



GUIDE

Living & Learning with AI Inquiry

Context – rapid emergence of AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already participating in our lives. It shapes what we see, what we write, what we buy, how we decide, and increasingly how we think and feel — often without our conscious awareness. The question is no longer whether we will live with AI, but whether we will do so consciously, deliberately and well, or passively and largely ignorant of its effects and potential benefits. If we do nothing, AI will quietly become part of the background architecture of everyday life and we will remain unaware of its consequences.

In this inquiry, AI refers to digital systems that participate in our everyday activities by processing information and offering responses that have the potential to influence how we think, feel, learn, decide and act.

This inquiry begins with a different intention: to pause, to notice, and to experiment consciously. What happens when we treat our interactions with AI not as convenience, but as sites of inquiry? What might we discover about ourselves, our habits of thinking, and what it means to live well in an AI-mediated society?

FOUNDATION QUESTIONS

Q1 What do we learn about ourselves and our own practices when we become more conscious of how AI is already participating in our everyday life?

Q2 What do we learn about ourselves, our practices, and AI when we intentionally experiment with AI as a cognitive partner in our everyday life?

Q3 What does it mean to live well, wisely, ethically, creatively, productively and responsibly with AI?

AI is often portrayed as something distant, technical, or threatening—an external force acting upon us. This inquiry begins from a very different place and it is underpinned by three foundational questions. Answers to these questions become very powerful when we share our perspectives with other participants in the inquiry.

What this inquiry is about

The 12-week collaborative inquiry invites participants to reflect on how AI is present in their everyday life before inviting them to experiment with AI as a *cognitive companion*—a partner that can help us notice patterns, ask better questions, surface assumptions, deepen reflection, and make sense of lived experience. The focus is not on technical expertise, productivity hacks, or automation. It is on learning through living our everyday life, with AI gently, or occasionally more intensively, accompanying us as we do so.

You do not need prior knowledge of AI. In fact, curiosity, scepticism, uncertainty, or even resistance are welcome starting points. This inquiry is designed for people who are willing to explore *how* AI already has a place in their everyday life, and how it's presence could be enhanced for their benefit —on their terms aligned to their own values.

A lifewide perspective

Our lives are not lived in neat compartments. We learn while caring for others for example as a parent or grandparent, or when working, studying, volunteering, gardening, walking, socialising, watching TV or YouTube, resting, creating, worrying, celebrating, and coping with change and through many other activities and situations. This inquiry recognises that learning and our own development and formation (our becoming), happens everywhere—often unnoticed, unexamined, and unvalued. By taking a lifewide perspective, we are encouraging participants to explore AI in relation to real moments, situations and experiences in their own lives:

- reflecting on past experiences and life stories
- making sense of present challenges and transitions as they emerge
- imagining possible futures and directions
- attending more carefully to values, beliefs, emotions, and relationships

What kind of inquiry is this?

This is a lifewide inquiry into lived experience, not a course in technology and not an endorsement of AI. Its aim is to help you understand better the sorts of relationships you might develop with AI in different aspects of your life.

One of the most distinctive features of the inquiry is the invitation to treat AI not merely as a tool that performs tasks, but as a cognitive partner — something that can actively accompany your thinking, help you notice what you might otherwise overlook, and deepen the quality of your reflection. In practice this might mean sharing a recent experience with an AI like *Claude* or *ChatGPT* and asking it to help you identify the assumptions you are making and offer perspectives you haven't considered. It might mean using these AIs as a sounding board when you are trying to make sense of something confusing or asking it to help you articulate a feeling or value that is present but not yet fully formed into words. AI can engage with the particular situation — your uncertainties, your contradictions, your half-formed thoughts — and respond in ways that open up rather than close down your thinking. The key is that you remain the author of your own inquiry. Used in this spirit, AI becomes less like a machine you operate and more like a thoughtful companion.

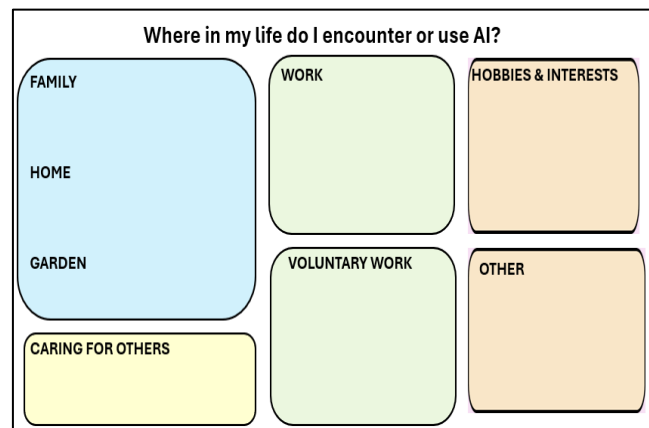
Ultimately the inquiry encourages you to explore whether AI has a place in your life at all, *and* how it affects your thinking, noticing, reflecting, planning and decision making.

