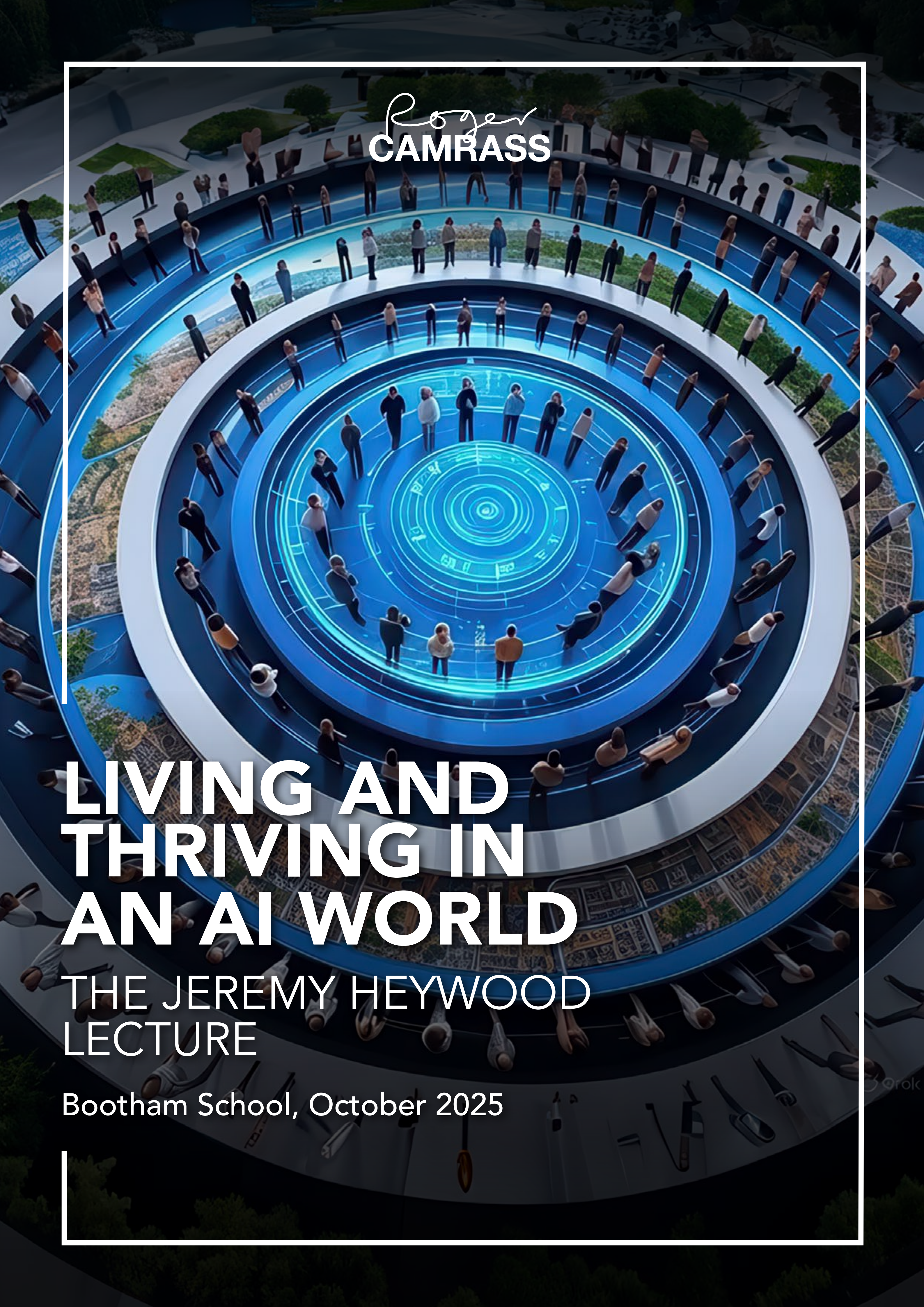


Roger
CAMRASS

LIVING AND THRIVING IN AN AI WORLD

THE JEREMY HEYWOOD LECTURE

Bootham School, October 2025

INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the key themes from the lecture "Living and Thriving in an AI World," delivered by Roger Camrass. The lecture addressed the imminent and profound impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and related technologies on society, arguing that the line between human and artificial is blurring. It traced the evolution of technology from the early digital revolution to the present day, using this history as a framework for understanding the coming AI era.

