **Bruce Alderman:** Yeah. So I went on a bit long with that, but it fascinated me because of this question that I think we're gonna have to wrestle with in terms of the way we think about the quadrants: what is it to have intelligence, if there's no interiority? Or, is there interiority emerging here?

[01:40:44] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Oh, that's, that's really fascinating. Two things real quick, Robb, then I wanna hear your response. First off, what you're talking about, Bruce reminds me of, there was sort of a thought experiment in what we'll just call theory of

mind philosophy, that emerged in, I think it was the 1800s, actually, late 1800s, where the question was, if you have a person who has been blind since birth, right?

And they're able to tactilely through the sense of touch, learn what a sphere is, and what a cube is, if you were to suddenly restore their vision, would they be able to identify visually, immediately a cube and a sphere? And there's been a lot of back and forth, a lot of debate about it. Like, eh, no. Well, it turns out about, I think it was about 20 years ago or so, there were five people in a single year who were blind since birth, fully blind since birth, and had their vision restored, medical miracle, right? Had their vision restored. And so they asked them. And they couldn't. They didn't, they were not able to correlate this image of a sphere with their interior understanding of sphericity that they developed somatically rather than visually. Right? Which brings up all sorts of deep and fascinating questions about intelligence and interiority and the interior mental models that we are unconsciously constructing to reflect our reality at all times, at every moment.

So that's the first thing I wanted to say. The second thing I wanna say, and we will get into this in a later episode, the actual questions of interiority with AI are fascinating. And I just wanna quickly comment that one of my experiences has been a little bit funny. I have never seen more people who would have previously identified as materialists suddenly becoming . Paninteriorists. Right? "There's no way this isn't conscious, guys. Just look what it's doing. I mean, look at those googly eyes! I mean, there's no way that thing's not actually, you know, thinking with an interiority." And at the same time, I've never seen so many people who I can depend on as being paninteriorists, who are suddenly staunch materialists. "There's no way physically this could have any interiors because you need the squishy stuff of cells and organs and organelles and all that stuff in order to generate a complex holonically sort of arranged individual, capable of interiority." I just think that's a little bit funny.

[01:43:10] **Bruce Alderman:** Yeah. So it's definitely, it's blurring the boundaries here for us and really causing us to dig even deeper into our categories and their intersections.

[01:43:19] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. So Robb, what do you think of the "is AQAL big enough" question?

[01:43:24] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, to me there is absolutely no question that it is. I think there may be refinements in certain parts of the intellectual ecological niches that it has not filled out, you know, in full clarity, that's gonna be an ongoing project, obviously, for generations. But for me, there's no threat to the underlying philosophical system.

And I think even the way we're talking about it is a bit crude because, you know, even the concept of exteriors and interiors is a bit of a fiction that doesn't do justice to what it's actually getting at. It's better if we think of everything as an occasion, and an occasion has a way in which it can be thought of as an exterior, and a way in which it can be thought of as an interior, and depending on which mode of perception that you take on that occasion, can take a mode that looks at that occasion as matter in its exterior mode, and we can also look at it as a rising interiority in, its mode. And I think if we hold that in mind, then the question of "what is AI as a complex configuration of matter", to put it in crude terms, does it have interiority? Well, the answer is obviously yes. Obviously, because every... the interiority of matter is pre-given, co-arising with the exteriority of the interiority, right?

And so I think we run a... so there is a complex configuration of interiors, of some form. I think the trouble we run into is we sit there and we try to put that onto the human analog of our own complex interiority, as if they're somehow equivalent. And I think that's where we go really seriously astray. That it is not anywhere near the kind of complexity we're talking about when we talk about a human complex configuration of interiority. Clearly not sentient, but even more than that, you know, even in its intelligence, look at the way our intelligence has evolved to function. 50% of it is visual. We have a ton of our intelligence dedicated to embodied regulation, and processes for keeping a body alive. We have a ton of intelligence dedicated to hearing, and planning.

I mean, so you know, the first thing you'd have to do is sort of have a much broader view of what human intelligence actually looks like. If what you're trying to do is compare a register of complexity of the interiority of these two things, and I think we're still a long, long way away from. And I basically disagree with the Microsoft philosophers. I think they're making mistakes philosophically about their belief that this thing has sparkles of AGI. I fundamentally don't, I don't think that is a sophisticated enough view of what actual AGI really is, or I should say what actual general intelligence really is.

[01:46:27] **Corey deVos:** Fascinating, fascinating response. And, you know, , what I love about your response, Robb, is you both sort of take us out of the metatheory, but also bring us, sort of plop us right back in. Because, you know, I think you're evoking a beautiful, you know, almost non-dual sort of enactment of the question of interiority, which I think is, is gorgeous. And of course once we return to sort of the relative on this side of the street and, you know, whatever we want to call the absolute on the other, you know, there's questions like, is AI a holon? If so, what sort of stage of holon, because that helps us determine if there is some degree of interiority there, it helps us gauge what kind of interiority are we looking at? What is the scope and the scale and the span of that interiority.