You are not expected to become competent with AI or continue using AI if it proves unhelpful or misaligned with your values. Learning here includes use, acceptance, resistance, discomfort, critique, and withdrawal. The inquiry acknowledges that AI is not a finished, stable, or agreed-upon learning aid: we accept that AI is provisional, evolving and contestable—and we treat your judgement, including the choice of whether to engage with AI or not, as a central learning outcome.

How to approach the inquiry

1 Create your own lifewide contexts map

When considering how and where in your everyday living AI is present or where else it might be used, it is helpful to sketch a map of the contexts that matter to you. Within these contexts new situations emerge day by day and this is where and how you experience living. **The example here is intended to be illustrative and you should create your own lifewide contexts map to**

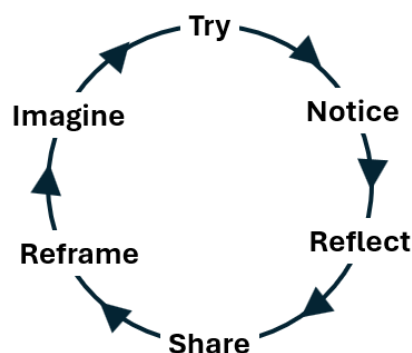


act as your own reference point when considering your use or potential use of AI. Such a map can be used as an artefact when engaging AI.

2 Keep the three foundational questions in mind together with any other questions you want to explore.

3 Adopt a simple inquiry rhythm

You may find it helpful to adopt this gentle cycle of living, thinking and learning. Even occasional use of this cycle might be helpful.



- Try something small
- Notice thoughts, feelings, tensions, surprises, effects.
- Reflect on what this reveals about you in your context.

Reflections can be recorded and curated in written or voice notes, or any other way as long as they enable you to reflect.

- Share any insights you gain about your use of AI in context with others.
- Reframe your questions, boundaries, or intentions.
- Imagine what you might try next.

FOUNDATION QUESTIONS

Q1 What do we learn about ourselves and our own practices when we become more conscious of how AI is already participating in our everyday life?

Q2 What do we learn about ourselves, our practices, and AI when we intentionally experiment with AI as a cognitive partner in our everyday life?

Q3 What does it mean to live well, wisely, ethically, creatively, productively and responsibly with AI?

Process

You can start your own inquiry any time after March 1st 2026. It will last for 12 weeks and unfold in three connected movements.

1 Opening the Door (Weeks 1–2)

Participants surface assumptions about AI, begin simple conversations, and practise noticing everyday experiences that we are already having with AI. Some suggestions for how to review where AI is already present in your life are provided in Appendix 2. You can use an AI like Claude or ChatGPT to help you undertake such a review. Questions that might be explored include:

- *What does AI mean to me?*
- *What are my fears and hopes?*
- *Where in my life am I encountering AI and in what contexts am I actively using it?*
- *What AI tools have I used and how have my experiences shaped my perceptions of it?*
- *Where in my life might I make more use of AI in ways that will benefit me?*

First Group Conversation Tuesday March 19th 13.00-14.00

Sharing of Experiences and Perceptions

2 Living and Learning with AI (Weeks 3–10)

Participants select one or more AI tools (see Table 1), to experiment with using AI across different life domains (e.g. work, home, creative enterprise, community, health and wellbeing, personal relationships, and many other possible situations). You can adopt a wide focus – many different contexts or focus on one or more contexts. We are particularly interested in tools that provide additional cognitive and / or emotional capacity and support that aid analysis, understanding, decision making and reflection.

- *Which AI tool(s) did I choose to use and why?*
- *In what contexts and situations have I tried to make use of AI?*
- *How did I use AI and what sorts of things emerged?*
- *What surprised me and what insights did I gain?*
- *What questions has this raised and how will I try to engage with them?*

Second Group Conversation Week 6 Thursday April 16 13.00-14.00 (UK)

Each participant shares one experience of using an AI, drawing out insights gained

3 Making Sense and Becoming (Weeks 11–12)

Participants synthesise insights across time, examine patterns in their experiences, and critically evaluate the role AI has played in their learning and development. Each participant prepares a narrative drawing out their learning and considering how their perceptions of AI have changed or been reinforced.