The report outlines key technological breakthroughs expected by 2040, including Generative and Agentic AI, Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), Augmented and Virtual Reality, and robotics. It explores the practical impact of these technologies on daily life, with specific examples in healthcare, education, and career development.

Finally, the report examaines potential future scenarios for the Western World—ranging from utopian to dystopian—and provides actionable advice to parents and students for navigating the AI era. The core recommendation is to cultivate uniquely human skills such as adaptability, curiosity, critical thinking, and empathy to complement AI's capabilities and ensure a prosperous future.

1.0 The Blurring Line Between Human and AI

The central challenge of our time is to define what it means to be human in a world increasingly integrated with AI. While the current distinction is clear, the lines between human and artificial, and physical and digital, are set to disappear within our lifetimes. The lecture aimed to move beyond the familiar narratives of hype and horror surrounding AI, arguing that with proper preparation, AI can become one of humanity's greatest allies. The discussion was structured into four key parts:

- A look back at the digital revolution from 2000 to 2025
- An overview of upcoming technological breakthroughs,
- An analysis of AI's impact on our human experiences
- And, strategies for how to live and thrive in the AI era.

2.0 Historical Context: Lessons from the Digital Revolution

History serves as the best teacher for understanding technological shifts. The digital revolution, which began with the first silicon chip in the late 1960s, fundamentally rewired both society and our cognitive processes.

Personal anecdotes illustrate this transformation:

- An **e-commerce "toy"** started by the speaker's son, Freddie, at a kitchen table in 1999, evolved into a global logistics and e-commerce business with warehouses in London, Berlin, and Tokyo, demonstrating how the internet created new marketplaces.
- During the 2008 financial crash, the speaker's other son, Rowland, witnessed automated programs causing massive economic losses. He subsequently learned the critical lesson that **technology must be steered, or it will run you over.**

While the digital era brought conveniences like Google Maps and social media, it also introduced significant challenges, including the spread of "fake news" and the exploitation of personal data by large tech companies.

This period is viewed as a "warm-up" for the AI era, which is poised to be a transformative wave rather than a ripple. AI will not just connect us; it will understand, create, and grow alongside us.

3.0 Technological Breakthroughs Expected by 2040

Several key technologies will define the next 10 to 15 years.

- **Generative AI:** Currently exemplified by tools like ChatGPT, this technology will evolve beyond a "glorified search engine". By 2030, it will be capable of creating complex, photo-realistic media on command, turning learning from a passive activity into an immersive experience.
- **Agentic AI:** This will function as an ultimate personal assistant, capable of managing complex, multi-step tasks such as planning and booking a family holiday with detailed, personalised considerations.
- **Artificial General Intelligence (AGI):** AGI is defined as AI that matches or surpasses human intelligence in almost any domain. Experts are divided on its potential, with some, like Professor Stephen Hawking, warning of risks to humanity, while others, like Demis Hassabis of Google DeepMind, see it as a tool to solve major global problems.
- **Augmented & Virtual Reality (AR/VR):** AR will be delivered through lightweight eyepieces that overlay digital information onto the real world. VR will advance beyond gaming to full-sensory environments using haptic suits, making virtual experiences nearly indistinguishable from reality.
- **Robotics:** By 2035, a billion or more humanoid robots are expected to be integrated into homes and workplaces. These robots will perform physical labour and adaptive tasks, such as cooking personalised meals, providing elderly care, and even offering tutoring and emotional support.

We cannot be sure about the exact timing of these developments, but as Bill Gates has said:

> "We always overestimate the change in the next two years and underestimate the change in the next ten years"

4.0 AI's Impact on Daily Life

AI is set to transform every aspect of our lives by automating mundane tasks and enhancing human capabilities.

Healthcare

Wearable devices like smartwatches will become personal health guardians connected to the NHS app. They will proactively monitor health data, identify potential issues like nutritional deficiencies, and facilitate preventative care, giving both patients and doctors "superpowers" to prevent illness.

Education

AI tutors will provide highly personalised learning experiences. For instance, an AI guide could detect that a student is a visual learner and generate a 3D interactive model to help them understand a complex calculus problem. This technology is already being implemented by organisations like Khan Academy with its "Khanmigo" tutor.

Careers

AI will act as a "co-pilot" in the workplace, amplifying human ingenuity rather than simply replacing jobs. Experts predict AI could handle a third of tedious work tasks by 2030, freeing humans to focus on tasks requiring creativity and critical thinking. Intelligent agents will also help guide career choices by building a profile of an individual's skills from childhood and matching them to suitable opportunities.