I mean, you know, this pen presumably also has some kind of interiority, but it's the interiority of its constituent molecules and its constituent atoms, right? So there's that holonic piece. Whereas, you know, I think with AI, one of the questions as we're... one of the things I think we're really asking when it comes to the AGI question is, how do you turn an artifact, or even a social holon if we want to think about it that way, how do we turn either of those into an individual holon, with its own sort of organized, self-referencing, sentience and interior.

[01:47:53] **Robb Smith:** That's why all of this comes back to the hard problem anyway, because the nexus agency of a social holon is arguably what's happening in the brain anyway, neuronally. Yeah. And the philosophical arguments occur right at that dividing line no matter what anyway. And so, so as I said, maybe, I don't know, a year ago or eight months ago, I said, look, no matter what you do, you don't get away from the limit question that defines the hard problem to begin with, which is fundamentally, "is reality awake?" And you have to come to an answer to that question in whatever way you want to, in a way that you can live with. And that's gonna be largely determined by the degree to which you've both done a lot of philosophical training in the question. Probably the kind of metaphysical or metatheoretical orientation that you have, whichever schools you come out of, but also your personal experience of realization. So I personally don't listen to anybody that's got a pre-turquoise view about AI, because I just don't find their views sophisticated enough.

[01:48:52] **Corey deVos:** Right. Well said.

[01:48:54] **Bruce Alderman:** I kind of agree with both points there really, I think every occasion obviously has interiority and exteriority. I mean, that's part of the whole AQAL thing, and yet we're looking at what's allopoietically organized or autopoietically organized, and is it organized in a way that actually there's a coherence through the whole system. or is it just, you know, elements that are... maybe they have interior qualities to the individual events within a system, but that they're not actually building a coherent autopoietic whole or not. And if we're seeing things being performed by ChatGPT that we associate as one of the key defining features of intelligence, even if these systems are not intelligent yet, it's a challenge to us, because it seems to be, it's like, what is the question? If they're able to do certain tasks that in any standard definition of intelligence we associate with an intelligent being, it's like, where is that line? Because we're seeing where it's actually doing stupid things, and it's actually doing stuff that's really impressive that, you know, we don't see happening until certain high primates and kids. So it's interesting.

[01:50:07] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, I mean, you're absolutely right, and I don't give myself credit for much, but I did predict precisely this problem eight years ago when I did that conversation with Ben Gertzel on AGI. We did it at IONS, and one of the things I said in that dialogue was that, when AGI hits, what it's going to do is challenge our notions of the hard problem. And the reason it's gonna challenge those notions is cuz it'll do all the things we've constantly said are the tests that would distinguish between, you know, reality being awake or not. And so all of a sudden we're gonna be faced with the bind that like, holy shit, this thing is doing the very thing... it passes all the ways that we've thought about this, solving it. And that's when I realized, no, it doesn't get us out of the problem "is reality awake or not?" That's still going to be the limit question. We're still gonna get into food fights on matters that are different, though it may persuade, you know, some people along the way, obviously.

[01:51:09] **Corey deVos:** So fascinating.

[01:51:11] **Robb Smith:** Cool stuff.

[01:51:11] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. Amazing. Guys, what a first episode, huh? This was, this was... I had a really good time with you guys today.

[01:51:20] **Bruce Alderman:** Same here. Thanks for hosting Corey.

[01:51:22] **Robb Smith:** Yeah.

[01:51:23] **Corey deVos:** Yeah. And we are gonna have so much more to say about this in the weeks and the months to come. One of the things Bruce and I often joke about is when it comes to like, researching for this stuff, I mean, you kind of have like a one week window before whatever it is you learn becomes quickly obsolete, right?

So we're gonna keep on churning these out. We have a number of topics that we want to explore through the course of the series. Robb, I know you've said that you have like 10 hours of content that you wanna share, so we're gonna have you back on many more times in the future. In the meantime, this was I feel like a really, really great way to launch this overall discussion.

And, you know, talking to our friends who are watching us from home right now, we wanna know what you think. Not just what you think of this particular conversation, we'd like to know that too. But we wanna know sort of what directions you want to go. What questions do you have that are really, really pressing for you as you yourself are watching this sort of tsunami coming closer and closer. Cuz we, you know, definitely very much wanna bring your feedback into this show however we can. So let us know in the comments right down there, I'm pointing to the bottom of the Integral Life page that this will be embedded on. There's a little comment field down there, click it, go into our forum, let us know what you think, and we will pick up some of your questions in our next show.

In the meantime, Robb, buddy, I love you man. Thank you so much for joining us today and for...

[01:52:44] **Robb Smith:** Yeah, absolutely. It was absolutely my pleasure. Thanks to you guys. Congratulations on the new show. Thanks to everybody who participated in the forum as as we were going, and, like I said, first of many, so, you know, God bless.

[01:52:57] **Corey deVos:** That's right. That's right. Bruce. I'm so happy to be in the pocket with you, brother, and I can't wait to see where we go from here, man.

[01:53:04] **Bruce Alderman:** Same here. Yeah. Excited about it.

[01:53:06] **Corey deVos:** That's right. Alright, well to everyone at home, thank you so much and we'll see you later.