- *Looking at the whole of my experiences what lessons have I learnt about using AI in everyday living?*
- *Am I in some way different to when I started this inquiry?*
- *What has AI learnt about me, about my use of AI and what advice does it have about how I might make better use of it?*

Third Group Conversation Thursday June 4 13.00-14.00 UK

Each participant shares the insights they have gained across all the contexts in which they have experimented in living and learning with AI.

After the Inquiry is completed we would like to curate what we have learnt individually and collectively in an issue of Lifewide Magazine.

Living & Learning with AI Resources

<https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/living--learning-with-ai.html>

APPENDIX 1 Examples of Free AI Tools

The inquiry aims encourages exploration of a variety of AI tools. The most useful free AI tools are not the flashiest, but the ones that quietly extend perception, expression, organisation, and imagination without demanding technical expertise. Table 1 provides a curated list of some of the best *free* AI tools that people can genuinely use in their daily life. Their *developmental value* depends less on technical power and more on how they are positioned within a person’s thinking, decision making, actions and reflections.

Table 1 Free AI Tools for Everyday Life (Practical Overview)

Purpose in Everyday Life	AI Tool (Free Tier)	What It’s Good For	Typical Everyday Uses	Role
Thinking, reflection, sense-making, writing	ChatGPT Claude	Dialogue, drafting, reframing ideas, reflective thinking	Journaling, planning, thinking through problems, drafting letters or proposals	Extends thinking and imagination; purpose and judgement remain human
Everyday explanations & summaries	Google Gemini	Clear explanations, summarising text, everyday reasoning	Understanding topics, summarising emails or articles	Supports comprehension, not lived understanding
Research with sources	Perplexity AI	Answers with citations, fast orientation to a topic	Checking facts, exploring unfamiliar subjects	Strengthens inquiry when sources are examined critically
Integrated everyday assistance	Microsoft Copilot	AI help inside browsers and documents	Email drafts, quick summaries, task support	Best used as infrastructure, not decision-maker
Writing clarity & tone	Grammarly	Grammar, tone, readability improvements	Emails, reports, messages	Polishes expression without changing meaning
Organising ideas & notes	Notion AI	Structuring notes, summarising, planning	Personal projects, study notes, life admin	Helps stabilise artefacts for reflection
Visual imagination & illustration	DALL-E	Turning ideas into images	Concept visuals, creative prompts, metaphors	Extends imagination; interpretation remains human
Simple image generation	Bing Image Creator	Easy access to AI-generated images	Posters, illustrations, community materials	Makes ideas visible and shareable
Everyday design	Canva (AI features)	Posters, presentations, simple graphics	Community notices, slides, leaflets	Supports communication, not content thinking
Speech-to-text & capture	Otter.ai	Transcribing conversations and meetings	Interviews, meetings, reflective audio	Excellent for artefact-mediated continuity
Accessibility & inclusion	Google Live Transcribe	Real-time transcription	Conversations, talks, accessibility support	Expands participation and inclusion
Learning support	Khan Academy (AI tutor)	Step-by-step explanations	Maths, science, foundational learning	Supports learning, does not replace practice
Language learning	Duolingo (free)	Adaptive language practice	Daily language learning	Builds habits through repetition and feedback

APPENDIX 2: Living & Learning with AI

Becoming More Aware of Our Participation with AI

1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a discrete tool used occasionally. It is embedded across everyday life — shaping attention, influencing choices, filtering information, optimising systems, and structuring participation. Most adults already live within AI-mediated environments, yet often with only partial awareness. This paper proposes a developmental shift from unconscious participation in AI-saturated systems to conscious, deliberate and responsible participation within all the contexts of your life, shaped by your own choices and values"

2. AI Already Present in Everyday Life

AI capability is embedded in many commonly used smartphone and laptop applications (Table 1 & 2). The majority operate as background infrastructure, shaping behaviour and perception without explicit recognition.

Table 1 Common AI-Enabled Smartphone Apps

Functional Category	Examples of Apps	Typical AI Function
Search & Information	Google Search, Bing	Ranking, prediction, personalised results
Navigation	Google Maps, Waze	Route optimisation, traffic prediction
Media Recommendation	Netflix, Spotify, YouTube	Content recommendation
Social Feed Curation	Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X	Algorithmic feed ranking
Smart Assistants	Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant	Voice recognition, predictive response
Shopping & E-commerce	Amazon, eBay	Product recommendation, dynamic pricing
Health & Fitness	Fitbit, Apple Health, Strava	Pattern recognition, trend prediction