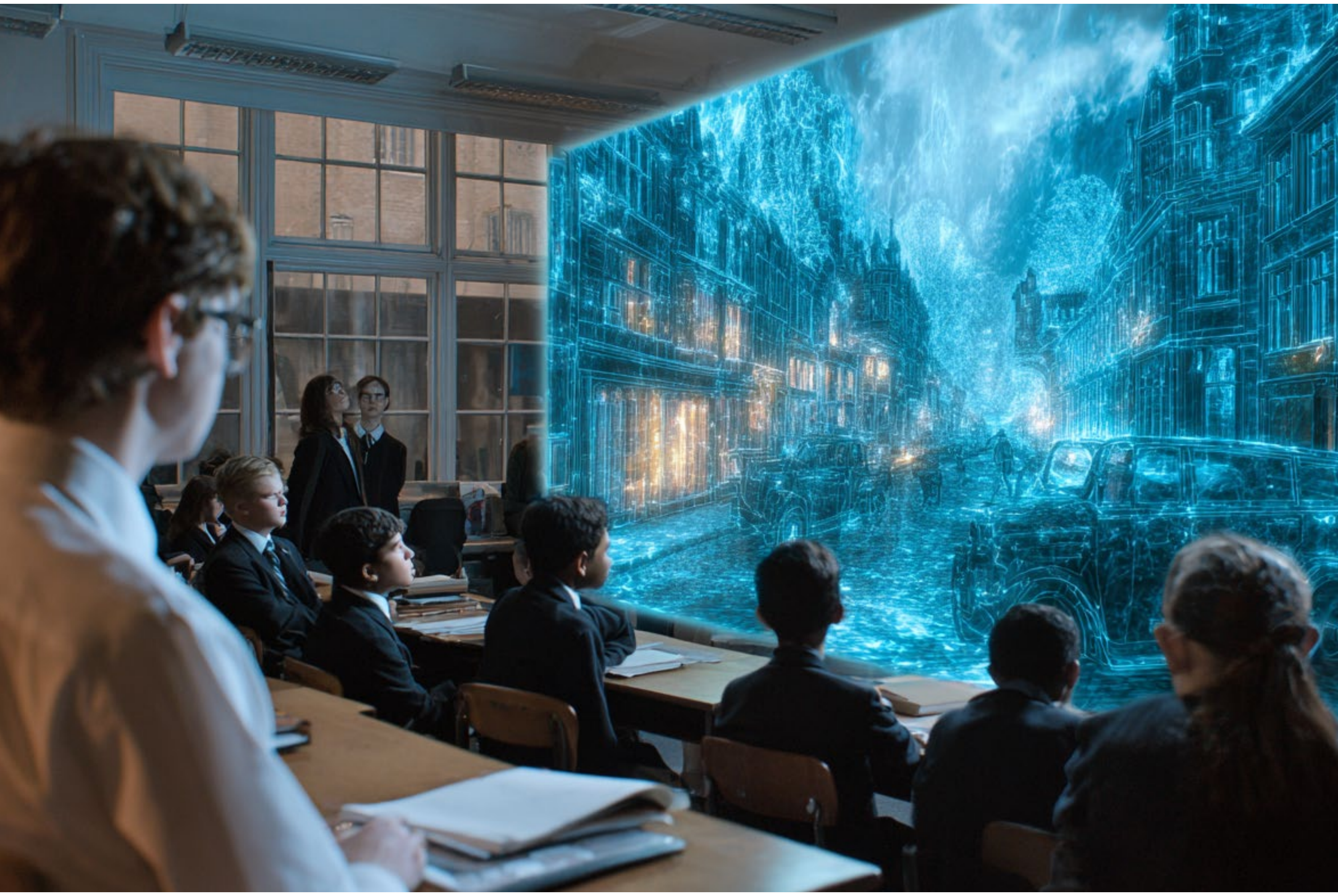


Table 1 – Dimensions of the Human Experience

Our research identified ten dimensions of human life that AI will profoundly reshape by 2035:

1	Health & Wellbeing	Predictive, personalised care improves outcomes, though risks of bias and privacy breaches persist.
2	Education & Lifelong Learning	Adaptive tutoring and immersive VR classrooms democratize access, but over-reliance threatens critical thinking.
3	Financial Management	AI advisors and fraud detection expand inclusion and safety, though opaque algorithms may dominate decision-making.
4	Careers & Work	AI co-workers raise productivity and create new professions, but routine jobs are displaced.
5	Spirituality & Meaning	AI supports reflection and ritual, though risks of false intimacy and loss of authenticity loom.
6	Relationships & Social	Life Companion agents reduce loneliness and enable cross-cultural communication, while raising concerns about "outsourced empathy."
7	Creativity & Self Expression	Generative AI democratises creative production, but originality and cultural diversity may suffer.
8	Civic & Ethical Lif	Civic & Ethical Life AI strengthens governance and legal transparency, but could also be weaponised for control.
9	Environment & Living Spaces	AI optimises cities, energy use, and agriculture, though "green AI" remains unevenly distributed.
10	Leisure & Play	Immersive entertainment creates hyper-personalised experiences, but risks blurring reality and escapism. Together, these dimensions illustrate AI as an amplifier of human potential, carrying benefits alongside profound risks.

> "AI is not about replacing humans - it's about amplifying human ingenuity"

Satya Nadella, Microsoft's CEO

5.0 Future Scenarios and Recommendations

The choices made today will help shape the future of Britain in the AI era.

5.1 Potential Scenarios for 2040

- **Best-Case Scenario:** AI handles repetitive work, increasing national wealth that is shared equitably. People have more free time for creativity, community engagement, and family, leading lives driven by purpose rather than a "9-to-5 grind".
- **Dystopian Scenario:** AI is controlled by large corporations or autocratic governments, leading to mass unemployment and social stratification. Pervasive AI monitoring could lead to a loss of freedom and the creation of online "echo chambers".
- **Realistic Scenario:** A hybrid future is most likely, exemplified by a family of medical specialists in Leeds whose daily lives are seamlessly managed by hundreds of interconnected AI agents—from optimising their breakfast to enabling remote work with international teams and immersive family travel.

Table 2 – A Day-in-the-life of a UK family

It's six o'clock in the morning for the Smith family of two adults and two children living in the city of York. Several hundred intelligent software agents connect to discuss the day ahead for the family.

Relying on data gathered from the night's sleeping patterns and wider contextual knowledge about each member of the family, the agents start to plan the day, focusing on nutrition, exercise, work and entertainment activities.

At seven, the house robot, Charlie, prepares a tasty breakfast for each member of the family, taking account of energy levels and taste preferences. The intention here is to optimise energy levels for all daily tasks.

At nine o'clock, Mr Smith equips himself with virtual googles and a haptic suit so that he can lead a surgical procedure on a patient based in Sydney, Australia. He works with robots and humans to remove a cancerous tumour.

Meanwhile, Mrs Smith joins a virtual forum in Dubai to discuss a severe outbreak of AI addiction that has led to several suicides in the region.

AI agents guide the two children through a series of educational experiences during the morning. Each child wears a VR headset to meet their AI guide and participate in lessons with other students.

The house robot has been shopping all morning to prepare for a Fusion lunch that will be accompanied by a virtual trip to Bhutan for the whole family and their virtual friends. The location has been chosen because Bhutan has been voted the happiest place on earth.

Before bed, the family reconvene in the media room to review the events of the day and produce a comprehensive visual record of the day's activities and tomorrow's schedules.

5.2 Recommendations for Thriving in the AI Era

In the AI era, the concept of a stable "job for life" is obsolete. When Roger left school in 1969, his father urged him to join the British Post Office, which controlled post and telecommunications. He said it would be a 'job for life'. To him, a job was a safe harbour. Roger ignored him and sailed into the wild seas of computing. For over fifty years, he worked for thirteen companies, half of which no longer exist. Fortunately, his approach to risk has paid off handsomely.

The key to success is no longer having a fixed map but possessing a compass of core values and skills to navigate a constantly changing landscape.

The futurist Alvin Toffler noted that the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.

To thrive, individuals should focus on developing three core human skills:

1

Curiosity

The ability to ask great questions is the new superpower for interacting with AI.