Table 2 Common AI-Enabled Laptop & Home Systems

Functional Category	Examples of Platforms/Devices	Typical AI Function
Productivity AI	Microsoft Word/Excel Copilot, Google Docs AI	Text prediction, summarisation
Email Filtering	Gmail, Outlook	Spam detection, smart replies
Video Conferencing AI	Zoom, Teams, Google Meet	Noise suppression, live captions
Streaming Platforms	Netflix, Prime Video, YouTube	Personalised recommendations
Smart Home Systems	Nest Thermostat, Hive, Alexa devices	Automation, behavioural learning
Security Systems	Ring, Arlo	Facial recognition, anomaly detection
Operating Systems	Windows, macOS	Predictive typing, optimisation

3. From Awareness to Conscious Participation

The developmental challenge is not to withdraw from AI, nor to adopt it uncritically, but to cultivate ecological awareness. Individuals can ask: Where is AI shaping my perception? Where is it narrowing or expanding my agency? Where is my participation passive? Where is it deliberate?

Conscious participation involves repositioning AI as a supportive element within a self-authored life — aligning its use with values, developmental aims, and responsibilities to others and the wider world.

4. Conclusion

We are not outside AI. We already knowingly or unknowingly participate within AI-mediated systems. The task of lifelong - lifewide learning is therefore to move from unconscious participation to reflective, deliberate and responsible ecological engagement. Such maturity does not reject AI, but positions it wisely within the evolving authorship of a human life.

APENDIX 3 AI AWARENESS WORKSHEET

Becoming a Conscious Participant in an AI-Mediated World

Purpose:

To help you become more aware of how AI already participates in your life, and to support deliberate, responsible repositioning of AI within your self-authored lifewide ecology.

Table 1 — Mapping My Existing AI Ecology: Where am I already living with AI?

Lifewide Domain	Apps / Systems Used	What Is the AI Doing?	Visible or Invisible?	Passive / Active?
Work / Professional Life				
Financial Life				
Health & Wellbeing				
Home & Consumption				
Travel & Mobility				
Community / Civic Life				
Leisure & Media				
Learning & Self-Education				
Interests and hobbies				
Other				

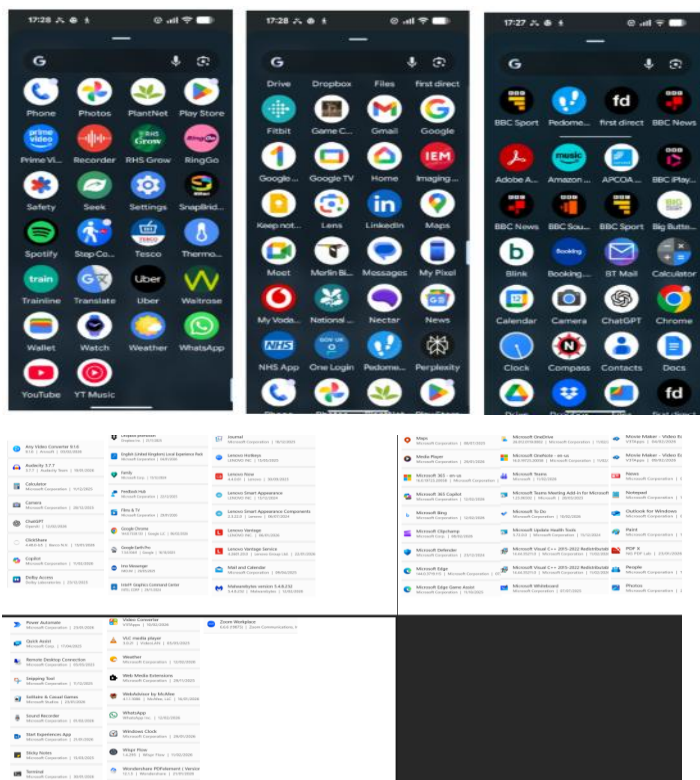
Table 2 Possible additional ways in which I might consciously live well with AI

Domain	Developmental Aim	How AI Might Support	Risks	Safeguards
Work				
Financial				
Health				
Community				
Learning				
Leisure				
Other				

Why not use AI to help you analyse your own involvement with AI?

A quick way of exploring how AI is potentially involved in your life is to screenshot the apps on your phone and laptop and upload the screenshot photos to a cognitive AI like ChatGPT or Claude.

Use a prompt like: I attach screen shots of my phone and laptop showing the installed apps . Please identify those apps which are AI enabled and classify them according to their functional role. What does this tell me about the potential ways I am living with AI?



Concluding Reflection

- *What do you conclude from this analysis of how you are living with AI?*
- *Going forward, how might you experiment to enhance your understanding of how you might live well with AI?*