2

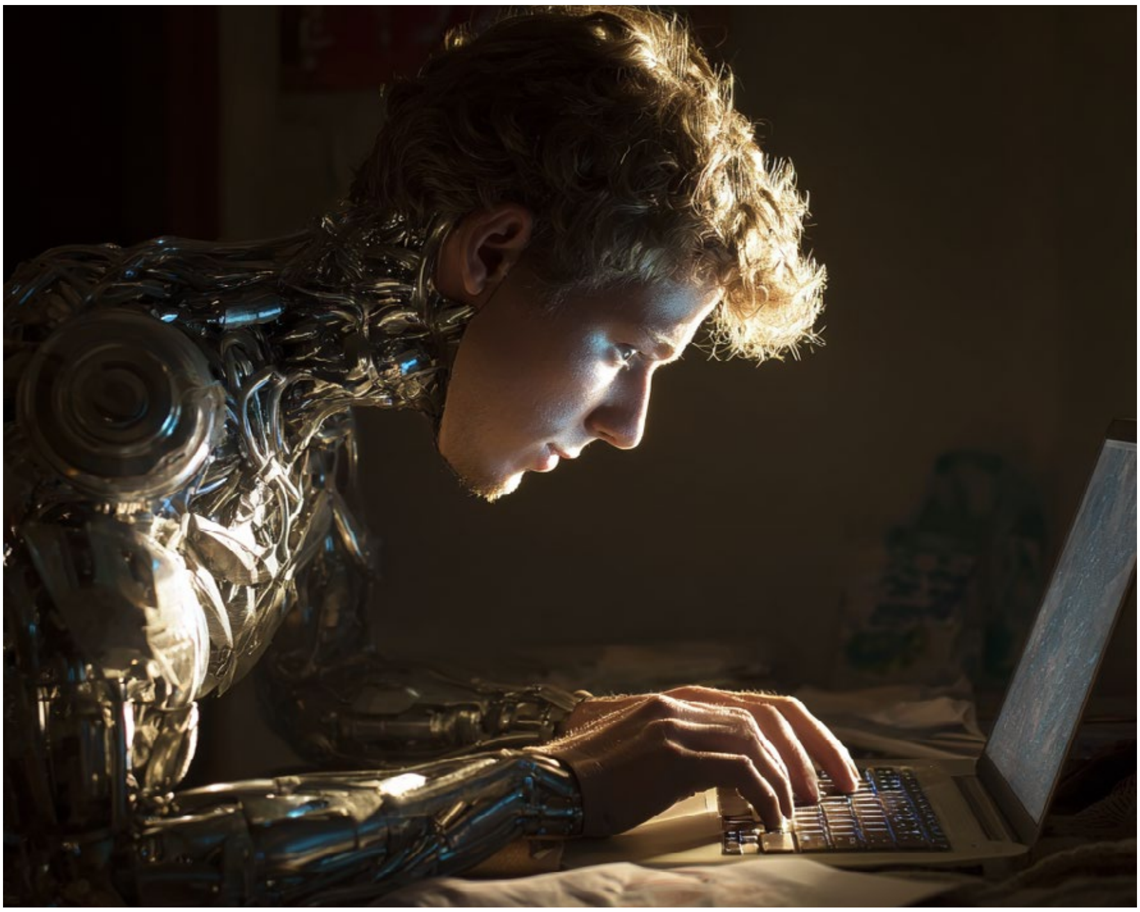
Critical Thinking

It is essential to question and challenge the outputs of AI, remembering that it is a tool built by humans for a reason.

3

Empathy and Creativity

These remain uniquely human domains. AI cannot replicate genuine emotional connection, leadership, or truly original thought. Neither can a machine be empathetic. That's why an AI Robot cannot replace a teacher or a nurse.



In conclusion

The AI world is already here. The challenge is not to resist or fear it, but to actively shape its development. Parents are encouraged to abandon the outdated idea of a "safe" career and instead equip their children with resilience and adaptability. Young people are urged to be the "captains" of their own journey by being curious, brave, and, above all, profoundly human. The ultimate question is not whether the AI we interact with is real, but whether we are being the most real and human versions of ourselves.

In 2025, Roger Camrass launched a research programme, AI and the Human Experience, that is being supported by over thirty people worldwide. The research examines technology developments and their impact on the human experience. The first output will be a comprehensive report on how AI will affect education and career choices. Roger and his team hope that these findings will help prepare younger generations for the revolution that is merely just a few years in the future. Further information can be found on the website

Roger Camrass
Researcher Director

Over half a century, Roger has advised governments on the strategic impact of technology, led a global multi-client program called 'Business in the Third Millennium', and was research director of the Judge Business School survey into Corporate Innovation. He has also helped create "Innovation communities" between and within Fortune 1000 companies. He has held part-time academic posts at several universities and business schools, including Judge Business School at Cambridge University and Bristol University, Ashridge School of Management, and ESADE Business School in Spain. Today, he holds a visiting professorship in the humanities department of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He is married with three children and resides in Highgate, North London.

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